



CALDECOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

Wednesday 6th October 2021 at 6:30pm

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

Present:	Pippa Smith (Chair) Rebecca Snelling (Co-Head) Cristina Turner Renu Martingale Mary-Ann Claridge Jay Surti Joanna Skiba-Szymanska (new governor observing)
In Attendance:	Lesley Whitehead (School Business Manager, Associate Member)
Clerk:	Vicky Miles
Apologies:	None

Reference

Action

1. Welcome to all and apologies for absence

PS as Chair formally opened the virtual meeting, extending a welcome to all present.

2. Declaration of interests relating to items on the agenda

None declared.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the committee held on 17th June 2021

The minutes were approved by Governors as a true and accurate record of the meeting, the Chair will sign and handover at the next available point.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the committee held on the 17th June 2021

Page 6 - Item 12: LW to look into the governor's only area of the website, check, and reset login details ahead of the next FGB Meeting on the 17th November. LW and VM to discuss.

LW, VM

5. BMR and Finance Update

LW circulated the BMR for September and took Governors through the headlines noted, highlighting and explaining the variances. LW explained that at the half waypoint in the financial year the key point of the report is that 52% of the expected income received and spent 49% of budgeted expenditure so we are securely on track with this year's budget.

- From the £30,000 building maintenance budget, spent just over £11,500 – no other building maintenance planned.
- All money from the general curriculum budget will be spent; Subject Leaders have been asked to compile a wish list.
- No spend yet from the £12,000 computing budget however, the intention is to buy a replacement laptop trolley and laptops as well as, a Clevertouch board for the group room.
- The Olympic Legacy budget to be capitalized towards an outdoor project.
- Every class went out on a school trip; this evened out the income and expenditure. Residential trips for Years 4, 5 and 6 are currently being organised. Looking at the Covid guarantee to ensure any money paid is protected.
- CCTV system upgraded during the summer holidays costing just under £2,000, existing contractor who, maintain the system installed this.
- Phone system upgraded to a combined 3 in 1 and costs slightly less than previous one. Now ready for when copper lines are switched off.

Question: Is there sufficient funds to pay for new Phonics books?

LW replied that this is why we have held off on spending anything else from the curriculum budget. RS added that it was not a planned spend, but to align with the new reading framework it is now a necessary expense. Our phonics and reading results are good but we recognise that we need a consistent approach to teaching and resourcing and the colour banded books we have do not exactly match up with the teaching and this is what they must do.

Question: Is this something that the PTA can help with?

RS replied that they could, but their funding goal this year is to replace the playground train.

Question: Are there plans in place for staff training and development?

RS replied that the planned budget included two staff members attending NPQ middle leader training, although both have decided to defer due to workload and personal reasons, however can start either February or September next year.

Question: Looking at pupil numbers, is it Census week?

LW replied that it is Census week and pupil numbers seem to be in a better position. There has been a steady stream join with four more due to start next week. Overall, it is not as bad as previously thought it would be.

Question: Are you both comfortable where we are in terms of finances and going forward?

LW replied yes, we are in a strong position things are going slightly better and we had hoped. LW asked if there is any training available for governors that will help with their understanding of the budget. PS replied that it is about understanding the language used. PS agreed to look into what if any training is available.

PS

Question: Do we have a contingency and is there a sufficient contingency?

LW explained that we have a carry forward. RS added that our carry forward is £49,000; this is around the average we usually aim to carry forward. LW explained that this is a comfortable amount. PS added that the term carry forward is used rather than contingency in schools.

6. Budget Review 2021/2022

LW explained that we are currently at the half way point in the financial year so each school is required to complete a forecast outturn predicting the position at the end of March. This has not been fully completed yet as it is not due until the 12th October, but it is looking good. LW to circulate once figures complete.

LW

7. Additional Funding: School Led Tutoring & Recovery Funding

RS explained that there are currently two streams of funding.

