



MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE ON MARCH 5TH AT 8.30AM IN THE SCHOOL

PRESENT: Simon Gifford-Mead (SGM), Mike Waterson (MW), Hilary Priest (HP), Nicky Rajska (NR)

IN ATTENDANCE: Debbie Horton (Clerk), Sandie Lovell (SL), Business Manager.

Minutes

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| 1 | Welcome & Apologies for Absence Laura Partridge sent her apologies. Jen Tierney was absent. It was agreed that SGM should Chair the meeting in LP's absence. |
| 2 | Attendance & Declaration of Interest The governors signed the attendance form. There were no declarations of interest. |
| 3 | Minutes of last meeting |
| 3.1 | Approval of minutes of last meeting on February 20th 2018 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a correct record. The governors noted that matters arising would be dealt with at the next meeting, to allow time for focus on the budget at this meeting. |
| 4 | Draft Budget 2018-19 Governors had received an income and expenditure report comparing 2016-17, 17-18 and 18-19, and the draft budget for 2018-19, a current budget monitor, an FRS report and explanatory notes from SL. SL said that the final figures for next year's budget had not been received from county yet and those circulated to governors were a draft version and whilst she hadn't included a carry-forward for the new budget yet, she calculated that it should be in the region of at least £5, 500. Q: MW noted that there was a significant predicted deficit, not for this year, but for years 2-5 and asked why. A: SL: said that the new national funding formula meant that there was £190 less for each child in comparison to last year, which was a drop of over £50, 000 to the budget as a whole. The sum received for each child was now £2747, whilst last year it was £2931. The governors discussed whether they should protest about the effects of the new formula on the school. HP said that as a group, Devon Head teachers (DAPH) were questioning the new formula, and they were meeting with Sarah Wollaston MP on 23 rd March to discuss it. The governors agreed that MW should draft a letter to Sarah Wollaston from the governors, to protest against the new formula and to make it clear how it affected the Grove School. Action: MW to draft letter of protest to Sarah Wollaston MP Q: MW asked why there was a reduced figure for TA and SEND costs in the draft budget. A: HP said that SEND funding had been reduced from last year (it had also been reduced the year before) as a result of the overspend by Devon County. This also affected the TA budget. Q: MW was concerned about low curriculum funds (£20) per child and IT funds. A: SL said that IT costs came out of the capital budget, and only the IT staffing cost came out of the working budget. HP agreed that the curriculum figure was low, and said that the school was working as well as it could within that limit, for example, children were being encouraged to bring in their own pens and pencils and local library services were being used in conjunction with the school library. HP outlined the main changes in the draft 2018-19 budget from last year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil premium plus funding had increased. This affected 6 children in the school |

- A cut to the growth fund had been announced but the amount was unknown, and governors noted that, as a result, the figures were based on guesswork
- PTA income of £6000 will be included in next years' budget
- Sports funding had increased
- Re-structuring of the Local Learning Community (LLC) had resulted in savings for its members. The governors noted that it now cost the school £1000 to buy in and each school would receive a share of a £30, 000 pot held by the LLC.
- Whilst the new budget was less than last year, she reported that new requirements around the Health Pledge and Data Protection required expenditure

Q: The Head asked what governors thought about asking the PTA if funds could be used to supplement the school budget.

A: MW said that he thought it should be linked to specific items like IT equipment, for example.

- NR said that other schools in the area asked parents if they would like to contribute to the school budget on a regular basis and that this could be a possible source of regular income. The governors agreed that this should be explored.

Action: NR to follow up.

Q: MW expressed concern about the £10,000 loss in catering and said that it was too high a figure.

A: SL said that the cost of food was part of the problem, and that the loss was likely to get worse, if staffing costs rose.

- The governors agreed that this loss needed to be addressed and was too high
- They agreed to put up the cost of school meals to £2.50 after Easter
- They agreed that a review of the school kitchen was due, with a view to making economies.

Q: MW noted that teacher training costs had been reduced from £4000 to £2000 and asked how training needs would be met.

