

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School

Minutes of a Resources Committee Meeting– 13 May 2021, at 3.30pm held remotely

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), Bryan Rossi-Anderson, Dee Simson

In attendance: Kim Breckell (School Business Manager SBM)

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

Clerk: Ruth Ali

Minutes signed by: _____ Agreed on: _____

Questions/Challenges

Actions

Resolution

1.	Prayer, welcome and apologies The Headteacher opened the meeting in prayer. There were no apologies as the meeting was fully attended.	Actions
2.	Declaration of business interests or interests of loyalty in agenda items None.	
3.	Minutes of the last meetings, 25 February 2021 <i>3.1 To agree accuracy of minutes</i> The minutes were agreed as a true record . <i>3.2 To discuss matters arising, including action points – if not elsewhere on this agenda</i> Min 7.1: ICT deficit increased because of license fee due to an additional laptop, and antivirus software. Min 7.5: Services to Schools document has been circulated. It was highlighted that the LA's Service Level Agreement (SLA) for Long Term Sick and Maternity insurance is due to finish in August, and schools are required to find their own provision. The SBM has obtained a number of quotes and is also attending a webinar with other SBMs on 20 May. Once available, she will share the information with the committee. Dee explained that she had sought advice from Mark Brunet around Capital Expenditure for Revenue Account (CERA) payments and is of the understanding that Voluntary Aided (VA) schools should not be required to pay for this. School should only be required to pay for aspects of this	KB

	<p>service, ie Condition Survey and Legionella testing. The SBM will follow this up.</p> <p>Min 7.6: The SBM explained that school is currently paying £3,600 for insurance. The difference between the current provision and Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA) would be £800 per year (RPA cheaper). Other SBMs are somewhat reticent to take this up. As the savings are only small, the SBM would like to wait till the next SBM meeting and then discuss further. This will be an agenda item at the next meeting.</p> <p>Min 8.4: Laptop has been provided and the Gift Aid programme is already installed.</p> <p>Benchmarking reports have been received and will be discussed further at the next Resources Committee meeting. Until then, governors will consider what they would like to gain from this exercise.</p> <p>All other actions have been completed and did not require further discussion.</p>	<p>KB</p> <p>RA</p>
Staffing		
<p>4.</p>	<p>To receive an update on Staffing</p> <p><u>Recruitment:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual Needs Assistant (INA) in Y3, to support a child with severe additional needs. The child was school refusing, but is now back. The new staff member is also well qualified in supporting children with autism, and it is hoped that her expertise can be shared with other schools. <p><u>Absences:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One staff member is on a phased return. A recent request for the phased return to be elongated was refused, and the staff member will be back in her full role on 24 May. School will support her with days off if needed, but these would be unpaid. Following a brief return, the site manager has been signed off again until 1 July. HR advice is being sought. A teacher on long term sick has now returned to work. <p>Governors asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the staff member who has been signed off sick again paid or unpaid, and if paid, is this on full pay? – Currently paid, on full pay. <p>Mel will meet with the Headteacher for a H&S meeting, including a walkaround. H&S related concerns about the site manager’s absence will be discussed then and shared with governors through a visit report.</p>	
Covid		
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>5.1 To understand Impact of Covid on the budget</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cleaning cost update <p>Cleaning aspects of the site manager’s absence were covered by Nviro. £6,000 of that cost has been reclaimed as a Covid claim. The additional cost is listed in the outturn as Contract Cleaning at £12,800. There were also additional costs for a cover caretaker over the summer holidays. The combined cost of covering for a staff member and cleaning amounts to around £20,000, some of which has been reimbursed.</p> <p>Governors ascertained that this is up to the end of the financial year and asked whether, moving forward, any more payments are expected. The</p>	

