



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE, PREMISES AND PERSONNEL
COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY, 16th NOVEMBER 2017, COMMENCING AT
7.15PM**

Membership:

Mr A Jones	Co-opted Governor	
* Mr S Eastbrook	Foundation DBE Governor	
* Mr R Potter	Parent Governor	
* Mr M Bishop	Parent Governor	Vice Chair
* Mr P Butcher	Authority Governor	Chairman
Mr S Morgan	Foundation PCC Governor	
* Mr M Moriarty	Head teacher	

* indicates attendance

Also in attendance: Mrs M Cox – Clerk to Governors
Ms E Marks – Consortium Finance Manager

Action

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN/VICE CHAIR

It was **agreed** that Mr Butcher would be Chairman and Mr Bishop Vice Chair for the 2017/18 academic year.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Jones, Mr Morgan and Mrs Smith (SBM).

3. NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

4. DECLARATION OF NEW BUSINESS INTERESTS/CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of new business interests or conflicts of interest.

5. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th June 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising are set out below. The following actions were noted (other items having been completed or finalised) –

Minute 4 – it was noted that, following discussions with Tiptree Pre-school, the location of a portacabin could be too invasive on the school site but the school had not been provided with the specific amounts of ground that would be needed, public access would need to be looked at to see if work would need to be carried out on the Rectory Road entrance, separate boundaries would be costly to implement and security would not be compromised but would have to be changed as part of the build. The Head teacher reported that he would be meeting with Tiptree Pre-school the following day to discuss this further. The Committee had a brief discussion on the viability of the Pre-school using the school grounds.

Minute 5 – it was noted that the member of staff who conducts the admissions interview requests an NI number from the parents and explains why the schools needs it. The New Pupil Premium eligibility form also requests an NI number. The Head teacher reported that new data collection forms given to parents would include the collection of the NI number.

Minute 6 – it was noted that Mr Jones had organised a volunteer party on 3rd and 30th August, which had extremely successful. The school would be keen to book the Ford employees for next summer too.

The Head teacher reported that the school would be ensuring the UIFSM opt out form was available for the next Census day when everyone will be automatically opted in.

6. FINANCE MATTERS

Current Financial Position

The September 2017 report had been circulated (it was noted that an amended report had been issued due to a spreadsheet error which did not affect the predicted carry forward balance).

Ms Marks reported that the carry forward amount at year end is expected to be £20,137 against a predicted amount of £43,052 when the budget had been set. **A Governor queried the cause of the reduction in the carry forward amount.** Ms Marks explained that costs, mainly from the employee's budget, had contributed to the reduction including the cost of the new Head teacher starting earlier than in the original budget set. However, these costs had been offset to a certain extent by the employment of new teachers on a lower pay

spine. Ms Marks commented though that the final carry forward amount may be slightly higher if the predicted spend from remaining unspent budgets were not as high as estimated for this report.

A Governor questioned whether the carry forward amount is a concern for the size of the school. Ms Marks reported that the carry forward for some schools in the Consortium had been less than at St Luke's and that unfortunately funding for schools had not kept pace with increased expenditure. However, the carry forward is a cause for concern. The Head teacher explained that the predictions are a worst case scenario and that savings are planned.

It was noted that the National Funding Formula (NFF) consultation had ended and that ECC would continue to be involved in providing funding to schools for

the next 2 years. Indications were that schools should be no worse off but that they should continue to make savings where possible.

Ms Marks highlighted that the Sports Premium amount had doubled to £16,000 plus £10 per pupil and will take effect from September 2017. Due to widened criteria for the use of the funding, it may be possible to offset other costs in the budget.

Ms Marks reported that the drop in pupil numbers had affected the school's 2018/19 budget – the school had been funded on 303 pupils for this year but next year would only be funded on 291 pupils (as at the October Census). The Committee noted that it had been made aware of this at the previous meeting. The Head teacher highlighted that EYFS currently had 30 pupils with 2 teachers and that these low numbers may impact going forward. Ms Marks also advised that should numbers continue to drop next year, further structure changes would be necessary.

A Governor queried the low spend in the Learning Resources budget. The Head teacher reported that £1,000 has to be spent on maths resources but that the requirements in other curricular areas are currently unknown. **A Governor commented that this was one area where spending should not be reduced.**

The Head teacher reported that the SENCO will be leaving at the end of term thereby creating a saving in the budget (the saving amount was detailed in the meeting). The Head teacher reported how the SENCO role will be covered in school. It was noted that the 5 Year Plan was presented as a worst case scenario as it assumed all staff would move up a pay grade and the overall structure would remain as it is currently. The Head teacher went on to report that, following advice from the school's SEP and HR, the Pay Policy had retained the UPS 1, 2 and 3 pay grades but that an appendix had been included in the Pay Policy setting out the expectations for each pay grade. It was noted that the Pay Policy had been circulated to staff for consultation and

the expectations had been made clear to staff who are at the top of their pay scale.	Action
Ms Marks undertook to provide Governors with a finance training session in the summer term.	Ms Marks
The Committee discussed the format of the Governor’s report and asked that a more simplified version be created that contained a short summary/headlines. Governors also asked that any overspends be highlighted in red across all reports. Ms Marks suggested that the ideal time to change the report format would be when the budget is set – the report could be made smaller and the number of cost centres reduced if necessary to demonstrate the links to the SDP. The Head teacher will highlight the cost centres where he wishes resources to be targeted.	Chair/SBM
The Chairman signed the Governors report to verify that it matched the system generated report.	

