



## MEETING OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE ON MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup> 2023 AT 8.30AM IN THE SCHOOL

**Present:** Mike Waterson (MW), Ian Stewart (IS), Rob Hill (RH) Chair, Jenny Barker (JB), Hilary Priest (HP).

**In attendance:** Debbie Horton (Clerk), Sandie Lovell, Business Manager

Minutes

1	<p><b>Welcome &amp; apologies for absence</b> There were none.</p>
2	<p><b>Attendance &amp; declaration of interest</b> The governors signed the attendance form. There were no declarations of interest.</p>
3	<p><b>Minutes of the last meeting 7.2.23</b> The Part 1 and 2 minutes were agreed as a correct record. The Chair signed the Part 1 minutes. The Part 2 minutes will be signed in GovernorHub.</p>
4	<p><b>Matters arising from the last meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Detailed costings for schools meals, aims, and chef's objectives - HP - for next meeting.</li> <li>Online payments recommendation for committee – SL. SL had researched 5 systems, (including E-schools, who are upgrading their system), including talking to local schools and Devon County Council (DCC). SL and HP will look at demos of 2 of the systems online. The governors agreed that during a transition stage, cash payments would still be on offer with a view to phasing them out eventually. Ideally, ordering school dinners will be incorporated into the system. The committee agreed in principle that an online payment system should be introduced in September, and that transaction fees will be passed to parents. SL was asked to provide a recommendation, with references, to the committee at the next Resources meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup> 2023.</li> <li>Benchmarking and completion of SFVS for recommendation to FGB on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2023 - SL&amp;RH – to do.</li> <li>Monitoring criteria for strategic plan to go on FGB agenda – Clerk</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION: SL to provide online payment system recommendation to committee on May 9<sup>th</sup> 2023.</b> <b>ACTION Benchmarking and completion of SFVS to be completed in time for approval at FGB on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2023.</b></p>
5	<p><b>Budget</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This year's budget can be met, but it will be in deficit by £70, 000. Since the carry-forward is £122, 000, the numbers will be positive, but subsequent years will be in deficit. DCC are expecting schools to be in deficit in year 2 and will accept this.</li> <li>The budget share is down on last year as a result of a drop of 16 in pupil numbers. There are currently 307 pupils on roll. 41 out of 45 places in Reception are filled from September, which is comparable to previous years. Classes are usually full by Year 2. DCC predict a downturn in pupil numbers over the next few years.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other factors impacting the budget are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10% rise in TA salaries from April 2023 which will be funded from the school budget. Some TAs are on temporary contracts. The TA budget overall has reduced, because of 6 resignations in September 2022.</li> <li>Energy costs have doubled. The contract with Laser has given some stability, and their figures have been used as an estimate of future costs.</li> <li>SEND funding has been reduced. This is as a result of numbers of children with EHCPs, but Devon County are also cutting back because they are running a large deficit in this area.</li> <li>Rates are now being charged (following some confusion about whether they would be or not) with money coming in from DCC and then immediately going out.</li> <li>School catering is predicted to break-even in 2023-24. The new system is settling down, food costs are being reduced (Morrisons will be the new food supplier) and menus are being changed to attract as many children as possible. The best number daily number so far has been 114, on a</li> </ul>

Friday. More time is needed to be certain of trends in uptake. Catering costs are now more detailed in the budget than previously.

- The repairs budget remains the same going forward.

#### **Cutbacks:**

- All first aiders are fully trained, so further training will be unnecessary this year. SWIFT is not being renewed, and the Governors' training budget has been reduced. The SLT training budget has been reduced. The HLTA trains TAs in-house and training links are being set up within the Primary Partnership.
- The supply teaching budget has been reduced with the HLTA doing most cover. The Mutual Fund will be renewed; it has been used by the school.
- Subscriptions to Seesaw, the Smart School Council and the Employee Assistance Programme will not be renewed, with free versions being used where available. The Play therapist's contract ends in July, as it is no longer grant or match-funded.

**Q: What impact will this have on children using the service?**

**A: Very few children see the Play therapist, and the effects are felt more in the long-term, so impacts are difficult to quantify. Parents will have the option of using the Play Therapist, but it would have to be self-funded. .**

**Q: Why is the PE grant spend predicted to be much less in 2023-24?**

**A: Several expensive trips were run this year, for example a skiing trip, which won't be run next year. Due to Covid, £5000 was carried over to this year, some of which has been spent. There is a £2500 carry-forward to next year, if this is acceptable to DCC.**

**Q: If necessary, could the Deputy Head do some teaching?**

**A: This is a possibility.**

**Q: Could there be a whole school approach to small energy saving measures, such as turning off the lights, and so on.**

**A: The savings would not be great, but it could be done. The children would probably respond well to such measures.**

**Q: Is there anything governors can do to address the dire budget situation overall, such as writing to the MP?**

**A: They could do. It would be worth explaining the challenge to the parents in the next newsletter.**

#### **Other sources of income**

- PTA, lettings and fundraising. None of these appear in the budget. A separate lettings cost-centre will be set up. SL reported that although the hire charge has not gone up, the Grove's rate is comparable to other local schools, and in some cases higher. Nevertheless, the charge has not been raised to accommodate higher energy prices. SL will make further comparisons at a Business Managers' meeting next week and report back to the committee.
- SL informed the governors that she will be consulting with a DCC adviser next week, and expects a few amendments to the budget to be made. A lettings cost centre will be set up, for example.
- **The committee agreed the budget should be recommended for approval to the FGB on March 21<sup>st</sup>2023.**

#### **Bought-In services**

- It was proposed that the services remain the same, minus the Legal Healthline.
- The governors noted that insurances are no longer broken down, they come as one figure.
- Whilst the Head's appraisal service is expensive, it was agreed that this should stay.
- **Bought-in services were approved.**

<b>6</b>	<b>Business brought forward by the Chair</b> There was none.
<b>7</b>	<b>Date &amp; time of next meetings</b> Resources meeting 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2023

The meeting ended at 9.45am

**Summary of Actions**

<b>4</b>	<b>Online payment system recommendation to committee</b>	SL	By May 9 <sup>th</sup> 2023
<b>4</b>	<b>Benchmarking and completion of SFVS</b>	RH/SL	By 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2023