

Minutes of Finance & Personnel (Autumn 1) Meeting

Tuesday, 9th October 2018 at 6.30pm

Present	Mark Whitehead (MW) Camilla Collins (CC) Simon Forder (SF) Gemma James-Moore (GJ-M) Laura Ovenden (LO) Roger Panter (RP) Linda Tansley (HT)	Chair Arrived after item 6 Deputy Headteacher Headteacher
Apologies	None	
In attendance	Jane Fitzpatrick (JF) Kieran Collins (KC) Flavia Coleman	Senior Admin Officer Associate Member Cover Clerk

		Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies The Chair opened the meeting at 6.35 pm and welcomed everyone. There were no apologies for absence but it was noted that Gemma James-Moore would be arriving late (parents' evening). The meeting was confirmed as quorate.	
2.	Declaration of pecuniary interests There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.	
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2018 The minutes of the meeting held on 26 th June 2018 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.	
4.	Matters Arising The HT provided an update on the recruitment of an Admin Officer (item 9, p3) and advised that, as the second choice candidate had not responded after the offer letter was issued, JF had visited the candidate at home and established that the candidate no longer wished to pursue the appointment. The post had been re-advertised and a very successful appointment made. With regard to the discussion about staff absence (item 10, p4), the HT advised that, following discussion with staff at the INSET day on 1 st September, the trigger point for a return to work conversation had been reduced from 9 to 6 working days. Discussion of staff absence at performance review may have contributed to the reduction in absence. The actions arising were updated - reported in the record of outstanding actions attached to the minutes or in the relevant agenda item below. Completed actions to be removed from the list. <u>2018/19 Budget Share (Item 5 – 10/05/18)</u> Ongoing – the HT had been unable to obtain the formula used to calculate low/prior	

	<p>attainment pupil numbers but will pursue this with Rachel Marchant from HCC Finance when she visits the school on 2nd November.</p> <p><u>Single Central Register Check (Item 6 – 10/05/18)</u> CC has re-sent the report to the HT.</p> <p><u>HT Performance Management Committee (Item 11 – 26/06/18)</u> A date for the mid-term review had been confirmed and taken place.</p> <p><u>Policy Group (Item 13 – 26/06/18)</u> A meeting had been arranged and taken place for those finance policies available which had not included the Pay Policy for 2018/19.</p>	HT
5.	<p>Budget <u>Review of figures to date</u> The YDev22, Variance Report and SLA breakdown reports were circulated to governors and uploaded to the portal prior to the meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that, at the 6-month point of the financial year, 51% of the budget remained, in line with the budget plan.</p> <p><i>Q: The variance report is very useful but sometimes things are left out that look like they could be significant. Could I suggest, belatedly, that any line where there is a variable greater than £1k should have a comment?</i> It was agreed that this would be helpful and will be implemented.</p> <p><i>Q: On the basis of the above criterion, it would be good to know about the first line of the YDev (unbudgeted spend of £1,684), 4092 Refuse Collection and 4380 Cost of Goods and Services Sold.</i> <i>A: The unbudgeted spend will be checked but is likely to be payment to staff who have worked additional hours.</i></p> <p>Post-Meeting Note: The unbudgeted spend of £1,684 was September salary of a new member of the Administrative Team which had not been included in GL 2050 Admin & Clerical Staff. A transfer has now been implemented to code this expenditure to the correct code.</p> <p><i>There has been no spend on refuse collection because we are withholding payment of the bill as bin collection has been variable and the 52-week contract is not always adhered to. We are negotiating with the company to obtain a refund.</i></p> <p><i>Goods and Services Sold relates to school uniform which always requires the larger proportion of expenditure to take place in readiness for the new school year. Stock held will mean minimal further in-year expenditure and thus the balance is considered sufficient.</i></p> <p>The HT added that a reduction in the 52-week contract with the refuse company and the hiring of a skip at the beginning of the summer holidays is being considered as better value for money.</p> <p><i>Q: Teacher pay is always the big cost driver. A simplistic projection could suggest an underspend for the year of about £43k, whereas 1% of £826k for 6 months (the budget assumption for pay rises) is only about £4k. If we ignore the uncertainties of what may be going to happen with pay awards and grants, is the large underspend at this point in line with the budget plan?</i> <i>A: Prudently, the planning software from EFS included for the budget plan to make</i></p>	

