

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee, held remotely (via Microsoft Teams), on Tuesday, 11 May 2021 at 5.00pm.

Present:

Mr P Taylor (chair), Mrs P Curtis, Mr P Hudson, Mr M Osborne-Town, Mr M Prescott.

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

Also in Attendance:

Mr A Storer (Business Manager)

Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the governing body)

237. Declarations of Interest:

There were no declarations of interests relevant to agenda items.

238. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee held on 30 March 2021 had been previously circulated.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting be received and approved.

239. Matters Arising:

a) Back Lane (Minute 224(a) refers)

Mr Hudson reported that, following his recent election as county councillor, he would seek to resolve the situation regarding the use of Back Lane. Governors would be kept updated on progress.

It was resolved –

That governors congratulate Mr Hudson on his appointment as county councillor and welcome his continued support to help resolve the situation regarding Back Lane.

b) School Trees (Minute 224(c) refers)

The business manager reported that some of the trees around the school site had been trimmed but that the tree at the front of the school, and the trees around Dove House, continued to be monitored.

It was resolved –

That the business manager be requested to contact Croppers to arrange for all tree work to be completed at the earliest opportunity.

c) Dove House (Minute 224(e) refers)

The headteacher reported that Dove House remained mothballed and would be expensive to refurbish. She agreed to prepare a report for the next meeting to outline proposals for its future use.

It was resolved –

That governors look forward to receiving proposals for its future use but that in the meantime, and to help prevent further deterioration, the business manager be requested to arrange for the ivy to be removed from the front of the building.

d) Mr Mirams (Minute 225(a) refers)

The headteacher reported that Mr Mirams remained absent from school for health reasons but remained in contact with him to support his return to school at the appropriate time.

e) Maternity Cover Insurance (Minute 225(b) refers)

The business manager reported that he had requested a quote for maternity cover insurance and details of the costs were awaited. He undertook to pursue this matter and to report back at the next meeting.

f) Trustee Communication (Minute 225(b) refers)

The headteacher reported that she and the chair of governors had met with the CEO and chair of the Trust Board to discuss several issues, including raising concerns around communication of Trust decisions with schools. Confirmation had been given of the requirement for schools to contribute 10% of any successful CIF bids but that communication concerns had been accepted and would be improved in the future.

g) School Reserves (Minute 225(b) refers)

The headteacher reported that the issues around the level of school reserves had also been discussed with the CEO and chair of the Trust Board. Although a formal response to this matter was awaited, the headteacher further reported that schools would not be required to retain 2% within an in-year balance if they already held reserves.

h) Grounds Maintenance (Minute 225(d) refers)

The business manager reported that the contract for grounds maintenance for all ULT schools was shortly to go out to tender. He would keep governors updated.

i) IT Review (Minute 229) refers)

The headteacher reported that the IT review being undertaken by the Trust Board had not yet been completed. Discussions continued to be held with the CEO to ensure that any decisions taken were in the best interests of the school and also reduce pressures on the school's IT staff.

240. Finance Report:

The business manager reported on a number of financial matters with details of all having been previously made available in Office 365. The committee chair had also had a lengthy telephone discussion with the business manager prior to the meeting to discuss a number of items, including the financial report.

a) 8 Month Financial Review (September 2020 to April 2021)

A financial report to show expenditure between September 2020 and April 2021 had been previously circulated and the business manager went through the detail of the report. An explanation was given for the recording of the school's minimum funding guarantees, as discussed at the previous meeting, and the headteacher confirmed that she was comfortable with the details of the school's income. With regard to school income, the business manager further reported that some income was being received

for Covid-19 related expenditure, including in particular the costs associated with the LAT testing centre. Other DfE Covid-19 related grants were also becoming available and the business manager assured governors that all appropriate claims would be made on behalf of the school. He also reported that the re-opening of the swimming pool would increase levels of school income.

With regard to expenditure, the business manager confirmed that the 10% CIF bid contribution had been built into the budget and, if not successful, this money would be used to support planned fire safety works across the school. Support staff pay rises had also been accounted for and provision made in the budget for a 1% increase. The actual pay rise, however, had been 2.75%.

Discussion followed and governors questioned, and challenged where necessary, the various levels of income and expenditure. They also noted that the projected financial surplus for the year-end was around £510K.

It was resolved –

That the 8-month financial review (September 2020 to April 2021) be received and noted with thanks to the business manager.

b) Draft Budget 2021-2026

The 5-year budget modeller for the period 2021/2026 had been previously circulated and the headteacher and business manager outlined some of the key funding issues.