5 Year Plan

The 5 Year Plan was received and noted. As previously mentioned, it was noted that the 2018/19 budget would be funded on 291 pupils and, as a result, it will be challenging to balance next year’s budget. Ms Marks explained that schools no longer received trigger funding but that the school will make a saving in the budget with the SENCO leaving at the end of term and there will be no additional cost for cover for the SENCO.

The Head teacher reported that himself and the Chair of Governors had discussed with HR the possibility of a restructure but that this would be financially challenging due to high redundancy costs.

A Governor commented that the premises expenditure had been predicted to be £74,000 but that this amount had now risen to over £100,000. Ms Marks reported that the school had experienced higher maintenance costs this year and the 5 Year Plan had assumed the same investment going forward. However, this may not be the case.

A Governor commented on the predicted staffing percentage of 99%. Ms Marks reported that the staffing percentages for most other Consortium schools were above 85% and some were already above 95%. **A Governor went on to highlight that the school had an expensive staffing structure and that numbers had been impacted by last year’s Year 6 leaving.**

Ms Marks explained that the 5 Year Plan assumes the staffing structure to remain the same. She reiterated that the increased Sports Premium funding could be reallocated to the staffing budget as long as the spend met the funding criteria.

Action

Ms Marks reported that the LA offers loans to schools as a last resort solution and that any application would need to be made by January. It was noted that a Committee meeting may be needed in January 2018 so potential changes could be costed and included in the 2018/19 budget plan.

Additional
mtg

Cash Flow

It was noted that there was £150,00 in the bank at the end of September with an adjusted balance of £54,000. Ms Marks advised that as the contingency reserves reduce cash flow would need to be monitored in more detail.

School fund

Ms Marks reported that the audited school fund accounts had been received following the August year end. The accounts were **approved** and a balance of £2,327 was noted. No anomalies had been found in the accounts. Ms Marks reported that it was permitted for the school fund to have its own cost centre in the main school budget which reduced administrative time in keeping a separate account – this was **agreed** by the Committee.

A Governor asked about the £2,000 loss on the Panto trip. The Head teacher explained that the school did lose money on school trips and the Panto as they had been run despite the minimum funding requirement not being met – this contravened the Financial Regulations. Ms Marks explained that the Panto loss was due to the deposit being paid before the school fund year end and thus creating a double amount.

Catering account

Ms Marks reported that there had been a UIFSM take up of 83 against a target off 112 pupils. This will negatively affect the funding next year. She reported that paid meals were over target at 63 (50 had been budgeted for). It was noted that the provision of tuck was working well.

The Head teacher reported that the dinner money arrears procedure required review as it is currently not being followed.

A Governor commented on the £2 school meal cost and that this appeared to be good value. Ms Marks explained that the provision cost had reduced from 91p last year to 87p currently.

The Committee discussed increasing the price of a school meal to £2.10 which was more in line with other Consortium schools. It was **agreed** that the cost of a school meal should be increased to £2.10 with effect from 1st January 2018 with further review in September 2018.

The Committee noted the healthy balance in the catering account.

Capital funding

It was noted that £12,320 of capital funding had been used on the playground resurfacing with the remainder of the 2018/19 allocation used for the chimney cost.

Virement record

Ms Marks explained the virement process. If the LA changes the funding received by a school Governors are advised and the budget is changed to reflect this (this is often the receipt of additional SEN or Pupil Premium funding). Money can also be moved from one cost centre to another – a virement. The intention is that Governors check that the allocation on the virement record matches the budget report.

A Governor highlighted that the virement approval form does not match the one set out in the new Financial Regulations.

SBM

The virement record was received and signed by the Chairman. The virement related to changes to Pupil Premium funding and UIFSM money – an increase to the budget of £1,948.

Extended Schools

The Committee received and noted the profit and loss account for Extended Schools. A profit of £9,850 was noted as at the end of September. Ms Marks reported that numbers for the breakfast session in September had been 335 children compared to 253 in July. Twilight numbers had also increased in September.

The income for October was noted as £7,884 (£3,621 for the twilight session).

A Governor asked whether the profit on extended schools had already been allocated. Ms Marks reported that the expected year end balance will be £14,000 and that this money is already allocated in the main school budget.

The Committee commented on the healthy balance in this budget and the positive take up for the service.

Financial Regulations

It was noted that the virement limits at the front of the document did not match the proforma at the end of the document.

A Governor queried the authorisation and monetary limits. It was highlighted that the document suggests that £5,000 can be spent without obtaining 3 quotes. The Head teacher reported that he always requests 3 quotes for items that he has had no previous experience of the cost of, even if this is below £5,000.

