

Minutes of Thorpe Primary School
Governors Finance/Personnel Committee Meeting
Wednesday 8th February 2017 at 7.00pm

Present: Kate Trethewy (KT) (Head Teacher), Colin Hammond (CH) (Chair of Governors), Tracey Cheung (TC), Karen Tucker (KTu) and Seetal Swan (SS).

Apologies: Anne Clayton (AC) (Chair of Finance/Personnel Committee), Jo White (JW), Jo Fillmore (JF) (Vice Chair of Finance/Personnel Committee) and Manoj Subudhi

In Attendance: Terry Edwards (TE) (School Business Manager), Emma Anderson (EA) (Deputy Head) and Hannah Jackson (Committee Clerk)

The meeting commenced at 7.00pm

Item	Points Discussed	Decisions/ Recommendations/ Action Points/Dates
1.	Apologies for absence: 1.1 Apologies were received from Anne Clayton, Jo White, Jo Fillmore and Manoj Subudhi. 1.2 CH chaired the meeting in AC and JF's absence. 1.3 SS was welcomed to her first Finance/Personnel Committee meeting. 1.4 CH reminded all governors of the confidentiality of meetings.	
2.	Minutes of the Last Meeting – Wednesday 12th October 2016 2.1 The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record and signed by Colin (in AC's absence)	
3.	Matters Arising 3.1 Trip information spreadsheets. A copy was sent in advance of the meeting showing contributions made to school trips by parents. TE explained AC had looked at this in detail last week and given further explanations. Governors queried if it is the same families regularly not contributing to the cost of trips? Possibly but	

	<p>contributions to school trips that are classed as part of the curriculum are voluntary. Trends such as a certain year group frequently having a shortfall for trips, would be taken into consideration when planning trips for them the following year. If not enough contributions are received for a certain trip it has to be cancelled – the school cannot take only those who have paid.</p> <p>3.2 Energy monitoring. At the last meeting it was suggested the Site Manager was to track energy used more closely. The head reported after investigation and alongside all the extra tasks the Site Manager now does, this would not be an effective use of his time. The head added since the last meeting the school has a new, improved energy rating – the energy consumption has gone down following a new boiler being installed and new energy-efficient lighting is planned; also energy is on the benchmarking report later. Governors agreed the extra monitoring was not needed.</p> <p>3.3 Governors asked if the lettings charge has been raised as agreed at the last meeting. It was confirmed this had happened and the regular booking in place was lost, as expected.</p>	<p>Governors agreed no further in-depth energy monitoring required.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Declaration of Interest 4.1 No declarations of pecuniary interest.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Budget Update – Predicted Outturn</p> <p>5.1 A copy was distributed in advance of the meeting. TE explained this was reviewed in depth last week with AC and that the figures shown were up to the end of January.</p> <p>5.2 I03 SEN Funding looks under budget, however the school are awaiting funding for 3 additional EHCPs so this will follow from the LA.</p> <p>5.3 I07 Other Grants and Payment – originally budgeted for £6k which rose to £10.5k due to extra funding received following the previous Head’s PIXL Income generated, triad funding and the two Teach First staff employed.</p> <p>5.4 I08 Income from Facilities / Services is income from the breakfast club, interest and lettings.</p> <p>5.5 I12 Income Contributions / Visits the school are in the process of collecting 2nd/3rd payments for a residential trip but may not hit the revised budget expected.</p> <p>5.6 E01 Teaching Staff - now all staff have been through pay progressions etc. accurate adjustments can be made.</p> <p>5.7 E02 Supply Staff - left long term sick contingency in this budget line to pay for absences.</p> <p>5.8 E08 Indirect Employee Expenses - original budget had to be raised as the costs for heads recruitment and Teach First has to come from this budget line.</p> <p>5.9 E12 Building Maintenance and Improvement – Governors queried why at 102% spent. TE explained this is where money was put aside for school maintenance such as broken toilets etc. The Site Manager does do a lot of repairs in house that would cost a lot more if the school had to use external companies. Also the school are planning to cut down and renegotiate some contracts that come under this budget line, making savings.</p>	

