



St Paul's Church of England Primary School

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND PERSONNEL (F&P) COMMITTEE MEETING held virtually via Zoom at 9am on Thursday, 15th October 2020

Governors Present: Tom Auld (Associate Member), Michael Beckett (for part of the meeting), Suranga Chandratillake, Helen Darrell – Headteacher, Beverly Jones, Russell Re Manning and Kate Sharkie.

Also in Attendance: Beverly Jones – as minute taker

(NB: Governor Challenge, Questions and Monitoring are highlighted in bold)

1. Apologies for Absence

NOTED: apologies for absence had been received from Hilary Aldred.

AGREED: to accept all governor apologies submitted.

2. Declarations of Interest

NOTED: there were no declarations of financial or other interests.

3. Election of Chair

NOTED: Suranga Chandratillake was proposed by Helen Darrell and Seconded by Tom Auld.

AGREED: to elect Suranga Chandratillake as Chair

4. Election of Vice Chair

NOTED: Tom Auld offered to be vice chair and was seconded by Helen Darrell.

AGREED: to elect Tom Auld as Vice Chair

5. AOB

NOTED: Chair of F&P proposed that 2 items of AOB be taken before the main item.

5.1 Premises

Chair and Head met with CSOC Director and the Architect who drew up the feasibility study for the development of premises. Chair updated meeting and asked for support with the process:

- a) Entrance area is a safeguarding priority and the plans may therefore be supported with funding from CSOC. Head is keen that the kerbside impression of the school is modern.
- b) Hall/Courtyard work would need to be completed during the summer break to replace canopies and improve accessibility. The Hall will also be extended into



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the playground.

Head confirmed: DfE funds for Voluntary Aided Church Schools have been used for classroom refurbish.

BJ reminded committee of Kate Sharkie's professional background in construction.

KS confirmed she has reviewed the feasibility study and emphasised that any improvements need to improve flow and review how spaces are used. She supports attention to the front of the school.

Michael Beckett joined the meeting at this point

TA asked about the suitability of the architects. Chair confirmed that the architects commissioned by Diocese of Ely have a background in schools projects. They are www.graylingthomas.com based in Oxford.

BJ confirmed that she had stressed as Chair of Governors to the Diocese at the outset that the ambition is to be a modern facility.

LK challenged whether the summer break would be sufficient time.

RRM recommended that we formalise a sub-committee for Premises.

AGREED: Committee approved to move ahead with the planning permission, design and budgeting of Entrance Area. Also Committee approved Head, KS to create a sub-group (supported by SC and others as required) to discuss other options and report back for decision-making by the full F&P committee.

5.2 National Teacher Pay Awards

AGREED: that the teachers should receive an increase in salary in accordance with the national pay awards as recommended by the Headteacher

6. School Budget

a) Head introduced the paper circulated ahead of the meeting.

2019 census 178 pupils on roll.

2020 census 159 pupils on roll.

The scenarios offer in the paper include a reduction in teaching assistants and class numbers. Also changes to the management of Planning, Preparation and Assessment time for teachers.

b) Chair and Head confirmed the feedback offered by the Local Authority Finance Adviser on 12th October 2020.

Predicted Carry Forward 1st April 2021 £117k

Chair emphasised that whilst the budget allocation for next year may have shortfall the surplus will enable us to retain 7 classes.



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Chair emphasised that we currently do not know the admission numbers for 2020 and the Age Weighted Pupil Units are not known.

With advice from the Local Authority the expectation is that the worse case scenario is a £70k deficit.

BJ reminded the meeting that each year we generate income through after school club. The carry forward has not been generated by not spending funds allocated to the pupils.

HD highlighted the savings that have been made this year through closure and staff changes.

Chair said the Local Authority had questioned the lack of spending on Staff Continuing Professional Development. Head explained this was about timing and activity is planned.

RRM asked if After School Club profit has to be spent on after school club.

BJ Confirmed that since HD appointed Head the work of the After-School Club is incorporated into the overall work of the school. The policies and procedures are now applied consistently under the leadership of the Head. Any income generated is school income.

TA asked what the additional cleaning costs had been linked to Covid 19. Head confirmed approximately £1000.

Head confirmed that the figures for 21/22 will be confirmed February 2021.

TA Supports the retention of surplus to protect the interests of the children whilst our Ofsted judgement and school roll remain uncertain.

Head said that it is not intended to spend the surplus.

MB asked if the Local Authority could claw back funds.

BJ confirmed that we are acting with advice from the LA regarding use of carry forward.

MB asked how we communicate to the community regarding our position to ensure that there is confidence that funds are being spent on the current intake.

LK confirmed that through Ace Nursery he is aware that there is a dip in the city and therefore reduced numbers is not unexpected. The RI Ofsted judgement has not helped community confidence.

Head has consulted the LA Admissions team. There is an increase in families choosing to home educate and there is a reduction in new international arrivals into the city.

Neighbouring schools judged good usually have a waiting list. They have been able to admit all pupils meaning that there is no need for them to go to St Paul's as second



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choice.

Chair summarised:

1. The carry forward will enable us to retain 7 classes through 20/21 and 21/22
2. There is uncertainty about 21/22 and this leads the committee to feel we want to be conservative.

Committee support the plan

1. Retain 7 classes
2. Surplus that is generated through after-school club income and staffing cost reductions.
3. Income generation remains important and Tom Auld is leading the group on this.

RRM Emphasised we must not be " penny pinching" this academic year.

Head confirmed the staff do feel that appropriate resources are available this year.

TC confirmed the next meeting of fundraising group is 20/10/2020 and all are invited.

Head supports a focus on marketing through this group and it will be discussed then.

Chair concluded

- Recognise and are comforted by the surplus that has been confirmed by the LA.
- Medium and Long Term situation awaits clarification from the Government and also the school roll.
- We will proceed with caution to retain our commitment to 7 classes and guard our surplus.

Meeting closed at 10.30 a.m.

Approved by The Finance And Personnel Committee on:

Date:

Signature (Chair):.....