The Committee discussed the limits further and **agreed** the following –

- a. Any additional spending not included in the budget over £2,500 will require Governor approval.
- b. That the quotes limit should be amended to £1,000 and anything over this amount will require 3 quotes. Governors also requested to review the detail of any quote over £1,000.

The Committee commented that it needed to ensure that robust financial measures are taken due to the current budgetary situation. More planning of larger expenditure amounts was required going forward to avoid obtaining approval via email.

Ms Marks drew attention to the proposals for the faster payments section. The Committee confirmed that it was happy for the school to pursue the ‘Online for Business’ system.

In relation to section 5.9 Gifts and Hospitality, it was **agreed** that the sentence ‘the school must maintain a register even where no gifts have been declared, which should be signed by the Chair of Governors on an annual basis’, should be removed as this contradicted the school’s Gifts and Hospitality Policy that had been approved by the FGB.

The Financial Regulations **were recommended to the Governing Body for approval.**

Requests for Expenditure over Head’s limit

There were none.

SFVS

Governors undertook to go through the SFVS questions for approval by the Committee and for submission to ECC by 31st March 2018. It was suggested that the SFVS action points could be discussed at Committee meetings as a matter of course.

All

7. **PREMISES MATTERS**

A premises update was circulated at the meeting.

The Head teacher reported that the long term Premises Plan required review and re-drafting. The Head teacher undertook to check if there were any pending actions before the next Committee meeting.

Head

A Governor monitoring report on health and safety had been circulated.

8. PERSONNEL MATTERS

In response to a question from the Head teacher, the Chairman reported that he would envisage future personnel reports to include any staffing changes since the last meeting, any long term sickness issues and staff absence levels. The Head teacher provided an update on staff absence monitoring.

As previously noted, the SENCO will be leaving at the end of term. The Head teacher updated the Committee on staff returning from or going on maternity leave. It was noted that the temporary senior leader posts would be reviewed in March.

In addition, the Head teacher reported that an HLTA had requested to reduce her hours, an LSA had resigned with the vacancy being partly covered on a supply basis in order for a review of LSA cover to take place, and a cleaner had resigned.

9. POLICY REVIEW

The following policies had been reviewed –

- a. Charging and Remissions
- b. Accessibility
- c. Children with Medical Conditions
- d. Security

In addition, the Committee had received the Whole School Food Policy and the Mobile Phone and Tablet Policy – it **agreed** that these policies did not need Governor approval although it would be beneficial to share them with parents.

In relation to the Charging and Remissions Policy, it was **agreed** that if non curricular related trips are not paid for and the parents have not had a discussion about non payment with the school, then attendance on the trip will be refused. However, it was **agreed** that the school should pay for Pupil Premium children to attend such trips.

In relation to the Accessibility Policy, the review date needed to be amended so that it was in line with a 3 year review. It was **agreed** that ‘monitoring arrangements’ should be amended to ‘review of document’. It was suggested that there should be a separate action plan

In relation to the Children with Medical Conditions Policy, it was **agreed** that due to formatting issues the Policy would be submitted to the next FGB.

Although the Mobile and Tablet Policy was not being reviewed by the Committee, **a Governor requested that the insurance is checked with regard to children’s mobile devices.**

FGB
agenda

SBM

In relation to the Security Policy, the Head teacher confirmed that the door code had been changed this term and is now due for another change. It was noted that visitors without a valid DBS should be accompanied in school. The Head teacher reported that the school was speaking to the children about visitor badges and for the children to tell a member of staff if they notice a visitor not wearing a badge.

The Head teacher reported that a fire alarm drill was carried out termly.

The Charging and Remissions Policy, Security Policy and Accessibility Policy were **approved** in principle subject to the suggested amendments being made.

10. OFSTED QUESTIONS

a. How does teacher's pay reflect performance?

A Governor reported that the Pay Committee had met following the teaching staff PMRs and had noted that there was a robust PMR process in place and had confirmed that the Pay Policy was being followed. A Governor confirmed that the Pay Policy had been sent to all staff for consultation and that an Appendix had been included in the Policy setting out the expectations for each pay grade.

b. How is Sports Premium used?

A Governor reported that the Sports Premium amount of £9,284 is being used for cricket coaching, Thurstable sports coaches, subsidising swimming, the Colchester United after school club and sports resources.

11. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8th March 2018 7.15pm.

MEETING CLOSED 10.15PM

Chairman.....

Date.....

Summary of Decisions taken (not part of the minutes)

Minute		Action	Completed
6	Finance training to be arranged for the summer term.	Ms Marks	
	Report format to be reviewed.	Chair/SBM	
	Possibility of an additional meeting to be resolved.	All	
	Virement approval form to match the one set out in the Financial Regulations.	SBM	
	SFVS to be completed by next meeting.	All Govs	
7	Head to check if there were any pending actions in Premises Action Plan before the next Committee meeting.	Head	
9	SBM to check insurance re children's mobile devices.	SBM	