



## CALDECOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July at 6:00pm**

**Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the meeting was held virtually using Zoom. Following local and national guidelines a shortened agenda was followed which only considered time critical issues.**

**Present:** Pippa Smith (Chair)  
Karen Stanton (Headteacher)  
Rebecca Snelling (Interim Headteacher)  
Cristina Turner  
Renu Martingale (ReM)

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

**Clerk:** Vicky Miles

**Apologies:** None

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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. BMR and Financial Update**

LW circulated the latest BMR ahead of the meeting, and took Governors through the headlines noted in the BMR, highlighting and explaining the

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variances. Both LW and KS answered questions raised by Rob Cottle; overall the outcome was that he is very happy with how the budget is being managed.

LW explained that one of the main causes of loss of income is due to the lack of fees from Care Clubs, as well as the majority of staff wages still being paid. There are only two staff eligible for furlough. There is currently no guidance on how that can be recouped.

LW added that the refunds for cancelled residentials is yet to come out, the PTA have loaned the school money in order to refund parents and allow time for LW to pursue insurance claims.

Other losses of income include school lunches, the annual summer fair and the University of Cambridge as no PGCE students.

LW added that the school bank account is being monitored daily to keep a close eye on the cash flow.

To a question on whether County are providing support, LW explained that County have full visibility, they can see the bank account and we as a school could ask for help if we needed support. All senior staff are aware of the current budget and for September all ordering is being kept to a minimum.

RS added Rob Cottle said that there is nothing we can do, he informed us that many schools will go into a deficit budget and that it is nothing to do with mismanagement and he added that we had followed all the guidance of what he had asked us to do.

To a question on claiming back money, KS explained that any claim is hugely restricted, RS had emailed the CB23 schools and all of them are in the same position, some had made claims and had them refused. One school had tried to claim money back for a deep clean, but as there was no confirmed case, this was refused. There is a few hundred pounds available but nothing close to what we need.

To a further question, KS explained that Jonathon Lewis had said that the deadline to claim was 21<sup>st</sup> July this has been extended until September. Eight schools made a claim in July and were closely scrutinised, there is nothing to lose so will make a claim in September.

To a question on the PTA loan, LW explained that there is no risk to the school. The PTA were told that they would get the money back once the school received the insurance claim for the Year 6 residential. The company has rolled the Year 5 trip over, so the current Year 4 parents will pay the deposit in the autumn term.

To a further question, LW explained the cost (20% deposit) of the Year 6 trip amounted to £1,773; this is what we are hoping to get back from the insurance company, as the company is refusing to pay back any amount.

To a question on availability of the BMR being circulated in a different format, LW to check with Orovia and send governors both a spreadsheet and PDF version if possible.

LW

#### **4. Staffing**

KS reported that we are in a fortunate position of being able to have full staff. Staff have returned very positive. We have been able to retain some of the TA hours as there is an increase in part-time teachers, so a need for more PPA cover, also a need for additional support for 18 hours. Staff will need to be deployed in other areas as we head into next year. All in all staff morale is quite high in this immensely pressured time. There is pressure on leadership as there is so much to get ready for September in terms of risk assessments, changing in routines, environment etc; this is all generating a great deal of additional work and many documents, policies etc have to be updated to ensure we are compliant. KS added that they are confident everything will be ready and in place for September, plans and policies are being cascaded out to staff, there is a workable, safe plan ready to implement.

KS informed the committee that one member of staff will be returning from shielding in September, RS has been in contact, a risk assessment in place to ensure she is fully supported in her return.

KS thanked governors on behalf of all the staff for providing many goodies (afternoon tea).

To a question on governors providing extra support, KS explained that the positive support provided really does help and if there is the chance of a monitoring visit in the autumn term governors should question 'you have told me, now show me.' RS added you could say 'How do you know this. How can you prove it?' If governors ask the question, we should be able to give you the evidence.

PS asked for suggestions, as governors would like to get involved but not get in the way. KS shared that staff all feel a bit emotional at different time: one day they feel really in control and other times feel vulnerable, it all depends on when the questions are being asked. KS added that our governing body works really well and they get the balance right between support and challenge. Keeping this balance is going to be crucial in the autumn term as we are unsure of what types of pressures there will be. RS added that she is currently fine-tuning the Recovery

plan; it will be sent to Tracey Fielding, local authority adviser for comments. Once all ok will be sent to governors.