	<p>SBM advised that any future costs (cleaning and caretaker cover) will have to come out of the budget.</p> <p>It was clarified that Nviro covers the cleaning aspects, but not the strategic work of the site manager.</p> <p><u>5.2 To have assurance that Risk Assessments are reviewed in line with statutory guidance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Covid Risk Assessment The Risk Assessment has been updated. As lockdown is being eased, an updated version from the LA is expected. • Implications around Sports Fixtures and Risk Assessments Sports fixtures within a small consortium of schools have recommenced. An addition to the Covid Risk Assessment for sports fixtures will continue to evolve, as well as a separate Risk Assessment for Sports Day etc. • After School Clubs Risk Assessments CATS club RA was shared prior to the meeting for information. Governors asked: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially it was uncertain how ASC would work in terms of mixing bubbles – how is this working out? Were there any concerns from parents? – We have not seen the return of our usual numbers; potentially parents are waiting to see how it pans out. This leaves children room to spread out. Children have also spent much time outside where the risk is lower. <p>The SBM advised that she is meeting with CATS club after half term, where it will be considered what ASC would look like in September. Their letting costs, and letting costs in general, will also be reviewed closer to September. There had been some interest in lettings.</p>	
Finance		
6.	<p>School Budget</p> <p><u>6.1 To note the final financial position</u></p> <p>The SBM took governors through the final outturn and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surplus on staffing relates to Covid; savings were made particularly on TAs where staff that left during lockdowns were not replaced. • Savings on teachers – leaver on higher pay scale replaced by NQT. • Admin – an additional admin role was budgeted for last year but not taken forward. • Caretaker was on half pay for some of the year. • Cleaning staff and breakfast club staff – one of each not replaced during the Summer term. • Large deficit in agency staff is due to long term absence; a claim has been submitted against absence cover which has been paid, so there is a figure in income against the deficit in this cost centre. • Sports Premium is an agenda item at this meeting. • Another saving was Term Time Only payment, which was delayed until 2021-22. At £900 this is lower than expected. • Building maintenance saw a large saving due to the caretaker not being present to action work and the difficulty of getting 	

contractors in during Covid. Some outstanding work needs to be actioned; this shows in the budget in form of an accrual.

- Curriculum: have added music.
- Savings have been made on utilities due to less usage. However, the same amount as previously has been budgeted for 2021-22.
- There were reductions in income in breakfast club and lettings.
- Furlough payments, the first part of the catch-up premium and covid claim have been received. These income streams have not been budgeted for in 2021-22.

Governors thanked the SBM for her explanations and asked/commented:

- You mentioned a reduction in service charges, but where are we with electricity (solar panels)? – Brighton and Hove are now inspecting solar panels on a weekly basis following an incident at another school. The issue continues to be investigated.
- We had a shortfall in Breakfast club, which we are unable to sustain.
- We have an overall surplus of £75,117.32; we have to remember that this includes a carryforward of £54,000 from the previous year, and circumstances were different this year. We have to continue to monitor the budget carefully over the next three years.

6.2 To discuss the impact of the Voluntary Living Wage on the budget

Governors were advised that there are no staff members on the final point which the Living Wage would apply to. There is therefore no impact on the budget.

6.3 To discuss the 3-year budget plan and agree to recommend to FGB for approval

Governors discussed the percentage of spend on staffing (78% of total available income). This is for six full time teachers, one part time, 12 TAs, one TA from May and one from September (this one being provisional, and funding would be received). Governors agreed that this is a high number, but recognised they are on minimal hours. Going forward this would need to be reduced through not replacing TAs who resign. However, at present a higher number of TAs are vital to support the learning of children through small group work.

Other regular expenditure has been budgeted for based on knowledge; agency costs were high, so the budget allows for cover for staff members who are isolating or on a phased return. This provision was made in light of Covid and hopefully will not be needed.

The maintenance budget has been reduced slightly, but work that was budgeted for last year and did not happen will have to be carried out. The allocated budget rises over the next two years.

Contract cleaning – the caretaker was not absent when the budget was set, so no provision has been made for Nviro.

Electricity has remained the same, but it is hoped that the solar panel issue will be resolved, so that the outcome at the end of the year will be lower.

Governors asked if the same figure has been budgeted for all three years; the SBM confirmed that this has been done but will be reviewed once the issue has been resolved.

Sports Premium shows around £17,000 for this year, plus £8,000 carried over from last year. Schools Finance are aware of the carryforward, and a plan for spending this will be discussed later in the meeting.

Counselling budget has been increased as there has been an increase in referrals and family work. This is mainly due to Covid and will be reduced in later years. This also includes Safety Net.

