



## CALDECOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November at 6:00pm**

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

<b>Present:</b>	Pippa Smith (Chair) Karen Stanton (Co-Head) Rebecca Snelling (Co-Head) Cristina Turner Renu Martingale
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Lesley Whitehead (School Business Manager, Associate Member)
<b>Clerk:</b>	Vicky Miles
<b>Apologies:</b>	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. Approval of the Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the committee held on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

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 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

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Page 3 - Item 5: LW circulating both a spreadsheet and PDF version of the BMR and will continue to do so.

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

LW circulated the BMR for September ahead of the meeting, and took Governors through the headlines noted, highlighting and explaining the variances. LW to circulate October BMR once finalised.

LW reported that the BMR for Septembers' first ½ year is positive and has been approved and signed off by the corporate team.

LW explained that the anticipated carry forward figure was down; although it was known that the budget was not achievable due to Covid impact. Additionally, all support staff have received a 2.75% pay increase, and this month all teachers will receive a 2.75% pay increase backdated to September, the October/November BMR will reflect this. Cash flow is a lot better than previously thought. Things have improved short term. Care Clubs however, have a loss of income from lockdown, lunch loses too, but mitigated by Elsworth profit.

LW added that the window to claim as stated in the minutes from July is now extended to November. Therefore, submitting a substantial claim for cleaning materials, Care Clubs loss of earnings and a paved path for children's safety.

LW explained the current financial situation for residential trips:

- Burwell yr4 - full refund received
- Caldecote Xperience yr6 - full refund from Insurance company
- Bushcraft yr5 - they were going to roll payment forward, although, it is too uncertain whether this can happen next year, if we don't receive the partial payment then a claim will be made with the insurance company.

To a question on pay increase, KS explained that the pay increase for teachers has only just been confirmed at 2.75% and NQTs at 5%, meaning a further £14,000 or £15,000 it is however a manageable impact.

To a question on Care Clubs and lunches, LW explained that Care Clubs have income coming in now, and we have received our Universal Infant Free School Meals funding. Lunchtime had received payment out of school money at the request of Jonathon Lewis. KS added that during lockdown, Care Clubs staff received their salary even though it

remained closed with no money coming in because all but one of them couldn't be furloughed.

To a question on the insurance claim, LW explained that the one claim submitted was for Caldecotte Xperience the Year 6 residential this was fully refunded. Now a 2<sup>nd</sup> claim is being considered for the Year 5 residential to Bushcraft, first it was thought that it could be rolled over but given the uncertainty of residential's not going ahead, a claim would be the best option.

CT added that the finances are in a better position than had previously been feared; this is down to the management of the finances. School numbers are also looking good. LW explained that the school role is moving around a lot now, a new child starting this week, one leaving at the end of the week, currently around the 190 mark.

To a question on Census date, LW informed the committee that Census takes place in October.

To a question on bank changes, LW explained that the new bank account went live today. A one-hour Zoom training session was held yesterday, but not able to attend due to technical issues. LW has arranged to attend another one-hour training session tomorrow. LW expressed concern over holding up payments to suppliers.

PS thanked LW.

## **6. Budget Review 2020/21**

Covered in BMR and finance update.

To a question on whether it is feasible to keep Care Clubs running, KS explained that it has to pay for itself; staff have agreed to reduce hours, as the other option would be redundancies. The redundancy option would make finding cover hard and we don't want to lose our good team. At present negotiations are taking place, all staff have agreed to drop one morning, waiting to find out more. KS added that numbers might drop over the next four weeks, as parents will work from home.

To a further question on numbers, KS informed the committee that on a Friday attendance is as low as only six or seven children at both breakfast and afterschool, other weekdays it is between 17-22 children a loss of £18,000. Care Clubs could not run during half term as was not financially viable, the only way would be to put costs up quite significantly but many parents could not afford this. KS added that Care Clubs staff are looking at holding special focus days leading up to Christmas to attract people in. Staff do not want to lose their salaries

but hard decisions will need to be made as the school is not allowed to prop it up.

## **7. Personnel**

KS reported that; it is currently a very difficult time for everyone but trying to keep morale high, some days nothing except for Covid related actions. With so many changes in guidance, policies and amendments, the day-to-day things cannot happen. It is difficult with additional measures in place; stringent measures for staff safeguarding, there is currently a very vulnerable member of staff, so an additional risk assessment was carried out and measures put in place. There are two members of staff currently isolating, this puts added pressure on everyone else, and more cleaning is an added strain. Over lockdown staff will have less contact with each other so may feel more isolated.

KS informed the committee that one member of staff has requested we support her teacher training in 2021, currently exploring the possibility of employing her as an apprentice teacher to undertake the training; it would not be a huge strain financially as we would use our apprentice levy.

KS explained that the pay award has increased on every point, this year – 5.5% for MS1 (uplift for NQT) and strongly recommends that 2.75% is applied across all other points. EPM and unions are in agreement. If governors agree, the pay policy will be amended and circulated. All governors agreed to go forward with recommendation.

KS informed the committee that a formal request from a member of staff was received, requesting to be progressed from UPS1 – UPS2: there is ample evidence to support this and she carries out a lot in terms of the wider school, both KS and RS are in full agreement that this should be ratified by the governors.

To a question on affordability, KS explained that as a school we want to keep her, we could afford it and we are still in a healthy position. All governors agreed to support the decision going forward.

