

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Minutes of a Resources Committee Meeting– 13 May 2020, at 10.00am via Zoom

The three core strategic functions of the Governing Body:

- a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction
- b. Holding the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils, and the performance management of staff
- c. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent

In this meeting governors will be mindful of equalities issues in all agenda items

Present: Pier Anscombe, Paul Barber (Headteacher), Mel Fane (Committee Chair), Dee Simson

Apologies: Kevin Golding (Site Manager, associated member)

In attendance: Kim Breckell (School Business Manager SBM)

Quorum: Three governor committee members. Four governor committee members were present. The meeting was quorate.

Clerk: Ruth Ali

Minutes signed by: _____ Agreed on: _____

Questions/Challenges

Actions

Resolution

1.	Prayer, welcome and apologies The Headteacher opened the meeting with prayer. Apologies were <i>received and accepted</i> from Kevin Golding.	Actions
2.	Declaration of business interests or interests of loyalty in agenda items None.	
3.	Minutes of the last meetings, 27 February <i>3.1 To agree accuracy of minutes</i> The minutes were <i>agreed as a true record</i> and will be signed when face to face meetings are possible again.	
Staffing		
4.	General staff wellbeing The Headteacher expressed his appreciation for the governors' interest in staff wellbeing, which due to the current situation is extensively covered at all meetings. Staff wellbeing is generally good, although slight anxieties are coming out of the prolonged lockdown. The Headteacher continues to check in with staff regularly. There is some concern around the suggested date for return to school on 1 June, involving some union correspondence. Staff feel concerned about the return, and this is constantly monitored; SLT continues to be mindful of this as the situation develops. It was recognised that communication is the key, for staff, governors and parents.	
5.	To understand how staff appraisals are conducted under the current circumstances	

	<p>Governors were advised that mid-term appraisals had been conducted with staff before lockdown. There is now no further focus on appraisals.</p> <p>The SBM updated the committee on the current situation of the caretaker who is on long term sick leave.</p>	
Finance		
6.	<p>Budget</p> <p><u>6.1 Month 13 report</u></p> <p>The surplus has increased from what was previously predicted to £53,886. This is due to the release of some expenditure that did not happen.</p> <p>Governors were advised that Slimming World had handed in their notice and asked whether this decision was based on the school's letting charges or the service received. This is not the case, but the decision was due to a change of their needs as their group was getting smaller. The committee ascertained that school would lose around £300 per half term.</p> <p>A grant of £3,000 has been received from The House Project.</p> <p>Governors were disappointed with the shortfall in Breakfast Club. The Debt Policy has now been approved; this makes it clear to parents that they must pay in advance for the service, and they still pay if the child does not attend. Some lunch money was also outstanding, and the SBM explained that, due to the lockdown, she had given recovery of this priority over breakfast club. Governors asked if outstanding money for breakfast club and for lunch was from the same families. This is the case for some. It was noted that, had there been no chasing, the deficit would have been higher.</p> <p>From September, school will ensure that parents are aware of the position, and the SBM was thanked for working on that. Governors are mindful that there are some parents who struggle to pay and some who choose not to pay, and they are confident that school will apply the Debt Policy appropriately.</p> <p>Governors were pleased that the year finished with this surplus and commended the Headteacher and SBM for managing the budget well.</p> <p><u>6.2 Budget 2020-21</u></p> <p>The SBM explained that she had endeavoured to achieve reality on expenditure whilst also considering eventualities. She considered the Caretaker's long term sick leave and made provision for additional support for caretaking until September and also for cover that may be needed from September.</p> <p>Pupil numbers are based on the October census, not on actual numbers in March.</p> <p>Governors considered the staffing sheet and noted the high grade staff in school now. Staffing costs are 93% of the budget, which is comparatively high, but governors were pleased that this is currently manageable. The Headteacher highlighted that, with pay progression, in two or three years' time more teachers will be on the Upper Pay Scale, if successful, and that he is mindful of the need to ensure they are appropriately supported to give value for money. The School Development Plan (SDP) focuses on the development of middle leaders.</p>	