A: HP said that the school is looking at collaborating with the Totnes Learning Community (TLC) to provide training, and she said that leaders within the school would also be delivering training.

Q: SGM asked if the Apprenticeship Levy could be claimed back if it wasn't used.

A: HP said that whilst it couldn't be claimed back, it could be used to train existing staff, for example, but it would only meet a proportion of the full cost, so there would be further expenditure involved.

- MW said that SL and the Head had done well to balance the budget for the next year given the constraints, but noted that Devon County wouldn't accept the setting of a deficit budget for the following years.
- HP said that the school had yet to receive final figures so there was still an opportunity to make the budget balance for later years. She said that she was expecting a full reception for next year and that the pupil premium figure was set to rise.
- HP expected the final figures to be in by the next Resources meeting on April 19th. The committee agreed to look at the budget then, with a view to recommending it to the FGB at its meeting on April 24th 2018, and not at the FGB meeting on March 13th 2018.

4.1 Bought-in services

The governors had received information about the Mutual Fund and bought-in services before the meeting.

- HP said that she did not think that the Mutual fund represented good value for money and suggested covering only teachers and not support staff, next year, reducing the cost from £7000 to £4000. She said that cover for support staff could be found within the school, and systems for home working for the business manager, for example, had already been set up. The governors discussed the cover provided for teachers. They agreed that whilst a risk, the benefits in the event of a claim only covered 23 days supply, it didn't cover the first five days of sickness and the school could only claim back half the salary of a member on long term sickness, which was limited to 6 months full- salary and then 6 months half- salary. They agreed not to buy into the Mutual Fund and to put the £4000 saved into supply costs. They would keep the line in the budget with a figure of

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| | <p>zero, to re-visit next year for a new decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HP said that she did not think that buying into the Occupational Health service, IMASS, was good value for money. She said that the school used it for pre-employment checks, which could just as easily be done by the school, and that only 4 people had used other parts of the service in the last ten years. The governors agreed that it was not good value and that the school would not buy in next year. In the meantime, SL will investigate if a Pay as you Go service is on offer. • HP said that she did not think that the Headteacher Performance Management service was good value for money. An alternative would be to use a Headteacher as an external adviser for the Headteacher's appraisal. This would make a saving of £513. The governors agreed to cut this service. <p>Action: SL to investigate Pay-As-You-Go IMASS service.</p> <p>Q: MW asked why the budget for the Educational Psychologist had gone up. A: SL said that the budget for this service had been overspent in 2017-18, so the amount in the 2018-19 budget was the same as the actual spend in 2017-18.</p> <p>Q: SGM asked why payroll had gone up by 13% A: SL said that payroll costs were charged per member of staff, and since staff numbers had increased, so had payroll costs.</p> <p>Q: MW asked why there were two lots of contents insurance. A: SL said one was for a County policy and the Zurich cover was one that could be used directly by the school</p> |
| 5 | <p>School's financial value statement (SFVS) The committee had received a draft copy of the SFVS.</p> <p>The governors noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps in information re benchmarking had been supplied. • The need for a Finance lead should remain, as the position is still vacant. • MW's suggestion that the change to the caretaking contract and the IT consultant contract could be included as evidence for the improved use of resources. <p>Action: SL to finalise and send to clerk to be sent out with papers for March 13th FGB.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Date & time of next meetings Resources meeting on April 19th 2018 at 8.30am FGB meeting on April 24th 2018 at 6pm</p> |

The meeting ended at 10.05am

Actions Table

| Item | To do | By whom | By when |
|------|---|---------|--------------------------------|
| 4 | MW to draft letter to Sarah Wollaston | MW | For 23 rd March |
| 4 | NR to follow up suggestion re regular parental contribution to budget | NR | Next Resources meeting |
| 4 | To explore Pay-As-You-Go IMASS service | SL | Next Resources meeting |
| 5 | To amend SFVS and send to clerk for March 13 th FGB | SL | For 13 th March FGB |