KS informed the committee that another member of staff has requested moving from M4 – M6: this was part of the budget agreed, in recognition of outstanding performance and taking on a year group at our request. All governors agreed.

KS informed the committee that at Elsworth they employ a CamClerk – who charges £1700 for six FGBs plus £145 per additional meeting. VM's clerking payment has not been reviewed since she took on the role in 2016.

To a question on whether this is a decision for the Chair, KS agreed to put in a proposal and send to Kevin Vanterpool.

KS

KS added that the NQT is working out extremely well and is an asset to the team.

## **8. Premises**

RS reported that:

- A kind group of parents and staff removed the surface at the park and used it to make a temporary path in the school grounds, until the paved path is in.
- A leak in the kitchen ceiling.
- Cath Conlon sorting play equipment remedials and emergency lighting.
- White fence surrounding the back playground is not safe, looking into having it removed.

## **9. Health & Safety**

PS reported that along with RS and LW they performed a health and safety walkabout, highlights as followed:

- Clear system in place for logging and reporting any faults.
- White fence around back playground, a balancing act between containing flying footballs and collapsing fence. RS added this is not an urgent safety concern as the field is not currently in use by the children; the school is looking into the cost of having it removed.  
RS added that the maze was removed. The wooden train is also coming towards the end of its life, but safe for the time being. The bridge is unsafe and taped off. KS added that the cost of having the white fence replaced was in the region of £9,000. RS added that an option would be to remove it and not have a fence.
- Back-up plan if caretaker is unwell – LW to take over with SLT support
- Classrooms well laid out, children do not face each other.
- Corridors clean and clear.
- Office staff not facing each other, a lot of thought and planning.
- Children's behaviour managed well – hand washing and social distancing.
- The biggest issue is around parents socially distancing, will remind in the next newsletter.

PS added that all these new systems are putting pressure on staff and with that in mind if there is anything the governors can do to help, please ask.

RM informed the committee that the current concern around children riding bikes and scooting very fast on and around the path and road outside school is being looked into, RM has chased for an update but not heard back yet. RM to contact Katy Reid and keep chasing.

RM

To a question on parent's donations, RS explained that the school has received lots of donations of cleaning products and it is very much appreciated as these things become a financial issue for the school. It was suggested that money be donated instead or items added to the Amazon Wishlist, but KS explained that the donations received from parents are of good quality, it is easy for them to purchase and really cheers staff up. LW suggested that the system in place should remain and a note of thanks will be sent out to parents.

LW

## **10. Impact of Covid**

KS reported that one of the biggest impacts of Covid is a financial one, with the cost of all the different cleaning materials needed, another big impact is workload for staff, with the remote learning legislation coming in, it states that home learning that mirrors classroom learning be provided to any child/children isolating or if the school goes into lockdown. If a lockdown notification is given then remote learning starts the next day.

KS added that good quality learning has been taking place across the school, checking in to make sure staff are not overloaded. Managing parental anxiety as this is quite high at present. There is a heightened sense of alert, constantly checking emails to see if there is a Covid update or case.

KS added that cleaning products used have damaged clothing.

KS explained that most normal activities across the school are still happening as normal or adapted, staff are outwardly positive and children are happy. RS echoed what KS has said and added that children are not aware of the pressures staff are under, we keep them sheltered from that and they all appear to be happy.

RS explained that a conversation around teachers and link governors took place at the PCS Meeting and the decision was to delay all meetings this term as the new measures are adding increased pressure. PS informed the committee that a telephone conversation

between herself and the Year 5 teacher took place. The suggestion of an email just to be in contact and say thank you would be a good idea.

PS to write a few lines for next week's newsletter around the health and safety external walk.

PS

## **11. Recovery Plan**

RS apologised for not sending. There are on-going adaptations to health and safety measures, a lot has been in amber, a few policy updates – mobile phone use – Track and Trace addendum to be added in. Areas of the recovery plan discussed, some amber areas will now be green and some red areas would now be amber.

The first 25% of Catch-up funding has been received; a plan is in place that will include using internally sourced teachers as 'catch up' tutors.

The Recovery Plan is looking good, there is a lot happening and still lots more to do. The document will be updated and circulated to governors before the FGB next week and then half termly.

RS

## **12. Catch Up Funding and how it will be used**

KS reported that the guidance on how this is spent is wide reaching. It is up to the school and the decision was to use two part-time teachers who have been approached and are happy to register with the National Tutoring agency, The Trinity Academy Partnership provide training on how to tutor. Our 'Scale of Need' register identifies children impacted by lockdown; this highlights individuals and small groups that are not back on track yet. These children will receive the tutoring. The agency will employ the teachers, the school will only need to pay 25% of the fee, and the government will pay the other 75% we are allowed to pay the difference between what the agency pay and what they would get as a teacher. This means around 15 hours a week of tutoring at a reduced rate.

KS proposes to go ahead regardless of outcome and use the two teachers, as they are both good quality.

KS explained that Elsworth received two devices from the laptops and IT for schools scheme, originally Caldecote were entitled to five it is now one device. We can apply for this when a bubble closes.

## **13. Policies to be ratified and reviewed:**

**Policies to be reviewed:**

Pay Policy - PS  
Flexible Working - RM  
Governor Expenses - CT  
PPF T & C – PS

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

The next PPF Meeting will be on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2021 @ 6pm  
via Zoom.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.15pm.

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