Staff training includes NQT training and First Aid. As a result of discussions with the INCo, school will utilise provision through Services to Schools more than previously.

The cost of Hilders field has not been confirmed yet. A reduction was granted last year, but the full amount has been provided for this year.

Trips has been reduced slightly as there is no trip to Sayers Common this year.

Swimming had been cancelled, but it is possible that this may start again.

Voluntary contributions from parents go through the School Fund.

Governors would like to see clarity in the budget in areas where there may be a shortfall, ie if the cost of a provision exceeds contributions, and how this shortfall is being managed.

Governors asked why there is no heading for DBS. This is included in general office expenses, and governors were reassured that school remains compliant with and has made provision for DBS check requirement.

Governors asked for confirmation that Breakfast Club expenditure for resources (food, equipment) has a separate heading in the outturn. This was confirmed.

Income entries are all based on estimates. It is hoped that the building can be let out more, but this will also depend on staffing (site manager available for weekend lets).

Governors asked for clarification on the difference between "lettings" and "rent income". Rent income is ASC; lettings includes all other lettings, such as Taekwondo and Dance School. Governors requested to be made aware of lettings, as the Hire Agreement requires governor signature. **The SBM will check who signed off lettings.**

The carryforward has been confirmed by Schools Finance as £75,117.

Governors expressed their concern for the next few years, recognising the considerable deficit moving forward, and asked whether any feedback had been received from the LA. No comments have been received, but the LA is aware. Staffing cost is based on the worst case scenario, with all teachers moving up through the main and upper pay scales, as advised by Schools Finance.

Governors noted that this is the first year without anything in short term contingency.

Governors asked what pupil numbers the budget is based on. This was a combination of the October census and known leavers and joiners. A few children are on waiting lists, and it is expected that numbers will be up at 198 again in September. Additional funding has been confirmed for a pupil not yet included in this budget.

Agreed:
Governors unanimously agreed to recommend the budget to FGB for approval.

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7.	<p>Grants</p> <p><u>7.1 To discuss the use of Catch-up funding</u></p> <p>Governors asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The funding is based on 196 pupils, but the budget we have just considered mentioned 198 pupils – what difference does this make? – Funding is £80 per pupil. 196 is a calculated snapshot by B&H, 198 refers to the census, for formula funding. • Are we only able to fund trips this year because of the catch-up funding? – We were thinking about the experiences of the current Y6 cohort and what they missed out on during lockdown. Our approach to education is holistic, and we did not want Y6 to miss out on this experience as well. We funded the deposit because we did not want parents to lose their deposit should there be a change in Covid guidance. However, measuring the impact is difficult. Our other use was provision of targeted support as recommended by the Education Endowment Foundation (smaller group work). <p><u>7.2 To discuss the use of the Sports Premium</u></p> <p>The Headteacher summarised his previously circulated strategy proposal and reminded governors that this funding is attached to certain criteria for allocation. He explained how the proposals fit in with the criteria and how they can also be for the wider benefit of the school by adding resources and widening provision. An additional benefit is that the proposal also supports a staff member’s phased return. Governors agreed with this approach.</p> <p>The question was raised what would happen if the Nintendo controllers break, ie whether the replacement cost had been factored in. The Headteacher explained that the equipment would only be used by two children, and other children would be copying. However, this was an example, subject to slight amendment after further consideration.</p>	
8.	<p>Voluntary Funds</p> <p><u>8.1 To receive an update on the School Development (Governors’) Fund</u></p> <p>The School Development Fund currently stands at £17,010.76. This is comparatively high, due to less spending than previously. New governors were advised that the fund is used to pay for 10% of the cost of capital expenditure. As this year’s Voluntary Aided School Condition Allocation (VASCA) bid has been granted, the fund will reduce as 10% of the costs are being met.</p> <p><u>8.2 Update to School Development Fund Signatories</u></p> <p>Governors were reminded that SDF signatories had resigned. Paperwork for new signatories has been received. Once work with HSBC has been finalised, it will be possible to do online banking and make BACS payments, eliminating the need to always have two signatories.</p> <p><u>8.3 To receive an update on Gift Aid, including taking SDF contributions online</u></p> <p>Governors were reminded that the Diocese stopped administering Gift Aid two years ago; no Gift Aid has been claimed since then. Governors have now registered with HMRC, but have not yet made progress on working through outstanding claims. However, the system is now</p>	

