

**THE BEECHES PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE**  
**Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 1pm**

**MINUTES**

Present: Adrian Holdstock (Chair), Tim Smith (Headteacher), Bill Peasley, Helen Marsden

In Attendance: Neil Burford (Finance Manager), Suzanne Arnold (Clerk)

**1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed those present. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Sadia Kauser.

**2 Declaration of Interest**

Adrian Holdstock recorded his employment as vicar of St Mark's Church, which received payment from the school for staff car parking spaces.

**3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016 were agreed as an accurate record subject to the amendment of section 10.5 to read "the local authority would be asked to fund an issue in which the school's lightning conductors had been found not to be installed at the uppermost part of the roof."

**4 Matters Arising**

**4.1 Car parking**

Mohammed Jamil was making enquiries into contractual and ownership issues related to the school's car park space.

**4.2 Pupil Premium and Sports Premium reports**

The Headteacher confirmed that the pupil premium and sports premium reports had been published on the school website. The Headteacher was asked to arrange for a link to be included on the pupil premium report to the school's performance data.

**Action: Headteacher to arrange for website link from pupil premium report to school's performance data.**

**4.3 CCTV**

The Finance Manager advised of quotations received for replacement of the analogue CCTV cameras at the front of the school. Following discussion, the committee approved a recommendation to replace all analogue cameras and recording equipment at a cost of £4,285; it was noted that a sum of £10,000 had been budgeted in the capital budget for update of the CCTV system.

**4.4 Classroom and hall redecoration**

The Finance Manager advised that a quotation had been received of £1,300 for redecoration of two identified classrooms.

Quotations had also been received, of between £2,200 and £4,000, for redecoration of the Suri hall. Quotations for flooring refurbishment had been received at between £1,800 and £5,000. Following discussion, the committee agreed that the work on the hall should be booked for the summer holidays, drawn from the budget for the financial year 2017-18.

**5 Finance Report**

**5.1** An annotated budget report as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 had been previously circulated, accompanied by a narrative finance report. Governors discussed the reports as follows.

**5.2** The Finance Manager continued to work with the SEND department at the local authority to resolve anomalies in the school's SEND allocation.

- 5.3 An increase in income shown in budget category I01 was due to payment by the local authority of a contribution towards redundancy costs
- 5.4 Income from school meals had increased.
- 5.5 **Governors referred to the reduction in the budget for contributions to visits and asked whether this was due to fewer trips, or to a reduction in contributions received from parents.** The Headteacher had advised that there had been a slight reduction in the number of trips and visitors, as reflected in the corresponding expenditure category, however, certain trips were still to be run before the end of this financial year and income and expenditure was therefore expected to increase. An update on these budget lines would be provided to the next meeting.

**Action: Finance Manager to provide update on budget for trips, for next meeting**

- 5.6 The Finance Manager advised that December invoices for cleaning and for catering were yet to be received.
- 5.7 The budget for supply staff had been increased, to reflect increased expenditure (see staffing report).
- 5.8 Anti-virus software had proved more expensive than the sum budgeted, by £489.84; governors approved the transfer of this amount from the revenue to the capital budget, to meet this additional cost.
- 5.9 Governors were advised that Peterborough City Council had agreed to meet the pension capital costs arising from the recent redundancies, amounting to £36,000.
- 5.10 The estimated carry forward to the next financial year was £51,000.  
  
The Headteacher advised that funding for the coming financial year, 2017-18, was expected to increase by approximately £100,000, reflecting the increase in pupil numbers.
- 5.11 Governors were provided with an update on the Tandem Printer issue.
- 5.12 Governors were advised that the billing issues relating to the account with Anglian Water had been resolved, and a credit had been issued to the school.
- 5.13 Financial decisions requiring committee approval  
A summary of requests for committee approval had been previously circulated, and were discussed as follows.
- 5.14 Phone System  
The Finance Manager presented background information and quotations for renewal of the phone system. Following discussion, the committee approved the recommendation of the Finance Manager to enter a five year contract with Nine Telecom, as offering the best value for money from the quotations received.
- 5.15 Car Parking  
A quotation had been received for increasing available car parking spaces at the school by four spaces, at £3,200; the cost would be offset by savings on the current rental of parking spaces at St Mark's Church. The Finance Manager had requested landlord consent for the work from Peterborough City Council; this was awaited.

The Finance Manager proposed that the work should be funded from a budget previously set aside in the capital budget for i-pads. **Governors asked why the budget had not been spent as designated, on i-pads;** the Headteacher advised that the decision had been taken to delay this spend until current connectivity problems with the IT system had been resolved. **Governors asked whether this change in designated purpose in the capital budget was permitted under the regulations** and were advised that the Finance Manager had checked with the Schools Finance Team, who had confirmed their agreement. Governors approved the outlay, and discussed the timing of the work; it was felt that this

should be undertaken during a school holiday if possible, to minimise disruption.

## **6 Financial Benchmarking**

Postponed to the next meeting.