- Changing rooms - £78K had been retained from S106 monies and was to be used to re-furbish the changing rooms.
- Staff salaries – the funding implications of impending staff appointments (Head of English; Head of Science; Assistant Headteacher) were discussed and the headteacher reported that she was looking at various options around the appointments which would be dependent on whether appointments were made internally or externally. Thanks were given to those governors who had offered to support the interviews.
- Leadership posts – the headteacher outlined the internal promotions to the leadership team to cover her absence from school whilst interim executive headteacher of Thomas Alleyne's and Ryecroft Middle. Mrs Maingay had recently been appointed as head of school and interviews were shortly to be held for the deputy headteacher post. The headteacher confirmed that the income from Ryecroft to support her role as interim executive headteacher should match the expenditure incurred through the necessary internal appointments.
- Student numbers – the headteacher outlined those areas of expenditure where a reduction could be achieved to offset the falling number on roll. In response to governors' questions, the headteacher further reported that the school was currently around 300 students below its capacity and would therefore be able to accommodate the anticipated students from the planned housing developments in and around Uttoxeter. Governors noted that projected numbers were to fall from 1035 to 979 by 2024. However, the headteacher further reported that the anticipated increase in students from the housing developments had not been built into the budget modeller and pessimistic view had been taken regarding the anticipated losses of students to JCB Academy and the 6th Form retention rate.
- Budget reduction – the headteacher reported that any necessary reduction in the school's budget could be achieved through a review of the school's support staff although the review would not have to be done until the summer term 2022.

- Cumulative surplus – governors noted that the projected cumulative surplus in the 5-year budget modeller for the end of the current financial year differed from the projected surplus shown in the 8-month review of expenditure as discussed previously in the meeting. The business manager outlined the reasons for the variations between the two documents.
- Movements from draft budget – the headteacher had prepared a summary report to show movement from the budget agreed at a previous meeting to the current 5-year modeller. Governors found this information to be of help.

It was resolved –

- i) That the 5-year budget modeller 2021-2026 be received and noted with thanks to the headteacher and business manager for taking governors through the detail of it.
 - ii) That the business manager be requested to include a narrative in future budget reviews to explain any differences between the information provided in the 5-year budget modeller.
 - iii) That governors agree to undertake a review of support staff during the summer term 2022.
- c) Update on Pupil Premium Funding and 6th Form Bursary
 Updated reports had been previously circulated to show the income and expenditure for pupil premium funding and the 6th form bursary. Governors noted the impact of Covid-19 on pupil premium expenditure and also that there was very little expenditure in the 6th form bursary.

It was resolved –

- i) That pupil premium funding be received and noted and that the headteacher be requested to prepare a comparative report for the next meeting to show pupil premium expenditure due to the impact of Covid-19 against expenditure prior to this need.
 - ii) That the 6th form bursary fund be received and noted and that governors remind staff that this funding was for the benefit of students and should be spent in their best interests.
- d) Benchmarking
 The business manager referred to a new DfE website designed to help schools benchmark against comparative school financial expenditure. The website was made available for governors to see and they noted that the data was RAG rated to enable comparisons to be made against schools of a similar size. The information was available for the ULT as a whole or for individual schools and would help governors ask appropriate questions whilst exploring the data. In taking governors through some of the information contained in the website, governors were able to identify the need for the previously agreed review of support staff, rather than teaching staff. The business manager would arrange for all governors to be able to access the website.

It was resolved –

That the business manager be thanked for enabling governors to access the website and that any questions they may have regarding the data available should be referred to him.

241. Premises:

a) 2021 Maintenance Budget – update on proposed work

The headteacher reported that she had devised a checklist to help identify daily, weekly and monthly premises maintenance work and a copy was made available for governors. The work was categorised and the checklist would also help ensure that all statutory maintenance work was undertaken.

The headteacher further reported that the school's asset management plan had last been reviewed in 2016 and required updating. Governors were informed that the asset management plan could be purchase through Entrust and a service level agreement put in place with them to complete a review.

It was resolved –

- i) That governors thank the headteacher for devising the maintenance check-list which would be of benefit for site staff.
- ii) That governors agree to purchase the asset management plan from Entrust.

b) CIF bids

The business manager reported that notification had been received that the outcome of the CIF bids would be announced by the end of May/beginning of June. As previously discussed, the school's 10% contribution for any successful bid had been included in the 2021/22 budget. If the bids were unsuccessful the funds allocated would be used to help fund fire safety work to be undertaken during the summer of 2021.

c) Sports Hall Changing Rooms

The business manager reported that quotes for the refurbishment of the sports hall changing rooms were being sought and that the necessary tenders had been invited. The closing date for tenders was 25 May 2021 and Mr Taylor would be representing governors at their opening. Governors were also informed that the suggested criteria for assessing tenders had been recommended to be set at:

- Price – 40%
- Quality and experience of previous school projects – 20%
- Ability to achieve timescale (before end of summer) – 40%

Discussion followed and particular consideration given to the criteria for assessing tenders. Governors were of a view that the timescale should have a lower value.

