

St. Michael's C. of E. Primary School

Resources Committee

Held on Monday 27th January 2020 at 6.00 p.m.

Minutes

	<p>Present: Mr. B. Leslie (BL) Mr. P. Vennard (PV) Mr. R. Studd (RS) Revd. D Howland (DH)</p> <p>Absent: Mrs. B. Fielder (CoG) Mrs. S. Jempson (SJ) Revd. I. Chukuka (IC) Mrs. A. Grande (AG) Ms R Gouws (HT)</p> <p>In attendance:</p>
1.0	<p><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RECEIVED</u> Mrs. B. Fielder – work commitments, Mrs. S. Jempson – with/caring for aged mother in hospital, Ms A Grande (taken ill during the afternoon), Ms R Gouws – attending son's performance.</p> <p>The received apologies were accepted</p>
1.1	
2.0	<p><u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> There were no declarations of interest.</p>
3.0	<p><u>MINUTES & MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING</u></p>
3.1	<p><u>Approval of Draft Minutes – 14th June 2019</u> The missing sections of the June minutes had now been added (i.e. Matters Arising and Treasurer's Report) and the minutes were approved.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Approval of Draft Minutes – 1st December 2019</u> The minutes of the December meeting were approved as being a correct record without amendment.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Matters arising and actions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 5.1 submission of supplementary Teachers Pension Grant claim – completed see Finance Report below- 5.1 adjustment of spend on Buildings Insurance – entries corrected- 5.2 Revised (November) budget submission signed off (confirmed) <p>5.4 Reducing energy costs – action taken: installation of PVC curtain at infants back door (cost c. £300) had made a significant impact on the warmth of the building, reducing heat loss through the open door which is too heavy for the children from Y1 and Y2 to open to access the toilets. <i>Q: are there any other doors where a similar solution could be installed?</i></p>

	<p><i>A: Possibly. The school has undertaken a campaign to keep the corridor doors in the juniors closed as much as possible and its effect will be monitored.</i></p>
4.0	<p><u>FINANCE REPORT</u></p>
4.1	<p><u>Budget – review of spending against budget:</u></p> <p><u>Staffing:</u> The meeting was advised that the January figures for salaries had not been received from Lewisham and had not, therefore, been included in the figures. It is anticipated that there will be an overspend of £30-40k against the budget set in April. It was explained that part of this is because the non-teaching staff pay award was higher than budgeted, the award was also structured with additional increases for lower paid staff (under spine point 30) that could not be programmed into the budgeting software or salary estimator spreadsheets.</p> <p><u>Funding changes/Income:</u> A claim for £3775 has been submitted to the DfE for a supplementary payment related to the Teachers' Pension Grant – it is due to be paid in March. The claim to Lewisham to have a funding adjustment related to two pupils who started after the October census related to perceived admissions delays was not successful.</p> <p><u>Expenditure:</u> A spreadsheet was presented showing total expenditure to date under the main budget headings with a forecast of the anticipated spend for the remainder of the year. This indicated an in-year deficit of £57.2K (November budget forecast was £50.3k as submitted to the LA although the new budgeting software showed forecast deficit of £60k)</p>
4.2	<p><u>Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) – checklist:</u> Revised comments for the SFVS checklist had now been incorporated. Areas for improvement/implementation were noted: Qs 6,9,10, 16, 19 & 21.</p> <p>The dashboard was again reviewed and areas of concern discussed:</p> <p>Percentage spend on teaching staff (highest 20% of similar schools) – this can be explained by our profile of teachers; 78% (7) are on the upper pay range with just one teacher on Main pay scale and one teacher on the Unqualified pay range. Of the seven teachers on the Upper Pay Range, 5 of them are at the maximum.</p> <p>Percentage spend on Admin and Clerical staff (highest 10% of similar schools) – reduction of admin hours re LM noted previously. Also, as Clerk was employed by school those costs were included in this area and it was noted that many schools use clerking services which are contracted and therefore do not get included in Admin staffing costs.</p> <p>Spend on energy (highest 20% of similar schools) – mention was made of the actions previously discussed above (3.3 re 5.4) to reduce energy consumption. It was also noted that the school is largely single-glazed.</p> <p>The outcomes/progress scores were also noted as being below or well below average. These are based on the 2019 KS2 SATS and do vary from year to year.</p> <p>It was agreed to submit the SFVS as prepared. ACTION: Submit signed version of SFVS to LA</p>

<p>4.3</p>	<p><u>Scheme for Financing Schools – update</u> The update, recently approved by Schools Forum was received:</p> <p><i>“A Governing Body may delegate responsibility to a working group (e.g resources committee) to undertake the detailed review of the budget plans/SFVS /other documents. For a school that is able to set a balanced budget in the current year (and at least the next financial year), submission to the LA ratification may take place post submission to the LA. The Full Governing Body must ensure that they have been provided with all appropriate supporting information to enable ratification. Where the school is in a Deficit Recovery Plan or unable to set a balanced budget it may not delegate any powers to a working group e.g. resources committee. Detailed working may still be undertaken by the working group but the full governing body must have full sign off before submission to the LA. Additional, time has been factored in to the submission times lines to recognise this requirement.”</i></p> <p><i>Q: Will this apply to us? Does the term ‘balanced budget’ refer to an in-year deficit when there are reserves/surpluses brought forward from previous years which exceed the amount of the in-year deficit?</i> <i>A: Guidance will be sought to ensure that the school acts correctly.</i> ACTION: check with LA Finance Team (DH)</p> <p><u>Financial Benchmarking</u> The ‘Arbor’ benchmarking report had been published on GovernorHub for review. Additionally the DfE Benchmarking Report Card for 2018-19 was now available and discussed. The reports both highlighted the areas of concern where the school’s costs are significantly higher than comparison schools, i.e. teaching staff costs, admin and clerical staff costs, energy costs and premises expenditure. The first three concerns had already been discussed earlier in the meeting in the SFVS Dashboard analysis – see 4.2 above.</p> <p>With regards to Premises expenditure – it was noted that the school has to pay rent of £21k a year to the church for use of the playground/hall and land where the Ray Wickes Building stands. This is quite an unusual cost as most schools occupy freehold land or have use of land at a peppercorn rent. <i>Q: can we gather more information on this spending area to confirm what is included within the heading and then make enquiries of comparator schools to further explain this concern?</i> <i>A: This will be researched.</i> ACTION: Confirm criteria for heading and constituent spending. Obtain more details from other schools for comparison purposes/revised benchmarking.(DH)</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p><u>STAFFING/HR ISSUES</u></p>
<p>5.1</p>	<p><u>Absences - update:</u> It was reported that the member of staff on long-term sickness has still not returned to work. A further Absence Review meeting had been scheduled for last Friday but she failed to appear. The meeting has been rescheduled for this week. A report from the Occupational Health Service has been obtained regarding her prognosis and potential to return to work. <i>Q: What is the next step?</i></p>

