



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

**Minutes of Finance & Personnel Committee Meeting**

held online on **Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024** at 6:30 pm

**Present:** Melody Baxter (MB), Nick Brown (NB), Camilla Collins (CC), Kieran Collins (KC), Laura Ovenden (LO, **Headteacher** (HT)), Nicola Ward (NW, Deputy HT),

**Apologies:** Emma Dinsdale (ED), Mark Whitehead (**Committee Chair**, MW)

**Absent:** None

**In attendance:** Jane Fitzpatrick (JF, Business Manager), Rachael Purvis (Clerk)

**Meeting started at:** 6:32 pm

<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome</b> NB welcomed everyone to the meeting and checked everyone could hear and be heard.	<b>Action</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence, Declaration of Pecuniary Interests / Conflicts of Interest</b>	
2.1	Apologies for absence were accepted for ED and MW. In MW's absence, NB chaired the meeting. The meeting was quorate.	
2.2	No pecuniary interests or conflicts of interest were declared in any of the agenda items.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Minutes of the last meeting</b>	
3.1	The minutes of the previous meeting held on 18 <sup>th</sup> June 2024 were agreed and the minutes would be electronically signed as a true and accurate record by the Committee Chair and stored electronically on Governor Hub.	
3.2	Actions arising from the previous meeting were reviewed and recorded on the summary table of Outstanding Actions at the end of these minutes.	
3.3	Matters arising from the actions are summarised below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Fundraising items</u>: Governors discussed fundraising through supermarket nominations. A nomination had been made to the local Asda store and it was agreed that governors should make similar nominations if they came across any opportunities.</li> <li><u>Focus on Speech and Language Development</u>: At the last meeting governors had discussed taking a proposal to the Full Governing Body (FGB) for speech and language development because the Pre-School Link Worker (PSLW) was not being replaced. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HT had ensured that others had been trained in the NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention) Programme. Speech and language were a focus area across the school with Emma Ramsier taking the lead.</li> <li><b>Q: Is a proposal to FGB needed now?</b> No; Pupil Premium (PP) funding and a focus through the School Improvement and Development Plan (SIDP) were in place.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Budget Review</b>	
4.1	<b>Spend to Date Review for 2023/24</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At half way through the year, variance was expected to be 50% from the budget.</li> <li><u>Line 2390 Supply Teaching</u>: More had been spent than desired, especially considering winter illness cover in the coming term. However, a teacher was being employed to support NW in class teaching. This resulted in a reduction in the teaching staff line and the two budget lines would be re-balanced at revision.</li> <li><u>Line 3740 General Maintenance</u>: This line was running very low which was a concern should</li> </ul>	

Minutes signed by (PRINT): MARK WHITEHEAD

Signature: *Mark Whitehead*

Position: CHAIR OF F&P COMMITTEE

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024

Page 1 of 5

something break and the HT would consider rebalancing this.

- Line 3956 Water Meter: There was a slight concern over the level of water charges.
  - **Q: Why has the cost suddenly increased; is there a leak?** There was an issue in the Tansley Tower with water temperature regulation meaning that the site manager Andrew Ward (AW) had needed to regularly empty the water tank to avoid Legionella. However, AW had received updated instructions that, as long as there was movement in the water tank, it was not necessary to empty the tank completely which should reduce water usage. It was noted that in the summer there would still be a requirement to water the gardens.
- Line 4663 Cost of Meals Provided: Following the appointment of Clever Chefs, additional money had been put into this line in case of unanticipated expenses. A £10k bill had just been paid, but the HT expected there may be some spare funding which could be changed at the budget revision.
- Line 4878 Hired Contract Services: Included within this line were Hampshire Inspection and Advisory Services (HIAS) charges and £4k would cover HIAS inspections. It also included Learning Zone training for the HT, NW and JF and bought in After School Clubs. The line was fully spent and there was a concern for future terms. JF explained that Education Finance Services (EFS) had moved the allocation of monies to different lines and she would need to re-allocate the budget accordingly.
- Line 5668 Technical / Professional Consultant: This line suffered that same re-allocation problem as 4878 and JF would amend this at revision.
- Line 6565 Catchup Funding: National Tutoring Funding had been received but this would be clawed back as it was not used last year. Initially, when the funding had been introduced it had been used very beneficially. Now that the school was required to match 60% of the funding, it was no longer helpful and hence the unspent money would be clawed back.
- Line 7444 Interest: Unexpectedly, the school had received an interest payment at the end of last year from Hampshire. EFS had assured JF that another payment would be made.
  - **Q: Would the Clever Chefs saving offset this?** Yes, however the HT would rather it did not.
  - **Q: Is there a real risk that the payment will not be received?** It was felt that this would be very unlikely given EFS's assurance.
  - **Q: Where does the interest come from?** The school is allocated a share of the interest earned from Hampshire's accounts. This payment would be for the previous year's interest. It was noted that interest rates would be falling in future.

The budget was in largely in line. JF and the HT had started looking at the November Budget Revision and in particular the staffing implications. It was noted that the teachers' pay rise, backdated to September, would need to be considered at budget revision. EFS had not yet received direction from the government about how this would be paid for. There was also support staff pay, back dated to April, to be finalised.

#### 4.2

#### Devolved Capital Budget

The most recent spend from the Capital Funds had been for the renovation of the Year 3 shelter.

**Q: Does the capital funding have to be applied for?** No; an annual allocation of approximately £8k to £8.5k is made to the school which is kept in reserve.

**Q: What happens if there is a sudden major need e.g. a new roof?** The school roof and other major structural items were taken care of by Hampshire. The school paid a Service Level Agreement which covered maintenance and structural issues. However, the school would now need to cover things such as the kitchen and its equipment because they no longer used the county catering service. Plenty of money had been put into the catering line as a contingency.

