



CALDECOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Personnel, Premises & Finance Committee

Wednesday 26th January 2022 at 6:30pm

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the meeting was held virtually using Zoom.

Governors Present: Pippa Smith (Chair) (PS)
Karen Stanton (Co-Head) (KS)
Cristina Turner (CT)
Mary-Ann Claridge (MAC)
Janet Taylor (JT)
Emma Hall (EH)
Vicky Miles (VM)

Governors Not Present: Jay Surti (JS)

In Attendance: Lesley Whitehead (School Business Manager, Associate Member)

Clerk: Katie Tween (KT)

Apologies: None

Item	Notes	Action
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. No apologies had been received but JS was not in attendance. KS was attending as Co-Head in place of RS due to illness. The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>It was noted that JT, VM and EH were attending as new governors; they would each attend one meeting of each committee to ensure that they understood the full range of the governing body business, before being appointed to the committee that most suited their skills and experience.</p>	
2	<p>Declaration of Interests</p> <p>No declarations of interest were made to any items on the agenda.</p>	

3	<p>Action Points, Minutes of Last PPF Meeting (06.10.21) and Matters Arising.</p> <p>The draft minutes had been circulated in advance. CT noted that she had been erroneously listed against the Induction Policy. Subject to this amendment the minutes were approved as a true record.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to amend the draft minutes and send to the Chair to sign and return to the school.</p> <p>The Chair listed the open actions:</p> <p><i>LW and VM to discuss the governors' area of the website.</i> Action completed: all governors could now log on to the secure area of the website.</p> <p><i>PS to look into training available for governors on the budget.</i> Action completed: details of relevant courses had been circulated.</p> <p><i>LW to circulate budget forecast outturn once figures complete.</i> Action completed.</p> <p><i>NQT policy to be amended to reflect change to ECT.</i> Action resolved: KS explained that the school did not currently have an NQT policy as they bought in to the LA framework. There was currently no ECTs at the school.</p> <p><i>RS to check that the extra allowance is being provided to the ECT and report back at the next meeting.</i> Action completed: KS explained that this was not relevant as the teacher referred to was an NQT rather than an ECT.</p> <p><i>MAC to contact Parish Council regarding the bump outside the gates. All to look into whether this can be reported online.</i> Action completed: This had been reported but no further progress had been made. It was unclear whether the section of the road with the bump was within the school's boundary and this was currently being discussed with the Highways Agency. In the meantime, governors noted that the children were not at risk, but staff and visitors may be. However there had been no further accidents.</p> <p><i>RS to update the Safeguarding Policy to reflect updated KCSIE and send to PS.</i> Action completed: the updated version was now on the school website.</p>	KT/PS
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4	<p>Terms of Reference</p> <p>The draft Terms of Reference had been circulated in advance. One change was proposed, from “performance management” to “appraisal” to accurately reflect terminology used within school. This change was agreed and the Terms of Reference were then approved by the committee.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to ensure that Terms of Reference are listed for ratification at the next FGB.</p>	KT
5 6	<p>BMR and Finance Update Budget Review 2021/22</p> <p>It was agreed to take these two items together. The BMR (Budget Monitoring Report) had been circulated in advance. LW and KS gave an overview of the key points from the BMR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The end of the financial year was approaching and the school had received 75% of expected income and spent 71% of expected expenditure. • To date, the school remained financially secure, as confirmed by the school's Financial Advisor. • The report showed a large variance on teacher and TA pay, indicating an overspend of £12,000 on teacher salaries and £7000 on TA salaries. However, this had been investigated and there had not been an overspend – this was an error on Orovio, the LA budget system, • The variance in agency staff pay was down to an overspend. This was due to long-term sickness in teachers that had to be covered using agency staff. This would be partially off-set by insurance claims. • The building maintenance was still running below budget; less than £15,000 of the £30,000 budget had been spent. No further building maintenance expenses were anticipated. • Care Clubs was doing well with a total income at the end of December of £57,000. The total expenses were £39,000 leaving an £18,000 profit to date. • One new set of laptops and a laptop trolley had been ordered, but at a lower cost than originally expected. The KS2 PCs had been found to be too old to be updated so these had also been replaced. Another laptop trolley was also needed; this was not budgeted expenditure, but if governors approved it then the unspent building maintenance budget could be used. This would mean that a full class set of laptops was available. The total cost for the new laptops, trolley and also some new DT and Art resources would be £10,800 (£7500 for the laptops and trolley, plus approximately £3300 for the resources). 	

