



## MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE ON MAY 6<sup>TH</sup> 2025 AT 8.30AM IN THE SCHOOL

**Present:** Mike Waterson (MW), Ian Stewart (IS) and Hilary Priest (HP)  
Head. Jenny Barker (JB) and Rob Hill attended after the meeting started.

**In attendance:** Dawn Pettipiece (Clerk), Sandie Lovell (SL) School Business Manager attended part of the meeting.

*“We are a community with a lifelong passion for learning.”*

	MINUTES
1	<b>Welcome &amp; apologies for absence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please inform the clerk of any apologies before the meeting.</li> </ul> Richard Gibbon gave apologies via email.
2	<b>Attendance &amp; declaration of interest</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please sign the attendance form</li> </ul> The governors signed the attendance form. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governors are reminded that they must declare any conflict of interest which becomes apparent during the meeting.</li> </ul> There were no declarations of interest.
3	<b>Minutes of the last meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please read the minutes (in meeting folder)</li> </ul> The Chairman of the FGB, signed the minutes as the Resources Chair, Rob Hill arrived at the meeting after it started.
4	<b>Matters arising from the last meeting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An item about governor recruitment to go in school newsletter.</li> </ul> IS: I will put an item about this in tomorrow's newsletter. <b>ACTION: IS TO PUT AN ITEM ABOUT GOVERNOR RECRUITMENT IN THE NEWSLETTER TOMORROW.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updated P.E. and sport premium information to go on the school website.</li> </ul> HP: Hannah Vitali (one of the teachers) is in the process of writing this. <b>ACTION: HP WILL UPDATE THE P.E. AND SPORT PREMIUM INFORMATION ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE ONCE IT HAS BEEN WRITTEN UP.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Termly facilities meeting and H&amp;S walk around to be booked.</li> </ul> IS: I will book this on my way out. <b>ACTION: IS TO BOOK MEETING AND WALK AROUND.</b> <b>Update: Meeting booked for Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June.</b> <b>ACTION: IS TO REPORT OUTCOME OF FACILITIES MEETING AND H&amp;S WALKAROUND.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify staff members who cover information technology (IT) and send information to RG.</li> <li>IT walk around to be arranged.</li> </ul> <b>Update: RG has met with team but not yet arranged the walk around.</b> <b>THE COMMITTEE AGREED THIS ITEM CAN COME OFF THE AGENDA</b>
5	<b>Budget</b> <b>SL ENTERED THE ROOM AT 8.53am</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To monitor FRS (in meeting folder)</li> <li>2025-26 budget approval, then to go to the FGB meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> May for approval.</li> <li>Plans for 2025-26 surplus/deficit</li> </ul> SL: At the moment there is not a FRS as the new system from BROMCOM has not got a replacement yet. We have a carry forward of approximately £41,500. IS: Is that what we thought it would be? SL: Yes. At the end of the year we did not have too many expenses. As you can see on the comparison chart we have put a similar amount in the cost centres to last year. We have allocated some money into training as teaching and support staff need to refresh their first aid training, which happens every three years. MW: Entitlements have gone up a lot to £200,000?

**SL:** That is because we get grants every year and last year it was for the teachers' pension and the pay grant, but now they are included in the basic entitlement. If you look at the previous year there was an adjustment to allow for the grants. This type of thing happens every year. This year the national insurance has a grant and next year it will go into the basic entitlement.

- Jenny Barker (JB) entered the room at 9am.

**MW:** Obviously the £12,000 is for the pre-school?

**HP:** The budget plan I have sent to Devon County Council (DCC) included around £45,00 in profit after taking the expenses out. That is if we get 11 children per session and I put in the absolute minimum of 2 children attending.

**SL:** That is for September and we did not want to over commit in case we are not ready to start then, so it is just a figure to balance the books and is not an over-estimate.

**JB:** How will the pre-school helps with the school funds?

**HP:** We already have the premises and staff, so there are no costs apart from the consumables. There is £3000 for investment each year and a £1 per day for consumables such as snacks.

- Rob Hill (RH) entered the room at 9am.

**JB:** If we were not planning on having a pre-school what would happen to staff, would there have to be redundancies?

**HP:** Possibly, but redundancies cost money. One member of staff is on long-term sick and one on maternity leave but they are both in the budget and I have discussed with the staff that some of them may be moved around to accommodate the pre-school.

