**RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING**

**THURSDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2023 – 8.15AM (Board Room)**

## Present:

Mrs J Swettenham Chair of Governors

Mrs C Costello Headteacher

Mrs K Boulton Co-opted Governor – Chair of Resources

Mrs Lynn Smith Governor

Mr A Williams Governor (via Zoom)

Mr C D’Silva Governor

Mr S Roberts Chief Finance & Operations Officer

Mrs D Matthews Finance Manager

Mrs L Smith Clerk

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| 1. | APOLOGIESVicky Noonan The meeting began by introducing ourselves to the new Resources Committee Governor, Cajiten D’Silva. | **Action** |
| 2. | **MINUTES OF THE LAST RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING**  JS raised the topic of CIF bids and the timescales involved. SR explained we would know by April and any necessary appeals would be advised by June/July.  PCH – in terms of the boilers, this would be Salix targeted by December 2023.  **Minutes from the Resources meeting held on 2nd December 2022 had been distributed, were not contested, and were approved.** |  |
| 3. | **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES**  SR –access to the “View My Financial Information” VMFI, sent out a link for the benchmarking-seems to have been replaced with the open forum of school’s benchmarking; all governors have access to this already, therefore enhanced access perhaps did not seem necessary.  Cost centre report and staff calculators – it’s a snapshot of cost centres showing commitment and allocation of budget for rest of the year.  Staffing-allocation set when budget is put on and changed when we do virements. Commitment and allocation is drawn from sims so HR contracts are imported across to finance system. It doesn’t account for teachers pay rises in September, that information won’t go through in the allocation to the finance systems until Oct/Nov. It also doesn’t take into account pay progression until that’s implemented in sims around September/October then it catches up. The same applies to Support staff pay progression and cost of living increases, that doesn’t update till May. Also won’t account for Maternity, it will still show the full commitment for that persons salary for the year, so it needs manually adjusting on the staff calculators. The same applies if we have any agency staff to cover such circumstances, it’ll need manually adjusting. Known variations such as increase/decreased hours, it won’t push through until you go past January and sims accepts it is live, it won’t go through to FMS. Once SR has made any necessary manual adjustments, the staff calculators will provide a more accurate picture. More modern systems are much better and discussions have taken place to update. SR reported that FMS is rather “crude and clunky” old system. Discussion followed that this is open to human error, although there were checks and balances that can be done to counteract this. HR system also needs reviewing together with the finance system. |  |
| 4. | **BUSINESS INTEREST UPDATES**  None declared. |  |
| 5. | **FINANCE REPORTS**  A detailed narrative and back up information for Budget Position, Cashflow, and 3 Year Forecast, had been provided by SR to Governors prior to the meeting. A brief overview explanation was provided by SR in respect of what the Governor reports reflected. SR discussed the content of the narratives, highlighting:  **CASHFLOW**  Expenditure actuals for first few months were lower than forecast. This was due to back pay for teaching and support staff which went through in November/December. Forecast between April and June will be our lowest forecast cashflow months, however this is not an issue.  JS asked about lettings and issues we’ve suffered with the swimming pool and sports hall flooring and whether we will meet the income stream predicted. SR felt that our sports hall will be lower than forecast income, however astro will make up shortfall.  LynS asked about the zero actuals shown on trips-discussion followed as to how this could be better represented.  Narrative on cashflow – needs changing to 22 (not 21).  **Cashflow report had been discussed and approved by the committee**  **BUDGET POSITION**  Narratives were circulated before the meeting.  SR reported on a positive position – we had received a Mainstream Schools Additional Grant of £100,628. This is extra money from the government to cover things such as inflationary costs and expenditures. We will receive a portion this year and a full years’ allocation next year. Our in year position is £360,620 improved from 255,738. The previously forecast in year deficit of £100,000 is now forecast as an in year surplus of £29,000.  Staff forecasting such as resignations and retirements have altered figures, and over the year we have got about £38,000 in savings. Also an additional capital grant of £56,000 which has been represented as an energy efficiency grant.  Reduction of contingency is due to an issue identified with the processing of year-end 2021-22 relating to Salix loan, £25,000 needs to come off the carry forward.  16-19 funding where there was a grant fund rolled in has had to come out of contingency.  We’ve also put £6,500 into alternative provision. This is where much work has had to be done as there are many students who cannot cope with in full time mainstream classes - this is part of our inclusion strategy – this will include more flexibility, online learning and some bespoke learning.  £12,000 will be spent on catering system, which is extremely old and causes many knock on effects, therefore Vericool will onboard in April, side by side Cunninghams then integrate.  Energy forecasting – although we knew details of the discount scheme from the government and our fixed contract gas costs between October and now have been under the forecasted amount. It has been impossible to forecast electricity costs due to issues with obtaining bills since October from the actual supplier. Therefore without data SR has been unable to predict electricity costs. Discussion ensued regarding smart meters and whether it would be better to have a contract directly with the supplier instead of via Zenergi. Our fixed contract expires October 2023.  