

Bevendean Primary School

Minutes of the Finance, Personnel & Premises Committee

held on Thursday 11th February 2016

Present: Jo Whitmore (Chair), Mark Back, Rachal Daniels, Martyn Giddens, Teresa Goble, Mo Marsh, Martin Brown (Business Manager), Glenys Harries-Rees (Clerk)

In Attendance: Mark Dally, Deputy Head

1. **Quoracy of meeting:** Meeting was quorate

2. **Apologies:** None

3. **Absent:** Garry Meyer

4. **Consideration of apologies:** N/A

5. **Notification of A.O.B:** None

6. **Minutes of last Meeting**

The minutes of the meetings of the meeting held on 5th November 2015 were approved.

7. **Matters arising**

(i) Revised Scheme of Delegation

This had been amended, as agreed at the previous meeting, and approved at the meeting of the Full Governing Body on 19th November 2015

(ii) School Fund signatories

The signatories on the School Fund have now been changed. MCB, MG and MD are now registered as the signatories. MD has still to be added as signatory to the main account

(iii) Dene Valley Football Club

MCB had met with the Chair of the club and agreed a process of payment which is now working successfully.

(iv) Photocopying / pincodes

All the pincodes have now been set up and it is possible to track usage in more detail. There is still 1 year left on the lease for one of the photocopiers with more on the second, so consideration of moving to RISO will be deferred until it is a viable option – it will definitely mean a considerable saving and (in response to a question) it is easy to use.

It was suggested that a system which indicates the cost at time of copying might encourage people to think carefully about their usage.

The school will be looking at ways to cut down usage generally.

(v) Indoor football hire

There has been no further contact over this.

(vi) Nursery snack charges

These will be reinstated in September, with an emphasis on chasing up within the first six weeks of term and encouraging parents to use ParentPay.

Governors asked that the prospectus be checked to ensure that the charges are outlined there as they used to be.

Q: Are the children whose parents have not paid still given snacks?

A: Yes

Q: Are special dietary requirements catered for?

A: The snacks are just fruit but staff are fully aware of dietary requirements

8. Finance

Business Manager's report

The report had been circulated to, and read by, the committee. The following points / questions were raised:

- a) The budget share stands at £1,817,535.00. This is lower than the figure reported at the previous meeting due to some funds being clawed back following assessment of the census data
- b) Pupil numbers stand at 389 including nursery
- c) Resignations have been received from 2 members of staff, with a further 1 a possibility. A fixed term contract appointment has been made permanent but there is still the potential for two unfilled posts in the summer term. Adverts are in place and Supply Desk has been instructed to seek suitable candidates. Questions / comments followed:
 - There is a recruitment crisis generally in Brighton and Hove, with potential candidates preferring to opt for supply work where they can pick and choose
 - Year 6 is a vulnerable cohort and needs stability
 - The TAs / HLTAs are a very stable force, providing consistency for the pupils throughout the school
 - Could the possibility of job-share be investigated, perhaps offering a more attractive option?
A range of options are being considered
 - Parents will need to be reassured about the situation
 - The service from Supply Desk is good: teaching supply staff have reported a positive experience within the school, while permanent staff have been impressed with the calibre of the supply staff
- d) It is proving difficult to recruit suitably experienced candidates for INA posts:
 - What is being looked for? Paper qualifications? Experience? Enthusiasm?
A combination of these. It is important to have some experience which can then be built on
- e) Staff absences are high, both for teaching and support staff, although higher among the support staff. MCB is in contact with the Council over an inconsistency in previous reporting of and management of absences. Absence review meetings should be triggered by 3 occurrences within 6 months or by accumulative absences of more than 10 days, also within 6 months. This is now being done, following the guidelines, and it is hoped the situation will improve.
 - Why is absence higher among support staff?
 - Poor pay? If so, this cannot be changed
 - Less motivation?
 - Less value placed on job?
 - Is there any pattern to the absences?

None that can be identified

The Leave of Absence Policy, modelled by Brighton & Hove, is worded to allow individual schools their own interpretation. The emphasis is on consistency of approach. Provision is made for 5 special discretionary days to be used in emergencies (with the option for the Headteacher to extend this to up to 10 days in extreme cases). The current policy states that if a member of staff takes leave to look after a sick child, the first day will be paid leave with the expectation that alternative childcare arrangements will be put in place. Subsequent days will therefore be unpaid. The governors agreed that this should remain in place.

- Is there any possibility that staff might be “going sick” to cover childcare arrangements?
No, the staff are very honest and there is a long tradition of trust within the school
 - Who does the return to work interview in the absence of MG?
This has not so far been an issue
 - This is not a witch hunt but a question of being consistent and fair and following the duty of care
 - Are the staff aware of the requirements within the Leave of Absence Policy?
All staff were given the policy at the September INSET day and signed that they had seen it. Their attention will be drawn to it again to ensure full awareness
- f) Budget planning for 2016-17 is under way. MCB is in discussion with key budget holders. Training from B&H has been very helpful. MB advised of a course on Budget Monitoring & Forecasting for Governors which will be held on both 2nd and 9th March from 6.30 – 8-30 pm and asked governors to consider attending.
- g) Preliminary intake numbers for September 2016 indicate that the school will maintain a two form entry
- h) Electronic communication continuing to expand and be received more willingly
- i) ParentPay is being increasingly used and the school is moving towards a cashless environment

