



The John Fisher School

Resources Committee – 19th March 2024 – Part A minutes

Governors:			
Mr Noel McEvilly (NM)	Foundation Governor - Co-Chair		Apologies
Mr Aidan Tierney (ATi)	Foundation Governor - Co-Chair	Present	
Mr A Theobald (AT)	Foundation Governor	Present	
Mr R Lawton (RL)	Staff Governor		Apologies
Ms G Grabowski (GG)	Foundation Governor	Present	
Dr Anita McGowan (AM)	Foundation Governor		Apologies
Ms Nathalie Walsh (NW)	Parent Governor	Present	
Mr Robert Teague (RT)	Headteacher and Ex-Officio	Present	
Mr A Dean (AD)	Staff Governor		Apologies

Attendees: Mr Michael Boyle (MB), Finance Manager
Mrs J Addison (JA) - CEP Governance Clerk

ITEM	MINUTES	Action
	Opening prayer by RT	
1.	<p>Apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from NME, RLA and AMG which were accepted.</p> <p>RT noted that RL had expressed his intention to step down as a Staff Governor and that once notice had been received an election would need to be held.</p> <p>ADE (Assistant Head Teacher) had sent apologies that he was unable to attend.</p> <p>Michael Boyle, the new Finance Manager was welcomed and thanked for attending. He would be taking up his post from 15th April 2024.</p> <p>The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes from the previous meeting</p> <p>DECISION: The minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2023 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and approved by all governors.</p> <p><u>Update on Actions</u></p> <p>1 – Contract negotiations with KGB have progressed. Action closed.</p> <p>2 – The H&S walkaround with David Laxton has been arranged for the 29th May. Action closed.</p> <p>3 – The lights in the car park and to the rear of the school have been updated. Action closed.</p> <p>4 – An absence report is provided in the papers for the meeting. Action closed.</p> <p>5 – GG had contacted Angela Cox. Action closed.</p> <p>There were no matters arising from the minutes.</p>	
3.	<p>Deficit Recovery Plan</p> <p>ATi: The deficit position of £510k had moved to £647k in January and by last week sat at £760k although some variances have been found.</p>	

RT: The position is over £200k worse than was thought and the current in year deficit is standing at £136,669 against the budget forecast of £65k.

Income

- An additional £50k of funding may follow and there may be further credit notes for £10k from Harrisons.
- There is a negative variance in catering which is £36k down, but the reasons for this are unknown.
- I01 shows no significant variance, with a £23k negative due to the way the rates are accounted.
- Sixth Form funding is better than expected but will be paid one month late. This is thought to be due to higher value courses.
- High Needs top up funding has been received.
- A company called School Space are coming in to look at the lettings possibilities and income generation across the site.
- There is £13k from 11 plus preparation.
- The Income shows an overall positive variance of £135k.

Expenditure

- Teaching staff has positive variance of £102k partly due to incorrect coding.
- Premises staff is overspent by £10k. The reasons for this are not clear so it will be investigated further.

Q: Could it be from overtime charges?

A: It would be a lot of overtime, when there few occasions which would be claimed for. The premises staff get time off in lieu instead. It could be down to miscoding.

- Admin costs are under, there were two months savings on the Business Manager's salary.
- There was a cleaning and caretaking variance of negative £28k. £17k was for the extra 4 hours cleaning per day, and £11k for the contract increase.
- The new contract begins in April, so it was a surprise to see an increase before then.
- There are going to be deep cleans in the holidays and staff will now be paid the London Living wage.
- The contract quotes obtained during the tender process were all quite similar.

Q: Was a cost increase introduced after the budget was set?

A: It may have been.

Q: Is the water rates £6k increase due to the leak?

A: The school were not expecting to lose out as there were no charges during the time of the leak. An insurance claim has been submitted for other expenses which were incurred.

There had been variances in previous years which may have been affected if the leak was already in place.

- There is a small energy saving of £11k based on conservative estimates.
- The situation may be resolved when the final bills are received.
- Energy readings will be taken on the last day of term and a final report provided to the LA on 15th April.
- Governors asked that energy costs are reported separately in future.

ACTION: E16 to report Gas and Electricity costs separately.

- Occupational costs have shown a large increase.

Q: What does this line cover?

A: There is no information to hand, it will be provided for next time.

ACTION: RT to provide information on what costs are included in E18 Other Occupation costs.

