



The Vineyard School Governing Board
Friars Stile Road, Richmond TW10 6NE

Part 1

Minutes of Resources Committee virtual meeting held on 16 November 2021 at 8am via Zoom

Governors Present: Firas Ali (FA)
James Lane (JL) (Chair)
Philippe Tapernoux (TP)
Richard Rosewell (RW) Deputy Head
Frances Bracegirdle (FB) Head
Alice McArdle (AMcA)

In Attendance: Svetlana Sanders Business Manager (SS)
Jackie Dutton (Clerk)

Absent: Charlotte Axbey

Item	Action
<p>1. <u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>None. The meeting was quorate throughout. . Frances was welcomed to her first Resources meeting. JW would have to leave the meeting at 9 am - PT would chair the meeting if needed.</p>	
<p>2. <u>Governors' Declaration of Interests</u></p> <p>No direct or indirect pecuniary interests were declared.</p>	
<p>3. <u>Election of Chair</u></p> <p>JW was elected as Chair</p>	
<p>4. <u>Minutes of the last meeting - 29 September 2021</u></p> <p>SS had made some minor adjustments - with those amendments the minutes were agreed as an accurate record and would be signed by JL. The amended minute would be put in the meeting folder.</p> <p>There were no matters arising not on the agenda.</p>	<p>JL Clerk</p>
<p>5. <u>Update on Bungalow/capital expenditure</u></p> <p>SS had had a response to her enquiry about letting the bungalow and she had been told it could not be let but should be used for curriculum purposes.</p>	

	<p>JL had spoken to Charles Owen at Richmond Council who had said the preference would be to sell the bungalow - a next door neighbour was interested in this. They did not want the bungalow to be let out as there was a risk of any tenant accruing the right to buy. They were happy for the bungalow to be used for educational purposes and asked JL to email them about the possibility of regaining the council tax payments. If the decision was taken to sell the property the next door neighbour would be contacted and asked to make an offer. It would be challenging to put this on the open market because of access difficulties to view it. JL would contact the Chair of Governors about this to keep him up to date.</p> <p>Q If the bungalow was sold who would get the money? A Richmond Council - but the money would be used for general educational purposes.</p> <p><i>Capital expenditure</i></p> <p>- the Yr 2 toilet refurbishment had been completed - SS and JL had walked round these and they looked very good.</p> <p>Fire doors - it had been agreed to proceed with the fire doors replacement but with a reduced number of doors, starting with the most vulnerable. The quote would be updated. It was proposed to put a figure in the budget for the next financial year to complete the rest of this project.</p> <p>There was an outstanding quotation on the fire alarms- SS had had problems getting quotes for this work. This was the same for all quotes in the area and supply shortage might mean the cost of works going up.</p>	<p>JL</p> <p>SS</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><u>Catering Contract</u></p> <p>Catering contract - more information had been sent to governors - the original 39 pages was very long. The full document would be sent to PT and he would then speak to SS. The school had been advised to look at due diligence and value for money to look at the main contract and compare prices with other companies - the contract would expire in July 2022. This would be quite a lengthy process so should start now. The majority of local schools used the LA contractor but other schools had said there were issues with pricing and quality of food so SS was not considering using them. Some schools used a consultancy service to organise tenders etc and SS was waiting for a quote to do this - it would probably cost £2 -3 K. The contract would be for 3 years and there would not be a need to retender after 3 years.</p> <p>Radish had been used since 2014 (and had been renewed once). RR and SS had discussed this and RR had asked for feedback from staff and pupils - it was hoped to decide on this at the FGB. RR said that the general feedback was that it was a really good company with a good standard of food and very few complaints. Staff, including the lunchtime supervisors, were impressed with them and felt they went 'over and beyond' their contract.</p> <p>Governors discussed this - the process of due diligence/comparison would cost the school money and the school did not want to use the LA caterers. At the same point in the renewal process previously Radish had given the school £5K to spend on equipment for lunches - two folding tables were bought, as well as cutlery and crockery. A letter had been sent in again from Radish offering a similar sum.</p> <p>It was agreed that there would be an item on the FGB agenda to discuss the extension of this contract and that RR and SS would negotiate with Radish to see if the incentive might be increased if the contract was extended. The question of sustainability/green waste/recycling would be something to discuss with the company.</p>	<p>Clerk FGB agenda</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>Budget Monitoring</u></p> <p>A budget monitoring report and notes had been sent out.</p>	

