



## CALDECOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 6:15pm**

**Present:** Dom Hordern (Chair)  
Karen Stanton (Head Teacher)  
Cristina Turner  
Renu Martingale (ReM)  
Rob Monk  
Rebecca Snelling

**In Attendance:** Associate Members Lesley Whitehead (School Business Manager)

**Clerk:** Vicky Miles

**Apologies:** None

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Reference

Action

**1. Welcome to all and apologies for absence**

DH as Chair formally opened the 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 Meeting held 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019**

The minutes were approved by Members as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed as such by the Chair.

**4. Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019**

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Page 4 - Item 6 – ReM looked into – update. Denver Owens really pleased with response from Redgate.

Page 4 - Item 7 – DH has now put audit into a word document.

Page 6 - Item 11 – CT followed up with County Council, out of courtesy Parish Council should be informed. CT will draft a letter to Linden Homes, Wheatley and Cala. Zig Zag lines will cost in the region of £350 - £400. RS informed the committee that the PTA are keen to help with the cost.

CT

Committee thanked CT.

Page 6 - Item 11 – Newsletter entry received from CT.

## **5. BMR and Finance Update**

LW circulated the latest BMR, produced a summary and took Governors through the issues noted in the BMR, highlighting and explaining the variances.

LW reported that everything is on track at present for this year. No staffing changes to report since last meeting.

To a question on IT pressure, LW explained that KS had spoken to Jonathon Lewis, it seems as though the risk is not as great as previously expected, and the reason for the update to Windows 10 is security. There will be a PC for every classroom (a static PC will be installed in every class this Sunday); at present, all teachers have laptops. The three office computers will be replaced, the money for this has already been allowed for in the figures presented in the BMR. The school has already received some donated PCs and these are being prepared for use in classes.

KS added that we would wait until April to see what funds are available, then we can look again at upgrading or replacing other machines. As County maintains the server, the children's access is very limited and controlled; we have been reassured that the risk is very low.

LW explained that following a conversation with David Poulter, the IT consultant, all agreed this was the right way forward.

## **6. SFVS**

The Schools Financial Value Standard spreadsheet had been circulated ahead of the meeting. LW explained that this document is now on an Excel Spreadsheet.

LW asked the committee if they are happy for KS and LW to complete document and email to governors of this committee.

To a question, KS explained that the local authority have to cascade out and schools have to show it has been completed. LW explained the Ray Byford looks at all of these documents; to date he has not come back to us which leads us to presume all is okay. They are able to see the BMR online and have access to the bank account and if there were any discrepancies, they would contact us. All governors agreed to KS and LW completing and emailing the spreadsheet ahead of the next PPF meeting. VM to add as item to the next agenda.

VM

## **7. 'EPM update and actions'**

ReM has mapped the policies we have onto the document; KS has added some information, governors to add more info. DH to type up. ReM to resend completed document that has current policies to DH. The plan is to have one document centrally located on the governors' area of the website as a live document that all governors can access and make changes.

DH

ReM

KS informed the committee that the shadow plan of staffing is not yet complete; one is needed as we are appointing two temporary TAs starting in January. Nichola Church will be working in the office full time – her hours as a TA were with a child that is funded. A child with a full EHCP is starting in Reception after Christmas; a TA is needed to meet the child's needs. The reason the TA posts are temporary is that at present there is a child who is leaving in July and has 35 hours of TA time.

To a further question, KS explained that there are no other staffing changes; someone has been sourced to do booster work with Year 6 from January. KS will also be supporting with booster work too.

To a question on workload, KS explained that it will be tough, but everyone will pull together.

## **8. School Funding Review**

ReM had emailed notes and slides from CPD.

To a question, KS explained that the letter sent out to all parents on Friday was from the Schools Forum, highlighting the impact of funding - part of the Worth Less Campaign.

The committee asked if there was anything, they could do to support the school. KS informed the committee that a response to the funding consultation has been sent from her on behalf of the staff and school.

She advised it would add impact if a response was also sent from the Governing body.

To a question, KS explained that at least seven schools in our locality have huge carry forward reserves; some schools have up to £500,000; we carry forward about £30,000. This situation weakens Cambridgeshire's argument with the DfE as they see the total in reserves and make the decision schools in this area are not in financial need. An obvious approach would be to reintroduce the claw-back mechanism to restrict schools accruing such large reserves. This was stopped, as schools would spend funds on 'additional' items to avoid losing their funding. Growth Formula Funding has been another area that hasn't been managed well and is no longer available. KS added that she has suggested the Council look at their land assets and possibly realise some of those to address the deficit. A discussion took place around School Funding Review.