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- Learning resources may be higher than expected due to miscoding of Tutoring which should be included in PPG or Covid Catch up expenditure. Individual departments have a budget which they must stay within, so there should not be an overspend.
- ICT learning resources are modest as are admin supplies.
- Catering supplies – there may be some good news as it looks like an estimate. There needs to be further investigation as there are unexpected costs.

Q: What is covered by insurance as this seems quite low.

A: There is also a line for other insurance, but this can be clarified.

ACTION: RT to clarify the coding for insurance costs and what these are.

- Supply costs have increased from £125k to £140k and the whole area requires review. This will be looked at in more detail at the meeting in April.

ACTION: Supply costs breakdown to be reviewed at the April meeting.

Q: Does the school have staff sickness insurance?

A: It has in the past, but it was not found to be viable as claims could only be made after 8 days of absence and support staff were not covered. In the size of school, it is likely that internal cover could be provided.

Q: What are the bought in services?

A: These would be for the Educational Psychologist and counselling.

Q: Would it include CPD?

A: No, there is not a big spend on CPD, it is likely it would be to support students.

Governors asked to see a full breakdown of these costs.

ACTION: RT to provide a breakdown of what is included in E27 and E28.

The overall variance on Expenditure is negative £207,033, but it is hoped there will be savings in energy and catering costs.

Additional pupils with EHCPs may bring in extra funding, and there may be more teachers pay grant funding if it was due in more than one tranche.

Q: Governors have not seen any actual figures since December. When will we receive them?

A: There have been delays getting information on to the system, but hopefully this will improve as the hours for finance staff have increased, and the new Finance Manager will be working purely with Finance.

There will be HR responsibilities which will need to move to someone else. It is hoped that a PA may be recruited who has expertise in this area and may be able to provide support.

Q: Income for next year has been increased by 4.1%, is there any idea of the budget and deficit forecast for next year?

A: Once this has been prepared it will be circulated as the GAG income information has been received.

The final figures for this year will have been submitted in advance of the next meeting, when an update will be provided.

Q: What has been included in the insurance claim? Were the boilers affected by the water pressure?

A: That should have been included along with the additional catering costs. There were no charges during the period so those cannot be claimed.

It was proposed that AT review the claim as he has expertise in the area.

Zenergy act as brokers for the school. There are four electric meters with Shell which expire this month. It is understood these have moved to Octopus as new direct debits are set up from April.

It is hoped estimated figures for consumption and rates can be obtained from Octopus so these can be compared with current usage.

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Facilities Update

Ground Maintenance

Three quotes for the Ground Maintenance are being sought. One company approached have declined to quote, one has returned their quote, and the other is awaited. A third option will need to be sourced and information on the quotes circulated as soon as possible.

Gas and Electricity

- There is a half hourly meter where consumption is by far the greatest, which is with British Gas and which expires at the end of September, so renegotiations can begin soon.
- The school would like to get Smart meters installed to reduce the admin workload required to upload meter readings.
- There are four gas meters with SEFE energy, which expire at the end of December 2024.
- Governors noted that it may be worth going onto variable contracts and renegotiating for all at the same time so they are aligned as savings may be made this way.
- Contract cleaners have confirmed the cost of equipment, and the purchase is only £500 more than the hire costs and they come with a one-year warranty.
- One cleaner is joining the payroll next month and it is hoped the other will do so in future.
- The hours worked by the cleaners need to be reviewed to ensure they work for the school and provide better cover for site staff.
- A deep clean will take place over Easter and the new cleaning contract begins on the 15th April.

Toilets

Q: Have the issues with the toilet doors and safeguarding risks been addressed?

A: There has been further damage which was repaired the same day.

There is a check list in the toilets for staff to sign when they have been checked for cleanliness etc. It is thought this includes soap, water supply, paper towels, locks on doors, health and safety hazards.

Toilets will be cleaned after lessons begin, at lunch time and after school.

The Sixth Form are being more proactive about monitoring their toilets.

Governors asked to see a copy of the checklist and stated that they needed to be assured there were no safeguarding issues.

RT replied that there are things in place and most of the issues have been resolved.

There is also a maintenance check list which is due to be completed on daily, weekly and monthly basis online, although this is not currently happening.

Q: Is there anything we can do to prevent the damage? Is it wear and tear or vandalism?

A: It is definitely vandalism, and without having CCTV it is difficult to identify who is causing it.

It is possible to have CCTV outside and in the handwashing area which will help.

There are plans to install new floor to ceiling doors which will be more robust.

