



CALDECOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

Thursday 6th May 2021 at 5:00pm

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

Present:	Pippa Smith (Chair) Karen Stanton (Co-Head) Rebecca Snelling (Co-Head) Cristina Turner Renu Martingale Jay Surti (new governor observing) Shweta Tripathi (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. BMR and Finance Update

LW took Governors through the headline figures, highlighting and explaining the variances.

LW reported that the headline figure of the revenue balance of £55,148 had been a fantastic achievement, after what has been a difficult year. Areas of largest loss include, Care Clubs who had a prediction of £81,000 but ended up with an income of (not profit) £41,000, and an overspend on cleaning materials although, this could have been much higher if we had not had the support from parents donating cleaning materials and hand sanitiser which is always appreciated.

LW added a few key points:

- First part of the Covid premium £8,870 had been received.
- Underspent on building maintenance; the work needed on the boiler was not urgent so advised to schedule for January 2022.
- Additional income of £9,000 from Elsworth.
- £9,600 Sports Premium carry forward
- Lots of small savings made
- Capital balance of £4,568 to carry forward (CF)

PS thanked LW and congratulated all for the great outcome after such a difficult year.

Question: Are you confident that the boiler will keep going until January?
LW explained that the boiler has been checked and serviced and we were advised to delay the work until 2022. It is safe and in good working order.

Question: How does the £55,000 carry forward compare to previous years?

LS explained that the CF has been no less than £30,000 for a number of years, and this figure is surprising after the year we have had. Historically the CF is at least £30,000 and up to £55,000. It is money that we will spend on the children and have plans in place to do so. We are in a good position.

Question: Is there always a carry forward?

LW replied yes, as it would be dangerous not too. KS added that we have a CF due to the continued success of Care Clubs and we have always been fortunate in having a large CF. Everyone is pleasantly surprised as the income from Care Clubs has been significantly down. Although cleaning costs have been high, we have not had to pay out on exercise books and other resources when the children weren't all in school. LW added that term time Care Clubs staff are on contracts whereas holiday club staff are not, so they don't get paid if Care Clubs isn't running, that is why there was not such a large impact from not running Care Clubs during the holidays.

Question: The £9,000 received from Elsworth, will this continue?

KS replied, no it won't be continuing. This was temporary to support them while they did not have a head.

4. Preparation of the Budget Submission for 2021/2022

RS circulated a detailed cost centre summary for 21/22 ahead of the meeting, and explained that this is the first time doing this and has received help and support from both KS and LW. RS took Governors through the headlines noted, highlighting and explaining the variances.

RS explained the highlights:

Income

- Headline forecast income up from 19/20 by £28k but there is more to pay out
- The 12 children coming into Red class (Reception) next year will not impact income until next year
- £6,330 remaining Covid catch-up funding
- PTA have had successful virtual fundraising events and we have budgeted for their normal donation
- Pupil Premium up from 13 to 20 children (approx. £9k)
- SEN – extra funding for additional support (up by approx. £7k)
- Cautious with Care Clubs figures as many parents still working from home – budgeted for £20k less income

Expenditure

- Teachers pay going up – pay rises and progression
- An increase for teachers and support staff is being negotiated and there is no funding to support us this time round so we have accounted for this
- Care club hours have been reduced due to lower numbers and income
- Maternity leave teacher returning part-time and we are keeping the NQT as she is an asset to the school
- Resources – increase (£8k) due to the need for new laptop trolley
- Supplies and services – increase (approx. £11k) – Covid cleaning costs and cost of all services going up, for example ICT services, grounds people, GDPR support
- Premises: slight increase of £5k due to planned astro-turf

RS explained that in order to make sure there is equality for all children the plan is to keep Reception and Year 1 separate in the mornings and combine in the afternoon. This means we will not have to pay staff for PPA. This also maintains our PAN of 30 so we can accept more children during the year who, we hope, will apply due to the extensive building works continuing in the village.

Question: Are there too many teachers with the maternity leave returning and keeping the NQT?

RS replied that the maternity leave teacher is coming back part-time and will cover PPA; we will not then need to pay for PPA cover additionally as we have previously. It does make adult ratios slightly higher than previously, but looking at the benchmarking tool, we are still in-line with where we should be for size of school and needs.

Question: Is it still the plan to keep the NQT when maternity leave returns to give more flexibility.

RS replied yes, that is the plan.

RS continued to explain highlights:

- Cost of supply reduced as we mostly cover this in house
- TAs remains slightly higher as we are paying for support for children with additional needs
- Staff sick pay, keeping this the same, as there is still the possibility of the need to self-isolate.

Question: Are you seeing good back up with ICT support for the additional cost?

RS replied yes. We explored other options. For example, GDPR has gone up and the idea to club together and go through one school was discussed as a CB23 cluster of Heads, but this option meant support would not be instant, if there was a GDPR breach it would need to be acted on immediately. Irvine Knight is value for money and is money well spent.

- New guidance has stated that PP money should not be used to pay for trips and should only be used to support children in school
- Sport funding carry forward is to be used to make the playground area all weather
- Catering income is back to pre Covid figures

RS explained that going forward the predicted pupil numbers from the place planning forecast would not affect the budget until the following year.

RS added that a lot of the expenditure is back to pre Covid figures. As a headline figure with the £55.1k CF, the predicted balance will be £27.4.

Question: Looking at balance income that Care Clubs provides, does it reflect where you are now?

RS replied that based on current conditions, with people working from home, which may stay in place longer term, the reduced staff hours and cautious income forecast will remain.

Question: Are you going to do any questionnaires or surveys for Care Clubs, to see what people want?

RS replied this happened this year, but is definitely worth redoing in the autumn term, a good idea, and thank you.

JS added that many people working from home would mean a reduction in childcare requirements. RM added that the autumn term is a good time to canvas as many businesses are staying with working from home approach until the end of the year.

Question: In terms of going forward, what is the view from the financial advisor in terms of future years?

RS replied that we have faced this before and things did improve, the financial advisor has gone through this with a fine toothcomb. How we did it this year with a large CF puts us in a strong position and hopefully, we can do it again next year.

KS added that we are forward thinking in terms of staffing. The joining of Y1 and YR in the afternoons is a step towards a larger change next year. It will be a big change of mindset for staff and parents if we do have to move to six classes. This discussion has happened before. Some children are being turned away from KS2 classes which are full, there is lots of building going on around us, we just need to sit tight and hold our nerve. PS added that it is important to give staff stability this year; they have worked hard. CT added that potentially this is a wider issue and we will not be alone in it. RS added that the low numbers seem to be county wide.

The committee agreed to recommend the proposed budget to the FGB.

5. Schools Financial Values Standard (SFVS)

LW circulated the completed document in March for governors to check prior to tonight's meeting. LW explained to all present that this is an annual exercise, it is a set of questions for governors to answer, and it provides assurance to the local authority in the six areas of resource management that resources are being managed effectively. The committee need to approve the document by the 19th May. CT added that the document is very thorough and the comparison on second page explanations everything very clearly.

Approval given and formally happy to accept on behalf of this committee.

PS thanked LW.

6. Date of Future Virtual Meeting of this Committee

The next PPF Meeting will be 17th June at 6pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6:00pm.

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