The school led tutoring funding which is automatically received in three instalments a year. It is based on 60% of PP numbers in Y1-6 (10 pupils) at the October 2020 Census at £202.50 per pupil (£202.50 per pupil x 10 pupils = £2025).

This funding gives school the flexibility to determine how best to provide tutoring intervention – last year we used a tutoring programme that was very restrictive with huge amounts of admin so this is a positive change. This grant funding is ring-fenced for expenditure on school-led tutoring only and the staff costs of delivering tuition only and cannot be used to cover costs such as: room hire, equipment, laptops, transport, stationery or record keeping.

It is to support disadvantaged pupils in catch-up learning and we have selected the pupils in need of support. This will focus on providing tuition to pupils eligible for pupil premium but also includes pupils with other types of disadvantage or additional needs. This includes special educational needs and other vulnerable pupils.

The other funding stream is the Recovery Premium Grant. This is based on whole school PP numbers at October Census (21PP). It is worked out as £145 per pupil x 21 pupils = £3045.

It must be used for the purposes of the school, for the educational benefit of pupils registered at the school – not just PP children. This grant can be carried over to next year. We must demonstrate that we have used it to support the quality of teaching, such as staff professional development, provide targeted academic support, such as tutoring or to tackle non-academic barriers to success in school, such as attendance, behaviour or social and emotional support.

We are required to publish how we have used our recovery premium on an updated pupil premium strategy template – this is very detailed and the SENDCo is currently compiling this. It must be published by end of December.

We are using both of these funding streams to pay for an existing teacher and a known teacher for catch up tuition for identified children

Question: Can you use it for small group teaching?

RS replied that yes, they recommend small groups of three with each set of three children get 15 hours.

Question: How many hours roughly are they getting?

RS explained that there are currently two tutors employed for two mornings a week. Also looking to see if there is anything else, we can spend it on.

Question: Are you seeing impact from this?

RS replied that there is much more impact this year already, with more flexibility allowing close working alongside the class teachers.

8. Personnel

RS reported that

- A reminder that at the end of the last academic year, two teaching assistants left along with a part time teacher. Maternity leave teacher returned part time and VM appointed as Deputy Careclubs Manager. Currently no spare capacity and Covid is still going on. TAs are placed where the need is. Some classes will not have a TA all of the time, this brings us in line with lots of other similar schools.
- A flexible working request has been raised again; an advert for a 60% teacher is currently out.
- This, along with rising numbers in YR/Y1, means we are looking at staffing across the school. Depending on who and the hours we can appoint, we will try to cover the flexible working request and move YR and Y1 back to separate classes by covering the PPA (which is where we saved money)
- Teachers pay award agreed at 1.96% already built in to the budget.
- There has been a change in teachers' pay and conditions for 2021/2022 due to the Jubilee and there is extra holiday day in June.
- NQT passed with flying colours. Now, as an RQT, she is entitled to additional non-contact time (5%). This is timetabled in each week.
- Two teachers who were due to start middle leader courses have deferred.
- RS due to complete NPQH (The National Professional Qualification for Headship) in March.

Question: Do we have an ECT induction policy, as we need one?

RS replied that there was one for an NQT it is being tweaked for new ECT (Early Career Teacher) framework.

RS

Question: Is she getting the extra allowance of £1000, as she should be?

RS replied that it was unknown if she was entitled to this as it is new for ECTs. RS to look into and report at the next PPF meeting. LW added that she is aware of it.

RS

Question: How are the teaching staff feeling with the reduction of TAs?

RS replied that it has been harder and it is putting pressure on staff. We have tried to be fair across the school; it is however having an impact, particularly with Covid absence as well. All TAs are also lunch supervisors so we are thinner on the ground than previously.

Question: Are you thinking about moving back to full TAs?

RS replied that we cannot afford to. This was a carefully thought out decision made with the Governors. We agreed to 'natural wastage' to avoid redundancy and to become more in line with other similar schools' support staffing figures. It has been a change and we do value our TAs as they do have huge impact.

