



---

---

The Vineyard School Governing Board

---

---

Minutes of Resources Committee meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019 at 8am at the school

- Present:** Emma Tuck (ET)  
Melanie Bywell (MB)  
Graham Stewart (GS)  
James Lane (JL)  
Ruth Whymark (RW)
- In Attendance:** Svetlana Sanders (SS)  
Anna Mantle (Clerk)
- Absent:** Richard Rosewell (RR)

Meeting started at 8.05am.

| Item  | Action |
|---|--------|
| 1. <b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b><br>Apologies received and accepted from Richard Rosewell.  |        |
| 2. <b><u>Governors' Declaration of Interests</u></b><br>No direct or indirect pecuniary interests were declared.  |        |
| 3. <b><u>Minutes from last meeting (14 November 2018) and matters arising</u></b><br><b>Minutes were signed off by governors as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</b>  |        |
| 4. <b><u>Review of 9 month budget report</u></b><br>RW started by providing an update from a recent meeting she had attended, where she had found out that due to significant overspend in Richmond council's budget, there are plans to request permission from the DfE to overwrite the Schools Forum and top slice more of the budget. It is possible that this could result in a £20k-£50k reduction in the school's budget for next year. RW also reminded governors that there will also be budgetary pressure from the increase in support staff salaries. The school is proud of its focus on inclusivity; however, this also puts pressure on the budget. They have just had their 20 <sup>th</sup> EHCP named – the school funds the first £6K for each EHCP, which represents £120K from this year's budget.<br><br>Governors discussed putting pressure on the LA . They asked whether considering a strategy to establish a special needs provision in school would ease the budget. RW explained that this could be considered, but it requires consultation and would not have an impact on the budget in the short-term.<br><br>Governors commented that all resources are stretched (staff as well as budget). |        |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | <p>SS provided an overview of the new salary bands being introduced for support staff. It will result in higher support staff costs. RW explained that they would review whether some TAs could move to unqualified teacher payscale.</p> <p>SS also explained that teacher pensions are due to increase as well and these must be budgeted for.</p> <p>SS took the meeting through the 9 month budget and notes circulated in advance. Highlights brought to their attention included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projected carry forward is £37K</li> <li>• Staffing underspend due to SBM position remaining unfilled, other vacancies and a restructure of the admin team</li> <li>• E12 Building Maintenance – overspent due to unbudgeted repairs.</li> <li>• E13 Grounds Maintenance – RW updated the meeting that the perimeter wall had been surveyed and a 300m stretch required re-pointing. This is a significant cost and will require council funding. JL advised checking the title deeds to check whose responsibility the wall is.</li> </ul> |  |
|--|--|--|

8.30am James Lane leaves the meeting. Meeting remains quorate.

|                  |  |  |
|------------------|--|--|
| <p><b>4.</b></p> | <p><b><u>Review of 9 month budget report continued</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E14 Cleaning contract. SS updated the meeting that this contract continues on a rolling basis. Best practice is to put contracts of this nature out to tender every 3 years. Will re-tender this when the new SBM is in place.</li> <li>• SS has a few queries to raise with the PTA regarding curriculum art funding.</li> <li>• RW asked whether the grant from Schools Direct had been received. SS to check.</li> </ul> <p>SS explained that she is putting in place procedures to bring accruals through in a timely manner in order to get a clearer understanding of the bottom line. In the past outstanding bills have not been accrued.</p> <p>There was a longer discussion regarding the catering budget. E25 is projected to be overspent by £118.8K because the budgeted amount is low, in comparison with the cost. Due to the lack of accruals, this year's catering budget has to accommodate 14-15 months of expenditure. I18 and I09 should combine to cover E25, however it requires constant debt-chasing to ensure pupil and teacher catering bills are paid in a timely fashion.</p> <p>RW commented that the admin team had done a great job reducing the amount owed for school meals from £25K to the present level of £14K. Procedures are being put in place to ensure that everyone pays in advance rather than arrears. There is a process to schedule calling to chase outstanding debts, starting with Y6 pupils.</p> <p>Governors had no further questions and thanked SS for her time.</p> |  |
|------------------|--|--|

|                  |  |  |
|------------------|--|--|
| <p><b>5.</b></p> | <p><b><u>DfE Benchmarking Report</u></b></p> <p>Governors reviewed the benchmarking report that had been circulated ahead of the meeting. They noted that teaching staff and admin staff costs were within the averages in comparison with the other schools in the benchmark report. In fact, admin costs should reduce further due to recent restructuring, which will not have been included in this report.</p> <p>Pupil-teacher ratios are within the middle of the group, in comparison with the other schools in the report.</p> <p>Support staff costs are higher than the average in the benchmark report, however the report only compares expenditure, it does not take into account the number of SEND children or income.</p> |  |
|------------------|--|--|

