



TOWER HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Fowler Road, Farnborough, Hampshire. GU14 0BW

Minutes of Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting

held virtually on-line on **Thursday 4th March 2021 at 6:30 pm**

Present: Heather Chapman (HC), Camilla Collins (CJC), Kieran Collins (KC), Gemma McDermid (GM), Laura Ovenden (LO, **Headteacher** (HT)), Nicola Ward (NW, Deputy HT), Mark Whitehead (**Committee Chair**, MW)

Apologies: Roger Panter (RP)

Absent: None

In attendance: Emma Dinsdale (ED), Jane Fitzpatrick (JF, Senior Admin Officer), Rachael Purvis (Clerk)

Meeting started at: 6:45 pm

		Action
1.	Welcome The Chair welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting the start of which was delayed due to connection problems.	
2.	Apologies for Absence, Declaration of Pecuniary Interests / Conflicts of Interest	
2.1	Apologies for absence were accepted from RP. The meeting was quorate.	
2.2	There were no conflicts of interest or pecuniary interests declared in any of the agenda items.	
3.	Minutes of the last meeting	
3.1	The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 th November 2020 were agreed and will be signed electronically on Governor Hub and by the Committee Chair as a true and accurate record once meetings in person have resumed.	
3.2	Actions arising from the previous meeting were reviewed and recorded on the summary table of Outstanding Actions (page 4) at the end of these minutes.	
3.3	All actions were completed and one matter arising was discussed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The completed Statement of Financial Expectations (SFE) had been circulated before the meeting. The HT had checked for any updated guidance for its completion, but finding nothing she and MW had based the SFE on last year's statement. Governors accepted the SFE. 	
4.	Budget Update 2020/21	
4.1	Review spend to date on 2020/21 budget The budget reports were circulated prior to the meeting and the HT highlighted the following points to governors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>3900 Electricity</u>: as highlighted in RP's Energy Billing Analysis, the spend on electricity in the autumn term had been the highest ever to date. The HT explained that this was directly related to COVID and the need to keep windows and doors open for ventilation as a safety measure, resulting in the heating being turned up higher than usual. • <u>3942 Hire of Accommodation and Facilities</u>: an old invoice for swimming was still awaited and hence had not been paid. The HT remarked that the Farnborough Recreation Centre's four year closure was going to have a huge impact going forward. JF had spoken to their Swimming Programme leader from who had offered to investigate other offerings that might be available through one of their other centres. However this would mean use of a minibus to transport the children as they would no longer be within walking distance. The HT was keen to make some provision for swimming in the future as it was a priority to give children the opportunity to learn to swim. • <u>4070 Cleaning Services</u>: the current slight overspend was expected to increase before the end 	

Minutes signed by (PRINT)..... Signature.....

Position..... Date.....

of the financial year. This was despite the increase made to the budget line in the November 2020 Revision. The cleaning costs were essential to ensure COVID safety.

- 4330 Sports Premium: this was currently under spent as clubs and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) had been curtailed due to COVID however, the team were looking at ways to spend it. The HT had not received any communication from Department for Education (DfE) as to whether it would be possible to carry funding over into next year.
- 4494 Purchase of IT Equipment: currently this was under spent as nothing had been required to be purchased. The DfE had provided 50 new laptops / devices and second hand equipment had been donated to families via Fleet Lions.
- 5097 Hire of IT Equipment: this money had not been used as it had not been necessary to hire Chromebooks.
- 5414 Day Activities: a number of day activities had been planned and had taken place in the autumn term; however they had not been able to go ahead this term.
- 6565 Catch Up Funding: two tranches of funding had now been received. They had totalled slightly more than had been anticipated. Included had been a Winter Grant payment of just over £6k in December 2020 for the provision of meal vouchers in the Christmas and February half term holidays.
- 6726 Meals, Refreshments and Catering: this income was severely impacted by the lockdown this term.
- 6798 Fundraising: the HT was pleased at how much fundraising had been achieved in very difficult circumstances.
- 7003 Breakfast Club: this was similarly impacted by the current lockdown.
- 7211 Day Trips & 7212 Residential Trips: both had been impacted by COVID. However, it was hoped that the Year 6 residential trip would still take place in the summer term as planned.
- 7690 Additional Grant for Schools: an additional £4k had been received to help provide extra meals going forward into 2020/21.
- 7691 High Needs Top Up Funding: it was expected that this would have been received by the end of February 2021, however it was still awaited.
- 7703 Reimburse COVID: the last instalment had finally been received.