To a question on Section 4 of the recovery plan, RS explained this has been filled in and when Tracey has seen it, the document will be sent out to governors.

To a question, KS explained that it would be unrealistic to update governors weekly; a monthly share of how things are going would be preferred. Our aim is to draw some key actions out of it to form our RAP/SDP. KS added that at Elsworth each governor will be taking on an area to oversee, and suggested that this is something governors might consider. PS added that this committee does not see the RAP and suggested they do so in future. KS added that it is quite a lot of work for the PCS committee; it is an ideal opportunity to rethink it, as the Recovery Plan will be more overarching for the school.

It was agreed that, similar to the RAP, governors would be assigned an area of the recovery plan. Everyone felt that this would be the best way to effectively manage such a large document.

To a question on school development plans, KS explained that there are pros and cons, some schools have SDPs that are much broader plans and cover all aspects of school eg premises, environment, etc. Caldecote have tried both and feel the RAP has served well to keep our focus on pupils and learning. The Recovery plan is much broader as it needs to be due to the situation and so there will be aspects that include health and safety and therefore premises.

## **5. Update from Financial Advisor (Rob Cottle)**

The key points;

All staffing discussed: no problems

KS being at Elsworth: this will bring in some additional funds

Care Clubs loss of income: no guidance yet on how this can be recouped; suggests prudent spending to try to offset

Refunds for cancelled residentials: PTA loaned us money so we could refund parents; LW is pursuing insurance claims

TA pay award: 2% built into budget; 2.75% has been offered, still negotiating

Teacher pay award: 2% built into budget; proposal that it is 6.7% across M1 – M6; NQT starting salary raised to £26000 from Sept (been brought forward); no decision on UPS or leadership scales

Unclear at present whether there will be an increase in the teachers' pay grant to offset this additional cost

Sport Premium funding will continue

PP funding will rise due to increase numbers  
Rebate to offset increase in teachers' pensions approx. £2k so far  
£1000 from Maths Hub for work Denver Owens & Meghan Turner have done  
Changing from Barclays Bank to Nat West; this causes a huge amount of work.  
Quite a bleak picture for all schools, many will go into deficit budget because of loss of income from other income streams.  
Overall Rob Cottle is very happy with how budget is being managed; and the meeting finished early.

To a question, KS explained that County are switching all schools bank accounts, as well as the change being a headache for LW, it will also affect on-line payments for lunches.

## **6. Catch Up Funding and How it will be used**

KS reported that it is unclear whether the school would receive much funding, the headlines say it will go to the disadvantaged, before Covid it was anyone who received free school meals, now it is for anyone who has social worker involvement. The Tutoring Fund will be for pupils with social worker involvement, if the decision were made to go down that route, we would use someone in house. Dependent on the amount of funding, Tracy Fielding has suggested we may consider different ways of using it rather than the traditional small group interventions, which are known not to have high impact. There is a suggestion that it could be used to support a whole class; when we know the funding we need to consider our options.

KS explained that Rob Cottle has been through the budget with KS and agreed with all income and expenditures.

## **7. Policies to be ratified:**

Appropriate use of staff laptops - RM reviewed  
Discipline & Dismissal - PS reviewed  
Grievance - CT reviewed  
Personal Information - PS reviewed; checked with DPO and this was duplication of Data protection policy  
Bad Weather - changed to Emergency Closure - PS reviewed  
Environment - VM reviewed  
ICT Waste - RM reviewed  
Equality & Diversity - RM reviewed  
Trade Union Membership - CT reviewed  
Energy - Decided it was duplicated

All above ratified

**Policies to be reviewed:**

None

To a question on whether policies need to be reviewed in light of Covid, KS explained that there is a huge list and until we know what it needs to look like, would it be possible to email out to governors? All governors agreed.

To a question, on who the link governor is for Health and Safety, KS informed the committee that it was Rob Monk. John Butler used to do a termly visit, which would involve a walk around the school looking at Health and Safety aspects. KS added that it was useful having an external eye someone who sees things differently. PS offered to take on the role, all committee members agreed.

PS thanked all staff and a well done for managing the budget

**8. Date of Future Virtual Meeting of this Committee**

VM to email all governors for ideas of suggested dates to set a yearly calendar for all meetings.

VM

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.55pm.

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

Chair