	<p>Governors asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the two day post for one month? - This is an overlap of one teacher returning from maternity leave and the cover teacher on a temporary contract still being in place. • There is an additional admin post – are we looking at recruiting another staff member? – This is currently only provisional to see what effect it would have on the budget, but would be a good thing to do. • TAs are 16 individual posts – is there some doubling up? – Yes, some have separate roles as TA and INA, some fixed term, some permanent, with two different contracts. There is currently no consistency in the number of working hours for TAs. • Why does the Principal MSA work less hours than other MSAs? - the Principal MSA goes back to working her TA role and is not involved in the clearing up. • Are staff still receiving allowances for First Aid? – No answer could be provided, and the SBM was asked to look into it. • Why has so much been allocated to staff advertising? – This has now been moved to “School Development Plan”, as it relates to costs in connection with advertising the school and marketing, not staff advertising. • Does “Staff Expenses” include staff training? - Yes. Governors asked for a separate heading for staff training. The training budget has been reduced for this year as it is hoped to use the school networks to get CPD for free. • Electricity expenses are still high. – This is based on an estimate received from the LA, and the SBM has discussed it with them. She had also contacted OVESCO after the last meeting explaining that school has seen an increase in energy costs since the installation of the solar panels, rather than a reduction, but has been unable to make any progress with them due to the lockdown. It was suggested that the SBM should ask Mark Brunet at the Diocese for support, as he had recommended the company. • What is included in “Other Premises”? – Alarm systems, general maintenance etc. Governors asked for a breakdown to be included in the comments section. • In relation to Breakfast Club, entries under staffing cost, income and expenses should balance out, but they don’t currently. We are not allowed to make a profit nor a loss. • Have photocopying costs reduced significantly from last year? – Yes, last year’s allocation was £9,000, but actual costs were under £4,000, due to the change to the new machines. • For how long will TTO back be a budget heading? – 10 years. • Are we confident we will receive all the income listed? - They are all grants, and figures were provided by B&H, based on current students. • We will end the year with a healthy surplus. In the past, we have put some money into Short Term Contingency. – We may 	<p>KB</p> <p>KB</p> <p>KB</p>
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	<p>not be allowed to do this, as this would result in a deficit in Years 2 and 3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we produce a budget that shows we have a surplus? – The SBM will enquire how the LA would like this to be recorded. <p>The committee thanked the SBM for presenting and clear and well thought through budget.</p> <p>Governors were reminded of the deadlines.</p> <p>Agreed: The committee unanimously agreed to recommend the budget to FGB for approval.</p>	
7.	<p>To discuss Services to Schools</p> <p>The committee was advised that there are increasing discussions on Headteacher forums around Services to Schools. The Headteacher has consulted with other Deanery Headteachers and ascertained that they are still all buying into the entire provision, although some are considering other options for maternity and long term sick insurances. As the Headteacher and SBM were both new in their role, they had felt that it would be better not to make any changes for this year.</p> <p>The SBM explained that each section on BEEM gives a detailed report on what each service offers, and it is up to each school to ensure that this is utilised to its full extent, including some training to which staff can be signposted. However, maternity and long term sick cover is not provided through an insurance, but a “pot” and does not cover support staff. Other SBMs are therefore in the process of obtaining quotes for the cluster, ready for comparison for next year.</p> <p>Looking at insurances for staff led the SBM to look at building and contents insurance. Buildings Insurance is provided through the Catholic Insurance, but there does not seem to be sufficient cover in place for contents. Contents is covered in case of fire etc, but not for a break in. The LA offered Optional Insurance for this in October, which was not taken up as it was believed at the time that it would be duplication. It was now clarified that this is not the case. The SBM will contact the LA to enquire whether the Optional Insurance can be taken out now, and if so, if payment has to be for the whole or only part of the year.</p>	KB
8.	<p>To receive an update on the School Development (Governors’) Fund</p> <p>An update was not available in time for this meeting, but will be forwarded to the committee by the end of the week. A verbal update was given, ie there has been no activity, except for receipt of regular standing orders.</p> <p>Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) is coming in in June.</p> <p><i>Dee left at 11am</i></p>	MF
9.	<p>To discuss the Marketing Strategy for 2020-21</p> <p>The SBM has started working on a Marketing Strategy by asking previous parents what they would like to have seen, and she has consulted with acquaintances who work in marketing to get new ideas. Quotes are being obtained for a brochure; anticipated cost is £1,500. New photos for this have been taken. The marketing plan will be emailed to the committee; details of the content were shared verbally.</p>	

	<p>In the absence of face to face meetings at the moment, the website is utilised more. The strategy employed last year was remarkably effective, and lessons can be learnt from it.</p> <p>The community aspect of the school was emphasised - that it is one of two “village schools”, and the work of the foodbank under the current circumstances.</p> <p>The committee also considered other positives of the school in terms of teaching, the experience children have when in school and a marketable curriculum.</p>	
Premises and Health and Safety		
10.	<p>To note the most recent Fire drill report</p> <p>A report was circulated prior to the meeting. This was an unexpected alarm, which occurred during at an “inconvenient” time, but went well. As it was unexpected, evacuation was not timed, but appeared to be less than three minutes.</p> <p>Actions arising from this were noted, one of which was the question whether the alarm is connected to the fire station, as it was believed that it is usual practice. It was suggested that the alarm may no longer be connected to the fire station because of the new good fire system, although the committee would still be keen for the SBM to check.</p>	KB
11.	<p>To discuss further how Health and Safety is covered in the caretaker’s absence</p> <p>The Headteacher commended the SBM for her work in augmenting one cleaner with another one from the LA. A request has been put in with the LA for a deep clean prior to 1 June; it is envisaged that it will be possible to claim back costs.</p> <p>To mitigate the risk of legionella, all toilets are flushed and water in sinks is run when the Headteacher is in school three times a week. There were no outstanding “red” issues from H&S walkarounds before lockdown.</p> <p>Governors asked about the employment status of the person who runs Forest School and were advised that she is not employed by the school as such, but is a member of the community bought in to offer Forest School provision. She is covered by her own insurance, and whilst she is not working she is not earning either. School therefore has no liability towards here whilst school is closed. Moving forward, other options for the provision of Forest School are being considered.</p>	

Documents circulated prior to and at the meeting:

- Minutes of the last meeting
- Month 13 report
- Budget
- Fire Drill Report