

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF ST MATTHEW'S GOVERNING BODY, HELD AT SCHOOL ON THURSDAY, 1st MAY, 2014 AT 6.15 P.M.

Present: Zoe Thorn (Chair), Martin Smart, Carole Mills, Joanna Dean, Lucy Walker, Sarah Ransome, Kevin Blencowe, Melissa Hatcher, Carrie Rice, Tony Davies (Headteacher), Kate Spencer-Allen (Assistant Headteacher), Adrian Strowger (School Business Manager), Ray Byford (School Financial Adviser), Anne Maskell (Clerk to Governing Body)

Today's meeting was open to all governors.

1. Apologies for absence

ACTION

None received.

2. Declaration of pecuniary interests

Governors present had no additional interests to declare.

3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 6th March, were agreed as an accurate record.

Absence insurance – an update to the budgetary toolkit has brought down charges as we have received a rebate. It will still be worth investigating other sources in due course.

**Adrian
Adrian**

Solar panels – Adrian has established who our contact is and is following up.

The task group to look at online payments/e.communications has met. Ray said that schools can go out to tender for banking services if they wish – they are not tied to Barclays, although most schools use them. Adrian was asked to look into this when time permits.

Adrian

The report from the recent investigation is now complete and has been shared with Martin, Zoe and Maxine Flynn, our EPM contact. It has not yet been discussed with the member of staff concerned so the contents must remain confidential at the moment. Governors asked if there could be some clarification of the issues leading to the current situation. Tony said that the budget set last year had been realistic, but a number of unexpected issues had arisen – implications of a large number of maternity covers; an increased number of SEN statements (this was the first year in which schools became liable for the first £6K of every statement); the difficulty of predicting utility costs for the new building (and some inaccurate and late billing from providers) and some substantial sickness absence. The cumulative effect of all of these had led to significant variance figures in certain areas of the budget. These should have been picked up during the ongoing monitoring process but the information did not come through in financial reports. There were particular issues with budgetary profiling. Ray said that a level of checks is being put in place this financial year to ensure that the phasing is correct.

4. Review of terms of reference for Resources Committee

- 1.3 to be changed from Personnel Committee to Resources Committee.

- 3.2 to be amended to state that meetings are set termly.
- Governors felt it would be more realistic to amend 5.1 to papers being distributed at least **five** days before the meetings as this tends to be the usual practice.
 - 5.2 will be amended to read 'A summary of decisions taken and points for action will be noted in a record of the proceedings of the meeting'.
 - 6c to be changed from Finance Committee to Resources Committee.
 - 6h to be reworded '...monitor the staff appraisal process and related staff development.'

5. Review of end of year position, 2013-14

A year-end budgetary control report and key points summary had been distributed prior to the meeting. Some accruals have been made but not in all cases (e.g. lettings). Governors commented on the unpredictability of budgeting for SEN provision when children with statements can come on roll at any time during the academic year. Ray said that schools can apply for contingency funding if statements are above a certain level for the size of school, but in our case this would need to rise to a very high figure to attract extra funding, probably 25-26 children.

The year-end bank balance includes both revenue and capital budgets. Ray confirmed that there has been no fee charged for the short-term cash advance loan. The Devolved Formula Capital Budget allocation dropped by about 80% to all schools a few years ago. Some lobbying is current taking place to try to redress the situation. Governors asked if depreciation of assets was costed into the budget. Tony said that this was not done at present but it is something we could consider.

6. Draft budget for the 2014-15 financial year

Copies of the draft budget for 2014-15 and an accompanying report had been circulated to all governors.

The budget shows that we are likely to end the financial year with a deficit of c. £30K. Any attempts to reduce this further by making significant cutbacks in certain areas were felt to be unwise and could impact on children's education. With a likely addition of £80-90K of extra funding in the 2015-16 budget the situation should resolve itself.

Governor asked if there would be any possible comeback if the costs of running the new buildings was significantly higher than anticipated. Tony said his was unlikely, and routine maintenance would also have to be factored in to manage the buildings effectively. Some warranties are still in place.

Temperature control in the new buildings is still being investigated, and Joe Ackers from the County Council is working with the architects and other consultants. Temperature monitors have been put into the classrooms and Adrian is monitoring figures in the central plant room. The architects are looking at whether the heat exchange system has been set up correctly and filters are being cleaned during half term week. Governors asked for reassurance that air-conditioning units would be put into classrooms immediately this year if the situation deteriorates and Tony said this would definitely be the case.

Tony's report looked in detail at the proposed allocations within the revenue and capital budgets and itemises how the pupil premium and sports premium funding is being utilised. Governors asked if it was possible to judge how pupil premium funding was impacting on the

achievement of eligible children. Tony said this was difficult to gauge as there was no benchmark. How would the children have fared without this additional support? It is certainly the case that pupil premium children are not achieving as highly as we would like, but a number of last year's cohort had significant emotional difficulties which were a contributory factor to their under-achievement. We are currently evaluating the effectiveness of the various catch-up programmes used in school and a report will come to Curriculum Committee in due course.

Governors agreed the draft budget and recommended it go forward to the FGB meeting next week for final ratification.

7. Staffing update

Hannah Paradis has now left and started at a new school nearer to where she lives. Her maternity pay is being reimbursed to the school. Marie Bushen, who has been on secondment from Histon and Impington Primary School is now on a permanent contract at St Matthew's. Deborah Lambell has given notice and is leaving in July to return to Dubai. Advertisements for a full-time KS2 teacher and a 2-day per week maternity cover post in KS2 are being placed this week, with a deadline for applications of 12th May and interviews scheduled for the 16th. After nearly 30 years at St Matthew's Eileen Dellar is retiring at the end of this academic year.

8. Any other business

No items raised.

9. Date of the next meeting

Thursday, 6th November at 6.15 p.m.