	<p><i>provision for a 2% pay rise, rather than 1%. But it must also be remembered that the budget plan includes for performance management progression of staff which includes for members of staff who have exceptional performance and thus accelerated progression. Thus, it is unlikely that there will be a significant underspend, so spend is in line with the budget plan. As the pay award is for a 3.5% increment for teachers on the main pay scale but only 1.5% for staff on the leadership scale, when the 2.5% differential is factored in, it is likely that this will even itself out although the DfE has committed to a Pay Grant to help offset the potentially greater demand on school budgets. News on how this Grant will be distributed to schools is awaited. The HT hopes that this might be available prior to November Revision but is not optimistic.</i></p> <p>It was noted that the £600 taken for security costs on 24th September is being investigated and a response awaited.</p> <p>It was also noted that very little supply cover is needed and that the underspend on supply staff included Premier Sport for PPA and the KS2 booster teacher for 2 days per week for the Autumn and Spring Terms.</p> <p><u>Implication of Teachers' Pay Award</u> Following discussion of the projected expenditure on teachers' pay, and in response to the consultation on the pay awards, it was agreed unanimously, by a show of hands, to adopt the 2018/19 Pay Policy as issued by Education Personnel Services (EPS), localised as always for Tower Hill and thus meet the EPS deadline of 2nd November 2018 for approval to do so at Governing Body level.</p>	
6.	<p>Control Checks <u>Purchase Card</u> MW completed the check for July with no anomalies identified and will book the check for May-August this term.</p> <p><u>Single Central Register</u> The check for the summer term has been completed. One of the recommendations from the safer recruitment audit is that a different governor should carry out the check each time. Subject to confirmation from JF, SF will carry out the check on 13th November 2018.</p> <p><u>Income</u> SF will pick up the check in the week commencing 1st February 2019 in place of CC.</p> <p><i>GJ-M arrived at 7.20pm.</i></p>	<p>MW</p> <p>JF/SF</p> <p>SF</p>
7.	<p>Staffing Structure and Recruitment <u>Current staffing issues and recruitment position</u> The HT advised that a resignation had been received from an LSA who is moving out of the area, and will take effect close to the end of term. The vacancy will be advertised over half-term, for a January start.</p> <p>There are 4 new NQTs in post, and a fifth in their final term. Supporting them makes considerable demands on SLT time, but the school is committed to 'growing its own' and views this as exciting development opportunities across all tiers of the teaching team.</p> <p>The first round of formal observations have taken place, with very pleasing outcomes.</p>	

There is a proportionately new team in the admin office which inevitably means that providing support is placing additional demands on JF's time. The HT is delighted to report that no 'loss of service' to stakeholders has been expressed.

The new General Office Manager & Administrative Officer had successfully carried out the Autumn Term PLASC in the previous week. There are 353 children on roll, against a projected total of 351, which will generate more income than planned. There are no outstanding siblings out of catchment not on roll, which is very pleasing.

Recruitment - Equality Monitoring

The Equality Monitoring reports for the Admin Assistant, Admin Officer and General Office Manager and Learning Support Assistant roles were circulated to governors prior to the meeting and uploaded to the portal.

Admin Assistant

- There were 6 applicants. 100% were female and British/white.
- There were 2 shortlisted applicants (1 further applicant was invited to interview for the role of Admin Officer). 100% were female and British/white.
- There was one successful applicant, who was female and British/white.

