



Whitchurch Primary School and Nursery
Finance Committee Meeting, 23rd September 2022

Meeting Attendees:

Name	Role
Caroline Rowley (CR)	Headteacher
Martin Thompson-Lawrie (MTL)	Deputy Headteacher / Contributor
Paul Smith (PS)	Governor
Rupen Shah (RS)	Governor
Seema Supeda (SS)	Governor
Peter Tenconi (PT)	Governor

Clerked by Deepti Bal, Clerk to Governors

Meeting Record:

Governor Scrutiny/Governor Question (GQ)

Meeting Action

Decision

	Item	Action
1.	Welcome and Introductions CR welcomed Governors.	
2.	Apologies None. It was noted that MK has resigned. PT agreed to chair today, with RS to take over as chair at future committee meetings. PS felt that membership of this Committee (and others more generally) should be raised with the Governing Board, and that a discussion should be held to ensure that all members of the GB contribute equally.	
3.	Declarations of Interest None	
4.	Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true and accurate record. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SS to amend budget format – done. ● Lunch Policy to be tabled at a future FGB – done. ● CR to chase Harrow Capital for landlord approval– done. ● Policy tracker to be brought for discussion at the next FGB – done. ● CR to seek approval from the LA re. the nursery build– done. 	
5.	Budget Monitoring	

	<p>SS provided an overview of budget monitoring:</p> <p>The budget is broadly tracking in line with predictions.</p> <p>The biggest issue has been the inability to be able to reconcile salaries due to issues with Dataplan – this has been an issue for all schools but it is hoped that this will be resolved this term.</p> <p>PS asked about the energy situation.</p> <p>CR confirmed that the energy price cap will apply to schools for six months. The budget includes a 100% increase in energy. It is expected the cap will be £211 per MWh for electricity (currently around £300 PER MWh) and £75 per MWh for gas.</p> <p>RS asked if inflationary increases have been applied. Coombes, the caterers, for example, have increased their prices.</p> <p>PT noted there was healthy income from premises and after school clubs.</p> <p>CR explained that the school is making savings where possible and avoiding building additional structural costs into the budget. Leaders are looking at how staff are deployed across the school.</p> <p>PS asked about using reserves to support temporary agency costs if needed.</p> <p>SS felt the budget to be tracking as expected.</p> <p>RS asked about agency costs.</p> <p>CR explained that agencies charge very high ‘buy out’ fees for staff who are coming onto payroll. There was a plan for this staff membership to become permanent in September, but this did not happen. The funds need to be moved from E01 Teaching Salaries (cc A101) to E26 Agency Teacher Supply (cc A201).</p>	
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	<p>Governors approved the change.</p> <p>SS presented costs in relation to white boards. The provider selected was Wibird - they are a known and preferred supplier. They have undertaken an audit. Funds were allocated in the budget.</p> <p>SS added that Promethean whiteboards were robust, good value and made specifically for the education sector.</p> <p>Governors noted that the Wibird quote was slightly cheaper and approved it.</p>	
6.	<p>Extended Services</p> <p>Governors noted the rise in uptake of Early Birds and Night Owls. A key issue is that of ad hoc bookings. The previous provider was flexible but CR cannot continue in this fashion as she is more mindful of ratios. Additionally, the school budget does not subsidise childcare. One administrator splits her time between school work and childcare.</p> <p>CR proposed the following changes to the Childcare policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookings should be made for the whole term (July for Autumn, December for Spring and in April for Summer) • Club capacity should be set at 80 in any one session and once this number is reached the club is effectively full. MTL felt above this limit, the quality of the provision is compromised. • Payments must be received a full half term in advance, and for the full half term (this is to make invoices more manageable for parents). RS asked about parents new to the school. CR will apply discretion in relation to new joiners, where there is capacity. • All bookings commence at the start of each term (the only exception will be Reception/Nursery parents at the start of autumn term who will be offered a two week buffer to aid settling). • Ad hoc bookings will only be accepted if there is capacity. • Ad hoc bookings must be made at least two weeks in advance. CR added that the Admin team might field up to 30 emails per day, otherwise. PS felt that the existing parents should be offered the opportunity to book by a certain date – this would guarantee the place for them. ACTION: CR took an action to incorporate this suggestion. • PS felt two weeks' notice to be too long and suggested 7 days. ACTION: CR took an action to amend the 	<p>CR to offer existing parents places on a first-come first-served</p>

	<p>deadline for Ad Hoc bookings to 7 days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RS asked about cancellations. CR explained that these are permitted, with one month's notice. ● Ad hoc bookings are charged at £10 per day for Early Birds and £14 per day for Night Owls. Governors agreed that ad hoc places will only be offered if there is capacity. ● The school will not accept any late bookings. e.g Bookings for Spring term must to be made by Friday 2nd December at midnight. ● Places are to be booked for the whole term. There will be no refund if a parent reduces their requirement. Cancellations will require 4 week's notice and only be accepted if the place can be resold. ● PT was concerned about parents gaming the system by 'abandoning their child(ren)'. CR felt that the policy changes would address this. <p>The policy was approved subject to the changes above.</p>	<p>basis.</p> <p>CR to amend to 7 days notice.</p>
6.	<p>School Meals Update</p> <p>School meal numbers are increasing (all 120 pupils each school meals). The price has been reduced.</p> <p>RS asked how this has changed.</p> <p>CR explained that, historically, there were packed lunches but this is changing. The school offers flexibility and choice for mix/match. However, the numbers drop amongst older pupils.</p> <p>CR thanked Governors for approving new ovens which were a significant expense but much needed.</p> <p>PS noted that parents had been concerned about queuing.</p> <p>CR explained that pupils go out and play. They don't have to line up until they are asked. Some pupils line up because they want a particular seat or place. Packed-lunch pupils don't line up and there is no enforced queuing.</p> <p>CR explained the need to carry out work to the kitchen - specifically in relation to food storage. CR would like to put in a dry stud wall and area for serving food. This is in the capital works plan.</p>	

