



SKELTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL
Minutes of the Finance and Personnel Committee meeting
held on Tuesday 20th February 2018 at 6.15pm at the school

Present: Mr Chris Linfoot Mrs Alison Halley (Headteacher)
Mrs Hazel Greenwood (*from 19:15*) Mr Tim Stead

In Attendance: Mrs Elizabeth Kaye – School Finance Manager
Mrs Catherine Lajoinie – Governor Support Officer

1 Welcome, Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

There were no apologies for absence.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2017.

Previously distributed.

Resolved:

Governors considered and approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2017 as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The Chair was duly authorised to sign the minutes.

3 Action plan and matters arising not covered by the agenda

The Headteacher stated that with reference to the SENCO role, she had deferred training in order to check if her previous experience and training was still relevant in order to potentially save the school some revenue. Governors were informed that SENCO training was priced at £1,800.

With reference to the Action Plan:

AP1 – To follow. Governors were informed that water bills were currently on budget but it would be useful to establish the location of the meter.

AP2 – To follow. Governors were informed that there had been little contact with HLTY.

AP3 – Complete. The Headteacher noted that the playground was much improved and thanked Mr C Linfoot and Mrs E Kaye for their hard work.

4 Staffing Update

The Headteacher informed Governors of the following changes:

After School Club:

Governors were informed that the club co-ordinator had left her position without notice. HR at City of York Council had advised to stop payment from the date of her departure. It was noted that one member of staff had taken on extra work and interviews had been held for a club co-ordinator and to replace the current member of staff working after school club hours. A new club co-ordinator had been employed and would start on 6th March 2018. References were being sought for the other position. Cover was in place until notice had been worked elsewhere and references sought. Governors were reassured by the qualifications of the two people employed (one subject to references).

Year two TA:

Governors were informed that due to additional SEN needs within Year two, and the lack of additional staffing support, pupils' progress had begun to be impacted. Consequently there had been an internal TA recruitment process for one to one support for the SEN pupil concerned, following receipt of SEN funding.

Class three – replacement teacher:

Governors were informed that a new teacher had started in January 2018, and in response to a question, the Headteacher confirmed that the new teacher was coping well for her level of experience in a class with some 'tricky' behaviour; going on to add that experienced teachers had also been challenged by the behaviour issues present in the class. Governors were informed that on the whole, behaviour had improved in the class but certain challenges remained. In response to a question the Headteacher stated that Ofsted made some allowances for a newly qualified teacher (NQT), but if the teaching were not considered good enough it would be reported to the Headteacher. The School Finance Manager noted that the timescale and situation at hand had contributed to the lack of candidates and choice.

Early Years and Foundation Stage – new teacher:

The Headteacher stated that a new teacher had started at Christmas, and was doing very well. The LA had visited to assess her teaching and had stated that whilst they were happy with the teacher, the TA needed further skills' development. The Headteacher noted that the TA was popular and worked well with the children, and was being sent on various courses to develop her professional skills. The School Finance Manager confirmed that the TA was very popular with the pupils and added that she would need time to integrate the learning from her training and that she lacked confidence with other adults and in her own ability.

Governors discussed aspects related to a potential Ofsted Inspection, the separate Early Years judgement and the LA's opinion on potential risks to a 'good' judgement.

5 Budget Monitoring Report

Previously distributed.

The Headteacher noted that following Mr K Hayton's suggestion at the previous FGB to develop different budget scenarios for consideration, the School Finance Manager had done so and had circulated the scenarios to Governors prior to the meeting. The School Finance Manager noted that the Revised Budget, circulated at the November FGB, was in fact based on ten new starters and that further scenarios had been formulated based on six, ten and thirteen new starters.

The Headteacher stated that currently the school was only guaranteed six first choice Reception entrants.

The School Finance Manager advised that based on ten new starters, plus the included £30,000 donation, the predicted deficit at start of year 2018-2019 was c. **£3,000**, which increased to **c.£97,000** at the start of year 2019-2020. Governors were then informed that the monitoring report demonstrated where the school was in terms of this year's budget, noting that whilst the school was currently overspending it was on track in terms of what had been anticipated.

Governors were informed that most funding had now been received and it was noted that should additional income from nursery aged children, that had not been budgeted for, be received before the end of the financial year, then this year's deficit would disappear, c.£10,000. Other additional funding expected related to after school income, c.£3,000, and Pupil Premium funding.