Administrative Officer & General Office Manager

- There were 4 applicants. An applicant for the position of Administrative Assistant was invited to attend interview for this position. 100% were female and British/white.
- There were 3 shortlisted applicants. 100% were female and British/white.
- There was once successful applicant, who was female and British/white.
- It should be noted that the original appointed candidate was British/Asian/non-white as reported at the F&P meeting of 26th June 2018.

Learning Support Assistants

- There were 21 applicants. 100% were female. 76% were British/white, 14% non-British/white and 10% non-British/non-white.
- There were 8 shortlisted applicants (4 withdrew before interview). 100% were female. 75% of the remaining 4 applicants were British/white and 25% non-British/white.
- There were two successful applicants. 100% were female and British/white.

8. Staff Development

Update on Staff Development Issues

Expenditure on training was shown in budget codes 3100 (Educational and Vocational Training), 3103 (Other Training Courses and Qualifications) and 3115 (Teachers' Training Costs), with 52% of the budget remaining. Much of the expenditure related to upfront costs for known courses but there had also been expenditure of £2,700 for training for new staff on Read, Write, Inc which had not been anticipated when the budget was set.

Health and Safety, ELSA and site staff training is all up to date, including first aid and fire marshal training which took place in-house and resulted in cost savings. A slight adjustment to the budget may be needed at the budget revision.

Feedback from Pay Committee

The Chair advised that very comprehensive documentation had been provided and that the Pay Committee had unanimously approved the HT's recommendations for staff

	progression, including those which involved accelerated progression.	
9.	<p>Policies</p> <p><u>Statement of Financial Expectations</u> The HT referred to a recent Schools Communication which advised that the Statement of Financial Expectations is to be replaced by an annual communication to all schools detailing the internal audit findings for that year. The first annual communication will be issued over the next few weeks and should be shared with governors at the next available meeting.</p> <p><u>Pay Policy 2018/19</u> Approved earlier in the meeting (see item 5).</p> <p><u>Performance Management Policy 2018/19</u> The Policy and the Capability Procedures have not yet been published, but may be released at the same time as the Pay Policy. If so, it will be brought to the next meeting.</p> <p><u>Financial Standards Statement and Policy</u> <i>Q: What are the criteria for assessing “an excessive surplus nor deficit”, as per point 12.i?</i> <i>A: EFS issue guidelines on what constitutes a prudent carry forward at year-end and recommends a balance between 3% and a maximum of 6%, although schools can hold a balance above the upper limit if they are planning a major project. However, if they hold this for more than 3 years, EFS will question their intentions.</i> The policy was approved.</p> <p><u>Best Value Statement</u> The HT advised that, in order to meet an action about the frequency of reviewing the contracts with external providers, to ensure value for money is being achieved, which had arisen at the review of the statement last year, a sentence had been added under the section headed “Compete” to state that ‘<i>written</i>’ quotations would be sought for works of more than £3k and that the ‘<i>regular supply of goods or services are not renewed or extended for a total period of more than four years without being re-competed</i>’ These statements were approved.</p> <p>It was noted that quotes from other contract companies would be sought this year for the cleaning contract as per the revised inclusion.</p>	HT/ Clerk
10.	<p>Governor Training It was noted that KC would be attending training on ‘Understanding Finance’ on 15th October.</p> <p>He will also be attending DSL refresher training on 18th October 2018.</p>	
11.	<p>Devolved Capital The HT advised that an allocation of £7,364 had been received for 2018/19 and that, with the carry forward of £4,483 from 2017/18, the capital fund stood at £11,847.</p> <p>£1,800 had been used for the artificial turf for the indoor quad and £1k for the continuation of the tarmacing from the playground to the KS1 activity area, leaving a balance of approximately £9k.</p>	

	It is being considered whether some of the funds may be used for the replacement of the equipment in the ICT suite. £3k has historically been retained as an ICT contingency.	
12.	Any Other Business None.	
	Meeting closed at 7.55 pm.	
	Date of Next Meeting Tuesday 13 th November 2018	