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Introduction

The introduction is something of a rattle bag this week, so please forgive the lack of a unifying theme. At the suggestion of one of our Heads, I have written a 'News from across the Trust' article for you to include in your own newsletter. As time has gone on it has become apparent that to be properly accountable to our community we must be more visible. I'll try and find some other opportunities to share good news from across our schools with you for newsletters again next term. I suspect that many of our parents are in blissful ignorance of our existence, so when you run the article, you may wish to introduce it by saying that the Trust is an education charity that is currently made up of 24 schools, with several others likely to join in coming months.

Talking of which, I am very pleased to tell you that Wrington and Burrington schools have applied to join LSP and our Trustees have given conditional consent, which as we all know opens the due diligence process on both sides. I'll be talking to the HT reference groups about this in coming weeks. We are also in the last countdown to St Andrew's joining us on 1st April and we look forward to all that they will bring to increase our capacity and strength.

You will have seen in the press that the Secretary of State has made his submission to the STRB. He proposes a very significant improvement in pay for teachers at the start of their careers but with a below inflationary increase for UPS and Leadership grades (more details provided later in this bulletin). We may have a range of views about that, but you will be pleased to hear that we had correctly predicted the rises in our budget setting assumptions, so our figures won't need to be revised and are published later in this bulletin. You will also see that estimated cost pressures are significant and, in some cases, eye watering!. Combine this with the difficulty that we are facing to recruit new staff and the demographic challenges in primary phase and it is clear that the next few financial years will be challenging. We will continue to work on your behalf to achieve the best value for money possible and please share your concerns or opportunities to make savings with us.

News from across the Trust

Click [here](#) to download the March edition of News from across the Trust including collaboration on curriculum, investment in school buildings, and an update on our Carbon Reduction Plan.

Please include this in your newsletters and share with your school communities.



LSP Trust Board Summary - March 2022

At a meeting held via Microsoft Teams on 2nd March 2022, the Board undertook the following actions:-

- Noted a Diocese Trustee appointment for a second term for Mike Sewell
- Noted a Trust Members appointment for a second term for Brian Wibberley
- Received and challenged the CEO report
- Received and challenged the CFOO report
- Noted monthly management accounts to 31st January 2022
- Received summary reports from Finance and Staffing & Pay Committees
- Approved School Condition Allocation (SCA) arrangements
- Gave conditional consent for Wrington & Burrington CofE Primary Schools to apply to the DfE to join LSP
- Noted responses to the Core Service Charge consultation and Approved all proposals as set out in that consultation
- Noted RAG updates from all schools
- Approved LGB co-opted Governor appointments and Noted LGB Governor membership updates

Guidance for teachers in discussing the situation in Ukraine

Schools may wish to share these resources with staff to support discussions in class.

<https://nya.org.uk/ukraine-crisis/> - this maybe particularly helpful for secondary schools

<https://twitter.com/muddychurch/status/1496839208207470599>

<https://kitchentable.org.uk/praying-for-the-crisis-in-ukraine-with-our-children/>

Secretary of State's Evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body

The Secretary of State has set out [proposals](#) for how the pay awards for the academic years 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024 should be applied to meet the government's ambition to raise teacher starting salaries to £30,000 in his published his evidence to the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB).

It proposes uplifts to M1-M6 over the next two years such that M1 reaches £30,000 at the end of this period, with progression between each pay point at 5.5%. For teachers on the upper pay range and leadership ranges, it proposes a 3% pay award in 2022/23 and 2% in 2023/24.

Core Services charge consultation

The Board of Trustees approved the proposed Core Services Charge of 4.09% for the 2022-23 financial year at their meeting last week, along with the updated Core Services Charge Policy. The updated version of the policy is now available on [Foldr](#). Thank you again for your responses to the consultation and we look forward to working together on arrangements for 2023-24 in due course.

Public Sector Decarbonisation

We are delighted to have been successful in our application for nearly £1.2m of funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund. The funding will enable us to replace 10 fossil fuel boilers, that are at the end of their serviceable life, across 8 schools in the Trust with a Low Carbon Heat Pump. The project requires funding equivalent to the like for like replacement cost and an additional contribution of £189k from the Trust's School Condition Allocation. This was approved by Trustees on 2nd March subject to the tender process.

This is a significant opportunity for us to move towards our target of carbon neutrality by 2035.

The schools involved in the project have already been informed.

School Condition Allocation - spending priorities for the next 5 years

The Board of Trustees has considered the proposed prioritisation of the Trust's School Condition Allocation (SCA) over the next 5 years following the new condition and M&E surveys. It is estimated that the Trust's SCA funding will be just under £1.4m each year.

The Trustees approved a plan that includes the following:

- 5% for project management
- 5% for emergency works
- 5% for contingency
- £50,000 annual bid fund
- £50,000 annual contribution to a major projects fund (to enable match funding for major project(s))
- £189k contribution to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme

The remaining funds were approved as available to deliver projects in schools identified in the condition and M&E surveys. The funding available is sufficient to meet all of the D1, C1, D2 & C2 (the most significant and immediate issues) items deemed necessary in the condition and M&E surveys, with some funds remaining available. The Trustees will review the position again in May and will consider how the remaining funds can be allocated within the 5 year plan in due course.