The HT and JF summarised that the budget was on track for the end of the financial year and no major expenses were anticipated in the final month.

Q: Why was the reimbursement for COVID higher than anticipated? Had more been spent? A claim had been submitted for March to July 2020 and a second claim in December 2020 for the autumn term. The second claim was made after the budget revision in November 2020 and in practice, it had been possible to claim slightly more than budgeted.

Q: Are you able to say anything about the surplus level expected at the end of the year? It was difficult for the HT to comment on this. There was still a full month left and other expenses to be paid out. Ground works that had not yet been completed would be considered prior to year end if there was more surplus than expected.

Thanks were extended to JF for all her hard work in preparing the budget summary reports.

4.2 Devolved Capital Funds

The Capital Fund currently stood at £38k. The following invoices were expected which would reduce this to £24k:

- £4k Rompa invoice for the sensory Room.
- £10k invoice for the Learning Zone.

Looking ahead to next financial year the HT was exploring the possibility of installing an additional room outside, similar to a 'garden office' structure. The aim was to alleviate some of the pressure on space in the school once all the children returned.

Q: Where do you plan to put the room? At the back of the Tansley Tower tucked away on a small area of field. The HT was also considering wooden 'pods' on the playground.

Q: Would the size of the building be sufficient for a whole class? It was uncertain whether this would be feasible. Whilst ideally a space for a whole class would be good, it was anticipated it might

	only cater for smaller group sizes e.g. Emotional Learning Support (ELSA) groups. It would be necessary to consider the full cost involved including electricity and heating.	
5.	Budget forward planning 2021/22	
5.1	<p>Census implications</p> <p>The new budget for 2021/22 had been received from HCC and looked positive at initial inspection. The following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Growing School' status and funding no longer applied. • The budget was based on 416 children, which compared well with the 413 currently in school. • There was an increase of 10 Pupil Premium (PP) children and five service children. • Deprivation funding had been reduced by £30k. The HT had noticed that the children allocated to different bands in the Budget Share seemed to have shifted and wondered if this had been the reason. • The minimum funding guarantee had increased since last year. <p>Q: Is this the next stage of the new funding formula being implemented? Possibly. Overall, the end outcome seems to be good.</p> <p>Teachers' Pay Grant payments would be included in the budget going forward and therefore it was no longer possible to make a like for like comparison with previous budgets.</p> <p>Q: How are there three more children in the budget than currently in school? The budget number was taken from the census conducted in October 2020. Since then pupils have left and joined the school and hence the number has fluctuated.</p>	
5.2	<p>School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP) Priorities</p> <p><i>The Zoom meeting link timed out at 7:13 pm and was re-established with all participants at 7:15 pm.</i></p> <p>The current SIDP will be continuing into the next financial year and 'Environment' will be the main area of development impacting on the budget as everything else will be funded through other means such as PP and Catch Up Funding.</p> <p>Looking ahead to September 2021 the HT anticipated that English and staff development would potentially have an impact on the budget, in addition to creating additional space for learning. She commented that the staff team was a mix of very experienced teachers and those who had only recently qualified and then had a very untypical year in 2020/21. She would therefore like to ensure the development support they need going forward.</p> <p>The HT requested that she felt this agenda item and the following one on the staffing structure (item 5.3) would be better addressed at the next FGB meeting.</p> <p>Action: Amend the annual agenda planner to include SDP priorities and staff structure discussions at the May F&P and then May FGB.</p>	
5.3	<p>Staff Structure</p> <p>The HT reported the following staffing updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both staff who were previously on supply contracts had been transferred to school contracts. The Single Central Register (SCR) had been checked to ensure the process was completed properly. • The new 'Right to Work' checks had been followed for one of these new members of staff. • One teacher was due to complete her Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) year at Easter, overseen by NW. Hampshire County Council (HCC) had moderated the training she had received and a glowing report had been received. • The new Year 1 teacher Kate Probert was now in post and the HT was looking forward to the team being able to benefit from her outdoor learning skills. • Governors congratulated ED on her pregnancy. The HT would determine the impact on staffing. <p><i>See confidential minutes.</i></p>	Clerk
5.4	<p>Staff Training Budget</p> <p>NW had circulated the CPD plan to governors prior to the meeting. It was noted that the title should</p>	

