

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee held in the school on Tuesday, 12 December 2017 at 5.30pm.

Present:

Mr P Taylor (chair), Mrs S Brown, Mrs P Curtis, Mr B Egerton, Mrs A Treney.

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

Also in Attendance:

Mr T Brunt (Deputy Headteacher)

Mr A Washbourne (Assistant Headteacher)

Mr A Storer (Business Manager)

Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the Governing Body)

Apology:

An apology for absence was received from Mr P Hudson.

15. Governing Body Matters:

a) Membership

The clerk reported that following the recent parent governors elections, Mrs Davies had been re-elected, and Mrs Horry elected, as parent governors. As a result, Mr A Barton was no longer a member of the governing body.

The clerk further reported that he had written to Mr Alcock, as he had not attended a meeting for several months, but a response had not been received.

It was resolved –

- i) That a letter of thanks be sent to Mr Barton for his contribution to the work of the governing body during his term of office.
- ii) That the headteacher be requested to contact Mr Alcock before a decision is taken on his continued membership of the governing body.

b) Pecuniary Interests

The clerk reported that he would arrange for all governors to update their pecuniary interest form at the next meeting of the full governing body.

c) Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

16. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee held on 9 October 2017 had been previously made available to governors via Office 365. The chair outlined a number of necessary amendments to the accuracy of those minutes before approval could be given.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher be requested to amend the minutes as necessary before making available on Office 365.
- ii) That the minutes of the meeting be received and approved, subject to all necessary amendments being made.

17. Matters Arising:

a) Endowment Fund (Minute 4 refers)

The business manager reported that the review of the Endowment Fund had still to be completed and would be presented at the next meeting for formal approval.

b) Finance ((Minute 6 refers)

The business manager reported that there had been a delay in preparing the final audited accounts, due in main to difficulties in obtaining the land and buildings valuations. However, valuations had now been determined and the auditors were meeting with the ULT Finance committee on 20 December to present their report. This will be shared with the governing body in due course.

With regard to the income and expenditure projection, the business manager reported that the FTE adjustment had been made as requested.

c) Premises (Minute 7 refers)

The business manager reported that long term improvements to the pavilion, to take account of the water hygiene inspections, were linked to the CIF bid that had been submitted which included replacement of the pavilion. However, acceptance of the bid was not guaranteed and some short term improvements were necessary. A number of options were therefore being considered, including the installation of a stand-alone boiler to ensure that hot water was available. Three quotes had been received for this work and the business manager recommended that the bid from NEVARs be approved at a cost of £4,100. Full discussion followed and consideration given to value for money in the event of a successful CIF bid and demolition of the pavilion.

The business manager also provided an update on the replacement of the ovens and although Entrust had undertaken some work there had been no improvement. He confirmed, however, that the school remained unwilling to pay for the cost of replacing the ovens and the matter therefore not yet resolved.

It was resolved –

- i) That the premises update be received and noted.
- ii) That the headteacher and business manager be requested to further discuss short term arrangements should the CIF bid not be successful but that the headteacher be authorised to take the appropriate decision around the installation of a stand-alone boiler.

18. Curriculum Update:

Mr Washbourne circulated a report outlining the school's vision for the Key Stage 4 curriculum and took governors through the detail of it. Key decisions to be taken were

around meeting national targets for Ebacc and the number of option choices available to students. Governors noted that, as with many other schools nationally, the number of students being entered for Ebacc was well below the national target of 75%. The headteacher reported that the senior leadership team, having considered the matter carefully, had agreed to recommend the retention of the 4 option choices which would not require compulsory study of a foreign language. This recommendation, which would impact on Ebacc entries, was considered in the best interests of the school and its students.

Full discussion followed and the advantages, and disadvantages, of retaining the 4 option choices were considered. In giving consideration to this, the headteacher further reported that a decision had been previously taken to only offer French as a foreign language. The reasons for this were outlined and the financial implications also made clear should the school return to offering two languages.

It was resolved –

- i) That Mr Washbourne be thanked for presenting his curriculum report and that it be received.
- ii) That governors agree to continue with the 4 option choices approach as recommended by the leadership team, subject to further review after one year.
- iii) That governors make clear their long term view for the school which includes a return to offering two foreign languages as soon as funds allow.

19. Finance:

a) Financial Report September 2017 to November 2017

A report had been made available on Office 365 to show the agreed budget for September 2017 to August 2018 and the current situation for the three month period from September 2017 to November 2017. The business manager took governors through both statements, explaining reasons for some variance particularly for staffing costs. He confirmed that the budget remained on track, with a positive variance of around £29k and that there was nothing of concern to report.

It was resolved –

That the business manager be thanked for the budget update and that it be received and noted.

b) Benchmarking

Schools financial benchmarking comparisons had been made available on Office 365 and the business manager reported that the current information available was much more detailed than previously and provided benchmarking comparisons over a five year period 2011 to 2016. Brief discussion followed and an explanation was given as to why there were some significant differences between different school expenditure. However, governors were recommended to go on-line to look at the information in more detail.