Two teachers had resigned since the last meeting. The school had tried to recruit replacements but had had no success so the only option was to go to an agency. There was a teacher in training at the school currently who could cover a Yr 6 post so two agency staff would be needed to cover the other post. There would be an underspend showing against the teaching line but the money would be spent on agency staff. An ex-member of teaching staff was interested in working some of these days.

There had also been a high level of absences and some positive Covid test results. The school explored all ways to cover those absences and would use agencies as a last option. There would be increased agency costs going forward.

SS was predicting £134K of carry forward into the next financial year, down from £146K previously - a drop of £12K.

Q Does that come from the increased agency staffing mainly?

A yes - additional services and also increased curriculum resources/stationery. New assessments had been purchased across several subjects, not just English and maths. Difference exercise books and diaries had been purchased so there was an overspend of several £K against that budget.

Q Do we reflect the changing pattern of expenditure on staffing/curriculum resources in the budgets going forward - is it the new normal?

A This would be discussed with the SLT for both staffing and to see if the same level of assessments would be needed and the same sort of books.

Q What about Covid Recovery funding?

A SS said that that was available to schools in the first lockdown (about £9K) but had restrictions on what it could be spent on - disadvantaged pupils badly affected by Covid/Lockdown to improve attainment. This was no longer available.

SS had put two links at the bottom of her summary for governors to read about funding on offer.

Govs

Q Was enough capacity not put into the budget/school so that absences could be covered from an internal pool? - what has changed, are the number of absences higher than this could cover?

A It was based on a model based on normal circumstances but the level of staff absent was higher than the normal capacity. The school still had to provide PPA time for teachers and cover other non-contact time and training. One of the resigned posts would be covered by the teacher in training at the school so this would save money. The agency post would be for 3 months.

The claims from staff absence scheme were rising too and would partly cover the agency costs. Governors should view

- Staffing costs
- Agency Costs
- Claims income

together to get the full picture.

Q The higher number of absences for sickness - were there normal underlying causes or increased stress?

A SS did not think there were increased absences due to stress. There was one pregnancy related absence which would be covered by the staff absence scheme. The majority of absences were short term - colds, Covid or positive Covid isolating. If HLTAs or part time teachers were themselves out of school they could not then cover other absences. This was not a concern as there was nothing the school could do to improve the absence in the future - staff absences were monitored and the school could talk to staff or refer them to Occupational Health if relevant. Governors noted that absences would be carefully monitored as the school returned to 'normal'.