ReM agreed that it would be a good idea for the committee to write a letter supporting the school.

To a question on academies, KS explained that they would not be hit as hard as most have large carry forwards accrued from their conversion.

To a further question, KS explained that the worst-case scenario would be redundancies; there would be no other choice. Examples of additional 'costs' which will need to be paid from our budget are insurance premiums which are no longer subsidised, an increase cost in pensions, broadband and teacher's pay rise of 2.75% (it has yet to be confirmed if we will get any funding towards this).

To a further question on academies, KS explained it is something that should be considered on a regular basis in order to ensure Caldecote is best placed for the future. Once you are in an academy, you can be considered a commodity and there are many examples of trusts merging so initially you may be with a small number of schools but then later you end up as part of a very large MAT.

To a question, KS explained that Funding consultations close next Friday and we would be informed in January what our budget would be. KS to work on financial models.

ReM to draft a letter to parents and send to DH.

ReM to meet with DH to discuss survey, ReM to complete following this meeting.

ReM  
ReM, DH

## **9. Benchmarking/Pay Policy**

KS circulated the link to the benchmarking website for Governors to look at ahead of the meeting and explained that similar schools in size and demographics are used as comparisons. Highlights from the document were:

- we came out below average for workforce
- Auxiliary staff show as being high, this is offset with CareClubs
- Teaching assistants came out high; KS & LW don't understand this and will raise at the next meeting with the financial adviser

To a question, KS explained that the number used is not a number recognised from previous years; it could be from original contracts where County have reassigned roles.

- Premises came out high, not sure why this is, could be the cost of the play area.

To a question, KS explained that schools are chosen by being similar demographic, results and numbers.

KS informed the committee that there have not been any changes to the Pay Policy since last year, EPM have not made any changes to their model policy. KS added pay can be set at minimum and maximum but the Governing body decision is to award an uplift to every scale point.

To a further question, KS explained that when there are any major changes EPM would issue a new policy.

KS proposed accepting policy, all governors agreed.

## **10. Premises**

KS reported that the toilets are a big issue at present. In the Year 3 boy's toilets, children have been standing on the urinal to look over the cubicle, and the urinal has had to be replaced twice. In the Year 6 toilets, children have succeeded in blocking the toilets, sinks and urinals causing constant flooding. LW added that in the Year 6 girl's toilets, a paper towel had been scrunched together and bound with sellotape then pushed down the toilet. A new plan is in place to crack down and prevent this from happening again.

KS reported that the legionella assessment took place and it has been agreed with Cath Conlon that the work to be done will be staggered, no major issues.

To a question, LW explained that the boilers have been serviced and currently waiting for reports. The kitchen is all okay; LW added that a

new contractor to help with kitchen equipment has been sourced (Oakington Primary School have used them and they seem to be good) other company have recently put prices up.

## **11. Chair for This Committee**

KS reported that following a meeting with Kevin Vanterpool last Friday a conversation around succession and the way forward took place. Kevin will email all governors. No decision to be made until then. It would be a good idea if the PCS meeting scheduled for January became a whole governor meet to decide what we want and need. Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January at 6pm.

A discussion around different models of governing bodies took place.

KS reported that a parent who is keen with financial/commercial expertise is available in the New Year.

## **12. Policies**

### **For Ratification**

Accessibility Plan – RM reviewed

Performance Management for Support staff – ReM reviewed

Special Leave of absence – CT reviewed – EPM awaiting response; KS to chase

Volunteers in School – DH reviewed

Pay Policy - reviewed

### **To be reviewed**

Whole School Pay - CT

Lettings – DH

To a question, KS explained that there are hardly any lettings; the policy is still needed for the occasional letting. LW added that the school use to make £6000 from lettings it now stands at £300.

KS informed the committee that the DfE guidance (recommended by NAHT) have written a paper on 'what is the definition of unreasonable behaviour'. KS proposes adding a sentence to the Persistent Complaints and Harassment Policy that states that part of how we deal with persistent complaints is with a communication plan. KS to send policy to all governors.

KS

Governors agreed to adopt policy; section 6 is the part that has been added in. Governors agreed to meet to discuss if any concerns are raised from the policy.

To a question on special leave of absence, KS has asked EPM but has not heard back.

To a question on the Recruitment Selection Policy, KS explained that this had been reviewed on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

**13. AOB**

LW reported that the Cala lorries had been reversing and swinging into the layby at 3:15pm which is a safety concern as the children are leaving school at this time. KS added that a lorry was seen mounting the pavement on one occasion and access to the site from Highfields Road was never mention in any plans. ReM to approach Cala to discuss.

ReM

**14. Date of Future Meetings of this Committee**

No date set

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.12 pm.

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