

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Minutes of a Meeting of the

Finance & Resources Committee

Held at the Academy on Thursday 3rd March 2016 @ 6pm

Governors Present -	Di Davy	Committee Chair
	Mrs Joanna Young	Academy Principal
	Miss Samantha Brennand	Academy Vice Principal
	Helen Morris	Nicola Kay
	Steve Hall	Amanda Manning

Apologies -

In Attendance -	Tracy German	Academy Business Manager
	Simon Morris	Associate Governor
	Amanda Arnold	Clerk to Governors

Item No.		Action
1.	<p>Apologies & Items of Any Other Business</p> <p>No apologies received, full attendance.</p> <p>A Manning new to the committee. Introduced herself. N Kay introduced herself as a parent at the school also new to the board</p> <p>All governors introduced themselves to the new governors.</p> <p>Any Other Business</p> <p>More hours for play project.</p> <p>Writing project</p> <p>A short Performance management update</p> <p>How are new caterers working out?</p>	
2.	<p>Committee Membership</p> <p>J Young declared that she is now a governor at Sir William Stanier, the local secondary school and will be adding this to her Pecuniary Interest form.</p>	
3.	<p>Approval of Committee Minutes for meeting of 15th October 2015</p> <p>Matters arising not on Agenda</p> <p>To confirm that computer hard discs are destroyed, not just erased.</p> <p>Minutes approved and signed off</p>	

4.

Finance

Accounts

Distributed in advance of the meeting. To note that they are now published, submitted to Companies House and available to view on the Academy website.

Business Managers Report

Living Wage

TG, Business Manager, reported that after speaking to HR and attending a finance meeting on 12th November 2015 it was advised that we wait for more information regarding the living wage. The living wage will replace the minimum wage on 1st April 2016 and would be increased to £7.20. The scale changes will be implemented via payroll, she reported that this is the decision that most Academies are enforcing. If the academy was to continue with the higher pay grade of £7.85, which as an academy they are advising, we will be charged £360 by CoSocius to change the grades. TG had a conversation with Helen Morris on Friday 20th November 2015 and she advised that the decision is put on hold and we wait for further information. She informed that she was part of a finance meeting on the 10th March where schools will be given further guidance and help. It was discussed that Cheshire East are putting their rate up to £7.85 which could make it difficult to recruit in the future unless we do the same.

A **governor asked** how many staff does the increase apply to. Just Middays and cleaners. JY explained the incremental steps that are already in place and that the new rate is not within the steps that are already in place. T German asked if we could hold on until the next meeting before making a decision.

A **governor asked** what is the £360 charge for? TG and JY explained that the agency will charge to change the grading system.

A **governor asked** is it worth waiting when it is not a large sum of money that it will cost to increment at the moment. **A discussion took place.**

It was agreed that we would continue to go with the living wage of £7.85 on 1st April dependent on the outcome of T German's meeting on 10th March.

Budget: 2015/2016

The £50k Investment matured on the 05.01.2016, interest made was £518.36

It has now been re-invested as agreed at the last meeting for 12 months in a fixed term deposit of 1.20% maturing on 16th Dec 2016

TG reported that the final carry over figure for 14/15 was £494,875 and that the budget up to February was attached with no concerns together with the Cash flow. Cash flow report is up to January 16 due to February 16 bank statement not yet received in school.

JY explained the bank balance discrepancy is very much because some money is paid to us from Cheshire East who use a financial year, and some from the EFA, who pay an academic year.

A carry over of approximately £337,446 is what is currently estimated.

A governor asked if we were allowed to carry over a higher percentage for proposed changes/works. JY explained yes, and that it is written in to the school development plan.

TG reported the following -

- DFC move to A/C 11313 - £7320 Car park extension and £2051 Artificial grass

DFC was explained to be money that was paid specifically for works to the property. A **governor asked** how many extra spaces we got for the expenditure. 9 spaces.

- A/C 1145 Increase by £1000 due to staff pay increase

JY requested that an amount was vired to cover the staff pay increase requested.

- A/C 12312 there has been no invoice to school since September, school has received an e-mail explaining

12312 was explained that the gas bill has not been received yet. The company have apologised and it was being chased.

- Donations and visits

Donations visit and income was explained that there will always be a minus in the visit budget as the accountants have told us that we can now not transfer the income pot to cover it. So one budget will grow and one will stay low. Governors requested that Tracy question this when Steve Parker is in next time.

- A/C 32211 increase £30000 due to late payments from Cheshire East this year

32211 – TG explained that Cheshire East had just invoiced for last year's school meals. Now that we have changed caterers this will not happen again.