	<p>The school would meet with the IT provider later this half term to review the IT equipment. There was some urgent need to purchase IT equipment for staff and SS would get costings. This was in the school budget and would not be an additional cost. This would be finalised ready to go to the FGB in December.</p> <p>Next financial year - the forms had been received from AfC to fill in so SS was working on this. There would be a need for a deficit recovery for the next financial year.</p> <p>Q It was often seen that the carry forward would improve by the end of the year- there was a significant deficit in the figures but it was improving. The main item was teaching and education staff - Frances had just taken up her post but was there an analysis of the cost structure, layer by layer, to compare to previous years, to see if there was any trend?</p> <p>A Work had just been done for teachers re scale points and allowances. There would be a meeting to discuss staffing for the next year - as governors knew RR would be resigning at the end of the academic year and that would impact on leadership. There might also be maternities and resignations before the end of the year. SS would start work on setting up the new budget from December/January - the new financial year started 1 April 2022.</p> <p>The draft budget would be presented at the next meeting of this committee.</p> <p>SS highlighted that unions had rejected the recent offer of a pay rise for support staff and there would be a consultation period in the first week of December. SS had budgeted 2.75% uplift increase for support staff but it was not yet known what would be agreed.</p> <p>Q Can you show a comparison of the structure - what it was previously and what it should be going forward - where were the risks?</p> <p>A Yes SS could do that. It was agreed SS would send some information in advance to PT to discuss, and JL if possible, and then present the final version to the committee at the next meeting.</p>	<p>SS Clerk FGB agenda</p> <p>Nxt meeting</p> <p>SS, PT,JL Nxt meeting</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><u>Policies, Terms of Reference and Scheme of Delegation</u></p> <p>FA and SS had met to discuss some policies highlighted at the last meeting. A small paragraph had been inserted into the Governors' Allowances policy re subsistence allowance, overnight stay etc (marked in red). SS had also added a governors' allowance claim form. FA was happy with these amendments and all governors agreed the policy.</p> <p>Staff Conduct - this had been reviewed following a request from a staff member and was about wording about not striking up a relationship outside of school. If a parent was a staff member that would be difficult so it was proposed to add 5.4 - two new sentences - to expand that topic, give some flexibility but keep boundaries. The Headship Team had agreed this. This was agreed.</p>	
	<p><u>Constitution/terms of reference/ SoD</u></p> <p><u>Scheme of Delegation</u></p> <p>FA had had some comments in the previous meeting about the Head having more actions but this not being reflected in the policy- this was found to be just a formatting issue with an Ipad.. These would be agreed with each committee. It was agreed to save final documents as pdf as this was better for the Ipad format.</p> <p>The Scheme of Finance came from the LA and there were no changes.</p> <p>FB would review these documents when possible.</p> <p>Q Do staff sign somewhere to record they have read and understood the relevant policies?</p> <p>A This could be considered</p>	<p>FB</p>

	<p>ECT Policy (Early Career Teacher). RR had sent this out the previous day but it had not gone to FA or the Clerk - RR forwarded it to them. It would go with the Safeguarding Policy to the FGB meeting. Governors were asked to look at these policies and send any comments or their approval to RR..</p> <p>For the ECT policy new ECT teachers would have a two year period to cover the procedures etc rather than the 1 year previously given to NQTs.</p> <p>Safeguarding policy- JL had a query on this and would email this to RR.</p> <p>9.01 am JL left the meeting and PT took the Chair.</p> <p>Lettings Policy- FA and SS had discussed the deposit sum and agreed £300 as the deposit - this needed approval here and at the FGB. This was agreed in committee and would go to the next FGB.</p> <p>FA had some comments on the Constitution where some paragraphs needed clarification:</p> <p><i>Voting and quorum</i></p> <p>In 1.4 it said only Governors could vote but in 3.3 it said Governors and Associate Members (AM) can vote - further on it said limited rights could be given to AMs. It was noted that only governors could vote at FGB meetings but AMs could be given voting right on committees when they were put on committees so 1.4 should be amended to say 'Only Governors and Associate Members with voting rights could vote'. RR was an AM but did not know if he had voting rights on committees.</p> <p><i>Appendices</i></p> <p>Appendix 1 said there would be support lead governors for Safeguarding & LAC and also SEND - were there?</p> <p>Appendix 2 said the Support lead governor for Parent Liaison would schedule governor listening forums - did this happen?</p> <p>Support Lead governors - a list of link governors would be useful for the FGB so that any gaps could be filled. There were two new parent governors - Elizabeth Kelly and Nicola Rossington.</p> <p>This would go to the FGB meeting to be discussed further.</p> <p>An eco governor should be added to the list of roles for governors - to look at environmental aspects in school.</p>	<p>Clerk FGB agenda Govs</p> <p>JL</p> <p>Clerk FGB agenda</p> <p>Clerk/school</p> <p>Clerk FGB agenda</p> <p>Clerk/school</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><u>Date of next meeting</u> 9 March 2022 8 am</p> <p>Date of FGB meeting - 6 December 2021</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.22 am with no Part 2 items. All governors were thanked for attending.</p>	