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | <p>Education Consultancy spend is benchmarked above average. The majority of this represents agency non-teaching supply staff costs, otherwise the school employs consultancy through the usual SLAs with various agencies.</p> <p>It was noted that it is possible to run a benchmark across the Borough for particular costs. SS will undertake this for the cleaning contract.</p>   | SS  |
| 6.  | <p><b><u>SFVS Review</u></b><br/>An updated version of the SFVS was circulated ahead of the meeting, however further changes are required. Governors agreed to review the document in detail and to send finalised document to the next FGB (28 February) for sign off.</p>   | <p>MB review SFVS</p> <p>SFVS onto FGB Feb agenda - Clerk</p> |
| 7.  | <p><b><u>Sign off BACS payment procedure</u></b><br/>Governors formally signed off the proposed procedure to pay invoices via BACs rather than cheque. Two levels of authorisation are still required. <b>Governors agreed the process.</b></p>   |   |
| 8.  | <p><b><u>Charging Policy</u></b><br/>RW asked whether the voluntary contributions for school visits etc. could be paid into FoV and therefore GiftAid could be claimed for these payments. SS to investigate whether there are any regulations that would prohibit this.</p> <p>Discussion started about the charging policy and it was apparent that significant changes were needed to make the policy clearer and establish a clear procedure for requesting payment and encouraging all who can afford to pay to contribute. The school wishes to maintain its inclusive approach, however it was agreed that everyone who can afford to pay should be encouraged to do so. The school budget is under too much pressure not to apply significant rigour in covering the costs of school trips.</p> <p>SS will do some research into the charging policies of other schools.</p> <p>Agreed to add Charging Policy to FGB Agenda and FoV agenda.</p> | <p>SS</p> <p>SS</p> <p>Clerk</p>                              |
| 9.10am Svetlana Sanders leaves the meeting. |   |   |
| 9.  | <p><b><u>Virements</u></b><br/>No changes made. <b>Policy agreed and signed off.</b></p>  |   |
| 11.   | <p><b><u>Grievance Policy</u></b><br/>This is a standard policy from the LA. No changes can be made without formal consultation with all the unions in the locality. Since the LA is the employer, the school is protected if it retains the LA policy. <b>Policy agreed and signed off.</b></p>  |   |
| 12.   | <p><b><u>Discipline Policy</u></b><br/>This is a standard policy from the LA. No changes can be made without formal consultation with all the unions in the locality. Since the LA is the employer, the school is protected if it retains the LA policy. <b>Policy agreed and signed off.</b></p>   |   |
| 13.   | <p><b><u>Any other business</u></b><br/>The Key vs School Bus – governors are requested to review the link circulated ahead of the meeting to evaluate the quality of information provided by School Bus. (The subscription is significantly cheaper than The Key.)</p> <p>PPG and Sports Premium report contents – Clerk to send research and best practice documents to Liz Foster (Sports Premium) and Charlotte Axbey (PPG) for review.</p>   | Clerk   |
| 9.26am Emma Tuck leaves the meeting         |   |   |
| 14.   | <p><b><u>Any other business</u></b><br/>Pay Committee Meeting Minutes (12 December 2018) agreed by all members of the pay committee and signed off.</p>   |   |

|            |   |  |
|------------|---|--|
| <b>15.</b> | <b>Part II – Confidential</b><br>Confidential minutes taken and filed separately. |  |
|------------|---|--|

9.45am Meeting ends.

**Date of next meeting: Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May at 8am.**

**Summary of action points:**

| Action point   | Responsibility |
|--|----------------|
| Benchmark cleaning contract costs with similar sized schools in the Borough      | SS             |
| Review SFVS detail   | MB and SS      |
| Put SFVS onto Feb FGB agenda   | Clerk          |
| Explore claiming Gift Aid on voluntary school trip contributions if paid via FoV | SS             |
| Research charging policies of other schools                                      | SS             |
| Add Charging Policy to Feb FGB agenda  | Clerk          |
| Add paying school trip contributions to FoV to next FoV meeting agenda           | Clerk          |
| Review School Bus  | GS and MB      |
| Send PPG and Sports Premium reports to relevant school representatives           | Clerk          |