CS discussed representing data on a spreadsheet, which SR already has done for the last 5 years. SR mentioned that since all the LED installations, it may also not display a true reflection.  In terms of budget position, it is very good and positive.  JS asked about the £5.5k support staff additional hours forecast.  SR explained that the staff in the SEN department have insufficient hours to complete the work that is needed. SR has met with all the TA’s and offered pre-approved additional hours up to between 2 and 7 hours. The benefit of this will be a continual review of whether these additional hours are needed. JS raised the 3 year forecast summary in November, educational support, supplies and services at an updated figure of £639,951 and then the forecast update for February £656,201 increase of £16,000 – the breakdown for that was the £6,500 alternative provision and other £10,000 was bursary funding expenditure that was carried forward from last year is now showing against expenditure, as it needs to be spent this year.  JS asked about other increases in support services in respect of:  £2391.50 in November 2022 and £2521.50 in February 2023 - SR reported that this was catering maintenance.  KB asked about an extra £6,000 expenditure – SR explained that as an example the Food department is running a new course this year and was unaware of what they may need. CC also mentioned that all budgets will be closed a month early this year.  **Budget position report had been discussed and approved by the committee**.  **3 YEAR FORECAST**  SR noted under income, first bullet point, second sentence - it had been rolled in for this year, the supplementary grant is as per the allocation.  SR noted that the GAG statement should be received by end of February. However, as SR sits on this forum he has access to early discussions as to what basic entitlement will be.  16-19 funding for next year will be released a tool kit which is based on census information.  Assumptions for expenditure – SR discussed where are pay rises assumed? April 2023 coming up for support staff has been 3% for last couple of years, but for support staff and teachers SR has left in 2.5%. It’s felt the political horizon will have to be monitored.  JS asked about the savings on striking staff so far – it’s about £4,000 to £5,000. LyS asked about extra increases in grants from the strikes.  LyS asked if this would be on the Risk Register.  SR mentioned the support staff increases never being funded, if any increases around 4, 5, 6%, this would be a significant risk. CC said support staff strikes hit inclusive schools more.  SR has assumed 10% in department budgets, but this may not come about.  Energy – SR noted we do appear to be back around pre crisis levels and forecasted around a third of current levels.  SR was certain that a balanced budget was possible for this year and next – there are so many unknowns for year 3 though. The additional carry forward of £100,000 expected this year and extra funding for next year which is the variation between the GAG and the additional grant. There’s about a £20,000 reduction in forecast staffing currently. There’s about £90,000 to come off energy. Next year the in year deficit of £118,000 doesn’t look good but we were looking at £320,000 in year deficit. £118,000 is definitely manageable given the reserves we have.  Risk and opportunities – Pupils number – admitting 180 into year 12, we do have flexibility of over-admitting 200 into the sixth form – 20 extra pupils that is approximately £100,000 extra funding in 24/25. This does come with extra operational risks that we would have to consider. CS asked about costs with different curriculum – there is capacity within the classes we currently have.  **VIREMENTS**  There were none. | **SR** |
| 6. | **STAFFING UPDATES**  CC reported on where we are currently:  We are looking at staffing in response to resignations. Humanities are losing a geographer but actually want to bring in a historian because of KS3. We need to look at support staff and issues around attendance officers again.  Senior team structure – looking at roles and responsibilities.  The history vacancy has produced 6 interested parties, which was encouraging.  CC reported that there two members of staff leaving at Easter, a retirement on the support staff and a resignation of a teaching staff.  CC pointed out that the standardisation will have to be addressed in relation to roles and pay in the next two years.  JS mentioned that the Equality & Diversity Employment policy, had a review date of 2021 - this will need updating. | **SR** |
| 7. | **BENCHMARKING AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**  SR explained that benchmarking is an item that needs to be discussed throughout the year. SR sent the link out to governors. There’s nothing of any sensitivity out there. All data is based on 20/21 data.  SR reported that he feels there’s nothing that’s leapt out causes concern. The data comes from category of expenditure, which schools publish – work is being undertaken to standardise this.  LyS noted that this data ranged through Covid times, which would obviously show discrepancies.  Further discussion followed regarding nuances such as in-house catering, cleaning etc.  Staff totals in terms of total expenditure were also discussed and what they reflect.  Committee nevertheless felt this was useful to represent local schools, i.e. in the same geographical region. All felt this made sense as there would be many similarities, for example local cost of living, staff recruitment. Benchmarking once the latest figures are out would be useful but from local areas. |  |
