



## CARLTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Minutes of the Resources And Finance Committee meeting held at the school on Tuesday 29 October 2019 at 5.30pm

- 3rd draft Ch & HT comments done-

#### **Governors:**

Tim Carew – Parent Governor (**Committee Chair**)  
 Georgina Harcourt-Brown – Deputy Headteacher and Co-opted Governor  
 Charul Patel – Co-opted Governor  
 Jacqueline Phelan – Headteacher and Exofficio Governor  
 Laurence Simons – Co-opted Governor  
 Yiannos Theodoridis – Co-opted Governor (*present via video call from Dublin*)  
 Jess Wren – Co-opted Governor  
 Peter Ptashko – Local Authority Governor (*left at 6:35pm*)  
 Jessica Marsh – Staff Governor  
 Hannah O'Brien – Co-opted Governor

#### **In attendance:**

Jo Lomax – School Business Manager  
 Victoria Mitchell – Clerk To The Governing Board

Tim Carew chaired the meeting and Victoria Mitchell wrote the minutes.

1.	<b>Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</b>	<b>Actions and timescale</b>
	1.1 The Chair Of Governors opened the meeting. Everyone was welcomed.  1.2 It was noted that Governor Kate Steele was absent. The Chair Of Governors agreed to contact her. <b><u>ACTION: Chair Of Governors to contact Governor Kate Steele.</u></b>  1.3 The meeting was quorate.	Kate Steele
2.	<b>Declaration of Interests</b>	
	2.1 There were no declarations of interests made.	
3.	<b>Committee terms of reference</b>	
	3.1 This item was deferred until the next meeting. <b><u>ACTION: Item deferred.</u></b>	Next committee agenda item
4.	<b>Report from the School Business Manager</b>	
	4.1 School Business Manager Jo Lomax issued a finance report to the committee. The report was dated 30th September 2019.  4.2 The School Business Manager explained that there had been been two pay awards to staff. A 2% pay increase for teachers will be received by staff in the next few months and backdated to the award date. All teachers will be asked to sign that they agree with this 2% pay award. There is also a pay award for support staff.  4.3 There has been a saving in teaching costs. This is due to the resignation of	

	<p>two teachers who were at the end of their contracts.</p> <p>4.4 <u>Question:</u> Are these two resignations over and above what was already planned for?  <u>Answer:</u>  No they were included in our plan.</p> <p>4.5 The committee was informed that there were four vacancies in the school that are being covered by supply teachers. This has resulted in a saving of £21,000 to the teaching staff budget.</p> <p>4.6 The Headteacher reported that the school has one Site Services Officer to cover the school premises. However if a task requires heavy lifting the school buys in an extra site services officer for that particular job.</p> <p>4.7 The school has allocated £2,500 to refurbish the nursery playground.</p> <p>4.8 It was also reported to the committee that it was felt there have been too many reductions in staff supervising the school playground. As such an extra member of staff has been allocated to supervise the playground and prevent challenging behaviour and accidents. The school wants the playground to be safe and not dangerous.</p> <p>4.9 The school is seeking an additional £12,000 to £22,000 funding to ensure the one-to-one interventions are carried out properly.</p> <p>4.10 One governor raised the question about Budget Line LE08 in the school budget. It was agreed the question would be emailed to the School Business Manager on Wednesday 30th October 2019 and a written reply would be provided.  <b>ACTION: Update on the question about Budget Line LE08 at the next meeting.</b></p> <p>4.11 Finally it was reported that School Business Manager Jo Lomax was leaving the school and this would be her last Resources And Finance Committee meeting. Governors bid her farewell and thanked her for all her work in the school.</p> <p><i>(School Business Manager Jo Lomax then left the meeting.)</i></p>	Headteacher
5.	<p><b>A proposal to close Carlton Primary School</b></p> <p>5.1 The Chair Of Governors reported that a meeting had taken place between the Headteacher and the London Borough Of Camden Director Of Education And Commissioning Richard Lewin. At this meeting the school had been informed that one of the options Camden were considering was to closedown Carlton Primary School. The Chair Of Governors opened a discussion with the governors on how to keep the school open.</p> <p>5.2 It was stressed that the school is still open and running as normal. Although the Governing Board agreed that they should fight to keep the school open, the number one priority for the school was the pupils and ensuring their teaching and learning remained at the highest level.</p> <p>5.3 Deputy Head Georgina Harcourt-Brown presented a paper to the meeting. This paper included two data tables. The first was the percentage places filled in Camden Planning Area Group 2 and 3 in January 2019. The first table</p>	

included the pan of each school in planning area 2, which included Carlton Primary School, and the total pupil numbers at each of those schools. It also included the calculation of the net surplus places in January 2019 at each of the schools expressed as a percentage. The second table was the historic pupil numbers in a projection of pupil numbers in Carlton Primary School reception year in each academic year from 2014-15 through to 2019-20 and then a projection of pupil numbers in Carlton Primary School reception year in future academic years in 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25.

5.4 The Headteacher stated that if Camden school leaders work to discuss options on closing down schools then it was important for them to consider the quality of education at each of the schools and the value added to each pupil during their time at the respective primary schools.

5.5 The Vice-Chair Of Governors stated that the decision to include the closure of Carlton Primary School as an option to consider had come very suddenly. The three local authority councillors for this ward had met with the Vice-Chair Of Governors and the Headteacher and had agreed to fight to keep the school open and to make sure the school's case was heard in the discussions.

5.6 One governor said that the local authority has got a legal duty to consult on the proposal to close the school. However the closure of the school has been announced as an option in the discussions which would effectively lead to parents and pupils leaving the school prior to any consultation and decision to close the school. The governor stated that Camden Council may be trying to get around their legal duty to consult by making the announcement in this way. One governor agreed that staff and parents may start thinking about leaving the school regardless of what the final decision is on whether to close the school or not.