- The school had struggled for class numbers but the admissions portal showed 33 applications in total, including 23 first choice applications, of which 17 were within the catchment.

Governor Questions, Support and Challenge.

Q./ Was the building maintenance underspend due to delayed spend or contingency not used?

A./ Contingency funds not used – there had been concerns that the boiler might need more work but it had been inspected and serviced and no work had been needed.

Q./ With Care Clubs, was the intention to make a profit which then subsidised the school?

A./ The clubs were staffed by school staff and the intention was that they would make profit. It was a service to parents but it was also an income stream for the school.

Q./ Was there any indication that parents were struggling to pay?

A./ Not that the school was aware of but if there was then the school would support those families. In holidays, out of catchment children attended free of charge through the LA holiday scheme. The pricing was regularly reviewed and always found to be in the middle. Part of the profit that was made would go directly to the club – staff were well remunerated and the club was resourced well. The school and the club had a very good relationship – the policies, insurance and risk assessments now came under the school's umbrella.

Q./ In previous meetings there has been discussion about additional book resources – have these been purchased?

A./ Yes, these had all been purchased and were in use.

Q./ What were the extra DT and Art resources that were needed – would it be a one-off cost or an ongoing additional cost?

A./ For the last two years (since Covid), Art and DT have been weak areas. The staff survey had shown that there were not sufficient resources to deliver the curriculum; they were not expensive items but lots were needed, for example pastel crayons. The children needed quality materials to produce quality work. This had been identified within the curriculum budget but this budget had not been managed effectively by the leader. Most of the money now would be used to get back to a place of strength.

Q./ Regarding the laptops and PCs, it was likely that if a batch was bought together then they would need to be replaced together. Would it be worth future planning the budget to allow for this to ensure that a pot of money built up?

	<p>A./ Yes, this was a good idea. The usual programme of reviewing and auditing the IT had not happened during covid but this should hopefully be getting back to normal which would help. It was also now the case that needs were greater because technology that could used to deliver remote learning was needed.</p> <p><i>Q./ Do laptops come from the capital budget?</i> A./ The money was in revenue, but it was a capital expense.</p> <p><i>Q./ Can you reassure us that if the boiler did break but we had spent the money on laptops instead, that there would still be enough contingency to fix it?</i> A./ There was currently a predicted carry forward of £45,000 so yes, there would enough contingency. Additionally, if anything like that ever did happen then the LA would support the school with, for example, a payment plan over a number of years.</p> <p><i>Q./ Were any other areas of the curriculum in need of new resources?</i> A./ On the whole there was nothing essential needed; there was always a wish list but the curriculum leaders had managed their budgets well and planned effectively.</p> <p><i>Q./ Were any other parts of the building approaching major maintenance?</i> A./ There was nothing expected: there were regular condition surveys carried out on behalf of the LA and the fabric of the building was always found to be in good condition and well-maintained.</p> <p>Following discussion, governors agreed that the remaining building maintenance budget should be moved to spend on new laptops and DT/Art resources.</p> <p>KS updated governors on the annual birth rates data which had been provided by the LA. The annual birth rates in Cambridgeshire were at a high in 2015 (7400+) and have dropped to below 6400 in 2020. Demographers were predicting the birth rate to stay low this year and next year and then stabilise. It was reassuring to know that the dip was not limited to Caldecote.</p> <p>KS also informed governors that the school's Financial Advisor had commented that the adjustments that the school had made in the autumn term had put them in a position of strength.</p>	
7	<p>SFVS</p> <p>Governors were reminded that the SFVS (Schools Financial Value Standard) was an annual exercise that had to be completed for the</p>	