It was resolved –

That the criteria for assessing tenders be revised to:

- Price – 60%
- Quality – 20%
- Timescale – 20%

242. Health and Safety:

The headteacher provided an update on the following health and safety matters:

a) Classroom Risk Assessment

The headteacher reported that a risk assessment of classrooms was being undertaken and gave an outline of the process for doing this. She was pleased to confirm that outcomes were proving to be very positive.

b) Accidents

The headteacher reported that there were no serious accidents to bring to the attention of governors.

c) Fire Evacuation Procedures

The headteacher reported that, following an unsatisfactory fire evacuation practice, a revised plan had been put in place and a copy was made available for governors. An outline was given of the improvements made to the plan.

d) Coronavirus – Financial Impact

A report was made available to governors to show expenditure to-date through necessary measures put in place by the school due to the implications of the coronavirus.

It was resolved –

- i) That the health and safety updates be received and noted.
- ii) That the revised fire evacuation plan be approved as presented.
- iii) That an updated coronavirus financial report be made available for the next meeting.

243. Policies:

Copies of the following school policies had been previously circulated:

- Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGS) policy
- Exams policies (various)
- Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme
- Freedom of Information policy

Governors were informed that due to the timescale for having an agreed TAGs policy in place, the chair of the governing body had used his powers to act in approving the policy. The headteacher also reported that the exam policies were similar to previous years but had been updated as necessary.

It was resolved –

- i) That governors support the chair's actions in approving the TAGs policy.
- ii) That all other policies be approved as presented.

244. School Website Audit:

The headteacher thanked Mr Taylor, committee chair, for undertaking an audit of the school's website and confirmed that most of the identified necessary updates had been completed.

It was resolved –

That governors note that the school's website had been update as necessary and also record their thanks to Mr Taylor for his help with this.

245. Chair's Power to Act:

As reported above, the chair of the governing body reported that he had used his powers to act in approving the TAGs policy. He also reminded the meeting that Mrs Lindsay currently had the dual role of head of RE and as a senior leader. Accordingly, it was felt that as the roles for heads of English and Science were now being split from the senior leadership role, that her role should also be split and he had used his powers to approve that decision.

The committee chair reported that it had not been necessary for him to use any powers to act between meetings.

It was resolved –

That governors support the actions taken by the chair of the governing body.

246. Disposal of Items:

The headteacher reported that the IT department had recently disposed of outdated equipment. A list of items disposed would be made available for the next meeting.

It was resolved –

That governors note the disposal of outdated equipment but that formal approval for this be given at the next meeting on receipt of the list of items disposed.

247. Safeguarding:

The headteacher reported that there were no specific safeguarding matters to bring to the attention of governors.

248. Consideration Given to KPIs:

KPI 6 – Governors ensure solvency and probity, and that financial resources are made available to the school and are managed effectively

Evidenced through the financial review of income and expenditure, and the 5-year budget modeller, and a request for future budget reports to make clear the reasons for any differences between actual expenditure and the forecast budget. (Minute 240).

Evidenced through governors being given access to the DfE benchmarking website to enable governors to compare expenditure patterns against schools of a similar size. (Minute 240).

Evidenced through governors challenging, and amending, the criteria for assessing the tenders received for the changing rooms' refurbishment. (Minute 241).

KPI 9 – Governors use pupil premium and other resources to overcome barriers to learning, including reading, writing and mathematics

Evidenced through usual consideration of a report to show the allocation of pupil premium funding and request for the headteacher to provide a report to show the impact of Covid-19 on expenditure patterns. (Minute 240).

249. Confidentiality:

Governors were reminded of the need for confidentiality with regard to a number of issues discussed, and documents received during the meeting, but it was agreed that there was no need for any of the issues to be recorded in a confidential appendix of the minutes.

250. Date of Next Meeting:

Governors were reminded that the next meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee was to be held on Tuesday, 29 June 2021 at 5.00pm. (The meeting would again likely be held through Microsoft Teams).

Signed..... P. Taylor

Date..... 6 July 2021