	<p>Notice for the cleaning and catering contracts has been served.</p> <p>The GB has previously used Schools' Buying Club to run the procurement process – the school is bound by the recommendation which they make. The DfE is happy to offer support with procurement exercises.</p> <p>CR explained that the tender specification would be written, invitations to companies would go out, and presentations received. Governors will be involved in all stages.</p> <p>The school will be submitting their own proposal for in-house catering.</p> <p>SS noted that the current cleaning contract is ending in August 2023 and will need to go out for tender.</p>	
7.	<p>Lettings</p> <p>The new lettings schedule was reviewed.</p> <p>Projected income this year is £77,615, with an expected expenditure of £19,428.75 on site services coverage. The school is projecting a final position of £58,186.25.</p> <p>CR explained that she would like to review the site manager's service and hours – there may be capacity within the site team to cover over the weekends if there is a restructure. This would save significant money with the private lettings company no longer required on Saturday or Sunday. CR confirmed that she will need to take HR advice.</p>	
8.	<p>Pupil roll</p> <p>Pupil roll has fallen over the summer with a number of pupils leaving the area. The census takes place on 14th October. The school is working hard to ensure all parents who have requested a place at Whitchurch over the summer have swift inductions and start ASAP.</p> <p>CR noted that the Y3 cohort has always been small. In Y6, a number of pupils have left to accommodate secondary school transition wishes of parents. There are currently 13 places in Y6.</p>	

9.	<p>Staffing</p> <p>Governors reviewed the the staffing structure, including the experience levels of staff. There is a mix of staff, with a number of staff at the top of the payscale (M6). Only four wish to move onto the next pay scale. Performance management is under way.</p> <p>SS explained that there is a DfE proposal in consultation to increase all support staff salaries by £1,925 - a 10.5% increase at the bottom of the pay scale and 4% for those at the top. This increase is significantly more than the budget advice and is not guaranteed.</p> <p>The government has confirmed the teacher pay increases for 2022-2023 - they will receive at least 5% (upper pay scale), up to 8.3% for those on the lower payscale. Again, this is significantly more than the 3% budget recommendation and will impact the school by around £80k.</p>	
10.	<p>Building and Capital Works</p> <p>Summer works are noted in the capital works plan. The school has held back 20% (£16,000) until all snagging is completed. These works are highlighted in green, with snagging highlighted in yellow.</p> <p>CR drew to the attention of governors, the essential health and safety works – predominantly ground works. The school anticipates having these completed during the Autumn term and will bring back quotes at the next meeting. Some of this work has health and safety implications which are currently managed using risk assessments.</p>	
11.	<p>Summer Works</p> <p>Governors noted the summer works:</p> <p>These include a major upgrade of ovens and kitchen equipment, a new server, network switches, IT upgrade and a major project to redecorate the school.</p> <p>CR explained that SIMS has completed an upgrade which affected interoperability with other systems. This is</p>	

	<p>mostly resolved.</p> <p>CR thanked to Andrew and Tim from the Site Team.</p>	
12.	<p>Capital Works (2)</p> <p>The school has allocated £530k for the Nursery extension including the playgrounds works. The architects are now working on a costed plan. The budget will not be increased and CR is considering contingency options.</p> <p>RS asked about material costs.</p> <p>SS explained that material costs will rise.</p> <p>ACTION: SS took an action to confirm the updated reserve figure.</p>	<p>SS to confirm the updated reserve figure.</p>
13.	<p>Health and Safety Report</p> <p>All staff attended annual, statutory training linked to managing asthma, allergies, epilepsy and anaphylaxis on Thursday 1st September.</p> <p>There has been an increase in pupils joining with more complex medical needs. e.g. a pupil with type one diabetes which required significant staff monitoring and support.</p> <p>CR has asked the LA if there is an exceptional needs grant and will follow up.</p>	
14.	<p>Fire Evacuation</p> <p>An unplanned emergency evacuation was required on 13th September (12:15pm) when a pupil activated a touch panel call point.</p> <p>The evacuation took place in 10 minutes, with all persons accounted for. The delays were mainly attributable to</p>	

	<p>staff supervising the lunch hall and failing to use the nearest available exit points.</p> <p>A debrief was held and improvement points communicated to staff.</p>	
15.	<p>GDPR</p> <p>There are no GDPR breaches to report.</p>	
16.	<p>AOB</p> <p>SS explained that the new SVFS is available. This would be worked through with the Committee so that all areas were covered for March.</p> <p>ACTION: CR took an action to confirm dates for the Pay Committee (to accommodate SIP availability).</p>	<p>CR took an action to confirm dates for the Pay Committee (to accommodate SIP availability)</p>

Post Meeting Action Log:

No	Item	Deadline
1.	Amendment to Childcare Policy: CR to offer existing parents places on a first-come first-served basis.	
2.	Amendment to Childcare Policy: CR to amend to 7 days notice	
3.	SS to confirm the updated reserve figure.	
4.	CR took an action to confirm dates for the Pay Committee (to accommodate SIP availability)	

Accepted as a true and accurate record by the Chair _____