| 8. | **AUDIT COMMITTEE**  **Ice Review – 1 of 3**  SR noted there was little to say. There were two low priority items. Business interests register – new requirement to say when the business interest began.  Business Continuity Plan – this had not been formally reviewed. SR suggested it needed to be sent to FGB for review as opposed to Resources Committee.  This summary report goes to our auditors at the end of the year.  JS has reviewed and signed the register of gifts. Government scheme of delegation-all agreed that this would be helpful to create and would be a good visual.  Financial scheme of delegation – SR commented this would need an overhaul and update.  **GDPR Audit**  SR reported we had adequate assurance this year and are close to a “green” assurance, explaining that we buy into a service from Essex IGS – they offer an amazing framework of data protection. Although the school is in a good position, there is more to be done. For example signage around CCTV and areas surrounding training. We need to evidence that staff are receiving updates. The procedure of reporting needs to be logged efficiently-SR felt a mechanism needs setting up in order to do this efficiently. Reports are submitted annually.  Any subject access requests for information are sent to SR – IGS manage this process for us.  CC asked about other activities they do – checked website, our policies, templates and tools (which SR had sent in advance), data flows were reviewed, what breaches had been reported. Discussion then followed surrounding how this report can be worked through.  CS asked if there’s a staff handbook which would need a review in September. He also asked if our IT department were able to monitor the number of hits on any of these documents like Google would. SR to look into this with IT.  DM commented that the way in which staff not reporting breaches is because they think they’ll get into trouble – the training linked to this offered reassurance in this regard. SR said perhaps the documentation should be distributed both ways. Discussion followed on how often line managers meet their direct reports and perhaps reporting of any breaches could filter through this way. SR felt that over reporting was preferable.  **Health & Safety**  SR reported that a company called Citation undertook this for us. Every room in the school was visited in a 6.5 hour period. There was only one high category noted. This was an uncovered pillar drill in a staff only area which didn’t have a guard on it. Average number of points was 15, ours was 41 which wasn’t unexpected.  Our fire risk assessments are scheduled for March. The fire alarm registering is being done next week. The oxygen cylinders in our chemistry prep room should further apart, therefore this will be addressed.  Basic compliance is ok, but risk assessments were no good. Part of the Citation has a platform called Atlas, which centralises and evidences risk assessments with us and for us. Plans are afoot for this to be done and put in place.  Log of COSHH and hazardous substances, service label needed on an item. SR explained there were a lot of “quick wins” so not too onerous. They were fully aware that not all these items could be fixed at once – the report is intended for the school only and is being addressed by SR and Estate Manager.  JS asked about Slipping hazards – SR confirmed this will definitely be addressed asap.  Food hygiene issues is the responsibility of Pabulum and has been dealt with now (this was in the Refectory).  LyS discussed the validity of our insurance if something was to happen with the highlighted issues. SR explained that once issues have been addressed Citation guarantee our compliance and would pay any legal fees incurred. Discussion followed regarding a total culture shift and the fact that Health & Safety is everyone’s responsibility. JS suggested that as AW is the school’s H & S link, a meeting is scheduled. This can be minuted and evidenced accordingly that things are being reviewed. | **SR**  **SR** |
| 9. | **UPDATES**  **Estates Update**  SR reported on the progress of our new Estates Manager-SR feels there’s been a complete turnaround of this department and altered the reputation of the Site Team. There has been great feedback from Science in particular. The value of this new post holder can already be seen.  An example is the air filters in the swimming pool which gave out at Christmas which caused the pool to be shut down due to condensation and mould. The company that makes these filters wouldn’t come out as it was condemned in August and we had done nothing about it. This obviously affected lettings and PE. CC called in a contact to link us to a funding stream and together with one of the Estate Manager’s contacts managed to get one of the units working. Our pool maintenance company the environmental issues have all been address within a turnaround period of 4 weeks. All felt this went some way to assuring the reliability of hiring our pool. CC explained what a previous culture of ensuring we do our best to ensure continued lettings.  **Cleaning**  SR explained how the standards have continually dropped. Although the cleaning supervisor is amazing, he has no supervising skills. Together with the fact that both Art and the C block tower stairs were not cleaned for 3 days. SR reported on the contact he had with Churchills. SR felt it was perhaps a better alternative to potentially manage cleaning in house. Steve has previously managed this.  Steve and SR had a meeting with Litmus surrounding the pros and cons and challenges – Litmus can provide a cleaning standards analysis of the school. They would work with the Estate Manager, in putting together equipment tenders. SR feels that taking all this into consideration, we would be better taking this in house. It would mean that the cleaners would be on the SHS payroll. Churchill’s contract is up in October but we would be able to give 90 days notice under our no fault break clause. SR suggests we get all the above together in the next few weeks so we are ready to give notice. Committee discussed what is needed in order to manage this. CC commented that the environment is so important. | **SR** |
| 10. | **POLICY REVIEWS**  Charging & Remissions Policy – there were no changes. Committee approved.  Data Retention Policy – Updated template from IGS. Committee agreed to adopt this template. |  |
| 11. | **A.O.B.**  KB raised the possibility of moving Resources to an afternoon time of 4.30pm on a Tuesday. DM commented that this time is outside of their working hours. LyS and LS are happy to start early in the day.  Update on governor portal – SR to action.  JS commented on the cloud based email system – SR explained that this is a larger IT strategy. This is work in progress with IT support.  AW – apologies on 27.4.23. |  |

**Date of next meeting: Thursday 27th April 2023 AT 8.15AM**

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**Signature of Chair of Resources Committee:………………………………………**

**Date: ……………………………………………..**