



SHIRLEY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND PRE-SCHOOL

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Resources Committee held at 18:30 on Thursday, 25 February 2021

Governors Present: Mark Lewis (Chair) (ML)
 Ian Glover (IG)
 Andy Atkins (AA)
 Mark Broadbent (MB)
 Dario Ummarino (DU)
 Marie-Anne Crawley (MAC)
 John Cattermole - Headteacher (JC)
 Ghislaine Dunn (non-Resources) (GD)

Also Present: Jo Bouttell – School Business Manager (JB)
 Suzanne Wernham - Deputy Headteacher (SW)
 (from 18:50)
 Andrew Pulham - Clerk (CK)

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

1. Apologies for absence

The absence of Jenn Abecina was recorded as not authorised.

2. Declarations of interests

MAC declared a possible interest in respect of agenda item 6 and it was agreed this would be declared if necessary, at that point in the meeting.

3. Urgent business not on current agenda

None declared.

4. Minutes of previous meetings

* 21 November 2019

These were agreed without amendment.

Proposed MB, seconded IG, all in favour.

* 20 November 2020

These were agreed without amendment.

Proposed ML, seconded MB, all in favour.

5. Matters arising not on current agenda

None advised.

6. Headteacher's report

JC took Governors through his report which had been circulated ahead of the meeting.

i) Staffing and iii) School Business Case

An update on the implementation of the School Business Case was given. Governors noted the impact on the budget and the consequence of a number of unavoidable delays to the process during 2020, due primarily to Covid-19. JC confirmed that strategies to eradicate the remaining element of the deficit were being examined.

Governors asked a number of questions as follows:

Q. The original proposal envisaged a need to reduce establishment by the equivalent of just over 7 FTE posts. Have we now achieved this?

A. Yes. We are effectively there in that we have now lost the requisite number of posts whilst bearing in mind also the needs of the school.

(SW joined the meeting at 18:50)

Q. Do we still have the staffing resources we need?

A. Yes. Staff will be re-deployed as necessary to cover gaps caused by departures and redundancies and these staff will be trained, developed and supported to move into these roles, where necessary. Managing the transition is going well at present and future challenges will be addressed as they arise.

Q. Is the school likely to receive additional funding due to more families qualifying under initiatives such as Pupil Premium?

A. Yes. Additional funding is likely due to increased Pupil Premium. The school will also benefit from the recovery funding announced by the Government.

Governors asked to be placed on record their immense gratitude to Jo Bouttell for her contribution to the life of the school over the past 3.5 years. Her commitment, dedication and support had been greatly appreciated, as had her professionalism, patience and dry sense of humour - especially when engaging with Governors.

ii) Covid-19

Governors were updated on plans for the recently announced full re-opening on 8 March. These would largely be a re-run of plans enacted during the parallel event in autumn 2020.

Governors asked the following question:

Q. How was the Government's announcement concerning 8 March received at the school?

A. The school is taking all necessary measures to make it a success, including providing reassurance as necessary. The fact staff have gone through a similar process before will be helpful and the existence of a clear roadmap this time is also helpful, as is the limited additional funding, although this will not be sufficient to meet all needs.

iv) Safeguarding

Governors noted the findings of a recent survey and CCC review and that both were broadly positive, with opportunities for improvement being implemented.

Action: JC to provide a full update on the CCC Safeguarding Review at FGB on 25 March 2021.

7. School Business Manager's Report

JB took Governors through her report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Governors expressed their appreciation for the helpful annotations JB had made to the BCR, which they would like to see carried on in future.

i) Finance

Governors noted how the financial impact of the School Business Case implementation will affect the school's 2020/21 and 2021/22 budgets, based on when these costs are likely to fall.

Governors noted also how Covid-19 had impacted the school's finances in 2020/21, for example through an almost complete loss of lettings income. Certain other costs had however reduced - for example expenditure on supply teachers. Only a small proportion of the extra costs the school had incurred due to Covid-19, primarily those associated with enhanced cleaning requirements, had been reimbursed by the DfE.

Governors asked a number of questions as follows:

Q. Does the school anticipate needing to spend more on catch-up provision than the current additional funding allows for?

A. The school will need to spend more, but not just in financial terms. It will be just as important to invest time in bringing on pupils affected by lockdown. Schools have

been notified of a second tranche of catch-up funding to be awarded later in the year and the school will seek to deploy this as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Q. What is the predicted impact of the school running a deficit budget for another year?

A. The local authority has been working closely with the school over the past year in particular, during the preparation and implementation of the School Business Case and is therefore well aware of the current position. It will be important, however for the school to demonstrate to the local authority that the school is taking appropriate steps to rectify the situation.

Action: Ray Byford from CCC to be asked to assist in the preparation of the school's 2021/22 budget in view of JB's imminent departure.

ii) Premises

Governors were pleased to note the progress made with implementation of the school's Energy Retrofit Programme.

Governors asked the following question:

Q. Did the break-ins/vandalism the school suffered last year occur when the school was unoccupied?

A. Most events took place over the summer and such acts tend to be a summer phenomenon. No acts of vandalism have taken place since those already reported or during lockdown.

8. Update on Governor training received/planned

Governors updated colleagues on a number of training courses they had attended in recent month and the potential benefits of each to the school were identified.

Actions:

*** More Governors to seek to attend the "Schools Funding, Budgeting and Financial Monitoring" course in 2021/22.**

*** School to book the pre-Ofsted governance session offered by CCC, for autumn term 2021, given the likelihood of an Ofsted inspection in spring/early summer 2022.**

*** Report on MAC's Safeguarding visit to be placed on agenda for FGB on 25 March 2021.**

9. Statutory policies for review

i) Governor Allowances Policy

This was agreed without amendment. Proposed ML, seconded MB, all in favour.

ii) Premises Management Policy

This was agreed without amendment. Proposed ML, seconded MB, all in favour.

10. Non statutory policies for review

i) Debt Recovery Policy

JB introduced this new policy to Governors and explained that it was drawn from CCC procedures plus the practices and policies already in operation at other schools.

Governors asked that the reference in the policy to the 'Head of Finance' be qualified to make it clear that this was an officer of the local authority, not the school.

Governors asked the following question in respect of this policy:

Q. Have Governors ever been asked to agree to the writing off of debt?

A Not as of now, but this could potentially happen in the future. Significant recent efforts have been made to recover debt and these have borne fruit, however there may come a point where the costs of recovery will exceed the value of a debt in which case it might be prudent to seek to write it off.

With the above amendment agreed, Governors agreed to the adoption of the policy. Proposed ML, seconded MB, all in favour.

11. Matters notified under Agenda Item 3

None notified.

12. Date and time of next meeting

This was confirmed as Thursday, 29 April 2021.

The Chair closed the meeting at 20:00

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 actions (not part of minutes)

Action	Agenda Item	Lead	Due Date
JC to provide a full update on the CCC Safeguarding Review at FGB on 25 March 2021	Item 6	JC	25/03/21
Ray Byford from CCC to be asked to assist in the preparation of the school's 2021/22 budget in view of JB's imminent departure	Item 7	JC/SBM	TBC
More Governors to seek to attend the "Schools Funding, Budgeting and Financial Monitoring" course in 2021/22	Item 8	All Governors/CK	ASAP
School to book the pre-Ofsted governance session offered by CCC, for autumn term 2021, given the likelihood of an Ofsted inspection in spring/early summer 2022	Item 8	JC	TBC
Report on MAC's Safeguarding visit to be placed on agenda for FGB on 25 March 2021	Item 8	MAC/CK	25/03/21