Governors agreed all proposed changes between accounts.

New budget will be set for next F&R meeting

GAG - General Annual Grant received. Significant difference in last year's payments which TG and JY are raising a question over and will feedback at the next meeting.

A **governor asked** if the payments are different each month. It was explained that yes there are sometimes additional payments, for example an early years payment.

A **governor raised a concern** over the timing of payments maybe causing deficit at some time in the future if a healthy carry forward is not available at some point.

Concerned that this should be monitored for assurance purposes in case of a large expenditure arising. A governor suggested looking at which times of the year are most efficient for authorising payments. A governor pointed out that as a new academy it will take a few years of forecasts to be able to have a clearer picture.

JY & TG have discussed being more careful at not overspending on the monthly income

TG suggested that rather than forecast an equal spread of expenditure, perhaps putting a larger forecast at particular times of the year i.e. September and lesser amount in June – August as this is always lower

HCSS

This is the software to prepare the three year budget. TG reported that the patch required has been downloaded to the office machine but unfortunately there are problems with linking this to FMS the problem was sent to capita but they could not resolve the error. As we have paid for the licence she has called and asked for a credit for the months the academy have not been able to use the system and they have agreed to reimburse the school. TG is still waiting for an update from HCSS.

	<p>Journal Requirement TG requested to move £20000 from A/C 14113 Water metered to A/C 14112 Water and drainage as a refund was entered on the wrong account number. Governors agreed</p> <p>Responsible Officer / Baker Tilly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Baker Tilly now (RSM) proposal to be discussed. Total costs are £840.00 Risk register and Assurance mapping. No finance checking has been actioned. <input type="checkbox"/> Cheshire East Finance team cost £720.00 per year - £240.00 per term they will discuss what the academy wants checking and set a list <p>Baker Tilly</p> <p>JY discussed that the Assurance Mapping had confirmed so much assurance – so they questioned control mechanisms in finance. The Governing body can now be assured that we are at a very high level of assurance. We thought we were good, but we now know we are good.</p> <p>Feedback confirms what we needed to get.</p> <p>A governor discussed her concerns about going to Cheshire East and questioned if it would be objective. She explained that what we want as a governing body to get from an internal auditor, is an external view of what we should be aware of. To set an audit plan at the beginning of the year, based on their advice, compare to what other schools have issues with. Request a light touch or in depth. But ask advice on what areas we should be focussed on and plan an audit plan to that level of need.</p> <p>Governors felt that it was better value to use a completely external company rather than the council.</p> <p>JY requested that AA contact Baker Tilly and ask them to look at Budget and Cash Flow for a half day, get quotes, and seek assurance. Get Chair to authorise if quote is suitable.</p> <p>A governor said that an Audit plan should be raised by the company in line with other education providers.</p> <p>It was agreed that whether or not to continue with them would be discussed in the Autumn term at the end of their first year.</p> <p>Pupil Numbers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> School has currently 484 pupils on roll with one place available in year 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery has currently 98 pupils places will be taken at Easter and 15 two year olds with places for up to 16. 	
<p>5. a.</p>	<p>Audit and Assurance</p> <p>Risk Register</p> <p>Shared in advance of the meeting with governors. JY had RAG rated the document which shows that Data was Green, with low concern.</p> <p>Website complying with Statutory regulations was RED – discussed that SB and AA plan to look at the company that had contacted us regarding the website and feedback to governors.</p>	<p>AA/SB</p>

	<p>A governor suggested that the use of an arrow to show if the value of the risk had risen or dropped would be useful, JY to implement for the next meeting. It was also suggested that the RAG rating was in line with the numbers. Governors agreed the following –</p> <p>RED – over 15</p> <p>AMBER – Over 5</p> <p>GREEN – 5 and under</p> <p>This will make it easy for governors to understand what the RAG rating is suggesting and show if it has been an increase or not.</p> <p>b. Governance & Trustees Statement</p> <p>It was noted that these were now complete and published within the accounts</p> <p>c. Benchmarking</p> <p>A benchmarking document had been distributed in advance of the meeting. JY shared the concern that it was for years 13/14 not 14/15. Although governors are very happy with the results and that it shows we are very much on a similar level to other schools of a similar size.</p> <p>d. Health & Safety</p> <p>A report was shared in advance of the meeting. It showed within the Statutory Compliance that Pressure Vessels must be tested:, this was not known before but has now been completed - 17/2/16</p> <p>JY informed that she does DBS spot checks and checks the Central Record periodically</p> <p>JY pointed out that the energy rating had improved from a D to C, showing impact of solar panels and new boilers working well.</p> <p>A H&S full audit is scheduled for the 23rd March – SHall to check if he can attend.</p> <p>JY confirmed there had not been any RIDDOR reportable accidents</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Estates</p> <p>Buildings</p> <p>It was confirmed for purpose of the minutes that further to the meeting which governors had attended in February, Capita had been agreed as the contractor for working with the Academy with regards to the feasibility project, including feasibility of expansion, new build or other options available. JY confirmed she was awaiting the feasibility project to start.</p> <p>Disability discrimination audit plan has taken place in school. This had been requested by Capita and by Statutory Compliance. So a company was brought in recently.</p> <p>There were some concerns over the results that the Site Manager is looking into, nothing to be overly concerned. A governor discussed that these things change frequently and are hard to keep up with. Details have been sent to Capita to be included in the feasibility planning.</p> <p>It was confirmed that externally there were no problems/concerns at all.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Impact/Value for Money</p> <p>Pupil Premium Report</p> <p>A report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. JY noted that this is now out dated. Note that it is now shown that Pupil Premium children are making as</p>	