	<p>5.10 E14 Cleaning and Caretaking – governors queried why at 107% spent. TE explained a new carpet cleaner has just been purchased creating the overspend, as shown in the commitments column.</p> <p>5.11 E24 Special Facilities – this is for payments to the Jack Hunt Cluster for PE and ICT. It is likely the school will need to make a much smaller payment to this next financial year.</p> <p>5.12 The carry forward is currently predicted at £33,940, which will still change before year end.</p> <p>5.13 The capital carry forward is currently predicted at £5,405. The investment this year into the CCTV and fob entry system, which is also used as a staff signing in system, has been a great improvement for the school. Governors congratulated the Site Manager for negotiating a good price for this, and to all others involved for their good work.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Budget 2017-18</p> <p>6.1 The figures for 2017-18 have not yet been added to the budgeting toolkit by the LA, so although the school have been given the headline figures; cannot predict an outturn at this point.</p> <p>6.2 Governors asked if the first look at the budget was better than last year. The head answered that there is a slight increase, however there will be an extra class of children from September. It appears pension increases are being held back another year, and the school plans to save £10-12k on property service contracts next year.</p> <p>6.3 TE will give committee governors an update on 2017/18 budget when the school has more information.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Personnel Audit</p> <p>7.1 A copy was distributed in advance of the meeting. As agreed at the last meeting, JF and AC met and answered all questions on the audit. The highlighted text shows suggested actions from this meeting which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New governors to attend training – SS agreed to book on. • KCSiE information will be included in the staff handbook when produced for September. Governors have also received this information. • October STPC is now in the policy file. • All staff have had training and safeguarding policies, and has gone to all governors. <p>7.2 The head added there were not many changes needed in the audit, and actions highlighted are all best practice rather than statutory.</p>	<p>SS to attend new governor training</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Audit Review from Internal Audit</p> <p>8.1 The school had an unexpected visit from a Group Auditor at the LA, focussing on employer pension contributions. A copy of the report from this was distributed in advance of the meeting, showing the two recommendations made.</p> <p>8.2 The report encouraged evidenced checks on payroll to be done each month. TE assured governors the</p>	

	<p>starters / leavers and one staff member are checked every month by the Office Manager and then checked again by the Head; however this is all verbally. An improved process is now in place where this is recorded on a printed check sheet each month, providing evidence as recommended.</p> <p>8.3 The second recommendation is that if a Responsible Officer reports on payroll in future, that pension contributions are reviewed, which TE assured would happen.</p>	<p>New payroll checklist evidenced each month by TE/KT.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Benchmarking</p> <p>9.1 The head advised it was decided to commission a benchmarking report (for £75) as this is believed to be good value for the amount of information given, in an easy to use format. Copies of the booklet produced were tabled and governors were given time to have a look through.</p> <p>9.2 Governors commented the report is reassuring and the school appear to be close to or below the national average for many of the expenditure budget lines.</p> <p>9.3 Energy has a large drop in costs from the previous financial year – likely to be as a result of the new energy efficient boiler.</p> <p>9.4 Governors queried what Brought in Professional Services consisted of. TE advised this is mostly funds delegated from the LA such as costs towards the EAL academy, payroll, personal, clerking, SLA for finance, HR and the cash collection service. The head added these were all management type services rather than educational.</p> <p>9.5 Governors were happy with the report and thanked the Head for sharing.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Catering</p> <p>10.1 A spreadsheet was distributed in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>10.2 TE reported the monthly averages for meals were slightly down for January. The Cook is aware and has been looking into new initiatives to improve this, including possibly doing another survey with the children for new ideas. Governors commented that previous data suggests January is usually a slower month.</p> <p>10.3 The Cook has suggested investing in a Panini making machine for the kitchen, costing around £500. Governors discussed the cost of this coming from the school meals income created.</p> <p>10.4 Governors discussed the unhealthy contents of some pack ups brought in from home and agreed the school will send a reminder/information sheet for parents on what could go into a healthy pack up. At the same time a reminder of the school pack up choice offered on the menu could be sent.</p> <p>10.5 The second page of the spreadsheet detailed income vs expenditure, which is still showing a positive balance so no intervention is needed, i.e. cost increases.</p> <p>10.6 Governors asked how the free fruit snack initiative is going at school. It was reported there is still some wastage. Governors discussed the possibility of the snacks being peeled/chopped but believe this would take too much time for kitchen staff. Also the possibility of the children being given the tools to do this task themselves, along with learning a new skill, was discussed.</p>	<p>Healthy pack up information sheet / reminder to be sent to parents.</p>

