

Bevendean Primary School and Nursery

Minutes of the Finance, Personnel & Premises Committee held on Thursday 20th October 2022 at 5.00pm [HYBRID MEETING]

Present: Eugene Arnold, Mark Dally (Headteacher), Adrian Strange, Michael Stroud (Committee Chair),

Also in attendance: Andrea Hammond (Business Manager), Sarah Miller (Associate Member), Andy Thomas (Clerk).

Apologies: Lydia Majic.

1. **Quoracy of meeting**

MS welcomed those present to the meeting. The meeting was quorate.

2. **Apologies**

Apologies had been received from LM.

3. **Minutes of the meetings on 19th May 2022**

a. **Approval of minutes**

The draft minutes were **agreed** subject to the amendment of “AS” to “AH” in respect of Action Points 7, 8 and 12 under Item 3.

b. **Action Points/ matters arising**

The Action Points were reviewed as follows:

- AP1 & 2 Noted covered by the agenda.
- AP3 - 5 Completed.
- AP6 *Policy review schedule/ strategy* This was in progress and MD would liaise with AT as required.
- AP7 *SFVS return* A new schedule was noted.
- AP8 *Training for panel members* This was in hand. AH was addressing Safer Recruitment training via the NSPCC. **ACTION 1 - AH**
- AP9 – 12 Completed.

4. **Staffing update**

MD reported that:

- Three ECTs had started in September. Mentoring was in place and they were doing well.
- Two TAs had been appointed at the end of the previous term. They were also doing well.
- Mid-day supervisors were being recruited. Three had recently been appointed.

There were no questions.

5. Finance update

a. *Business Manager's report*

AH presented her Business Manager's Report, which had been circulated in advance. Reference was made to a number of aspects of the Report in relation to:

- Finance*: Pupil numbers; budget update – additional income and expenditure; virements (none); and write-offs.
- Personnel*: Pay, staffing changes, maternity leave and recruitment.
- Premises*: Summer works; refurbishment; training; Health & Safety; flooding; Schools Condition Data Survey; network upgrades; maintenance work; utility costs.
- Staff absences*: Data for 2021-22 and 2022-23 rolling year to date.

The following questions were asked:

- ***Did the two cases of changes in flexible working involve a reduction in hours?*** Yes, this was the case.
- ***How was the school picking up the "slack" arising from the above?*** This was being satisfactorily managed.
- ***Did staff insurance cover sick absences and did an excess apply?*** There was an excess set at 10 days. Arrangements were capped at certain levels.
- ***Had an exit interview been conducted with the Learning Mentor who had left?*** No, this had been a short notice departure before Summer. The member of staff had had issues with childcare. The school was starting to conduct exit interviews from this year.
- ***Was the long-term sickness absence likely to continue?*** The member of staff concerned was currently signed-off until 30th November.
- ***Was there good TA coverage?*** The position was different to that of Learning Mentors, but some "slack" was being picked up. There an element of crossover between the roles.
- ***Could the H&S Link Governor attend asbestos training?*** The Link Governor was H&S trained.

b. **Local Authority letter re: low pay awards**

Covered under Item 5a).

c. **Budget update/ outturn and commentary**

AH made reference to the budget monitoring documents circulated in advance and the following were highlighted:

- *Staffing*
- *Premises*
- *Curriculum*
- *Supplies and services/ transport*
- *Income*
- *Swimming and trips*

There was an estimated carry-forward of £61,209 as at August. This was below the previous forecast due to changes in staff pay awards.

d. **New budget monitoring report layout and update**

MS stated that a new approach was being taken based on:

- A spreadsheet with multiple “tabs”.
- A written overview.

This would provide fuller information and background. The spreadsheet backed up the overview in the written report.

The “Financial overview” section set out a £60k overspend. Monitoring was against the approved budget rather than the whole funding position. This was considered to be more meaningful.

Reference was made to the key issues of overspends, underspends and grants.

In summary, there was a £60k overspend against the approved budget. This meant that there was only £61k to carry over to the following year. This meant the school has had to draw more from their prior year carry forward pot than they had budgeted to utilise in this year. Now there is only £61k forecast balance available in 23/24 rather than £121k as stated in their medium-term budget plan.

The following questions were asked:

- **Were there workload implications for the Business Manager?** This was minimal. The documents were populated by reports from AH.
- **Was the new approach helpful to the Business Manager?** Yes, this was a good tool. It was beneficial to the school.

e. **Budget planning 2023-24**

MS delivered a presentation on this matter.

There was a concern about future budgeting. A significant shortfall of £300k was anticipated in the following year.