	<p>much progress as non-Pupil Premium children. AA will request VR for an updated version and ask that it includes more on the impact.</p> <p>A governor questioned whether it will be sustainable to continue to pay for visits and that this is maybe looked at in the future. It was discussed that perhaps they could be subsidised in the future rather than pay the full amount. This will be looked at in the future</p> <p>Sports Premium</p> <p>A Sports Premium update had been distributed in advance of the meeting. SB explained that the expenditure showed the heavy investment in equipment which supports the commitment to the children and extra-curricular activities.</p> <p>A governor asked if the football was mixed gender. SB confirmed it was offered to both, but only one girl was on the team. However we were able to enter a team to the girls' tournament this year.</p> <p>Governors thanked SB for the detailed breakdown of expenditure.</p>	<p>AA</p> <p>JY/SB</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Directors Report</p> <p>A Directors Report Response had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>JY discussed the new EWO and Academy charges. She informed that Attendance is currently monitored heavily in school but that if we don't buy in to a package with Education Welfare then every phone call and email will be charged to the school at £30 each. Last year this would not have had an impact. However, we may have to look at a service level agreement. A governor asked how much would it cost; TG reported that it could be approximately £800. This will be looked into and reported in the Summer Term</p> <p>SB explained the new service, Operation Encompass, whereby any Domestic Violence incidents are reported directly to the school on the morning after an incident. The academy have had 12 calls, 7 of which have been for the same family. It has worked well so far in supporting children and families.</p> <p>JY confirmed that Insurance arrangements have been checked</p>	<p>JY/TG</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Policies</p> <p>The following policies had been distributed in advance of the meeting for review -</p> <p>Admissions Policy 2017 – 2018 - Updated</p> <p>Medical Conditions in School Policy - Updated</p> <p>Medications in School – Updated</p> <p>Governors Approved all changes with an amendment to a typo on the Admissions policy – “Academies” on the first line has a typo</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>More hours for play project</p> <p>A request was made for an increase in the play therapist's hours due to the increasing number of children that require the extra support, i.e. in care. Visiting Lecturers' budget will need to be increased to cover it. – Further information available in Part Two</p> <p>Writing project</p> <p>JY reported that the Academy had been accepted onto the writing project. Interest registered for a two year whole school project which would cost the</p>	

	<p>academy £12,500 over two years. It was due to start next year, and would also require 3 inset days over the two years. It was explained to be an exciting project that had been discussed in the T&L Committee meeting and that all staff would be dedicated to the project.</p> <p>A governor asked to explain what the outcome may be. JY explained that it was 'Talk for writing' – building up a sequence of skills and that it would mean that every teacher will be teaching the same way.</p> <p>A governor asked if governors can observe. JY confirmed this would be great and that they may also be able to attend the training days. This would be looked into. 12 schools have been accepted on to the project. JY certain that it will be great value for money.</p> <p>New caterers' progress</p> <p>TG and JY reported that they listen to the academy's requests and take on board their comments and views. The quality of the food is much better, the uptake is also much higher. TG is keeping an eye on costs. TG recently met with local schools and most schools have increased dinner costs from £2.10 to £2.20. It has been decided that the academy will increase the cost from September 2016. A governor asked if we are still profitable at £2.10, JY confirmed that we pay £2.02 per head. Transparency is required as at present the finances do not appear to be breaking even.</p>	
	<p>Date for Next Meeting Thursday 9th June 2016 @6pm</p>	

Signed - _____ Date - _____

Print Name - _____