It was also noted that students tend to show more respect for newly refurbished areas, so it is hoped this will be the case if the toilets are upgraded.

Telephony

New cabling was fitted over half term, and the new phones will be installed over Easter. The system often malfunctions, so the upgrade will be appreciated.

Other work

- A new Wi-Fi system is being installed.
- New AV systems are being installed in the Sports Hall, and LED lighting in the LRC and Founders, but not the Chapel. The new lighting will be more efficient, and it is hoped the whole site can be upgraded in due course.
- The proposed lighting design for the Chapel would improve the ambience, and funding for the project will be discussed with the Friends of the Chapel.
- The Health & Safety visit by David Charles will take place on 29th May.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The infill for the DT window and Sixth Form doors work will be completed over Easter. • The main priority is the playground as there is root damage. It was hoped the Diocese would fund the works, but they have prioritised the roof and toilets. <p>A Governor noted that the priorities of the Diocese will be to ensure the site is water and wind proof, then they will consider Safeguarding and Health & Safety risks. If there are genuine trip hazards in the playground, they should consider it.</p> <p>RT noted that the worst areas are cordoned off at present.</p> <p><u>Fire and Lock down alarms</u></p> <p>There are two solutions to the current problems with the system.</p> <p>The first is to rip out the existing system and replace it with one which can sound two different alarms.</p> <p>The other option is that the current Fire alarm system is extended to ensure the whole school is covered and look at a different sounder for the lockdown system.</p> <p>Quotes are being sought.</p> <p>Q: Could the phone system be used to broadcast a lock down alarm?</p> <p>A: This has not been investigated, and there are not phones in every classroom, so coverage would have to be investigated as the site is very complex.</p> <p>Q: Is there an effective lockdown policy?</p> <p>A: The school does not have one at present as there is no alert system. There are contingencies in place.</p> <p>Q: Can there be different tones on the fire alarm system?</p> <p>A: Only if a new system is installed.</p> <p>Q: Could the lesson bell be altered to be a lockdown alert?</p> <p>A: RT would have to look into whether this was possible and where it could be manually operated from, but it may be better than nothing.</p> <p>A Governor noted that if the school publishes its Evacuation Plan publicly, it should not include information on muster points for safety.</p> <p>RT confirmed that the policy is not published on the website.</p> <p>For the Health and Safety update, Governors asked to receive before and after photographs of the DT window and Sixth Form fire doors as the work has been outstanding for a considerable amount of time and H&S is the responsibility of the Governors.</p> <p>Easter works include the telephones, lighting, Sports Hall AV, painting the front door frame, the car park rope pillars, the music gate and rails and removal of junk from areas of the school.</p> <p>A Governor noted that the wood by the back door also needs attention from the premises team.</p> <p>Contractors are coming in to look at the roof and toilet works and quotes for all projects need to be obtained.</p>	
5.	<p>Partnership Work and Fundraising</p> <p>Q: Did AD provide an update of how much is in the private fund?</p> <p>A: No, he did not, but it is somewhere in the region of £156k and will rise after Gift Aid is added in April.</p> <p>There have been a few donations including to the Alumni salary.</p> <p>The admissions officer currently works 0.8 but their workload should reduce next year due to changes in the Diocesan rules. They have been looking for extra hours, so will reduce the admissions role to 0.5 and take on marketing work funded by the donation for the other 0.5. The arrangement will run from April to August 2024 and will then be reviewed.</p> <p>Tutor Doctor sponsor a minibus. The site staff have purchased a pressure washer and steps so that the roof of the minibus can be cleaned. They are a good marketing opportunity so should be maintained.</p>	

