

QUEEN ELIZABETH GRAMMAR SCHOOL, PENRITH

Minutes of a meeting of the Governors' Finance and Pay Sub-Committee held on 22nd February 2021 at 5.30pm held via Zoom.

Present: Miss R McMann (Clerk)
Mr M Worrall
Mrs T Boving-Foster
Mr G Miller
Mr Dawson
Mrs J Scott
Mrs K Rae
Mr J Ray
Dr E Mawson

Quorum per Terms of Reference - 4 Governors

Governors present: 5

Visitors: none

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted for Mr Buckland and Mr Airey (work commitment) and Mr Shephard

2. Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes from the meetings held in November 2020

The minutes were unanimously approved as a true record and Mrs Boving-Foster will sign these the next time she visits school.

5. Matters Arising

It was confirmed by Mrs Scott that the accounts return is complete and has been submitted. It was noted that the budget has been discussed and was approved in the January Full Governors' meeting.

Mrs Rae queried if any of the recommendations from the internal audit have been implemented? Mrs Scott answered that work has begun on reviewing the Financial Procedures Manual and Mrs Rae advised that when doing this to make use of the Academies Financial Handbook to ensure that the school is compliant. Mr Ray said that this is largely a tidy-up exercise to ensure that simple things are corrected and that everything is documented for evidence. He added that due to Covid-19 the next internal audit will likely take place in April, as opposed to March as previously agreed. It was noted that the timing of the internal audits does not matter as long as two are conducted a year.

As per the previous minutes, Mrs Boving-Foster confirmed that she had taken up the Bike to Work scheme with Mr Bauer and reported that it is ok to cap numbers on up-

take on a first come first served basis or however the school wished to do it so long as the process is explained. **The Governors unanimously agreed that Mrs Scott could go ahead and launch this scheme.**

Mrs Scott gave an update on the bid for re-roofing and unfortunately, the school was not eligible for the larger bid nor a later smaller bid of £250,000 for the Sixth Form roof. As these are Sailex loans there was a discussion as to whether the school is blacklisted. It was concluded that it should be put in writing at the end of the current CIF process that any future bids should be treated fairly and thus, the school is justified in raising an issue should this not be the case.

Mrs Tine Boving-Foster reported that prior to Christmas, Mrs Scott had asked her to authorise the cost of a cherry picker to come and deal with some coping tiles which have come off the main building. However, due to the weather this was not possible and as there have been no more issues, the school is monitoring this closely. Additionally, there are issues in the gable end and two builders have been in to look at this. The intention would be to use monies from the Devolved Capital Grant to pay for this. In response to Mrs Rae's question, there are two Devolved Capital Grants each worth around £20,000. Mrs Scott also said that more toilet provision could be a use for this money.

6. Management Accounts to 31st December 2020

As this set of accounts was brought to the Full Governors' meeting in January, there were no further updates except to say that Mrs Scott has almost completed the January accounts. There were no further questions or comments.

7. Bank Accounts and Cash Flow

Mrs Scott reported that the bank balances are looking healthy and are growing nicely, as very little is being spent. It was reported that the HSBC account holds around £652,000 although salaries and pensions are to come out of this (the figure for this is circa £270,000). **The Governors unanimously confirmed that they were happy with the amounts held in each account.**

Mrs Rae was glad that things are on track but added a note of caution that there could be a few maintenance items that would require using up surplus money. She asked if there is likely to be anything major to do, for example the Sixth Form roof? Mrs Scott replied that the Sixth Form roof is something which must be addressed and also the issues at the gable end requires a proper fix. Additionally, the school is also short on toilets. **With these larger projects in mind Mrs Rae thought it would be useful for a costing of each essential item alongside a timeframe (i.e. what needs to be undertaken in 6 months time, 12 months time and so on) to produce a document with a sensible maintenance target for Governors to see.**

8. Maintenance Update

Following on from the above Mrs Scott reported that whilst school has been closed, a number of things have been achieved such as decorating classrooms, updating the

reception area and some general servicing of systems and technology. She reported that there is a leak in the pavilion to look at. However, it was also noted that due to the restrictions it can be difficult to get people in to undertake work.

Mr Henderson has now made the switch to the pastoral team and his job is to be recruited to.

10. Headteacher's Report

In the absence of Mr Buckland, Dr Mawson informed the Governors that Mr Nelson of PKN who supply the online admissions is retiring and therefore, a new supplier must be found. This is a niche market but Mr Martin and Mrs Denyer have done extensive research for a replacement. However, it was reported that they could only find two potential suppliers and thus the school is short of one quote as per the guidelines to obtain three quotes. This is backed up by the minutes of the Grammar School Meeting, where advice on this was sought. Dr Mawson also made Governors aware that is not something that can be done internally due resources and GDPR issues as to how the data would be held.

The Governors having discussed this in full were satisfied that everything has been done to source three quotes and it is just not possible. Thus, they are satisfied with the two quotes. A cover sheet will be inserted with these quotes, explaining the context alongside the Grammar School meeting minutes and these minutes. This cover sheet should be signed by Mr Buckland as accounting officer. Mrs Scott noted that the cost of this will increase slightly and be around £3,000. Whilst Governor approval is not needed for this level of expenditure, Mrs Rae thanked the SLT for highlighting it.

Mrs Rae asked how staff and SLT were managing the workload, conscious of the announcement that schools are to re-open on March 8th and had they had chance to relax over half-term? Dr Mawson answered that it has been heavy for all and that everyone is doing the very best they can do. Mr Dawson felt that this half-term break was better than the Christmas break which was awful. With regards to opening, there are lots of things to re-think and must support staff who are understandably anxious but on the whole the school stands in good stead. Mrs Rae gave huge thanks on behalf of the Governors for the work that has been done.

The meeting closed at 6.10pm.