

QUEEN ELIZABETH GRAMMAR SCHOOL, PENRITH

Minutes of a meeting of the Governors' Finance and Pay Sub-Committee held on 13th November 2017 at 6pm.

Present:	Mr P Buckland	Miss R McMann (Clerk)
	Mr J Leveson	Mrs G Gravett
	Mrs S Warner	Mr R Dawson
	Dr T Castles	Mrs K Rae
	Mr D Chappell (Head of Finance)	Dr E Mawson
	Mr A Catterson	Mrs J Nicol

Quorum per Terms of Reference - 4 Governors

Governors present: 8 until the end of item 9, 7 thereafter and for the remainder of the meeting.

Visitors: Ian Thompson of Saint and Co for item 1 only.

1. Presentation: Audit Management Report for Year Ended 31st August 2017

Welcomes were extended to the auditor, Mr Thompson, who went through the previously circulated draft Management Letter points. Overall, Mr Thompson reported that he was happy with the figures and systems in place and that there are no high risk items. Additionally, he added that every academy will have some issues and that the EFSA will expect comments such as the ones on the letter. The following was highlighted from the report:

- Tendering Procedures (Appendix B): Mrs Rae stated that all tenders come back to the Governing Body for a decision, which is minuted. Thus, Mrs Rae felt the 'high' rating was too severe. Mr Thompson agreed to make this a 'medium'. Additionally, the Governing Body felt it wise to amend the policy on this so that it reads 'where possible three quotes will be obtained'.
- Business Interests: it was noted that four Governors had not sent their responses to the request to update their interests. Miss McMann queried if it was sufficient, as is current practice where interests change over the year, that business interests are itemised at every Full Governors' meeting, any changes minuted and the website updated to reflect this or; should a form be filled out every time? Mr Thompson stated a form would be preferable. To overcome these issues, Mrs Rae suggested that a book be set up to record both business interests and related parties information that would be brought to the first Full Governors' meeting at the start of the year with each Governor having their own page to update their interests and sign. Mr Thompson was happy with this.

Mr Leveson queried the process to fill out the responses column. Mrs Rae informed the committee that herself and Mr Chappell will send the response. She said that they had sat down and discussed the points on the letter and each one was fair. To conclude, Mrs Rae felt it was crucial that there is nothing show stopping on the letter and it was the responsibility of the Governors to make sure that none of the points are

carried over to next years' audit. The Company Accounts are scheduled to be signed at the Full Governors' meeting on 7th December 2017. Thanks were extended to Mr Thompson, who in return expressed his thanks to school and in particular Mr Chappell for his help.

2. Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

3. Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items

There were no declarations of interest in the agenda items.

4. Minutes of the Finance and Pay Meeting held Monday 2nd October 2017 Paper: F&P201718(8)

The minutes having been previously circulated were unanimously agreed and signed as a true record.

5. Matters Arising

Mr Buckland informed the committee that there will need to be some further updates to the Data Protection policy (item from the last meeting) in order to make it compliant with next year's change in legislation. This will be brought back to a future meeting.

6. Pay Policy

Mr Buckland reported that this policy has been shown to the unions, who have approved it. The main change is that the pay scales are now displayed via a link to the DfE website as opposed to printing the tables in the policy. This means that the policy will not necessarily need changing on an annual basis.

Questions and comments were as follows:

- *If the unions have approved it, is there no scope for Governors to change elements if they desired (JL)?* This is not the case, any amendments would be sent back to the unions.
- *Is it the Headteacher who decides on the level of pay and if so, who would a member of staff appeal to if they were unhappy with a decision (AC)?* At the recruitment phase the salary offered is at the Headteacher's discretion. However once employed and it comes to pay progression points, the ultimate decision rests with the Governors, based on the SLT's recommendations. There has been a meeting with a number of Governors this evening to look at this year's recommendations. There is an appeals sub-committee within the Governing Body, should there be a challenge made.
- *Is there a Support Staff Pay Policy (SW)?* Mr Buckland confirmed that there is one and will check if it needs updating.

The Governors unanimously agreed to adopt the policy.

7. First Aid Policy

Mr Buckland reported that this policy has been updated and adapted from 'The Key'. Mr Catterson asked for clarification that near misses were also reported and Mr Buckland confirmed that this is the case.

The Governors unanimously agreed to adopt the policy.

8. Health and Safety Audit

Mr Buckland provided a context for this item, stating that was done in July 2017. It is hoped that the previously circulated action plan will be completed by the end of the month.

Mrs Rae wished to highlight item 4.3.1 which asks that Health and Safety is made a standing item on the agenda for Governors' meetings, asking for clarification as to which committee it should sit with. After a short discussion, it was recommended by Dr Castles and Mr Catterson that this should go to the Full Governors' meetings. This was agreed by the rest of the committee. **Action: Miss McMann to ensure this is itemised on every Full Governors' meeting.**

Mr Catterson queried if there was a specific Governor role to monitor Health and Safety to help establish a solid structure within the academy. At present there is not, just Mr Catterson attending Health and Safety Committee meetings. Therefore, Mrs Rae asked if Mr Catterson would undertake a role to continuously monitor Health and Safety. He agreed to this, with Mr Buckland advising that he spends one hour prior to each Health and Safety Committee meeting having a walk around the school, discussing any concerns etc.

Along with the audit, Mr Buckland also circulated two documents, 'Management of Contractors' and 'Permits to Work', for approval from the Governors. Given Mr Catterson's expertise and additional Health and Safety role, it was agreed that he spent some time looking at these and it brought back to the committee in the next meeting for approval.

9. CIF Expenditure Paper: F&P201718(7)

Mr Chappell went through the previously circulated report detailing the four separate projects. The two projects from the 2016/17 round of funding are finished with the exception of some snagging issues on the windows.

With regards to the two 2017/18 projects (life safety and mobile replacement), there has been very little spend, just E3Cube consultancy fees. A progress update on each project was given:

- Life Safety: main contractor has now been appointed. After an initial meeting it is anticipated that work will start in January 2018 to be completed by March 2018. This work will be done during the night over four nights of the week.
- Mobile Replacement: main contractor has been appointed and the project manager visited last week. The delay is due to service re-direction (telephone lines and electric cables) with BT proving to be particularly problematic. It is

anticipated that once work commences the build will take approximately 30 weeks.

In response to concerns from the Governors about the deadline to complete work, Mr Chappell confirmed the EFSA have agreed to extend the deadline to 30th April 2018 and Dr Mawson felt that confident that they will extend the deadline again. Mr Buckland cited his biggest concern would be the possibility that the building will not be ready for September 2018 – even if the building is in place, there will be interior work to factor in. If this is the case, there will still be enough space in school to accommodate the extra form.

10. Headteacher's Update

Mr Buckland said that most of his update had been covered during the meeting. The only additional item to mention was that the front gate project is still experiencing problems and is not finished. Presently, there is no date for completion.

11. Any Other Business

Mr Chappell had two items he wished to raise:

- i. An update on the EFSA return – there is a new element 'Land and Buildings Collection' which has been completed ahead of deadline.
- ii. Managed to claim some money back from the RPA from the flooding. This amounts to £6,000.

As the meeting was moved to an earlier date, the management accounts were not available and thus, an up-to-date version will be emailed out to the sub-committee at the end of the month.

Finally, Mr Buckland reminded Governors of the invitation to attend the GCSE Award evening on the 15th November 2017.

Date of the next meeting: 26th February 2018, 6pm.

The meeting closed at 7.10pm