The School Finance Manager stated that 71.2% of the budget had been spent as budgeted, although some instances were not clear. Governors discussed staffing expenditure and the following points were made:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Teaching staff | Roughly in line with anticipated expenditure.
More additional hours than anticipated.
Training budget was likely to increase into a negative variance. |
| Support staff | Expenditure was likely to increase in this area.
There were two new TAs:
One necessary for support to minimise impact on learning linked to behaviour.
French was now a statutory requirement, meaning the employment of a second TA who was also doing PPA cover work for two sessions per week.
Sports staff were on fixed term contracts until the end of the summer term – which gave some flexibility within the budget.
Catering staff – a negative variance was expected due to long term sickness absence. Governors were informed that the school was in touch with Occupational Health services and HR at City of York Council. Governors enquired regarding contractual obligations linked to sick pay, TUPE regulations and planned meetings in relation to this. |

In summary, the School Finance Manager noted that generally the school was on budget for 2017-2018, going on to add that with the anticipated extra £10,000 nursery funding and a few overspends, as outlined, the school should start at zero in 2018-2019.

Finally, the School Finance Manager informed Governors that the school was awaiting heating repair bills and added that external works were funded from various codes. It was noted that Learning Resources might also go over budget due to an unexpected charge from the maths consultant. Governors discussed the maths consultant, his work and whether he represented good value for money.

In response to a question, the School Finance Manager stated that the £30,000 donation had been entered into the 2018-2019 budget and added that the following year 2019-2020 was the currently pressing issue.

i. Deficit 2018-2019/2019-2020 planning

The School Finance Manager stated that the scenarios had been based on the Revised Budget with the £30,000 donation included.

- *Scenario one* – was based on six new starters in 2018
- *Scenario two* – was based on ten new starters in 2018 (the School Finance Manager cautioned that this scenario entailed the loss of infant class size ghost funding and consequently improvements were shown in Year two as opposed to Year one.)
- *Scenario three* – was based on thirteen new starters in 2018
- *Scenario four* – was based on ten new starters and a reduction to three classes from September 2018 (the School Finance Manager cautioned that she had only removed one teacher post costs and had not considered any other potential knock on effects.)

The Headteacher, in response to a question, stated that ideas were needed on how to save c.£97,000 and that options were limited. The Headteacher stated that the school needed more pupils, or would have to reduce the number of classes. The Headteacher outlined the situation regarding possible redundancy situations and the wish to avoid that if possible. It was noted that a number of staff were currently employed on fixed term contracts but, if they were employed for longer than one year, would become subject to permanent employment rights.

In response to a question, the School Finance Manager stated that 'on costs' for a teacher earning c.£22,000 per year were an approximate additional 26% on top of the salary. The Headteacher noted that if she left that would represent a sizable saving and suggested that the school could federate with another school with one Executive Headteacher; going on to add that the school would still need someone working as Head of school in this situation.

Hazel Greenwood arrived at 19:15

In response to a question, the Headteacher stated that a redundancy process for permanent staff would need to start in January in order to incorporate the set consultancy period.

The School Finance Manager stated a clear plan was need for the deficit in 2018-2019, but to ignore the c.£97,000 deficit in Year two would be irresponsible and would be cause for concern for both the LA and Ofsted. The Headteacher added that not to consider Year two's looming deficit might risk a grading of special measures for failure of leadership and management, noting that governors would be criticised for lack of action.

Governors discussed aspects related to infant class sizes, statutory regulations for EYFS, Key Stage one and Key Stage two, possibilities to stretch criteria and the people responsible for those decisions, statutory regulations surrounding Headteacher

teaching responsibilities, the resulting impact on strategic leadership and other responsibilities in a small school, executive Headteacher models, community views and cross key stage classes.

The Chair stated that in his opinion scenario four was the only viable financial option.

Governors then discussed numbers across three classes, associated staffing needed to manage the classes appropriately, staff willingness to work in such a model, other schools in the area, the current and historical contexts.

The Chair proposed that Scenario four be taken to FGB for further discussion.

The School Finance Manager In response to a question stated that 2019-2020 budget would be examined more closely at this point next year, but with respect to staffing planning would need to begin much earlier; going on to note that scenario four would entail the school implementing three classes from September 2018. In addition to this the School Finance Manager noted that the proposed scenario still entailed approximately **£18-19,000** in-year deficit.

The School Finance Manager noted that it was not possible to make any further cuts in the budget under ICT or resources. The Headteacher suggested that the first step would be to lose one or one and half teachers, but this could have further ramifications on remaining staff members' desire to remain at the school. Governors were informed that a decision had to be made at the next FGB on 12th March 2018.

Governors discussed possible savings related to catering, the new National Funding Formula, cohorts and possible dynamics, local reactions to cross year groups and larger classrooms. The Headteacher stressed the need to generate income and cut expenditure. There was a discussion regarding general problems across school budgets, on costs, increasing salaries, reductions in funding, fuel costs and reductions in pupil numbers.

Resolved:

Governors agreed to take scenario four to FGB for discussion.

6 Capital Spending Review

The School Finance Manager stated that the school had budgeted a spend of c.£7,500 which would be reached. Expenditure related to:

- Wifi
- Fencing
- Projectors
- Work above the boiler room
- Roofing
- Re-routed pipe work

Governors were informed that the school would carry forward approximately £6,000 and should start the financial year with approximately £10,000.