	<p>simpler, and an accumulative sum for each person can be submitted quarterly. An admin error means that new declaration forms have to be sent out to donors, resulting in the loss of some of the Gift Aid. Retention rules for paperwork were clarified.</p> <p>A further update will be given at the next Resources Committee meeting.</p>	RA
9.	<p>To receive a report on and, if required, authorise write-offs or disposals, if any None.</p> <p>Governors asked for an update on the School Fund. The SBM explained that signatories have now been amended, and the School Fund will be used again from September.</p> <p>Reciprocal arrangements with another school for the Independent Examination of Voluntary Funds are being explored.</p>	
Buildings/Grounds/Health and Safety		
10.	<p>Health and Safety</p> <p><i>10.1 To receive a report on accidents</i> There were no reportable accidents.</p> <p><i>10.2 Fire Drill Report</i> The last fire drill was conducted at the end of the Spring term. Evacuation time was 2 minutes 20 seconds. It was the first time that Y5 had to evacuate out of the hall, but there were no issues.</p> <p><i>10.3 Year 6 Residential Trip</i> As discussed under agenda item 7.1, the Y6 Residential Trip has been booked and paid for. There were no H&S related questions.</p>	
11.	<p>Buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>To receive an update on VASCA bid and next actions</i> <p>Governors were reminded that the submitted bid was to alter the junior stairs and intervention areas. This has been approved, and a tendering process is being carried out. The change for both children and staff will be invaluable, as the space will be used daily for phonics groups and provide a more effective learning environment.</p> <p>Governors asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the work will be carried out during the Summer holidays, what will happen about site management? – We will either source someone to come in to manage, or current staff will make themselves available. The H&S related paperwork for contractors will also need to be discussed/arranged and sometimes contractors require interim payments during the holiday. How will this be handled? – We will discuss with the project managers (Morgan Carn). <p>An update will be given at the next Resources Committee meeting.</p>	RA
Policies and other statutory documents		
12.	<p>Policies Due for review/approve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Health and Safety Policy</i> <p>Governors asked/commented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Page 7 - Do agency & cover workers get told what the first aid arrangements are in their induction, is there a record of that 	

training? – There is a notice in the classroom and on the Supply sheet, with information in the register. Agency/cover workers also meet with senior staff to run through school processes. This is not currently recorded anywhere, but can be set up.

- Page 14 - To avoid this the previous PTA didn't use the kitchen but set up outside and used their own equipment, so this would have been considered if the new PTA intend to use the school kitchen in future.
- **Page 24 – Has the caretaker had recent training?** – No training has been undertaken in 2020 or 2021.
- Page 28 - This comment is not currently included in letting policy/agreement.

Governors thanked the SBM for her work on updating the policy.

- Premises Management Documents

No further questions.

- Special Leave of Absence Policy (new LA model)

No further questions.

- Scheme for Paying Governor Allowances (Governor Expenses Policy)

No further questions.

Agreed:

The committee unanimously agreed to recommend the above four policies to FGB for approval.

- Animals in School, including risk assessment and public liability insurance

Governors were advised that this is a new policy as school now has two nurture dogs.

Governors asked:

- **When this was first discussed some time ago, a governor at the time expressed concern that some cultures do not like dogs, or children are scared – have you found any downside to having the dogs? Are parents worried?** – Not at the moment, but the dogs have been introduced in a low key way. One dog works with a particular group of children which is overseen and supervised by the INCo, the other dog remains in the Headteacher's office. After the policy is agreed, the provision will be formalised and parents informed. This would include seeking assurance from parents and asking them to inform school of any concerns.
- **Is this policy only for the dogs or other animals ("Animals in School Policy")?** – At the moment it is not specified, leaving the opportunity to bring other animals in. However this is not currently a consideration.

Governors recommended:

- Consistent use of plural (dogs)
- Clearer separation of bullet points
- Define type of dogs, as their abilities are referred to in the appendix
- How children are supported if a dog dies

