

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF ST MATTHEW'S GOVERNING BODY,
HELD AT SCHOOL ON Thursday 8th March 2018 AT 6.15 P.M.**

Present: Kevin Blencowe (Chair), Lucy Walker, Zoe Thorn, Rosa Mottershead, Debora Lucarelli,
Melissa Hatcher, Tony Davies (Head teacher)

Clerk: Zoe Thorn

1. Apologies for absence:

No apologies were received. All committee members were present.

2. Declaration of pecuniary interests:

There were no declarations of additional pecuniary interest relating to items on the Agenda.

3. Minutes of the last meeting – 12th November 2017:

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

4. Matters arising and agreed actions update:

From Matters Arising from the last meeting: The head teacher reported that the MUD local history project is nearing completion. This project has involved children from years 2 – 6. There will be a walk round for parents on Monday 12th March, including burying of time capsules, re-enactment of archaeology workshops and performance of songs written by the children, as well as a local history display in the hall.

Other items were to be covered later in the meeting.

5. Review of the latest BCR report

The head teacher reported that the current BCT predicts a carry forward at the end of the financial year of approximately £57,000, against the budgeted £34,000 – this is because the school has received a considerable increase of SEND funding of about £14,000.

What has been unpredicted this financial year is that many more children than expected were assessed by the staff as needing full time 1-1 support. Governors asked who these children were: the head replied that some were new starters and others were children who were already established in the school who were undergoing crises. The head also reported that numbers of children needing 1-1 has also increased because the school roll is larger and also the school demographic has changed slightly. The head teacher reported that currently 4 children have 1-1 support which is not funded at all.

Governors asked why the income from hiring was lower than expected: the head reported that this was not necessarily the case: the school business manager is chasing some invoices and also they have just passed over responsibility for this aspect of work to the school office. The school office taking responsibility for lettings should enable a more active approach to marketing the buildings and also increasing income. The head reminded governors that the floodlights put in a few years ago have substantially increased lettings.

The head asked the committee to review letting rates in the next meeting and then annually from then.

Finally, the head advised governors that the budget is very vulnerable and that the carry forward will be very small as a percentage of the whole budget.

6. Projected funding 2018/19

The head teacher reported that he has started work on next year's budget, using a new budget setting tool. Items which may have an impact on the budget include that teaching assistants have been offered a 5% pay rise by the local authority. They are being balloted by their unions. If this is approved, it would prove a significant challenge for the budget next year.

Overall, the projected funding has an increase of £79,000 or 3%. This comes from the increase in FSM ever 6 funding.

Governors asked about the current uptake of free school meals, taking into account the fact that all children have free meals up to the end of year 2. The head reported that parents are asked for their National Insurance number on the school admission form. If they agree to supply the number, then the school can use it to check automatically if children are entitled to free meals.

The head teacher reminded governors that the capital budget is now only £10,000. Governors asked if the school anticipated any large capital spending needs in the next financial year. The head teacher gave examples of regular items like repairing and replacing windows in the Victorian block. He also said that in 5 to 10 years the astroturf would need to be replaced. The school may struggle to maintain ICT equipment if replacements are needed. Governors asked why there was an underspend in the budget line for ICT equipment. The head replied that the school was being prudent and also laptops which had been purchased were cheaper than expected. Governors asked if the school could save money by sourcing second-hand ICT equipment. The head replied that buying second hand equipment was not appropriate as there were potential issues with virus infection. Governors also asked if teachers have wish lists for new equipment? The staff governor replied that teachers were well aware of budget constraints and were practised in "making do". They reported that sometimes ICT lessons cannot be done properly as the equipment is not sufficiently reliable. The head reported that every year before setting the budget, staff are surveyed to find out what equipment and supplies are needed in each department.

Governors raised awareness of the REACH project, which is supported by the government and uses companies to supply ICT equipment to schools.

Other matters to take into account when considering funding include the appointment of the new Director of Education for Cambridgeshire, Jonathan Lewis, who is looking at all LA services and considering root and branch changes.

The head also mentioned the contribution of the PTA which has been vital over the last few years. In the next financial year, the school is considering asking the PTA to fundraise for the following items: astroturf in a particularly muddy area of the playground; and/or a covered seating area near the lunch hall for packed lunch eaters to ease pressure on the lunch hall.

The head teacher also reported that St. Matthew's is now part of a data sharing agreement with other local school who are part of the "schools south of the river" cluster.

7. Ongoing School Funding Campaign – WorthLess? and Local Authority Response

The head teacher asked governors' permission to send out a letter (included in papers for the meeting) to parents about the ongoing campaign to improve school funding. The Cambridgeshire Primary Heads association, of which the head teacher is currently Chair, is working with the WorthLess campaign. The LA response has been so far that it is "gathering evidence".

8. Draft SFVS (schools financial value standard)

Governors considered the draft SFVS. St. Matthew's considers itself to be compliant in all aspects. Governors asked regarding point 15 ("Does the school have procedures for purchasing goods and services that both meet legal requirements and secure value for money?") whether the bulk buying power of ESPO was worth it or if better deals could be struck with suppliers. The head reported that it still gives very good value for money. The head reported that the solar panels are now giving payments as the electricity is put back into the Grid. Governors

discussed point 13 (“Is end year outturn in line with budget projections, or if not, is the governing body alerted to significant variations in a timely manner, and do they result from explicitly planned changes or from genuinely unforeseeable circumstances?”) and were satisfied that they were alerted to significant variations in a timely manner.

9. AOB

Governors were advised by the Head teacher that a professional Clerk to governors had approached the school. They will be interviewed in the near future.

Governors asked about the increase in traffic in Norfolk Street. The head reported that traffic wardens were working in the morning and afternoon to stop dangerous parking by parents of children at the school. Governors suggested that a study could be undertaken by children and families to monitor pollution in the area. A local resident has indicated that he is interested in being part of a “Green St. Matthew’s” group. Governors agreed that it would be good for families and governors and other local residents to work together to improve the environment around the school. Governors will send out a letter to parents asking for volunteers to set up a working group.

10. Date for future meeting

At the meeting, the date of 2nd May 2018 was set, but, following update from the LA about the date budgets must be submitted, this has been changed to 25th April 2018 at 6 pm at the school.

The FGB will then be on Wednesday 2nd May at 6:15 pm.

11. Key outcomes from this meeting

- a) Governors received the latest BCR.
- b) Governors received an update on the projected funding for the next financial year.
- c) Governors approved a letter to parents about funding.
- d) Governors approved the draft SFVS.
- e) Governors agreed to set up a working party on pollution.

Agreed Actions:

- Chair of governors still to complete online safer recruitment update course. Other governors to do this course or the one offered by governor services.
- Governors to set up working party on pollution.