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The Vineyard School Governing Board

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Minutes of Resources Committee meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 8am via conference call\*

- Present:** Graham Stewart (GS)  
Ruth Whymark (RW)  
James Lane (JL)  
Firas Ali (FA)  
Amy Salem (AS)  
Melanie Bywell (MB)
- In Attendance:** Svetlana Sanders (SS)  
Richard Rosewell (Associate Member) (RR)  
Anna Mantle (Clerk)
- Absent:** None

\*Due to current government restrictions on social interactions and almost complete school closure (with the exception of keyworker and vulnerable children), governors agreed to hold the meeting via conference call. All participants were present via video link. The meeting was quorate.

Meeting started at 8.11am.

Item	Action
1. <b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> None	
2. <b><u>Governors' Declaration of Interests</u></b> No direct or indirect pecuniary interests were declared. MB informed the meeting that she was due to become parent governor at Capella House School and this has been noted on the Register of Interests.	Clerk
3. <b><u>Minutes from last meeting – 22 January 2020</u></b> <b>Governors agreed that the minutes of the last meeting (22 January 2020) are a true and accurate record.</b> Electronic version uploaded to website. Hard copy to be signed at next meeting in person and filed at school when possible.	Clerk
4. <b><u>Update on current situation</u></b> RW provided the meeting with an update on the current situation in school. She thanked all staff for the immense amount of hard work, commitment and professionalism that they had demonstrated in the past few weeks. There has been very good feedback from the parent/carer community regarding the communications and home learning arrangements. RW recognised the considerable demands being put on school staff at this difficult time. She talked governors through the measures that had been put in place to minimise the risk to their health wherever possible, including:	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining social distancing</li> <li>• Hand washing and provision of hand sanitiser</li> <li>• Provision of individual toys and stationery items for children in school</li> <li>• Recommendations on wearing different clothes at school</li> </ul> <p>RW emphasised that the school had implemented its own policy on social distancing, no guidance had been received to date from the DfE or LA.</p> <p>Governors thanked everyone for all their hard work.</p>	
5.	<p><b><u>Financial Monitoring Budget to date</u></b></p> <p>There is currently a more than £60K surplus projected. SS explained to governors that she was in the process of going through the budget to reimburse letting costs for clubs that were not happening, as well as looking into the cancellation fees for school trips that would not go ahead next term. There will be some financial impact.</p> <p>The school has received notification from the LA that their bid for assistance with capital works to refurbish the toilet block has been unsuccessful. SS intends to keep £20k to put towards this and explore whether the PTA or FoV can assist with the remaining funds.</p> <p><b>Governors asked how the uncertainty in the past few weeks will impact the bottom line this financial year and next.</b></p> <p>SS explained that in the short term there will not be a huge financial impact. There will be no added staffing costs and that staff had volunteered to work over Easter. She had also not forecast summer term letting income in the budget this year. In the longer term, it is difficult to forecast what the situation will be like. This will obviously affect recruitment etc. in the medium term.</p> <p>Both Koosa Kids (providing wrap around care) and Radish (school meal providers) have been very flexible and supportive and will be working over the Easter holidays. All children in school are provided with school lunch (to minimise infection risk) and they are starting to implement meal bags for PPG families to collect from school.</p> <p>RW and governors thanked SS for her hard work in achieving a surplus for the year, which they attributed to her laser focus on costs.</p>	
6.	<p><b><u>Bad Debt Update</u></b></p> <p>SS provided an update on the school meals debt. Current historical debt is £10,473.96 (incl £790.94 staff).</p> <p><b>Governors asked whether, in light of having pushed hard all year to reduce the historical debt, it is possible to write down the remaining debt.</b></p> <p>SS to seek guidance and report back.</p>	
7.	<p><b><u>Premises Update</u></b></p> <p>There was a substantial discussion about the caretaker's bungalow. Various options are being explored. Governors agreed that consideration must be made to safeguarding and costs to the school of servicing the property vs leaving it empty. <b>JL and SS to discuss the options before proceeding.</b></p>	JL and SS
8.	<p><b><u>SFVS</u></b></p> <p>GW and RW to review and finish completing the document.</p> <p>Governors reviewed the dashboard and discussed "red" areas, namely the high cost of staff in comparison with other schools. Governors commented that they were happy with the level of investment the school makes in employing outstanding staff, as exemplified by their performance in recent weeks in face of extreme adversity.</p>	