Out-turn (attached)

Please note that all governors may see a copy of the out-turn on request at the school office

MCB presented the annotated out-turn for Month 10 and made the following points:

- a) He has presented the “worst case” scenario in the prediction of total spends
- b) Some of the budget coding will be changed for 2016-17 to achieve greater clarity
- c) Where curriculum budgets are currently underspent, budget holders are not being actively encouraged to spend them at this stage in the financial year
- d) Pupil Premium funding is variable and depends on the number of free school meals taken on census days. Children who are eligible need to be encouraged to do so
- e) A grant of £3.5k has been received to fund work on Mental Health Awareness
- f) The current predicted surplus is £73360.00. This is a cautious figure based on the “worst case” scenario

8. Pay Policy (attached)

MG explained that the school had adopted the model Pay Policy from B&H. Those items in green show the amendments agreed between B&H and the unions.

The governors approved the policy

9. After-School Clubs

MG explained that historically the school has paid a flat rate of £18 per hour to any member of staff who runs an after-school club. The clubs have then been offered free to pupils, costing the school between £2.5 – 3K. There is no rationale for the £18 and it is not in parity with practice within B&H. Discussion followed:

- There is no statutory requirement to offer after-school clubs, however, it would reflect badly on the school if they were not offered
- The school is a more rounded community if after-school clubs are in place
- A charge of £1 per club session was introduced in Autumn 2, but this only goes a little way to covering the cost
- The clubs being free has an adverse impact on Groovy Gang for which parents have to pay
- Groovy Gang is a very important support for working parents and awareness of this should be included in any consideration of change
- Possibilities for changing the structure include:
 - Teaching staff to run clubs as part of their “directed time”
 - Support staff to be paid according to their current rate of pay
 - Support staff to increase their contract hours to include running a club
 - Increasing club fees to £2 or £3 per session
 - Implementation of separate casual, zero-hour contracts to cover the running of clubs

The following was agreed:

- MG to talk with SLT re the use of directed time (using the directed time allocation calculator)
- Outside providers of clubs should continue to invoice for their services as they do now
- Other clubs should be considered and evaluated on an individual basis, looking at the content of what is offered and what is appropriate remuneration
- Any changes would be implemented from September 2016
- Staff should be informed that this issue is under consideration
- A parent survey should be used to inform decision making
- Pupils should be asked their preferences

10. Update re restructuring

Because of the need to look at all extended school provision, restructuring is currently on hold

9. Reported accidents – annual report

This will be brought to the next meeting.

10. Staff leave policy

Dealt with under 8(e) above

11. Communicating with parents re contributions for school trips

MCB reported that, with increasing awareness of the voluntary nature of contributions towards school trips, an increasing number of parents are declining to pay. The school is not allowed to make payment for trips compulsory, but, despite building in subsidies to the costs, trips are increasingly running at a loss when insufficient money comes in.

Questions / comments followed:

- Parents should be made aware when a trip is subsidised (and what the original cost would have been)
- Parents should be asked to arrange to see the Head if they are unable to contribute
- Could a trip be cancelled if insufficiently funded?
Yes, although this would be seen as a last resort
- Does this apply to swimming?
No, swimming is part of the main curriculum
- If given adequate notice, parents should be able to save up for a trip
- Perhaps a schedule of trips should be planned a year in advance
- Consideration needs to be given to less expensive trips
- Some additional funding has been received which might in part be put towards subsidising trips
- The Charging and Remissions policy is on the website. Governors are asked to look at it and bring any questions or comments to the next meeting before final approval

12. School Fund audited accounts

Now that it has been possible to change the signatories, these will be audited and brought to the next meeting

13. Autumn Term Pupil Premium data

MG reported that £68k had been spent this term on interventions. JW requested that a written report on expenditure be presented to the next meeting

14. SFVS

MG MCB and JW will meet to and bring it to the next meeting.

15. Date of next meeting

Thursday 21st April 2016 at 3.30 pm. **PLEASE NOTE, THIS IS A CHANGE OF DATE**

16. AOB

None

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 5.35 pm

Signed _____ Date _____

** Please note that all governors may see a copy of the out-turn on request at the school office

***** Please see Action Points from this meeting on the following page**

Action points from the meeting of the FPP committee held on 11th February 2016

Action	By	Person responsible
MD to be added as signatory to the main school account	ASAP	MCB
Position re restructuring to be reported as appropriate	Ongoing	MG
Nursery snack charges to be reimplemented in September 2016	2nd meeting Autumn Term	MCB
Leave of Absence Policy be brought to staff's attention to ensure full awareness	ASAP	MG
Budget Monitoring & Forecasting for Governors 2nd or 9th March from 6.30 – 8-30 pm. Governors to consider attending	ASAP	All governors
Work on new system for after-school clubs remuneration	Ongoing	MG / SLT / MCB
Staff to be informed of above	ASAP	MG
Reported accidents annual report to be brought to next meeting	21/4/16	MG / MCB
Governors to look at Charging and Remissions Policy on school website	ASAP	MC / MCB
School Fund audit to be arranged	ASAP	MCB
Written Pupil Premium Report to be brought to next meeting	21/4/16	MG / MCB
Finalised SFVS to be brought to next meeting	21/4/16	MCB / MG / JW