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The Vineyard School Governing Board

Friars Stile Road, Richmond TW10 6NE

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Minutes of Resources Committee virtual meeting held 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 9.15am via Zoom

**Governors Present:** Firas Ali (FA)  
James Lane (JL) (Chair)  
Graham Stewart (GS)  
Ruth Whymark (RW) Head Teacher

**In Attendance:** Richard Rosewell (Associate Member) (RR)  
Anna Mantle (Clerk)  
Svetlana Sanders (SS) School Business Manager

**Absent:** Alice McArdle (AMcA)

Meeting started at 9.18am

Item	Action
1. <b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> Apologies received and accepted from Alice McArdle. Graham Stewart was delayed and not present at the start of the meeting. The meeting was quorate throughout.	
2. <b><u>Governors' Declaration of Interests</u></b> No direct or indirect pecuniary interests were declared.	
3. <b><u>Minutes of the last meeting (27 January 2021)</u></b> <b>Governors agreed the minutes from the last meeting were a true and accurate record. Hard copy minutes to be signed and filed at school when next possible. Electronic version filed online.</b>	Clerk
4. <b><u>Budget monitoring report</u></b> A spreadsheet and notes reporting on the financial position to date had been circulated ahead of the meeting. SS updated governors that the budget for this financial year was further underspent than previously anticipated because her budget assumptions had been based on a return to school after the February half term. She noted that the biggest underspend is on school meals. However, the underspend from this year is committed for next year and due to be spent on funding work on the school and also the utilities bill from October is still outstanding. She also drew governors' attention to the underspend on pupil premium; they will transfer £16K to next financial year and plan to assist children in receipt of the pupil premium with school trips and also allocate additional staff to assist these children with interventions and improving curriculum outcomes.	

	<p>She said that they hoped to provide places for six PPG children to attend Easter and summer holiday club.</p> <p><b>Governors asked whether a surplus this year could mean a reduction in funding next year.</b>  SS told governors that that had not happened before and that the school was permitted to keep 5% of its budget in reserves. She emphasised that the funds were committed and allocated for next year.</p> <p><b>Governors asked whether the high cost of support staff could be reduced by using volunteers.</b>  RW explained that the cost of support staff was mostly covered by EHCPs and there was a statutory requirement to provide qualified, trained support. She said the cost was high at The Vineyard because it is an inclusive school and has a high number of children with high levels of SEND and additional needs. She said that the school had cut down the number of volunteers on site during the pandemic, however she explained that they were preparing for two volunteers who were planning to undertake teaching qualifications to assist in the school, once the necessary DBS and background checks had been completed.</p> <p>There were no further questions at this stage</p>	
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<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Funding Update</b>  SS had circulated some information with regards the school's funding for the year. She explained that this year the school had received a 0.5% uplift in funding for teacher pension and salary grants, but that next year this would be part of the funding and not paid in addition. She explained that although pupil numbers had been significantly reduced on census day in October, the national funding formula did not allow large decreases in funding and therefore they had received an extra £74K from the minimum funding guarantee fund to cover the deficit and had not suffered a major loss in funding due to the pupil number decrease.</p> <p>There was a discussion about whether the top up funding allocated covered the cost of SEND provision. SS explained that the school had to fund £6K for each new EHCP from within the budget. She also explained the top up funding is calculated based on the 2015/6 staffing salary rate, which is not reflective of today's salary bands. She said this had been raised with AfC.</p> <p>SS also explained that salary grant funding for trainee teachers is being frozen from September 2021, however the school has recruited two additional trainees to start from the beginning of April. They will be covered by the current funding agreements and they will also assist with providing additional catch up support, the cost of which is covered by the catch up funding. She referred governors to the draft budget document for full details.</p>	
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<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Draft Budget</b>  SS updated governors on capital expenditure plans. Details of the school's successful bids for funding to cover the refurbishment of the Y2 toilets and also to cover some of the wall maintenance had been circulated via email to the committee in advance. She explained that the school would have to fund £12.5K for those projects. She also outlined other projects to redecorate the small hall, replace fire doors and drew governors attention to the wall art examples circulated ahead of the meeting which it is intended will be used to decorate the entrance hall and link between the two halls, as well as the science area. She also outlined the requirement to purchase 60 chromebooks and the necessary licences and trolleys etc. She said she had explored a leasing option and would be pursuing this. She also anticipated that two donations received by Friends of The Vineyard might cover the first payment instalments.</p>	
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9.55am Graham Stewart joins the meeting

<p>7.</p>	<p><b>SFVS</b></p>	
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	<p>GS had reviewed the SFVS in detail and SS had updated it with any relevant details. It was agreed that GS would review the document for one final time, circulate to FA and JL for final review and it would then be presented at the 24 March 2021 FGB for final sign off.</p> <p>Benchmarking information was circulated in advance. Governors commented that the school is spending less in relation to other schools than it used to. SS explained that, with regards teaching costs, in 19/20 there had been significant costs spent on agency staff. The budget had not included these costs this year.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Staff Absence Scheme</b> Governors were supportive of continuing in the Staff Absence Scheme as recommended by the school.</p>	
9.	<p><b>SIMS Capita</b> The school proposed moving to use SIMS Capita (information about the system had been circulated in advance of the meeting) as a means of replacing Integris, ScoPay, School Ping, Dojo etc. and consolidating all this functionality into one system. This has the benefit of reducing complexity, improving and simplifying communication for staff and parents, and removing the cost of multiple app subscriptions. Governors were in favour of the suggestion.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Draft Budget continued</b> GS commented that the budget is in a very healthy position.</p> <p>SS advised caution that she had not budgeted for any salary increases because they are not planned at the moment.</p> <p>GS commented that this was an uncertainty that the school would have to live with. He added that there is a better buffer in the budget this year than previously and it was a healthy as could be managed.</p> <p>Governors had no further comments. Draft budget to be recommended for approval by the FGB at 24 March 2021 meeting.</p>	

Meeting concluded 10.25am

**Date of next meeting:**

**Professional Negligence Statement:** Advice given by governors at The Vineyard School is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity.

**Confidentiality Statement:** Governors should respect the confidence of those items of business which the Governing Body decides and not disclose what individual governors have said or how they have voted within a meeting.

Signed: ..... Dated: .....

Name: ..... Chair of Resources Committee

**Summary of action points:**

Action point	Responsibility
File minutes	Clerk
Review SFVS	JL and FA