Question: What consideration was there to help support teachers when reducing TAs?

RS replied that it was not a decision that was made lightly, it was painstakingly thought about. RM added that when the decision was made it was the lesser of two evils, a natural wastage to avoid redundancies. RS added that our TAs are brilliant and do support teachers so much so it was a hard decision.

Question: In terms of staff wellbeing, Covid has not gone away. What is the sense of how people are feeling?

RS replied that it is having a bigger impact than ever before; we are operating as we were, back to normal in many ways, plus the added pressure of Covid and remote learning continue. Unfortunately we have now had our first cases since the start of the pandemic and this has increased anxiety among staff and the school community.

9. Premises

RS reported that the main spend will be the plan to finish putting artificial grass in the areas that get muddy and flood and we have placed a firm order for new equipment for the old maze area. A minor leak in the roof has also been repaired.

Question: Is there anything we are worrying about with winter coming in terms of the equipment build?

RS replied hopefully not, we will look carefully at dates and circumstances when we get the work booked in. LW added that three quotes were needed so five contractors were approached so this took time and the original plan to do this in the summer had to be delayed. The contractors have explained that the cost of the wood used for play structures is rising so we wanted to get a firm order booked at the price quoted.

Question: Longer term are there any other niggles that you are concerned about?

LW replied no, we are in a good place; we had a lot of work carried out on the boiler last year. There is nothing else we are aware of coming up.

Question: I assume you have a rolling schedule for maintenance, are you sticking to schedule?

LW replied yes, sticking to schedule, keeping the rolling plan and there is contingency in the budget just in case.

10. Health & Safety

RS reported that this is mainly still focussed around Covid; we will continue to keep governors up to date. We had an influx in cases over the last few weeks and still have a couple off school although we have not met thresholds for imposing additional measures. We are in close liaison with Jon Lewis and his team at the LA. The remaining measures we have in place are: handwashing, additional cleaning and ventilation. CO2 monitors are to be delivered soon to monitor air quality and ventilation.

The caretaker alerted LW to a bump outside the pedestrian gates, it initially looks as if it is something to do with drainage. A member of staff has tripped over it; it is proving difficult to manoeuvre over. MaC agreed to speak to the Parish Council to find out who in Highways is responsible. PS added that this may be able to be reported online, governors to look into.

MaC

All governors

11. Impact of Covid

RS reported that two members of staff are currently isolating due to Covid, both positive. This has led to a huge amount of work for the remaining staff as there is no supply available locally. Catching up on missed learning is still going on, there is no quick fix. All teachers and subject leaders are closely tracking this.

Question: How are the clinically extremely vulnerable staff coping?
RS replied that we no longer have any.

Question: Is Track and Trace having an impact?
RS replied that the school has not been contacted by Track and Trace, even though we have had positive cases. The LA is frustrated by the lack of NHS track and trace so have advised schools to let parents know of cases in their children's classes. We can say that families may choose to get a PCR test but we cannot tell people to do so. CT added that speaking as a parent; the school has taken a very pragmatic approach.

12. Policies to be ratified and reviewed

All policies were caught up at the last meeting.

To be reviewed:
Pay Policy – CT

Code of Conduct – RM
Induction – Cristina
Employment – JS
Lettings – MaC

Question: Has the safeguarding policy been updates to reflect KCSIE?

RS replied that this is currently in process – we were awaiting the update from the safeguarding team. RS to send to PS once complete.

RS

13. Other Matters appropriate to the school and Governing Body

Question: How do the PPF and PCS work? Do I choose?

PS replied that as part of your induction, you are invited to attend both meetings, and then we decide together which committee you would like to sit on.

RMs last PPF meeting, PS thanked RM for her services as governor on this committee

14. Date of Future Virtual Meeting of this Committee

Next PPF meeting to be held at 6pm on the 26th January 2022.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7:34pm.

Signed as a true record..... Date.....
Chair