It was suggested that a meeting be arranged to discuss options. One possibility was to apply for a licensed deficit. However, there was a limit on the amount. Also, a three-year recovery plan would be required.

MD stated that this was a major issue, given the current climate. The school did not foresee that a 3-year deficit recovery plan would be possible.

Similar problems were being experienced by all schools in the City. One way forward may be to collaborate with other schools.

The school was constantly looking at options. Staffing was an area to be kept under review in terms of natural wastage/ turnover.

This was an important conversation and a huge challenge.

There was a general discussion.

It was expected that a meeting of school Business Managers would be held. The projected shortfall of £300k was noted. Action may be required before the next FPP meeting on 1st December.

The following question was asked:

- ***Should potential areas of saving be looked at?*** Yes, this would be done for the next meeting. **ACTION 2 – MD/ AH**

It was noted that there were a number of “unknowns” at present and that it was too early to make firm decisions.

There was some further discussion.

It was agreed that the possibility of meeting up in the New Year (following the next scheduled FPP meeting) should be looked at. **ACTION 3 – MD/ AH/ MS**

f. ***SFVS update/ third party transactions***

It was reported that this had been updated and colour-coded. Declarations were in progress.

g. ***Scheme of Delegation***

This had been reviewed at the July FGB meeting. MS had since raised questions.

It was agreed that the Local Authority model document should be circulated with the school version, tabled at the May FPP and July FGB, to facilitate further discussion.

ACTION 4 – AH/ MS

h. Disposal of Equipment / Write off Authorisation form

Reference was made to the document circulated in advance. There was a cost of £445 to collect, dispose and certificate.

This was agreed and would be formally signed off. **ACTION 5 – MD/ MS/ LM/ AS**

6. Premises update

Most issues had been covered under Item 5a.

The following were reported:

- A fire risk assessment visit was expected. Associated issues were being addressed.
- Action was ongoing on a Health & Safety checklist.
- There had been a fire evacuation that week. This had been timed at 8 mins and 50 seconds, which was average. This had gone well.

7. Pupil Premium spending and outcomes

A written report would be available by the end of December.

Funding was £230,160 in the current year. Most of this was spent on staffing e.g. TAs and Learning Mentors. A cost centre was being created for this.

A full report would be made to the next meeting if available by then. **ACTION 6 – MD**

8. Performance Management Report 2020-2021

a. Performance pay awards – Mainscale, Upper Pay Scale and Leadership – recommendations from Pay Committee

The Pay Committee had met immediately before this FPP meeting and had endorsed MD's recommendations on teachers' pay. These had been reflected in the budget.

The recommendations were **approved**.

b. Annual Statements of Salary

The 2022-23 statements would be issued by the end of the Autumn Term.

9. Teachers' pay award and model pay policy 2022-23 - update

This had not yet been issued by the Local Authority. Consultation was ongoing.

10. Policy reviews

MD stated that he would be setting aside time to review HR policies.

a. *Safer Recruitment*

This needed to be updated and would be referred to the next meeting. **ACTION 7 – MD**

b. *Charging and Remissions*

This needed to be updated and would be referred to the next meeting. **ACTION 8 – MD**

11. Review of Action Points

The Clerk reviewed the Action Points, which were **noted/ agreed**.

12. AOB

There were no items.

13. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was **Thursday 1st December [subsequently deferred to January 2023]**.

13. Close of meeting

Those present were thanked for attending.

There being no further business, the meeting was duly closed.

Signed _____ Date _____

***** Please ensure you check Action Points from this meeting below**

Action points from the meeting of the FPP committee held on 20th October 2022

Action	By	Person responsible
1. Take forward NSPCC Safer Recruitment training for panel members [Item 3b].	Ongoing	AH
2. Look at potential areas of savings for discussion at the next meeting [Item 5e].	*Next meeting	MD/ AH
3. Consider possibility of meeting in the New Year to address budget challenges [Item 5e].	New Year	MD/ AH/ MS
4. Circulate school Scheme of Delegation and Local Authority model document for further discussion [Item 5g].	In due course	AH/ MS
5. Sign off equipment disposal [Item 5g].	ASAP	MD/ MS/ LM/ AS
6. Make Pupil Premium funding/ spending report to next meeting if available [Item 7].	*Next meeting	MD
7. Update Safer Recruitment policy and refer to the next meeting [Item 10a].	*Next meeting	MD
8. Update Charging and Remissions policy and refer to the next meeting [Item 10b].	*Next meeting	MD

*To be timetabled for future meetings.