5.7 The meeting was informed that all schools in planning area 2 will be told on 30th October 2019 about the option to close Carlton Primary School. The Headteacher informed the meeting that a letter would go out to parents from the school on 30th October 2019 to alleviate any concerns they may have about gossip relating to the school closing.

5.8 The Headteacher reminded the meeting that the school had recently reduced to one form of entry. The staff at the school had also already gone through a difficult restructure in the previous school term. A possible school closure may lower staff morale.

5.9 Question: Has the decision been made entirely based on pupil number projections?

Answer:

That is the impression we got from the meeting with the Camden Director Of Education yesterday. However they did also mention the capital asset as a factor - i.e. the value of the land and the school is built on.

5.10 Question: Camden local authority have gone through these exercises of making projections on pupil numbers before and have proved to be very unreliable. How can the school be sure these current projections are reliable?

Answer:

We are living in very uncertain political times. Pupil numbers were very affected around the time of the EU/Brexit referendum result. However we do agree that it is very strange to base a decision on closing a school just on the

forecast predictions and not on any other important factors.

5.11 One governor observed that Carlton Primary School is located between two other schools so is an easy target for those looking to close a local school. Another governor stated that the capital value of the land and building may have been a factor in the decision to close the school and re-use the land.

5.12 Another governor informed the meeting Carlton Primary School had always been full in its reception year and had always produced a huge value-added factor to pupils during their time at the school. Local pupils at the school progressed a great deal - many had no English when they began at the school. The sense of community has stayed strong at the school despite the staff restructure and other problems. This school is very well equipped for specialist support for children who require it. Pupils wouldn't get the same specialist support elsewhere. The staff at the school are also from the local community. Carlton Primary School is genuinely a community school.

5.13 One governor observed that the local area is very integrated with different ethnicities, religions, sexualities and genders all living together. Local housing is also diverse with modern buildings and Victorian buildings all side by side with each other, making this a truly diverse community. The governor expressed the view that to close an integrated diverse community school that sits at the heart of this diverse community would make differences in the local area more apparent and would be bad for integration in this area.

5.14 One governor stated that compared to other schools Carlton Primary School is much better in terms of progress and attainment. The Headteacher added that the ethos of the school is also good and the view the parents have of the school - reflected in the recent parental survey - shows that the school is doing well. Another governor pointed out that Carlton Primary is also very good at inclusion compared to other schools. In all the areas where Carlton starts off disadvantaged such as free school meals, disadvantaged pupils, ethnicity, English language, SEND pupils, Carlton does all these children well during their time at this school.

5.15 One governor recalled a recent class observation he had carried out. Some of the children he observed were very fragile and needed great support. They could get this support here at Carlton Primary School.

5.16 The meeting was informed that if the school has alternative proposals to the options proposed by Richard Lewin then these need to be submitted to Camden for consideration by the end of November 2019.

5.17 Governors stated that Camden should establish what is the criteria for closing the school. Is the criteria based only on projected pupil numbers or should other reasons such as attainment and progress, pupils with SEND, value-added and educational factors need to be considered as well? Also Carlton is a non-faith school which is important for some parents - are there alternative non-faith schools in this area if Carlton closes?

5.18 The Chair Of Governors reminded the meeting that officially the consultation process had not yet started. It will probably start in February 2020. If it is announced that the school may close then staff and parents may begin leaving the school. So there needs to be care in the words that are used when discussing this matter. Camden have stated that they have already decided to close the school but officially the consultation has not yet begun.

	<p>5.19 Governors agreed the school needs to establish whether Camden have any alternatives to closing this school down. Also what suggested alternatives would change their decision to close Carlton? If Camden are determined to close Carlton regardless of alternatives then any action by the governors and the school may be futile.</p> <p>5.20 The Headteacher then read out a letter she had drafted to parents of the school. The school staff have already been informed about the option to close the school.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Minutes From Meeting Held On 30 April 2019 And Matters Arising</b>	
	<p>6.1 The committee received and read the minutes of the committee meeting held on 30th April 2019. These were accepted as an accurate record.</p> <p><u>Matters arising</u></p> <p>6.2 None.</p> <p>6.3 The Committee Chair Tim Carew then signed off the Minutes of the Resources And Finance meeting held at the school on Tuesday 30th April 2019 and the signed copy was placed on file at the school.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Update on the school premises</b>	
	<p>7.1 A Premises Plan for 2019-20 was circulated to governors before the meeting. This listed the funds allocated to the premises and then various premises projects that had been planned for this academic year. These projects had been RAG-rated to indicate whether they were completed, in progress or not actioned yet.</p> <p>7.2 The Headteacher reported that the school lunch hall is to be redecorated.</p> <p>7.3 At the beginning of this academic year there had been furniture removals from room to room. This work was carried out by the Site Supervisor and a hired-in Site Supervisor.</p> <p>7.4 The Headteacher was pleased to report that £4,600 has been received from Camden Council to improve fitness and obesity levels at the school. This will be used to purchase more exercise cycles and fitness equipment for the pupils to use.</p> <p>7.5 This ended the premises update.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>How has this meeting made a difference to the school?</b>	
	8.1 Due to the meeting running later than scheduled this item was not discussed.	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
	None.	
<b>10.</b>	<b>Next meeting of the Resources And Premises Committee</b>	
	<p>The date of the next committee meetings will be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 28th January 2020;</li> <li>- 2nd April 2020.</li> </ul>	All committee members

<b>11</b>	<b>Confidential items</b>	
	11.1 There were no confidential items.	
	11.2 The meeting then ended.	

The meeting ended at 7:30pm.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair Of The Committee/Chair Of Governors)

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_