	<p>10.7 The Head added she is considering the idea of introducing a healthy tuck shop to be run as an enterprise by the children.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>School Financial Value Standard</p> <p>11.1 A copy was distributed in advance of the meeting. TE explained this is to be returned to the LA as part of the end of year accounts. Changes made to last years' submission had been highlighted for discussion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q1 added an accountant (SS) has joined Finance/Personnel committee. • Q2 added governors with personnel experience (TC) and finance experience (SS) have joined committee. • Q7 added a new head has been appointed by governors. • Q8 on appraisal process being robust – added quality assured. • Q17 fully reworded to reflect the grants received for re-wiring, CCTV, new entry system and how governors monitor these projects. • Q18 fully reworded to reflect how the school work with Jack Hunt cluster and now looking at options for multi academy trust and what this would mean from a procurement point of view. • Q9 professional advice re heads pay decision process – this needs to be changed to Malcolm Massey undertaking task. He helps set the targets but the question is more about reviewing. In mid-year review next half term MM to come and review then. Governors agreed for KT to rewrite answer to reflect this change. • Q19 fully reworded to reflect the improved use of resources in school this past year. • Q20 added information on the internal auditor visit. <p>11.2 Governors agreed the changes which have to be signed off before being returned to the LA in March.</p>	<p>Head to rewrite answer to Q9</p> <p>Governors agreed SFVS changes.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Policies</p> <p>12.1 Leave of Absence. A copy was distributed in advance of the meeting. Although recently approved, this has been brought to the committee to suggest further work needed to ensure the message that staff leave is requested, not an entitlement.</p> <p>12.2 There is a webinar from EPM on this subject soon which KT/TE will ensure they watch.</p> <p>12.3 After discussion governors agreed to have a working group including TC to discuss in detail following the webinar, and report back to governors.</p> <p>12.4 Attendance Policy. A copy was distributed in advance of the meeting, and flow charts showing 'persistent' and 'single' absences was tabled. EA explained the highlighted text in the policy which has been added by the LA / Jack Hunt Cluster, changed following a high profile legal case where a parent was allowed to take their child out of school.</p> <p>12.5 EA highlighted the main differences are persistent absence is now classed as 90% and the way penalty notices are issued and what for. The school would continue to always meet with parents regarding attendance, warning what they may be fined for, and monitoring attendance when back in school.</p> <p>12.6 Governors queried the new wording re monitoring attendance for 30 days on return to school – would this</p>	<p>KT/TE/TC working group re Leave of Absence Policy, report back to governors.</p> <p>KT to clarify '30 days' in attendance policy. TC to be additional named governor.</p>

	<p>be continued after summer holidays? KT to seek clarification.</p> <p>12.7 TC agreed to be an additional named governor on the attendance policy.</p> <p>12.8 After discussion governors approved the policy with the new wording included, to be signed by the chair.</p> <p>12.9 SEN Policy. A copy was distributed in advance, along with the School Information Report (SIR). EA informed governors a representative from Family Voice is coming to parents evening to gain their views on the SIR. Accessibility of the SIR is an important check made by Family Voice, who've confirmed ours is easy to find on the website, only a few clicks needed. EA invited governors to all check how easily they can find the SIR on the schools website. EA explained the additions made since 2014 to make the SIR more user friendly. KT suggested Early Help to be added to the report, which EA will do, as this is discussed regularly with parents. KTu (SEN Governor) to meet with EA to look at SIR in more detail. Governors commented the SEN Policy and SIR were clearly written and approved by all, to be signed by the chair.</p> <p>12.10 Pay Policy – Amendment. KT suggested an amendment to the current Pay Policy, that teachers need to be on M6 of the main payscale to be entitled to apply for threshold. This is on p5-6 of the policy and also mentioned in Annex 3. Governors discussed the dangers to staff morale for those applying for threshold from a lower level that are not ready for this step. KT added most schools still advise being at M6 to apply. There may be more changes to the Pay Policy at the usual annual review in September, but thought important to get this amended now rather than wait. Governors agreed this amendment to the Pay Policy.</p>	<p>Attendance Policy agreed by governors</p> <p>Governors to check ease of access to SIR on the website.</p> <p>KTu/EA to meet re SIR.</p> <p>SEN Policy / SIR approved by governors.</p> <p>Governors agreed amendment to Pay Policy.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>13.1 Governors agreed for SS to be an additional Safeguarding Governor alongside JF. EA added safeguarding should be reviewed each term by governors so this will be helpful. SS and EA to arrange a meeting in school re safeguarding.</p>	<p>SS/EA to meet re safeguarding.</p>
	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting Wednesday 5th July 2017 at 7.00pm</p>	

The meeting concluded at 8.30pm