

THE GOVERNING BODY OF HOWARD PARK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Finance and Premises Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Premises Committee held **remotely** at 5:00 pm on Monday, 22 March 2021.

PRESENT

Mr O Bryden (Chair), Mrs V Farrell, Mr R Jeffrey, Mrs J Leighton, Mr G Muir, Mr J Pickles

In Attendance

Mrs A F Jewell (Minute Clerk)
Mrs S Mollett (Observer and Deputy Head Teacher)

20. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest.

21. **NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items notified to be brought up under any other business.

22. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2021**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2021 be approved by the Chair as a correct record and signed at a future meeting.

23. **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

24. **FINANCE AND PREMISES REPORT**

The reports to month 11 had been sent to Governors prior to the meeting. The following were noted:

(a) **Finance**

It was noted that income to the budget for the Childrens Centre of £21,000 and £7532 for reimbursements of ICT equipment were still awaited.

Q: Is that overall income?

A: No, not yet. We take this into account.

Significant additional spending had been made with cleaning due to Covid, as well as Bradford City. Some savings on staffing had not been realised due to plans not happening. Due to the Covid overspend a very small carry forward was envisaged.

Q: Will you have any carry forward at all?

A: It will be very minimal. If we have £5,000 we will be lucky.

Q: What happens if we go into deficit?

A: We have to budget to pay this back out of our next budget.

Q: Have you got all funds in from the Government for the additional Covid expenses?

A: Yes, we are not aware that we will receive anything further. We have allowed a further £7,060 for covid catch up. We also don't know how much we will receive for Sports Premium, we have not received any confirmation about that yet. We have allowed £7,048 for Sports Premium.

Q: What was the extra expenditure for the drains spent on?

A: During the summer term there was a strong smell coming from the drains under the Head Teacher's office. The drain company came out and rodded the drains. They needed to flush a substance through to re-line the drains as they had cracked. It has since been drastically better since, but it was one of those things that we could not foresee.

Q: Have the extra costs for the gas boiler been because it was new? Are the costs likely to go down?

A: Our heating hasn't worked to full capacity and this winter was the first time we have had a fully functioning gas boiler as well as a cold winter period. We also had to have our doors open due to Covid. Our readings are taken automatically and sent to the LA. We have budgeted for next year based on this years' readings so it should be on a worst case scenario. Hopefully, next year this will not get any worse.

Q: Can we stop the extra cleaning costs soon?

A: We have budgeted to stop in July.

It was noted that although the School will have a very small carry forward figure, there are other Schools in a worse position, so it is likely that the School will not be 'top of the list' with the LA for support.

Mrs Farrell informed Governors that she was hoping to have the three year forecast summary ready for the next full Governing Body meeting in May.

(b) Premises

The Caretaker is due back at the School on 12 April.

25. 2021/22 BUDGET

The draft budget had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting. Mrs Farrell spoke to the contents. It was noted that the budget has been set realistically.

Q: Have you had to make any hard decisions. Are there any drastic spending cuts?

A: We have had to make some hard decisions re premises. We have had to delay the work to Reception, as well as the repairs to the lighting in the hall. For the next year unless work is critical we cannot spend on the building. We are now in a position where it is essential spend only. The issue will be if we have a big requirement later in the year that was not anticipated. We do need to maintain the building but money needs to be directed towards children and education.

Mrs Farrell confirmed that she will be setting up a slightly more structured and controlled ordering system to give more control on what is going out. The Head Teacher advised that he had gone through all general resources spending but there has been nothing drastic or unnecessary spent out of this.

Q: Income is reduced, the School has achieved £175,000 with another £28,000 to come in but next year we have only budgeted £93,000. Why is this?

A: We do have a large amount of income which is FSM and there is £10,000 that we are down on Sports Premium with adjustments to EYFS or SEND as well as £20,000 on School visits income.

ACTION: Mrs Farrell to compile report and send to the Chair regarding reduction in income from £175,000 to projected £93,000.

Q: Is there anything else on the expenditure that could be looked at?

A: Our biggest expenditure is staff salaries. We have a lot of staff who are very nearly at the top of their pay scale. For example, if we had someone leave and replaced them with an NQT this would save us £15,890. We also have to employ additional support staff to work 1:1 with our high needs children. As well as the Caretaker and extended School staff, our costs are approximately £950,000 and we don't receive any financial reward for having experienced staff but our children do benefit from this. We did have a big staff cutting exercise a few years ago.

It was noted that there have been changes made to high needs top up funding which will increase slightly but the School is hampered by the numbers of children that are at a high level need. This has always been an issue.

Q: Is swimming likely to take place in 2021?

A: It is highly unlikely but at the moment we have received no communication about it. We will have to wait and see, but we would be expected to deliver this provision if it is allowed to go ahead.

Q: Has there been a double-spend in for School residentials?

A: We have not paid double anywhere. The deposit was paid out of last year's budget and we have paid nothing this year. If this year doesn't go ahead we will receive a credit but there will be no net profit anywhere from this.

Mrs Farrell assured Governors that there is no frivolous spending and anything spent is used in School. Governors agreed to approve the budget, for ratification by the full Governing Body.

RESOLVED: That Governors agreed to approve the budget 2021/22 for ratification at the next full Governing Body meeting.

26. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The LA audit report from the visit held in December had already been circulated to Governors. Mr Muir reported that he had visited the School on 24 February to go through the list of actions from the report and check the health and safety policy, as well as looking round the premises. Governors were informed that the majority of actions had already been completed. The only outstanding actions were those which applied to the caretaker and outside agencies. This report will be used as a basis for conducting checks in the future.

Mrs Farrell advised that she would be completing a health and safety walk round with the caretaker after Easter.

ACTION: Mrs Farrell to complete health and safety walk round.

27. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No items were notified.

28. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Finance and Premises Committee take place on Thursday, 1 July 2021 at 5:00 pm.

29. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

RESOLVED: That no part of these minutes, agenda or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the School, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.