**IS:** What is the mobility income?

**SL:** It is one of the things in our budget that DCC give us.

**IS:** So it is funding?

**SL:** Yes.

**HP:** All the conversations and the plan is around the pre-school being absorbed into the reception class. We have less children in reception than the maximum allowed so the staff can cover 11 children in the pre-school. If we expand the pre-school we would need more staff, but would get more funding.

**RG:** There are three rooms?

**HP:** There will be a reception room and a pre-school room and they will also mix together sometimes.

**RH:** Is there a statutory duty to have a teacher in the room all the time?

**HP:** DCC have been and looked at the space and are happy.

**RG:** But there are three rooms and two teachers.

**HP:** Yes, but it is classed as one unit.

**JB:** Did you get any interest from the newsletter

**HP:** We have had five enquiries for September.

**JP:** Have you any idea how you would manage demand?

**HP:** There is a standard DCC admissions policy, but we can change it in the future, so that if children attend the pre-school they automatically get a place in the school. If we want that we would need to put it in the policy soon and it is a complicated decision to make. We are however, being very well supported by Devon.

**RH:** Why are Devon involved?

**HP:** It is statutory as we are a "maintained" school. They have completed an initial consultation to see if there is a demand. Then it is going to a formal consultation to stakeholders next week.

**RH:** Who are the stakeholders?

**HP:** Other nurseries and schools etc.

**RH:** Does there need to be a separate Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) inspection?

**HP:** No, we are altering the age range in the school and calling it a nursery class.

**SL:** This will be in our normal budget.

**HP:** If we kept it separate the school would not get the funding, so IS and I looked at the different options and discussed them with DCC. Jo Counter (in her role as a teacher and governor) came to the meeting as she used to be a nursery advisor as well as a nursery teacher.

**IS:** So this will not trigger an Ofsted mini inspection?

**HP:** No, it is just a change in the age range.

**IS:** Are we expecting any unexpected expenses, such as in IT (information technology).

**HP:** Every year we have to replace some laptops and some ipad screens, but everything is fine at the moment.

**MW:** The two biggest increases are catering staff and expenditure – going up from £34,000 to £45,000.

**SL:** Food costs have gone up considerably. We looked at our “spend” in the last financial year and estimated what it will be this year.

**MW:** Are we going to increase prices of school meals?

**SL:** All of the other school business managers have had to increase their prices and it is something we need to consider. It is over five years since we last did this.

**HP:** I am conscious that the cost of everything is going up and this would be an extra expense for parents.

**MW:** Our priority is spending money on the childrens’ education.

**HP:** We are not meant to make a loss.

**MW:** Last year on the figures it was pretty close and if we are spending another £17,000 an increase in the price of meals may be helpful.

**JB:** Could we not do a sliding scale with parents paying what they can afford?

**HP:** The only children who have to pay for meals are key stage (KS) 2 children who are not entitled to free meals. When we offered to pay for school meals, no parent took us up on it.

**SL:** We have not put the price up for over six years and if we waited until September it will have been a few months since other bills have gone up for the parents.

**HP:** We could announce it now, but we need to see the actual figures before we put the price up.

**5MW:** Gas and electricity has gone down from £46,000 to £26,000.

**SL:** As you know we are contracted to Laser and each year they send us an estimate of how much energy will cost us over the next 12 months. It was high last time due to the price increase in energy, but did not cost us as much as expected. Being cautious, in the past, I have put more in the budget, but due to budget constraints this year I have put Laser’s prediction of costs in the budget. It is a big difference and I am hoping Laser’s estimate is correct.

**IS:** Water is going up.

**SL:** We were informed it is increasing by 32%, so that is accounted for in the budget. With national insurance (NI) we were told the government would cover the increase, but our school has lost out with that by £10,000 and other schools are in a similar situation.

**MW:** We spend a high amount on staff compared to similar schools.

**SL:** Yes, and those sort of things are worked out per pupil, not staff so that is difficult for us.

**HP:** Our numbers of pupils is increasing daily and we have 51 parents who have chosen the school as their first choice for reception.