	<p>Sponsorship for student after match teas has been received.</p> <p>Q: Does this actually get used for after match teas?</p> <p>A: Teas are provided, it is assumed the donation is used for this purpose.</p> <p>Donations have been received in return for boards at the Plough Lane ground and some work in kind.</p> <p>The 300 club has raised £7800.</p> <p>Q: Has there been any progress on the Plough Lane astroturf?</p> <p>A: A donor has promised £250k towards it, but it is felt a 4G pitch on the school site would be more useful than at Plough Lane as it would be a better play area for the students who could use it on a break and lunch time rota as well as for sports.</p> <p>The donor wishes to increase income at Plough Lane, but there is less value for the school. Planning permission would be required to install a 4G pitch and lighting at the school, and there would likely to be opposition from residents.</p> <p>Governors felt there were security issues at Plough Lane as it is open to the public.</p> <p>The school is keen to maintain its reputation for sports, and such a pitch is essential for this.</p> <p>Suggestions for fundraising include a 4G pitch, increasing the Sixth Form space with a multifunctional area. This could be a growth area and increase numbers in the Sixth Form which has a capacity of 250.</p> <p>There is a proposal to install a climbing wall in the old gym, which is designed to enthuse pupils, but there are other priorities.</p> <p>Governors felt a review of the capital works should be carried out at a future meeting. It would be helpful if the document is organised in priority order and colour coded.</p> <p>ACTION: Governors to review the prioritised list of capital works at a future meeting.</p>	11
6.	<p>HR Update</p> <p><u>Recruitment</u></p> <p>There are still challenges in recruitment of staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One application has been received for the teacher of English and two for Maths, one of whom is promising. • No applications for Food Technology have been received, the advert is ongoing. • The PA advertisement will be re-run although there may be a promising candidate through an agency. • The school would like to recruit Lunchtime Supervisors to save money, but it is not known how successful this will be. There are options to use existing staff, but it is voluntary. • A teacher of RE is needed, but as there is a History teacher on Maternity leave and some slack in the department they have been teaching RE as well. There is only one specialist RE teacher, and it would be better to have more support in the department. A one year RE post might be difficult to fill but will be investigated. <p>Q: Are there links with teaching colleges?</p> <p>A: There are, and staff have been out to open days etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One cover supervisor who started in January has had high levels of absence and handed in their notice last week. There is still one cover supervisor, but the school is advertising for another as it helps to reduce agency supply costs. <p><u>Sickness Update</u></p> <p>There are seven staff who have triggered the first formal stage of the procedure. One has a serious health issue, and another has handed in their notice following a period of long-term sickness. The school has agreed to pay them for a month in addition to their notice period to cover them until the end of term, as it was felt this was the right thing to do.</p> <p>Informal discussions have been held with the others and letters will be sent out. The school is being more vigilant around it and so an improvement is expected.</p>	

7.	<p>AOB</p> <p>Two flexible working requests had been received. Governors agreed that this was an operational matter to be decided by RT.</p> <p>Q: Has the school considered getting lockers for pupils. Does carrying their kit around increase wear and tear on the building?</p> <p>A: There is lack of space to put them inside, although the school has been offered some. Outside lockers could be considered.</p> <p>Q: Is there somewhere extra-curricular sports equipment could be stored?</p> <p>A: This could be considered.</p> <p>Governors wished to note that there had been considerable pressure on the Headteacher to get maintenance work done and that they thanked him for his efforts in addressing this.</p> <p>BTEC business and sports costs and pupil numbers are not adding up so changes may be made from September 2024. Discussions will be held with those pupils who would be affected to reach agreed solutions.</p>	
8.	<p>Staffing Update</p> <p>There are no other updates, the next meeting will include a full review of staffing.</p>	
8.	<p>Agree Part B minutes</p> <p>The Part B minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2023 were agreed to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>There were no actions arising.</p>	
9.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The meeting was scheduled for 11th June, but it was felt this was too early in the term to fully review the impact of staffing on the budget. It was agreed that the meeting will be moved to Wednesday 3rd July 2024 at 5.30pm.</p> <p>DECISION: The next Resources meeting will be moved from 11th June to 3rd July.</p> <p>A discussion will be held at the FGB meeting regarding moving that date later in the term.</p>	

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

Actions list:-

	Action	For	Date	Comments	Status
Meeting of 19.3.24					
6	E16 to report Gas and Electricity costs separately.	RT			
7	RT to provide information on what costs are included in E18 Other Occupation costs.	RT			
8	RT to clarify the coding for insurance costs and what these are.	RT			
9	Supply costs breakdown to be reviewed at the April meeting.	RT			
10	RT to provide a breakdown of what is included in E27 and E28.	RT			
11	Governors to review the prioritised list of capital works at a future meeting.	Governors			
Meeting of 14.11.23					
1	AS to report back with regard to the status of the contract negotiation with KGB	AS	Dec 23	Update provided	Closed

2	AS to ask David Laxton to organise H&S walkaround and meeting	AS	This half term	Visit set for May	Closed
3	AS to provide details of when the lights in the car park and at the back of the school are planned to be done.	AS	Dec 23	Work completed	Closed
4	RT to ask Helen to prepare an absence report of term-by-term comparison with the previous year.	RT	For next meeting	Provided	Closed
5	GG to draft a letter to Angela Cox	GG	Immediately	Completed	Closed