

## QUEEN ELIZABETH GRAMMAR SCHOOL, PENRITH

### Minutes of a meeting of the Governors' Finance and Pay Sub-Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at 6.20pm held via Zoom.

Present: Miss R McMann (Governance Professional)  
Mr M Worrall  
Mrs T Boving-Foster  
Mr G Miller  
Mrs K Rae (Chair)  
Mr P Buckland  
Mr J Ray

Quorum per Terms of Reference - 4 Governors

Governors present: 6

SLT present: Dr Mawson, Mr Dawson, Mrs Scott

Visitors: none

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were accepted for Mr Airey (work related).

2. Declaration of Interest in Agenda Items

There were no declarations of interest in the agenda items.

3. Minutes from the meetings held on February 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Mrs Rae said that the Finance minutes were shared in the Full Governors' meeting in October. There were no revisions made in this meeting and thus, they are accepted as a true record and will be signed in school as soon as is practicable.

4. Matters Arising

In response to Mrs Rae's question, there has been no response from the EFSA. Mrs Scott reported that the school was subjected to a national minimum wage audit, after receiving a very strongly worded letter requesting an audit. She said that this was done virtually and that there are very few staff members in this category. There were no issues found despite it being an onerous process. Mrs Rae thanked Mrs Scott for her work and patience on this. Mr Ray added a note of caution to be mindful of any staff members in this category who may sign up to salary sacrifice schemes, such as cycle to work.

5. Teaching Staff Pay Progressions

A document detailing the cost had been previously circulated to the committee and Mrs Rae commented that most of these increases had already been budgeted for, save

for a slight difference. Mrs Boving-Foster reported that herself, Mr Worrall and Mr Miller had attended a meeting where they had looked over a number of anonymised appraisals with Mr Dawson. Due to DfE guidance and the impact of Covid, it is very difficult to deny any pay progressions this year but she was pleased to report that they had found this to be a relatively robust process with good examples shown. Mr Worrall added that he has been to schools who have not undertaken the appraisal process and it was commendable that QEGS had stuck with it, despite the circumstances. Mr Buckland wished to note his thanks to Mr Dawson for all his hard work.

**A vote was taken and the committee unanimously agreed to adopt the pay increases.**

6. Management Accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021

Mrs Scott said that the school had been fortunate to receive Covid money and the fact that they were prudent with this by managing all the testing in school, has reflected well in the accounts. Mrs Scott was pleased to report a surplus of £65,000 although in the statutory accounts this is £97,000. This is owing to the fact that the snack bar and decking expenditure has been moved into the fixed assets to depreciate over a ten year period. It was originally put through the Management Accounts to enable Mrs Scott to keep a close track of expenditure

There were no questions or comments.

7. Bank Accounts and Cash Flow

Mrs Scott reported that the biggest change was removing most of the money from the InvestTech account and moving it into the Penrith Building Society. There is still more than the recommended amount in the HSBC account but given the profile of this bank, there is deemed to be minimal risk. Additionally, the NatWest account is not covered by the protection scheme but again there is minimal risk.

**The Governors unanimously agreed that they have reviewed and are happy with the amounts held in each account.**

8. Maintenance Report

Mrs Scott had circulated a report prior to the meeting. She added that the decision has been taken to close the school over Christmas to give all staff a break, which is truly deserved.

Mrs Boving-Foster asked for an update around the protection for the new snack bar. Mrs Scott answered that this is still a work in progress. Suppliers have been contacted for ideas of what could be put up to protect the snack bar but prices are between £68,000 and £73,000 so more work is to be done here. Work has been done on the

queue length with the longest queue time being 12.5 minutes. Mrs Scott was pleased to report that it is hugely successful across the whole school and serves good healthy food.

Mrs Rae closed this item saying it was good to see a positive update on the implementation of the snack bar.

9. Financial Procedures Manual

Mr Ray led on this item, thanking Mrs Scott and her team for their help and support. He said that the main changes to this are in section 9. He highlighted that the intention is not to take any decision making away from SLT but rather establish how the Governing Body is informed and interacts. Mr Ray also feels that this should be an evolving document which will be looked at again in the April internal audit. There were the following comments / questions:

- Mrs Scott made Governors aware that that a low-level credit card has been introduced to reduce petty cash and this will be of particular use in Food Technology and Science.
- Mrs Boving-Foster added that this document is as much to help the Governors keep focus on what they need to do.
- Mrs Rae queried at what point in the meeting schedule would look at 3.2 (income lettings) and 9.1 (preferred suppliers) **It was answered that normally income from lettings should normally be looked at in this meeting so for this year it will be carried into the February meeting and thereafter in the November meeting. With regards to approving the preferred suppliers, this will be presented in the June meeting.**

**A vote was taken and subject to the revision, it was unanimously agreed to take this to the Full Governors' meeting in December to ratify. Thanks were given to all for their hard work on this.**

There was a query regarding the Whistle Blowing Policy and it was noted that this is to review and update if necessary.

10. Headteacher's Update

Mr Buckland had no further updates as everything had been covered in the meeting.

11. Any Other Business

The next meeting date is Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 at 5.30pm via Zoom.

The meeting closed at 7.03pm.