	<p>read 'Staff Development Plan April 2020 to March 2021'.</p> <p>Governors were very impressed at the extent to which staff development had continued despite the pandemic. The team were looking at ways of disseminating training received to the wider staff team and it was hoped that there would be a couple of further courses attended before the end of the financial year.</p>	
6.	<p>School Financial Value Standard (SFVS)</p> <p>The deadline for submission of the SFVS to HCC had been postponed to 28th May 2021. However, the HT had prepared much of the submission and it would now be passed to JF and MW to check before being brought to the next committee meeting on 13th May 2021. The HT reported there had not been any major changes to the previous year's submission.</p> <p>Q: Do you have everything you need to complete the submission? Yes. The skills matrix and benchmarking were in place.</p>	
7.	<p>Control Checks</p> <p>KC updated governors on the status of the Control Checks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MW had been completed the following checks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Income ○ Purchase Card ○ Petty Cash • MW would be looking at the Payroll and SCR checks in mid March 2021. • The IT Asset Register check was postponed to the summer term when all the items of IT that were currently out on loan would be back in school. • It was noted that Chris Caswell (CC) had conducted the SCR check in the autumn term and focussed his check on the Safer Recruitment Process. It was recommended that MW use this process for the check he was due to conduct and CJC forwarded him an email describing it. • CJC agreed to undertake the Purchase Card and SCR checks due in May 2021. <p>KC noted the following with regard to the benchmarking exercise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tower Hill's 'profile' was fairly stable. • As in previous years spend on meals was high but was recovered through income. • As demonstrated through NW's CPD report, spend on training was high but this was a conscious choice made by the school to invest in its staff. • It was noted that the benchmarking was based on 2019 data and that future comparisons against the current year would highlight what an odd year 2020/21 had been. 	
8.	<p>Any Notified Business</p> <p>The committee members were universal in their praise of the quality of reporting to them. They very much appreciated the time and effort spent in addressing any issues they might have questioned in advance with their comprehensive commentary.</p>	
8.	<p>Date of next meeting: 13th May 2021 at 6:30 pm</p>	

The meeting closed at 7:34 pm.

FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Action	By Whom	By When	Status
12/11/2020	6	Investigate and organise the Statement of Financial Expectations control check.	MW		COMPLETE
4/3/2021	5.2	Amend the annual agenda planner to include SDP priorities and staff structure discussions at the May F&P and then May FGB.	Clerk	25/3/2021 FGB	

F&P STANDING AGENDA ITEMS / CONTROL CHECKS 2020/21

Item	Autumn	Spring	Summer	By whom
	*Date set	Date set	Date set	
Manual of Financial Practice & Procedure (annually)	COMPLETED FGB 24/09/20			FGB
Payroll check (annually)		Mar 21		MW
Purchase Card check (3 checks per year / termly reports to F&P committee)	COMPLETED Nov 2020	COMPLETED Feb 21	May 21	MW, MW, CJC
Petty Cash (annually)		COMPLETED Feb 21		MW
Benchmarking (annually)		COMPLETED Feb 21		KC
Income (annually)		COMPLETED Feb 21		MW
IT asset register (annually)		Postponed to Summer Term	May 21	
Statement of Financial Expectations (annually)	COMPLETED			MW
Single Central Register	COMPLETED OCT 2020	Mar 21	May 21	CC, MW, CJC

***Control checks** – date of actual check included in table. Report on control check to be added to agenda of F&P for relevant month / term.

Key:

	No Check due this term
	Check completed
	Check due this term