The Hub Estates Leads are now carrying out a final review of the projects that will be approved for funding and we intend to provide this information to schools by the end of March.

Please note that, whilst there can be some certainty around the projects identified for funding in year 1 of the plan, the funding for projects in future years (particularly years 3 to 5) are subject to change. The priority for SCA funding is condition and, apart from schools devolved formula capital allocations, we have no other guaranteed sources of capital funding. Therefore, should significant unexpected condition issues occur, funding may need to be re-prioritised.

Please note that bids for additional SCA funding are due by 29th April. Full details were provided in the bulletin on 14th December.

Civica

We have been experiencing a number of difficulties with the implementation of the Civica system. You may well have experienced some issues with the system and will certainly have noticed the delays to our implementation plans.

We recently held a 'crisis' meeting with the Managing Director of Civica, Kirsty Fowler. We have agreed a new project plan and Kirsty is taking personal responsibility for this as Project Sponsor. The new project plan targets 31st March for issues with the core systems to be resolved and 1st June for all modules to be successfully implemented and tested.

We thank you for your patience and understanding as we go through this process. Please can we request that Business Managers raise any system issues with the Trust's HR team so we can ensure that they are resolved in line with the timetable above.

Neo People - Payroll Bureau (info, heads & SBMs)

As you will be aware, we are moving over to our new payroll provider with effect from 1st April 2022. They have been working well with us to transfer the data across to their system and are running parallel runs to check the payroll reports mirror that of our current payroll provider FS4S. We are in the process of pulling together the process that schools will need to follow when sending data to payroll. This information, including payroll schedules, examples of reports and how to send data, will be provided to schools shortly.

Neo People have offered to join our hub SBM meetings to introduce themselves to you and we will get these arranged.

FS4S will return to schools any payroll data that needs to be processed after 1st April, as this will need to be passed onto Neo People for processing.

Risk Register & H&S minutes - Reminder for Heads and SBMs

As per the annual planner, can I remind schools to email their latest risk register and set of Health and Safety Governors meeting minutes to enquiries@lsp.org.uk by 11th March please.

Many thanks,
Neill Bird



Budget assumptions and guidance for 2022-23 3-year budgets

As you are aware, we are beginning to think ahead towards 2022-23 budget planning, and all schools should now have received their GAG statements. The proposed timetable for support with budget planning is as follows:

- Your GAG statement will be uploaded as a new funding scenario on Orovia during the week beginning, 7th March.
- The April 2021 Support Staff Pay Award which has now been agreed as well as future pay projections have been sent to Orovia and should be updated by Friday, 11th March. When you log into Orovia, the salary notification message will appear once the pay scales have been updated. However, some schools still have the notification from when NI rates were updated earlier in the year. It is worth marking this as read which will remove the message in advance of the new notification appearing. If you save a new version of an Employee Scenario for your 2022-23 budget, this will ensure that all pay changes are applied to your budget forecast.
- Our Budget Assumptions Guidance and supporting tools, including funding calculators, spreadsheet tools for updated Pension Deficit contributions, Covid Catch-up Funding, Core Services Charges, etc, are now available on [Foldr](#).
- Budget planning support will take place from 4th April to 10th June. These timings recognise that some schools like to start their budget planning early, but the team will break from budget checks to review budget monitors between 19th and 27th May. The Finance Team will be contacting all schools shortly to arrange a convenient time for this support. The aim will be for schools to have their draft budget plans ready for review by 9.00am on the day booked for your support, with a follow-up remote meeting later in the day to discuss your draft budget. The aim of these meetings is to offer you support and a ‘second pair of eyes’ before your 3-year budget plan is agreed by your LGB. The timings are tight, so it is worth planning your budget preparation to make the most of the support.
- All schools must have had their budgets approved by their LGB by 17th June.

Joint statement from the Chair of the Avon Pension Fund Committee, and the Chair of the Avon Pension Fund Investment Panel on the unfolding crisis in Ukraine

The full statement is available [here](#), but please see extracts below:

“As a leader in the field of responsible investment and where social factors, specifically human rights, form a key pillar of our responsible investment principles, we were shocked to learn of the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, and we are naturally concerned about the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the region....With immediate effect and together with our partner funds that make up the Brunel Pension Partnership (Brunel), we commit to prohibiting any new investments in Russian assets and will further disinvest from all Russian-controlled and Russian-owned assets, bonds and equities, wherever they are domiciled....Where we have exposure to non-Russian companies and assets that derive a material proportion of their revenues from Russia, we will seek to engage both at the company and policy level to the same end.”

Governance Update

Governor Training - Diocese of Bath & Wells

Latest Diocese training brochure is available [here](#).

If you want to book onto any of these courses, either do this via EventBrite [Diocese of Bath & Wells Education department Events | Eventbrite](#)

or email Jan Chandler directly Jan.Chandler@bathwells.anglican.org

National Governance Association Membership (NGA)

All LSP Schools have a National Governance Association (NGA) subscription. If you've not already signed up, please drop them an enquiry using this form.

[Contact us - National Governance Association \(nga.org.uk\)](#)

Once you have signed up, you will also have access to a very extensive range of Governor training via the NGA Learning Link.

This subscription is paid for by the Trust at a cost of around £100 for each LGB, so we need to ensure that that we are getting full value for money.

John Purcell