## **7 Premises Projects and Asset Management Plan**

- 7.1 The Premises Report for January 2017 had been previously circulated and was discussed as follows.
- 7.2 The bay window in the Reception classroom had been completed; this had provided increased classroom space and had resolved issues with temperature control in the room.
- 7.3 An installation date was awaited for replacement of the Reception hatch; governors expressed concern at the delay in completion of this work.
- 7.4 Anglian Water were investigating issues relating to a blocked drain underneath the new building.
- 7.5 An update on the Asset Management Plan was reported, including plans to redecorate two classrooms (see item 4.4 above). The Headteacher proposed that new boarding for displays could be installed as part of this project; it was recognised that this would be at additional cost, but would fall within the Headteacher's limits for expenditure approval.
- 7.6 A fire risk assessment had taken place, resulting in an action plan, most of which had now been addressed. Two evacuation chairs were to be purchased, as an outcome of the risk assessment.
- 7.7 Work to remove asbestos at the front of the building and above the disabled lift was scheduled to take place at half term. Asbestos at the back of the building was not included in this project, and would be addressed at a later date. Governors asked whether there would still be access to the building during half term; it was thought that access would be permitted, as specialist equipment would be used to prevent the spread of dust. **In response to governor questions**, the Finance Manager confirmed that the asbestos would have been removed by the time school started again after half term, however the work on making good was expected to extend into term time.
- 7.8 Outstanding work on the solar panels was noted. Amey had been asked to arrange for a specialist report (still awaited) and advice had also been sought from the company which had attended school to carry out maintenance on the lightning conductor. The Finance Manager would forward their report to Peterborough City Council.
- 7.9 A request had been received by Amey to carry out an inspection of the school premises as part of the City Council's asset management plan.

## **8 Health and Safety Report**

The Health and Safety Report for January 2017 had been previously circulated.

## **9 Staffing Report**

- 9.1 The Headteacher provided a staffing update as follows.
- One teacher had resigned at the end of the autumn term and had been replaced by an experienced teacher through a supply agency. The outgoing teacher had been working on a part time contract at 0.4 fte; the replacement had been arranged for 0.6 fte.
  - An additional teacher had been appointed through a supply agency to work as a booster teacher in Year 5, and to team teach with the unqualified teacher who was working as a class teacher in Year 5.
  - There were currently four trainee teachers working in school.
  - Staffing requirements for September were currently being considered, with a view to initiating recruitment for NQTs within the next few weeks.
  - A request had been received from a part time teacher to reduce from 0.9 fte to 0.8; the school would consider the implications for time-tabling, but hoped to be able to agree to this request.
  - A TA had asked to reduce their hours by one day; the school would agree to this request, providing it proved possible to recruit a replacement for a one day contract.
- 9.2 The Headteacher advised that the leadership were working with staff to find ways of optimising the

way in which workload was addressed, to ensure appropriate work-life balance.

- 9.3 In response to governor questions the Headteacher advised that office staff were working at full capacity, and that the workload of the Attendance Officer had increased. The post of Attendance Officer was a key role in school, as the school's data for attendance was below the national average.

In order to add capacity, the school was exploring the possibility of appointing a part time PA to support the Headteacher and senior leaders.

## **10 Review of Policies**

### **10.1 Critical Incident Response Procedure**

The Critical Incident Response Procedure had been previously circulated. Deputy Headteacher Helen Marsden advised that the policy had been checked and updated for accuracy of phone numbers etc.

Governors discussed lock down procedures and the implications of implementing such procedures given the constraints of the premises. There would be a financial implication of providing locks to all doors, improved blinds for classrooms, and adapting outside fire doors. A need had also been identified to replace the bell/alarm system with a system which enabled a range of alarm types.

Governors suggested that an action plan should be drawn up, listing the requirements for implementation of a workable lock-down procedure, and the cost implications.

Drills for lock-down were discussed; Helen had consulted with other schools, who had advised to hold practices with staff in the first instance.

It was noted that cards had been issued to advise staff of action to take in the event of a bomb threat received by phone; these protocols had been added to the Critical Incidents Procedure as an appendix.

Governors agreed that aspects of enabling a lock-down procedure which could be addressed cheaply should be undertaken quickly, and that work should commence with staff on practice and drills. The Finance Manager was asked to submit quotations for a renewed alarm/bell system. Governors expressed the intention of implementation of a workable lock-down procedure within six months.

#### **Actions:**

**Helen Marsden to arrange staff training time for lock-down procedures.**

**Helen Marsden to draw up action plan for premises requirements to enable a lock-down procedure**

**Neil Burford to obtain quotations for new alarm/bell system and report back to committee.**

### **10.2 Allegations of Abuse against Staff and Volunteers**

Deputy Headteacher Helen Marsden advised that the school's procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against staff and volunteers were included in the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Governors agreed that the policy would be re-named "Safeguarding, Child Protection and Allegations of Abuse against Staff and Volunteers".