It was resolved –

That the business manager be requested to send the on-line link for governors to access the benchmarking information and that any questions should be referred to him for discussion at a future meeting.

c) Sixth Form Funding

The business manager circulated a report giving an overview of sixth form funding income against staffing costs. In summarising the report, he confirmed that the main school, in staffing costs alone, was subsidising the sixth form in the region of £86k. Governors were advised, however, that this was a similar scenario for most schools with sixth forms. Discussion followed with further questions asked, and challenged, about how the figures had been arrived at.

It was resolved –

That the report on sixth form funding costs be received but that the business manager be requested to have another look at the accuracy of the information provided and to report back at the next meeting.

d) Update on Payroll and Catering Tenders

The business manager reported that the ULT had gone out to tender for the provision of payroll services for all schools and had subsequently awarded the contract to Stoke City Council with effect from April 2018. The total cost had been agreed at £9.5k per annum and that Thomas Alleyne's contribution would be in the region of £4.5k which was significantly less than it currently pays.

The business manager further reported that the ULT had considered to going out to tender for catering services for all schools but, having taken advice from headteachers, had agreed to allow each school to determine its own catering arrangements. Governors were pleased to note that the school had already negotiated a better deal with Chartwells for catering services.

It was resolved –

That the updates for payroll and catering services be received and noted.

20. Premises:

a) Update on proposed work for 2017/2018 Maintenance Budget

The business manager reminded governors that he had given a presentation on the 2017/2018 maintenance budget at a previous meeting but wanted to provide an update on two items in particular:

- Electrical work – three quotes had been received for electrical improvements across the whole school and, although not the cheapest, it was recommended that the contract be given to Meachan & Bevan at a cost of £4,400. Governors were advised that although a cheaper quote had been received from Cripwells it was only an estimate and final costs could therefore be higher than quoted.
- Whole School Safeguarding – three quotes were currently being obtained to improve site security through new doors, fencing, access controls and new paths. Approval for the work would be sought at the next meeting with work likely to commence in the summer.

It was resolved –

That the maintenance budget update be noted and that governors approve the awarding of the electrical contract to Meachan & Bevan for the reasons given.

b) Update on Current Building Projects

The business manager gave an update on the following projects and sought approval from governors on the next steps:

- Salix bids (lighting and emergency lighting) – this work had now been completed and was a significant improvement on the previous lighting.
- CIF bids (boilers and classroom/pavilion replacement) – bids for both projects had now been submitted and a decision now awaited. Governors were informed that if the bids were successful then it would be necessary for the school to make a financial contribution which, in the case of the classroom/pavilion replacement would be in the region of £100k.
- Swimming Pool – see confidential appendix (attached).

It was resolved –

That the update on the current building projects be received and noted and, in the event of a successful bid for classroom/pavilion replacement, governors would give consideration to the school's financial contribution at the appropriate time.

21. Chair's Power to Act:

The chair reported that it had not been necessary to act on behalf of the Managing and Resourcing committee between this and the last meeting.

22. Disposal of Items if Required:

The headteacher and business manager confirmed that there were no items for disposal.

23. Policies:

The following two policies had been made available on Office 365:

- Freedom of Information policy
- Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

The business manager further reported that both policies had been revised to reflect County Council guidance.

It was resolved –

That both policies be approved as presented, subject to one or two small text amendments, and that both policies be reviewed every two years.

24. Health and Safety Issues:

The headteacher informed governors of recent decisions taken as a result of snow and ice and confirmed that all decisions were in the best interests of the students' education whilst mindful of health and safety implications.

It was resolved –

That governors fully support the decisions taken by the headteacher, necessary as a result of the recent snow and ice.

25. Safeguarding:

There were no safeguarding matters to discuss.

26. Other Business:

a) School Play

Those governors that had recently attended the school play congratulated all concerned on what had proved to be a very enjoyable evening. The headteacher was asked to pass on governors' thanks to the members of staff responsible for its production.

b) School Website

Having been informed that the school website was still showing the school prospectus for 2016 the headteacher undertook to ask the IT team to arrange for it to be replaced with the 2017 version.

27. Consideration Given to KPIs:

i) KPI1 – Governors ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction

Covered through discussions relating to Minute 18 (curriculum update) and the governors short term and long term vision for the teaching of foreign languages.

ii) KPI6 – Governors ensure solvency and probity, and that financial resources are made available to the school and are managed effectively

Governors questioned, and challenged, the premises and finance reports provided by the business manager to ensure best value and compliance with financial regulations.

28. Date of Next Meeting:

Governors were reminded that the next meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee would be held in the school on Tuesday, 6 March 2018 at 5.30pm.

The meeting finished at 7.50pm.

Signed.....

Date.....