**RH:** What is the budget adjustment?

**SL:** That is for the NI increases, which we get a grant for, so they are not in the actual budget.

**IS:** The money from the PTA (Parent and Teachers Association) is for the playground etc.

**SL:** That is “ring fenced” in the budget.

**RH:** What is the settlement for teachers?

**HP:** Last year it was 5% and is negotiated every year. The government said they will contribute 2.8% for teachers, but they do not give any money for support staff. The teachers’ pay body and other organisations, such as the NHS, pay bodies are recommending 3.8% this year and the government are saying we will have to find the difference out of the school budget. However, the government can elect to pay less than the pay bodies agree to the schools’ budgets.

**RH:** You have 3.5% for staff, but no income to cover more?

**SL:** Yes.

**IS:** What was the reception intake last year?

**HP:** This year we will take 48, so that is more children in reception.

**JB:** So, the pre-school will help with income generation and will also increase numbers in later school years. That is good as a lot of other local schools are having decreasing numbers of pupils.

**HP:** If a school is well respected numbers are increasing.

**JB:** So unpredicted things such as the cost of living going up, staff wages increasing and the government not providing funding for that, makes things difficult for the budget. Is there anything the governors can do to support the school with this?

**SL:** You need to bear in mind that we have had to pare everything back and are working to the minimum. Hopefully the pre-school will bring in extra funding.

**HP:** I had a meeting last week with a potential holiday club provider as there are none in Totnes.

**RH:** The scale of the deficit is high.

**HP:** Yes and our school is full compared to others who are not and they are really struggling.

**RH:** If you look at the total staff costs they are going up by 3.5% or so every year.

**SL:** DCC put the 3.5% into the budget calculations.

	<p><b>MW:</b> The predicted loss for next year is less than the last couple of years which is good and if we get extra funding for the pre-school, hopefully it will be a break even. If you got extra funding where would you spend it?</p> <p><b>SL:</b> On curriculum and repairs.</p> <p><b>HP:</b> Buying books uses up almost all of the curriculum budget and we are looking at that area.</p> <p><b>SL:</b> The school were in a similar position a few years ago and turned it around. We are just being careful for a couple of years and hopefully, things will improve.</p> <p><b>RH:</b> I do not think the school should be using money from the pre-school etc., to spend on teachers' salaries as the government should be paying for those.</p> <p><b>SL:</b> We do not want to lose our existing experienced staff and having extra income will provide a financial cushion.</p> <p><b>MW:</b> It is important to put money into the curriculum.</p> <p><b>SL:</b> We have done so in the past and it has only been a problem over the past couple of years.</p> <p><b>MW:</b> Money is needed in that area for creativity etc.</p> <p><b>HP:</b> We are very lucky as we have such an active PTA who donate books etc.</p> <p><b>SL:</b> Totnes Bookshop also donate books and every year I put in the Lettings budget a minimum amount, so any extra lettings are a bonus.</p> <p><b>MW:</b> I am pleased that the budget looks better than we expected a few months ago, when we were told the school was really struggling.</p> <p><b>RH:</b> Do we need to approve the budget?</p> <p><b>SL:</b> Yes, and then it needs to go to the full governing board (FGB) for approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>THE GOVERNORS AGREED TO APPROVE THE BUDGET AND IT WILL NOW GO TO THE FGB FOR FINAL APPROVAL.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: SL TO DO SCHOOL MEAL COSTING, INCLUDING PROFIT AND LOSS AND TO BE BROUGHT TO NEXT MEETING.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: BUDGET APPROVAL TO GO ON NEXT FGB AGENDA. Done.</b></p> <p>SL left the room at 9.32am.</p>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Business brought forward by the Chair</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None in this meeting</li> </ul>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Date &amp; time of next meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources meeting 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025.</li> </ul>

The meeting ended at 9.35am.

#### Summary of actions

	To do	By whom	By when
<b>4</b>	An item to go in the school newsletter about governor recruitment	IS	After the meeting
<b>4</b>	Updated P.E. and sport premium information to go on the school website once it has been written up.	HP	By the next meeting
<b>4</b>	Termly facilities meeting to be booked after the meeting. <b>DONE.</b>	IS/SL	After the meeting
<b>4</b>	Report on facilities meeting and H&S walk around to be brought to next meeting.	IS	By the next meeting
<b>5</b>	Work out how much the school meals cost and if they are making a loss and bring results to next meeting.	SL	By the next meeting
<b>5</b>	Budget approval to go on next FGB agenda. <b>Done.</b>	Clerk	By next FGB meeting