	<p><i>A: Encourage her to attend the next formal meeting which is the next stage in the absence management process</i></p> <p><u>Staffing Structure review:</u></p> <p>5.2 The staffing structure is under review with a view to starting to build the new budget for 2020-21 in the next few weeks. It was suggested that the Committee chair arrange a meeting with the School Business Manager to talk over (confidentially) some of the changes that might be considered. ACTION: BL to advise DH of possible dates/time for meeting during the school day.</p> <p><u>Clerk to Governors</u></p> <p>5.3 Members were aware that the Clerk resigned on 20th December 2019 and has now completed her notice period. An event was being held in school to thank her for service of 34 years, on Friday 31st January. It was agreed that a contribution of £100 would be made from School Fund in addition to collected contributions towards a gift for her.</p> <p>It was noted that the school had managed to acquire some interim clerking support from Nicole Galea who is self-employed and acts as clerk for Downsvie Community Primary School in Croydon. This would provide cover for the two FGB meetings in March and May but she does not wish to take on another school on a permanent arrangement at this time.</p> <p>Possible solutions to the need for a replacement of the clerk were discussed. Three potential options were available:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Advertise for a replacement (employed) Clerk – terms and rates to be determined. (2) Utilise the LA Clerking Service provided by Lewisham (3) Engage a self-employed/clerking service company to provide clerking duties to the school. <p>The LA's service costs £675 per FGB meeting, £340 per committee meeting and ad-hoc work at £71/hour Nicole Galea's costs are £360 per FGB meeting (max 2 hours), £260 per committee meeting and ad-hoc work/time at £30/hour. Carole Connelly, the Governance adviser, had been contacted and provided a model SLA and indicated that out of London rates were in the region of £175-£225 per meeting.</p> <p>It was reported that there are a number of clerking companies/self-employed clerks listed on the National Governors Association website that could be contacted to see if they had availability. It was felt appropriate to make use of Nicole for the interim to see how this works out before making any firm decisions.</p>
6.0	<p><u>PREMISES</u></p> <p>6.1 <u>Nursery adaptations – funding/update</u></p> <p>It was reported that the school had heard back from the SDBE that the unallocated funds within the old LCVAP had dropped to £20k and that there was no guarantee that the remaining £46k the school requires could be committed from the 2020-21 funding programme - now Voluntary Aided – School Condition Allocation (VA-SCA).</p> <p>The priorities for VA-SCA funding will be to prioritise building condition, health and safety issues and statutory responsibilities such safeguarding. Two bids are allowed per school for each year.</p>

	<p>The school had considered whether or not to continue with the bid for nursery funding and felt that one more try should be made but if not successful in the 2020-21 allocations then probably not continue.</p> <p>The second bid would be for the relatively urgent works to repair the roof lantern over the toilet areas in the infant building. Estimated costs are £41,400 and the surveyor has indicated that these works, whilst not critical at this time, should be undertaken before next winter.</p> <p><i>Q: if we are successful in obtaining the nursery funding bid, are we committed to developing the nursery?</i></p> <p><i>A: No, we don't have to use the funding allocation if it is granted but it cannot be used for any other project.</i></p> <p>It was agreed to submit the two bids to the SDBE</p> <p>ACTION: VA-SCA bids to be submitted to SDBE by 31st January 2020 (DH)</p>
7.0	<u>POLICIES – all draft Policies are on the Governors' Hub.</u>
7.1	<p><u>Pay Policy</u></p> <p>This has been reviewed/adapted from the Lewisham template which has already received agreement from the unions and staff representative bodies. It was agreed that Governors should be given two weeks to respond with any objections, failing which it would be considered as approved.</p> <p>ACTION: Governors to be reminded to read and respond on GovernorHub within two weeks (BL)</p>
8.0	<p><u>DATES AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS</u></p> <p>Resources meeting Monday 4th May 2020 at 6.00 p.m.</p> <p>Noted that FGB meeting date has changed to 30th March 2020 at 7.00pm</p>
9.0	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <p>None.</p>

ACTIONS:	
4.2	Submit signed SFVS to LA
4.3	Check definition with LA Finance Team
4.4	Confirm criteria for Premises heading and constituent spending. Obtain more details from other schools for comparison purposes/revised benchmarking.(DH)
5.2	BL to advise DH of possible dates/time for meeting during the school day.
6.1	VA-SCA bids to be submitted to SDBE by 31st January 2020 (DH)
7.1	Governors to be reminded to read and respond on GovernorHub within two weeks (BL)

PART 2: CONFIDENTIAL

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	None