	<p>LA. Governors were required to reflect on whether they had the skills and knowledge to successfully manage their role. KS, PS and LW had taken the current checklist and updated the answers which had then been circulated in draft form to committee members.</p> <p>Governors made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions 3 and 4 had the same answer due to a copying and pasting error. • The answer to question 28 did not make it clear that the training was understood; this should be clarified. • The answer to question 28 referred to safeguarding training but not specifically whistleblowing. It was clarified that the safeguarding training included whistleblowing and that also posters about whistleblowing are displayed in accessible places around school including the toilets. It was agreed that the answer should be amended slightly to reflect this. <p>Subject to these agreed amendments, the governors agreed the SFVS.</p> <p>Action: LW to make agreed amendments. The Clerk to ensure that the SFVS is listed for approval at the next FGB.</p>	<p>LW KT</p>
8	<p>Personnel</p> <p>KS gave a personnel update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were lots of staff absences, largely due to covid and also two members of staff had long-term sickness. • Staff were wonderful and pulling together to cover classes and breaks; this was a real strength of the school. • It was unfortunate that some of the usual things to boost morale, such as going out for a team meal, could not be done. • There were two new members of staff: a new Year 5 teacher and a new Year 5 TA – both were settling in well. • A former TA had returned to support the school – it had been great to welcome them back. • It was proving difficult to find a consistent Year 1 teacher – there were not many supply or cover teachers available. Teachers had therefore been moved around within the school to try to increase consistency for this class. • A new Year 2 teacher was starting after half-term. • The week before Christmas there had been no kitchen staff due to covid, but thanks to huge support from staff they had still been able to deliver Christmas lunch for the children. • Teaching and learning was happening and quality was high. 	

	<p>Governor Questions, Support and Challenge.</p> <p><i>Q./ There were normally “booster” classes held at this time of year before SATs – were these unlikely to go ahead given staffing levels?</i></p> <p>A./ Some sessions were happening through the tutoring programme, but the focus was more about getting the children ready for secondary and plugging the gaps since lockdown.</p> <p>Governors also wished to express their thanks to all staff for their continued efforts during this challenging period.</p> <p>A further personnel matter was discussed and subject to a confidential minute.</p>	
9	<p>Premises</p> <p>KS provided an update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New play equipment was due to be installed in March. • A parent had cleared out all of the guttering free of charge and had now offered to line them with mesh – this was very helpful. • CO2 monitors were now in classrooms and public areas to check the ventilation. School was freezing all of the time. • The new gas meter had been fitted. • The LA condition survey had been carried out – they had not yet had the report but the surveyor had not reported any problems during the visit. Another visit on behalf of the DfE was also due. <p>It was noted that a governor visit was due. Action: PS to arrange a date.</p>	PS
10	<p>Health and Safety</p> <p>There were no concerns or issues to report. The yellow form system used by staff showed nothing outstanding.</p>	
11	<p>Impact of Covid</p> <p>The catch-up funding was being used for books and for tutoring, as discussed.</p> <p>There had been an outbreak within school including 9 pupils in one class of 28. This had been managed OK – the class had been ringfenced to avoid spread between classes. There had been a continuous number of positive cases but no further outbreaks. Positive cases significantly increased the workload for teachers</p>	

