



SHIRLEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PRE-SCHOOL
Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Resources Committee held at 18:30 on
Thursday, 19 November 2020

PART CONFIDENTIAL

Governors Present: Mark Lewis (Chair) (ML)
 Mark Broadbent (MB)
 Jenn Abecina (JA)
 Dario Ummarino (DU)
 Marie-Anne Crawley (MAC)
 John Cattermole - Headteacher (JC)

Also Present Jo Buttell – School Business Manager (JB)

The meeting opened at 18:30 and remained quorate throughout.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Ian Glover and his absence was recorded as authorised.

2. Declarations of interests

MAC declared a possible pecuniary interest in respect of agenda item 8.

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

i) Chair of Resources

The Clerk called for nominations for the role of Chair. A self-nomination was received from ML. There being no other nominations, upon a show of hands ML was re-elected as Chair on a unanimous basis.

ii) Vice-chair of Resources

The Clerk called for nominations for the role of Vice-chair. A self-nomination was received from JA. There being no other nominations, upon a show of hands JA was elected as Vice-chair on a unanimous basis.

4. Urgent business not on current agenda

None notified.

5. Minutes of Resources Committees

i) 5 March 2020

The minutes of the 5 March Resources Committee were agreed without amendment. Proposed ML, seconded MB, with all in favour.

ii) 6 May 2020

The minutes of the 6 May Resources Committee were agreed without amendment, proposed ML, seconded MB, with all in favour.

6. Matters arising from 6 May 2020 not on current agenda

Governors returned to the management and monitoring of the school's annual budget as addressed under agenda item 4 on 6 May.

A number of questions were raised as follows:

Q. Do Governors receive a copy of the BCR each month?

A. (ML) No, they receive a copy only in conjunction with a meeting of this Committee.

Q. Could additional software be employed to present key information in a more accessible format?

A. (JB) This has been discussed before and it is recognised as a desirable step; however under current circumstances there has been no time to research and make changes to how the information is currently presented.

Q. How can Governors receive ongoing assurance that the school's finances are in good order?

A. (JB) Reports to Governors on the Resources Committee will continue to be the primary means by which they receive this information.

Governors agreed that the financial information presented at Resources, allied with the explanations offered by JB at the meeting, constitutes a sufficient analysis of performance against budget.

Governors committed also to attending additional finance-related training in 2020-21.

Following further discussions of how Governors might best exercise their strategic monitoring role, the following actions were agreed:

- **JB to email summary report, derived from the BCR, to Resources Governors following each month end. (Full BCR still to be issued in conjunction with meetings of the Resources Committee)**
- **JB to move towards also providing graphical representation of data, only when circumstances permit.**
- **Interested Governors to liaise with CK concerning opportunities to receive additional training on school budget monitoring.**

- **CK to ask CCC if additional delegates can be accepted on the Zoom-based training course on 26 November (Schools Funding, Budgeting and Financial Monitoring) and advise accordingly.**
- **CK to ask CCC if the above course will be recorded and if so, whether that recording can be shared with Governors.**
- **CK to research and forward links to webinars that may be of assistance to Governors, including of the course attended by DU.**

7. Minutes of the Pay Committee on 15 October 2020

The minutes of the 15 October Pay Committee were agreed without amendment by the members of that Committee. Proposed ML, seconded DU, with all in favour.

8. Headteacher's report

JC took Governors through his report which had been circulated ahead of the meeting and which was also screen-shared.

Governors noted the school's financial position and the areas in which financial challenges have been further exacerbated by Covid-19.

Section 8d (School Business Case) is the subject of a confidential minute

Covid-19 Update

JC advised that the school had received a clean bill of health from CCC in respect of the systems and protocols it has put in place for dealing with two positive cases of Covid-19 affecting the school. A wide range of scenarios had been modelled and the school's procedures remain under constant review.

Governors were pleased to note that the school had now been able to re-introduce hot meals for pupils, thanks primarily to the efforts of Suzanne Wernham and JB.

Governors expressed their concern for the wellbeing of staff and pupils during this difficult time. JC confirmed that mechanisms had been put in place to check on the wellbeing of staff. He advised also that the school is working towards becoming a Beacon School in terms of the mental health support it is able to offer to pupils, staff and parents.

JC advised that pupils were showing great resilience and were genuinely excited to be back at school. Whilst their wellbeing was a matter of concern, it was important also to focus on plugging any gaps in pupils' learning that had been created over the past year.

Governors commended the school for and thanked staff for everything they are doing to promote the wellbeing of staff, pupils and parents at this difficult time.

Budget Consultation Meeting

ML updated his fellow Governors on the CCC budget consultation meeting he had attended, along with JB. It was apparent that the majority of any additional funding that schools will receive next year will be swallowed up by the twin effects of inflation and teacher pay rises, over which schools have no control. ML noted also that Cambridgeshire sits at 143 out of 149 local education authorities in terms of funding per pupil. ML and JB agreed that for these and other reasons including a likely reduction in pupils on the roll on census day, it was unlikely there would be a significant increase in funding for the school next year.