9.	<p><b><u>Budget 2020-21</u></b></p> <p>Budget and workings were circulated ahead of the meeting. The current draft predicts an in year deficit of £14K. SS explained that all workings and assumptions were included in the spreadsheet. She had based her calculations on the most costly assumptions for teacher and support staff pay reviews, in order to create a prudent budget. She highlighted that the cleaning contract will be put out to tender in September and will include provision for a cleaner on site during the day, therefore costs for this are likely to be higher next year. She also provided details on some planned capital works.</p> <p>SS also explained that she is preparing a list of items to request funding from Friends of The Vineyard, in order to take some pressure off the school budget.</p> <p>Governors commented that this budget seemed reasonable at the current time.</p> <p><b>Governors asked what risks or uncertainties there were around the budget.</b></p> <p>RW explained that the biggest uncertainty is recruitment and staff turnover, since staffing costs are the greatest cost to the school budget. SS added that the lack of potential to generate income from lettings was also a risk. Governors also recognised the far-reaching economic impact the current pandemic would have and there was a discussion about how this might impact the school community.</p>	
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9.40am James Lane leaves the conference call.

10.	<p><b><u>Update on insurance situation regarding volunteers on school trips</u></b></p> <p>Less relevant at the current time. To be added to June agenda.</p>	Clerk and SS
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11.	<p><b><u>Staff Absence Scheme</u></b></p> <p>There was considerable debate about the various options available to the school with regards providing funds to cover staff absence. Governors explored the different options in detail, discussing the risks and costs of staying in the current LA scheme, self-insuring and whether it was possible to find insurance elsewhere. In the end, <b>governors agreed unanimously to stay in the LA Staff Absence Scheme for this year and to review in detail to make a definitive decision in time for next year.</b></p>	Add to Jan 2021 Agenda – Clerk.
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12.	<p><b><u>Policies</u></b></p> <p><u>Pay policy</u> Removed mention of SBM taking part in pay committee decisions. <b>Pay policy approved.</b></p> <p><u>Lettings policy.</u> SS highlighted the main change she had made to the model policy, which is to ask clubs to provide one free place for PPG children for every 10 children in the club. Previously this cost was covered by the school.</p> <p><b>Governors asked whether the lettings policy covered lettings longer than the school term.</b> SS explained that Koosa Kids would be using the whole site during the holidays.</p> <p><b>Governors queried whether the requirement to pay in advance would put off lettings to people who needed to raise funds in advance of planned events.</b> SS explained that debt recovery is time-consuming and that most clubs invoice participants in advance, so it should not be a problem.</p> <p>Review: agreed to review in one year, particularly to review charges schedule. <b>Policy signed off by governors.</b></p> <p><u>Health and Safety policy.</u> Requires further review. Add to June agenda.</p>	
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<b>13.</b>	<b><u>Any other business</u></b> KS2 playground.. A date for delivery of materials had been agreed. It is unsure now whether this will go ahead, but it is in the pipeline	

Meeting concluded 10.30am

**Date of next meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 at 8am.**

**Summary of action points:**

<b>Action point</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Update Register of Interests	Clerk – COMPLETED
File hard copy minutes from last meeting at school when appropriate	Clerk
Seek guidance on writing off historical debt	SS
JL and SS to discuss options for renting out bungalow in short term	JL and SS
Add update on insurance situation for volunteers on trips to future relevant agenda	Clerk
Review Staff Absence Scheme in Jan 2021 Resources meeting	Clerk