	<p>because of the need to provide remote learning. SEND and other support services were also affected.</p> <p>All members of staff were trying to ensure that education was as normal and routine as possible for the children; they did not need to know what was going on behind the scenes. In general the children were happy.</p> <p>The LA was providing good support. Sourcing the number of lateral flow tests needed for daily testing was an ongoing challenge.</p> <p>Governor Questions, Support and Challenge.</p> <p><i>Q./ Was the catch-up funding being specifically applied to those identified as in need?</i></p> <p>A./ Yes, especially in Year 6. The school maintained a vulnerable register including children who had been identified as not moving on in terms of their learning and ability to learn since returning to school after the closures. As gaps emerged, more support groups and 1-1 sessions were arranged. It was a very dynamic picture; as new gaps were emerging others were closing. Writing was a weaker area across the whole school; that was also the case nationally.</p> <p><i>Q./ Do you think that the catch-up funding was having an impact?</i></p> <p>A./ Yes – it was not much money but the data drops were helping to identify the children who needed the additional intervention and therefore target the money effectively.</p>	
12	<p>Policies</p> <p>Pay Policy CT had reviewed this policy and liaised with RS. All points were resolved and she recommended it for ratification. Governors ratified this policy.</p> <p>Code of Conduct This had not been reviewed and therefore was not recommended for ratification.</p> <p>Induction Policy It was noted that this had been reviewed and ratified in March 2021 and therefore had been incorrectly listed for this meeting. No action needed.</p> <p>Employment JS had reviewed this policy and liaised with RS. He had recommended it for ratification. Governors ratified this policy.</p>	

	<p>Lettings Policy MAC had reviewed this policy and her recommended changes were now in place. She recommended it for ratification. Governors ratified this policy.</p> <p>PPA Policy This was a new policy that had not been listed on the agenda, but had been reviewed by KD and recommended for ratification. Governors ratified this policy.</p> <p>Policies to be reviewed Governors agreed to review the following policies in advance of the next meeting:</p> <p>Communication – PS Prevent – PS Privacy Notice for Staff, School Records Management and Data Protection – MAC Code of Conduct - PS Critical Incidents – MAC Smoke Free Environment – CT Trip Slip and Hazard – PS Governor Expenses – CT</p> <p>It was agreed that the Complaints Policy should go to FGB for approval.</p>	<p>PS</p> <p>MAC</p> <p>CT</p> <p>KT</p>									
13	<p>Other Matters Appropriate to the School and Governing Body</p> <p>GDPR Audit KS informed governors that in December the school had had a GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) audit and that all processes and procedures had been ratified. There were some minor updates needed to the privacy notices but they were compliant.</p> <p>Attendance Attendance was down – normally it would be around 96 or 97%.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>w/c</th><th>School (%)</th><th>National average (%)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>13/12/21</td><td>95.5</td><td>89.3</td></tr> <tr> <td>12/01/22</td><td>95</td><td>88.6</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Link Governors All subject leaders had now updated their plans and had been advised that link governors would be contacting them.</p>	w/c	School (%)	National average (%)	13/12/21	95.5	89.3	12/01/22	95	88.6	
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	<p>Staff Support Governors were keen to ensure that staff were aware of the governors' support. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the FGB.</p>	KT
	<p>Training The Chair advised that more governors were needed to complete the Safer Recruitment training. She agreed to circulate details of the training courses and asked all to consider whether they could do it. It was a commitment as trained governors would then need to potentially be available for interview days.</p> <p>It was noted that it was CT's last PPF meeting. The Chair thanked her and noted that she had been a really valuable member of both the FGB and this committee.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.10pm.</p>	PS/All

Item	Action	Responsible
3	Clerk to amend the draft minutes and send to the Chair to sign and return to the school.	KT
4/7/12/13	Clerk to ensure agreed items listed on FGB agenda.	KT
7	LW to make agreed amendments to the SFVS.	LW
9	PS to arrange a Health and Safety governor visit.	PS
12	Policies to be reviewed before next meeting, as agreed.	PS/MAC/CT
13	PS to circulate details of Safer Recruitment training. All to consider doing the training.	PS/All