**Action: Helen Marsden to re-name Safeguarding Policy, as above.**

Governors discussed the section of the policy which provided contact details and which contact details should be provided for the Safeguarding Governor. It was suggested that contact with the Safeguarding Governor could be arranged either through the school office, or through the Clerk to the Governors. The Clerk was asked to make some enquiries about the usual practice in other schools, and report back.

**Action: Clerk to make enquiries about protocols for publishing contact details for safeguarding governor in Safeguarding Policy**

## **11 Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)**

- 11.1 The draft SFVS return for 2016-17 had been previously circulated by Bill Peasley. Governors discussed section 10 of the questionnaire, which requested evidence of a clear and demonstrable link between the school's budgeting and its plan for raising standards and attainment. Possibilities for evidencing this

included:

- the budget for staff CPD (training) and its impact on school priorities;
- the budget for one to one tuition to raise attainment;
- Every Child a Reader and Every Child Counts initiatives;
- additional teaching roles (booster teachers), targeted towards raising attainment.

- 11.2 Question 14 of the questionnaire related to financial benchmarking; Bill Peasley and the Finance Manager would use the Arbor benchmarking report to inform this analysis.
- 11.3 Governors discussed question 25: "Does the school have an appropriate business continuity or disaster recovery plan, including an up-to-date asset register and adequate insurance?". The Headteacher noted that, with the implementation of a cloud-based IT system, the school's business processes could be carried out from any location.
- 11.4 Bill Peasley would meet with the Finance Manager to complete the SFVS return as above, for submission to the full governing body.

**Action: Bill Peasley and Finance Manager to complete SFVS return, for submission to full governing body**

**12 Any Other Business**

None

**13 Date of Next Meeting**

An additional meeting was arranged for Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April, at 1:30pm, to focus on the budget for 2017-18

**14 IT Project**

- 14.1 Governors discussed ongoing issues with the delivery of the IT project, contracted to Think IT. In response to governor questions the Headteacher advised that Think IT was a not-for-profit organisation run as part of the E2BN framework. In response to governor questions the Headteacher confirmed that the school had issued a formal complaint to E2BN and had met with the CEO to discuss the school's concerns. The Finance Manager clarified that the concerns mainly related to project management and organisation; day to day issues with the provision were not being addressed sufficiently promptly by Think IT, despite issue of a revised project plan as an outcome of the meeting held with the CEO of E2BN.

The school recognised that the nature of the premises was causing complications; however, a full audit had been carried out by Think IT prior to commencement of the contract and they had expressed confidence that the project could be delivered.

Governors discussed the option of taking legal advice, as it appeared that Think IT were in breach of contract, as they were failing to deliver as agreed.

- 14.2 The Chair of the committee had requested attendance at today's meeting of a representative from Think IT, in view of the seriousness of the situation. A good deal of notice of the meeting date had been provided. However, Think IT had advised that their attendance at the meeting would not be possible.
- 14.3 Paul Wyatt-Pike, Framework Director at Think IT, joined the meeting by telephone at this point (3pm), and apologised for the failure to attend the meeting in person; this had been due to a conflicting commitment elsewhere. The Chair noted the committee's disappointment that attendance in person had not been possible.
- The Chair asked how Think IT were to address the various technical issues which had been reported by the school, to ensure a robust and reliable system going forward. What was the timetable, and where was the detailed plan?
  - Paul advised that a detailed plan had been created and implemented in the form of a project plan. As far as Paul was aware, there was now only one element outstanding, other than ongoing fixes.
  - Paul had requested a report from CMAT, who were supporting the project, about common faults and frequency of faults; a pattern was evident in this data, and Paul felt that certain elements

needed to be addressed by the school, others by Think IT.

- Paul said that Think IT were doing their utmost to resolve the issues and were aware of where the weaknesses were. However, if the school wished to terminate the contract Think IT would work professionally to effect a hand-over.
- The Finance Manager queried Paul's assertion that there was only one element of the project still outstanding, as he had identified and reported several elements. It appeared that Paul considered some aspects had been resolved which the Finance Manager knew to be still outstanding.
- The role of the support officer was discussed; this officer was deployed in school for one day per week and the school reported some confusion as to whether this role was for project roll-out or project support.
- Governors felt that there was a key issue around resourcing the delivery of the project and asked Paul to submit a written report of Think IT's plans to complete the project, and their timeframes.
- Paul said that, although Think IT would like to continue to work with the school, they would understand if the school decided to terminate the contract.
- The Headteacher and Finance Manager noted that communication from the Project Manager had been sporadic, and it was felt that the project was not being managed sufficiently tightly. The Finance Manager had reported a range of issues which needed to be addressed.
- Paul Wyatt-Pike reiterated his invitation to the school to terminate the contract, and concluded the phone call at this point.

14.4 Following discussion, governors agreed that the next step would be to contact the CEO at E2BN to request that the project be completed without further delay, and that a Project Manager should be deployed on site to ensure this.

**15 Close**

The Chair closed the meeting at 3:15pm

Date of the Next Meeting: Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 1:30pm.