7 Audit

The Headteacher stated that Veritau had completed a very comprehensive audit over two days and had examined finance, Health and Safety policies and practice, some safeguarding, and administration cash handling and procedures. Governors were informed that the school was hopeful that the report would be positive.

8 MAT Due Diligence

The Headteacher stated that there was nothing further to report on this and the school was still awaiting contact from HLT. Governors were informed that the Chief Operations Officer at HLT had stated that Skelton's Due Diligence would be proposed at the Board of Trustees meeting in April. It was also noted that City of York Council conversion processes were slow.

9 School Fund Update/Review

The School Finance Manager stated that the School Fund was within tolerance of not needing to register with the Charity Commission and reminded Governors that funds for the residential trip were put into BAFS (bank account for school) and not the School Fund.

Governors were informed that funds related to photography, school fairs, and parental contributions to trips. It was noted that FOS had donated a number of times towards the cost of coaches.

Governors were informed that the school had raised £473 directly for charities and had started to charge for school performance tickets. An earlier donation of £2,000 from Mr T Stead had been spent on after school club resources and equipment, whilst funds from a Sycamore class fundraiser would be ring-fenced for a fun activity for that class.

10 Benchmarking

Tabled.

The School Finance Manager stated that the data on the Department for Education Benchmarking website was historic – 2015-2016 - and was therefore of questionable relevance. Governors were informed that the School Finance Manager had selected schools within the LA who had less than 150 pupils for benchmarking comparison. Governors were informed that 2016-2017 data were expected during the Summer term and that income could be tracked comparatively per school and expenditure on key areas could be compared also; for example premises, supplies and services.

The Headteacher advised that a utilities' costs comparison could be useful, but added that Skelton was a large school which was costly. The School Finance Manager noted that a comparison of in-year balances was interesting noting that Skelton had higher on costs than other schools and carried forward smaller amounts. It was noted that low pupil numbers was a key issue.

11 External Contracts

The School Finance Manager informed Governors that the City of York Council's Services for Schools were starting to offer different options; going on to add that the school would stay with certain services into the coming year and were currently submitting intentions to purchase.

Grounds maintenance:

Governors were informed that the current provider, Mighty, was sourced through City of York Council. Following a meeting with the School Finance Manager and Mr C Linfoot, they had confirmed that they were happy to fulfil a contract at the same price as the previous year with a couple of extra services included. Mighty had also been asked to provide a price for the removal of the silver birch tree near the early years provision.

Catering:

Governors were informed that the current contract would end at the end of July. The School Finance Manager stated that she would ask North Yorkshire County Caterers to provide a price for the school to buy in meals and possible transport. Governors discussed redundancy formulae.

ICT:

Governors discussed the service and resources provided by Vital. The Headteacher and School Finance Manager noted that this had been a successful relationship and represented good value for money.

Resolved:

Governors recommended that the Vital contract be renewed for one year from April.

*Agenda:
F&P*

Caretaking and Cleaning:

Governors were informed that the Betterclean contract would end at the end of July. It was noted that a consistently good service had not been provided to the school by Betterclean and there was currently no additional help available from HLT. Governors discussed the possibility of taking cleaning and caretaking in-house, the costs and the need to offset the cost of any necessary equipment against savings in the first year, in addition to staff costs. Governors agreed to discuss this further at the April meeting.

*Agenda:
F&P*

Sports:

Governors were informed that Total Sports provision had been reduced from two to one day per week at the end of July. The Headteacher noted that whilst the provision was very good the school felt they had to reduce the number of days due to financial pressures. There was a discussion regarding the use of Sports Premium funds.

12 Sports Premium Funding

The School Finance Manager stated that the majority of improvements had been made to the external sport environment (playground markings and ball hoop), but in addition to this the school had purchased a software planning tool, free gymnastics sessions for half a term, one day a week provision from Total Sports and drama workshops at the Theatre Royal.

13 Policy Review:

- i. Budget Management Policy***
- ii. Charging and Remissions Policy***

Resolved:

Governors considered and approved both the policies listed above, 13.i and 13.ii.

14 Any Other Business

Governors discussed the committee membership and the current vacancy unfilled. A Governor stated that he would discuss the possibility of joining the Committee with another Governor.

Action:
CL

15 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 24th April 2018 at 6.30pm (Start Budget)

The meeting ended at 8.40pm

Signed _____

Mr T Stead – (Chair of the Committee)

_____ Date

Action Points from the meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee held on Tuesday 20th February 2018			
Action	Item	Who	When
1. Mr C Linfoot agreed to enquire regarding interest in a vacancy on the Finance and Personnel Committee	14	CL	Asap

Items for F&P Committee:

Caretaking and cleaning contract (April)