Governor Panel

JC advised Governors that in accordance with the process it was necessary to establish a Governor panel to consider any appeals that might arise from implementation of the School Business Case.

It was agreed that JA, ML and DU would serve on that panel, should one need to be convened in the New Year.

9. Finance Monitoring

JB took Governors through her report, including the BCR, which had been circulated ahead of the meeting. Whilst a small amount of additional funding from HM Government/CCC had been welcome, increased costs and reduced income had placed considerable additional strain on the budget, the latter arising primarily from the loss of income from lettings and from the after-school club. Costs had also increased due to delays in the implementation of the redundancy programme.

JB confirmed the school is keeping a comprehensive record of the additional costs that have arisen, primarily as a result of Covid-19 and that a claim for reimbursement will be made in due course; however it was unlikely full reimbursement will be made and extremely unlikely in respect of the lost lettings income.

Governors noted the school is likely to end the year in a deficit position and accepted the inevitability of this situation given the effect of Covid-19 on so many areas of school life. They accepted also that the position risks being worse in 2021/22 should the continued EHE of some pupils lead to lower numbers on the roll and therefore a lower settlement for the school.

JB advised that the energy retrofit programme was proceeding well and that the new heating system would hopefully be up and running by the time this Committee next meets on 25 February 2021.

Governors noted the flexibility the site team had demonstrated during this difficult period, often whilst coping with reduced numbers and asked for their thanks to be conveyed to all members of that team.

Governors asked a number of questions as follows:

Q. Is there any possibility of additional funding being provided for schools?

A. (JB and JC) This is unlikely. We have already received our 'catch-up' funding, which is likely to amount to approximately £30k over the current academic year. This funding is ring-fenced for pupil tuition and cannot be used for any other purpose in the school.

Q. Have any external concerns been expressed about how the school is spending its budget?

A. (MB) No. External focus on schools' expenditure is primarily in the area of Pupil Premium. It must also be borne in mind that what is being experienced at Shirley is happening in schools up and down the country. The school is not in an exception position in this regard.

Governors expressed their confidence that everything the school can do to manage the budget effectively is being done. They confirmed their willingness to support the school in

the making of any representations to CCC and/or the Government in respect of the school's financial situation.

10.Premises update

This had been addressed under agenda item 9.

11.Policies for review

JB and JC took Governors through the policies listed for review and outlined the areas where changes had been made. Governors noted that most of the HR policies were standard policies, often based on EPM models, where it was not appropriate or possible to depart from the model. Most of the changes therefore amounted to 'topping and tailing' the documents and personalising them for adoption at Shirley.

JC particularly drew Governors' attention to the Pay Policy and recommended the Governors agree the recommendations of EPM and the Trades Unions as manifested in that policy.

Following an explanation from JC, Governors supported the school's proposal that the recruitment and retention bonus currently available for Phase Leaders and middle management staff be withdrawn and replaced by Teaching and Learning Responsibility payments only from 2021/22 onwards.

Governors asked the following question:

Q. Can we please review the timelines between staff appraisals and the meeting of the Salary Committee?

A. (JC and JB) We will review the necessary sequencing of events with regard to the Appraisal Policy and if appropriate we will schedule the Pay Committee to meet in September, rather than October.

Governors agreed all policies presented, without further amendment. Proposed ML, seconded MB, all in favour.

Actions:

- **JB/JC/CK to review sequencing of staff appraisals and meeting of the Salary Committee.**
- **CK to email the FGB to obtain its adoption of the Pay Policy and to notify JB, in order that pay awards might be implemented before the end of the calendar year.**

12.Matters notified under agenda item 4

None notified.

13.Date and time of next meeting

This was confirmed as Thursday, 25 February at 18:30.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:45

I confirm that at a meeting of the Resources Committee held on _____
these minutes were approved and signed as being a true and fair record.

Signed -----

Position -----

Date -----

Summary of Agreed Actions (not part of minutes)

Action	Agenda Item	Lead	Due By
Email summary report, derived from the BCR, to Resources Governors following each month end	Item 6	JB	After month end
Move towards also providing graphical representation of financial data when circumstances permit	Item 6	JB	When circumstances permit
Governors to liaise with CK concerning opportunities to receive additional training on school budget monitoring	Item 6	All Governors/CK	ASAP
Ask CCC if additional delegates can be accepted on the Zoom-based training course on 26 November (Schools Funding, Budgeting and Financial Monitoring)	Item 6	CK	ASAP
Ask CCC if the above course will be recorded and if so, whether that recording can be shared with Governors	Item 6	CK	ASAP
Research and forward links to webinars that may be of assistance to Governors, including of the course attended by DU	Item 6	CK	ASAP
Review sequencing of staff appraisals and meeting of the Salary Committee	Item 11	JC/JB/CK	Before year end
Email the FGB to obtain its adoption of the Pay Policy and to notify JB, in order that pay awards might be implemented before the end of the calendar year	Item 11	CK	ASAP (deadline for response of 23/11/20)