**Q: What is the state of the kitchen equipment? Is it aging and do we need to put money aside?** The kitchen was refurbished recently and new ovens were installed. However, the dishwasher may need replacing in the future.

Other items that capital funds could be spent on were IT. There was a meeting scheduled with the school's IT partner Harrap to conduct a RAG rated audit of the school's needs. The HT mentioned that Microsoft 11 upgrades could have an impact, as would any need to update the server, laptops, iPads etc.

5.	<p><b>Feedback from the Pay Committee</b></p> <p>The Pay Committee had met prior to this meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2024. They had reviewed samples of anonymised performance management paperwork for teachers, support and leadership staff. Everything had been agreed by governors.</p> <p>The committee had also discussed the pay and performance management policies.</p> <p><b>Q: What was the purpose of the Pay Committee's review?</b> It was a moderation of the implementation of the pay and performance award system.</p>	
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p> <p>6.3</p> <p>6.4</p>	<p><b>Policy Review</b></p> <p><b>Performance Management Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This was based on a model Hampshire policy. It was noted that there would be changes to the policy to come in the following year.</li> <li>The government were looking at changing the statutory requirement for performance related pay and staff being able to take their Preparation and Planning Allowance (PPA) off-site.</li> <li><b>Q: Do you have any concerns over these proposals?</b> No. The HT commented that it would be interesting to see whether performance management would have the same level of importance. Currently a lot of time was spent on performance management and the HT regarded it as a useful tool, not just to be able to award additional pay, but also in motivating people to do well.</li> <li>It was noted that the school had a number of staff at the top of their payscale who therefore did not receive performance pay awards, however, they still valued the process. Staff wanted to receive feedback and positive feedback in particular.</li> <li><b>DECISION:</b> The Performance Management Policy was approved by governors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pay Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HT had prepared a localised version of the model policy. The model policy had not been formally issued as the consultation process had not yet concluded. However, governors needed to approve the use of the model policy or inform county by the end of the month if they did not wish to use it.</li> <li><b>DECISION:</b> Governors approved the use of the model Pay Policy.</li> <li><b>DECISION:</b> Governors recommended in principle the localised model Pay Policy to the FGB for approval, bar any changes to the model policy.</li> <li>It was noted that all staff had received copies of the Pay Policy and Performance Management Policy and had an opportunity to comment on them.</li> </ul> <p><b>Model Lesson Observation Protocol</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No changes or questions were raised on the Model Lesson Observation Policy which was an integral part of the Performance Management Policy.</li> <li><b>DECISION:</b> Governors approved the Model Lesson Observation Policy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Charging and Remissions Policy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No changes or questions were raised on the Charging and Remissions Policy which was an integral part of the Performance Management Policy.</li> <li><b>DECISION:</b> Governors approved the Charging and Remissions Policy.</li> </ul>	
7.	<p><b>Control Checks</b></p> <p>KC reported that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Manual of Personnel Practice had been adopted at the 26<sup>th</sup> September FGB meeting.</li> <li>The Purchase Card check would be carried out by MW with JF in the following week.</li> <li>KC would conduct a check on the Single Central Register next week.</li> <li>Checks for the spring term would be considered at the next F&amp;P meeting in November.</li> </ul>	

8.	<b>Any Notified Business</b> There was no notified business.	
8.	<b>Date of next meeting:</b> 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2024, 6:30pm, online.	

The meeting closed at 7:12 pm.

#### FINANCE & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

Date of meeting	Agenda item	Action	By Whom	By When	Status
9/5/2024	7	Put a list of fundraising items on Governor Hub for governors to use when making supermarket nominations.	NW	ASAP	COMPLETE
9/5/2024	7	Make fundraising nominations for Tower Hill in local supermarkets.	All	ASAP	COMPLETE
18/6/2024	4.1	Take proposal to FGB to provide a new focus on Speech and Language development.	HT	18 July 2024 FGB	COMPLETE

#### 2024/25 WATCHLIST

<b>Leadership structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative leadership structures to reduce costs and minimise impact on children.</li> </ul>
<b>School Trips</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of subsidy</li> <li>Number of trips</li> <li>Parents' ability to pay for trips</li> </ul>
<b>PP Income</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of PP children at October 2023 census was 97 as input to 2024/25 budget</li> <li>Impact on income</li> </ul>
<b>High Needs Top-Up Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance of the additional funding awarded in 2023/24.</li> </ul>
<b>Staffing assumptions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing assumptions for years 2 and 3 should be reviewed and monitored.</li> </ul>

## F&P STANDING AGENDA ITEMS / CONTROL CHECKS 2024/25

Item	Autumn	Spring	Summer	By whom
	*Date set	Date set	Date set	
Adoption of Manual of Financial Practice & Procedure (annually)	<b>COMPLETED Sept 24</b>			FGB
Payroll check (annually)		<b>Feb 25</b>		MW & NB
Purchase Card check (3 checks per year / termly reports to F&P committee)	<b>Oct 24</b>	<b>Mar 25</b>	<b>Jul 25</b>	MW & NB
Petty Cash (annually)		<b>Feb 25</b>		MW & NB
Benchmarking (annually)		<b>Feb 25</b>		F&P Committee
Income (annually)		<b>Feb 25</b>		MW & NB
IT asset register (annually)			<b>Jun 25</b>	OG
Single Central Register	<b>Oct 24</b>	<b>Feb 25</b>	<b>Jun 25</b>	KC
Performance Management Process (to be continued after Oct 24 as part of Pay Committee business)	<b>COMPLETED Oct 2024</b>			Pay Committee

\***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.

	No Check due this term
	Check completed
	Check due this term