

Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee which, due to the Coronavirus lockdown, was held remotely (via Zoom) on Tuesday, 13 October 2020 at 5.00pm.

Present:

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

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

Also in Attendance:

Mrs A Maingay, (Deputy Headteacher)

Mr A Storer (Business Manager)

Mrs E Peers (Assistant Headteacher)

Mrs C Dodd (Senior Assistant Headteacher)

Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the governing body)

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr J Davey and Ms R Horry.

All other members of the leadership team were also present for the start of the meeting but, given their many other commitments in supporting staff and students through the impact of covid-19, the chair gave approval for them not to remain for the meeting.

189. Election of Committee Chair:

It was resolved –

That Mr P Taylor be elected as committee chair until the first meeting of the autumn term 2021.

190. Election of Committee Vice-Chair:

It was resolved –

That Mrs P Curtis be elected as committee vice-chair until the first meeting of the autumn term 2021.

191. Declarations of Interest:

The following declarations of interest were declared in advance of discussions relating to:

Agenda item 8b (central services) – Mr A Storer, business manager. (See minute 195(c))

Agenda item 8c (pay policy) – Mrs J Rudge, headteacher, Mrs A Maingay, deputy headteacher, and Mr Storer, business manager. (See minute 1959(c))

192. Report of Chair's Action:

The chair reported that approval had been given for the purchase of bike sheds to encourage more students to cycle to school.

It was resolved –

That governors support the chair's action.

193. Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee held on 23 June 2020 had been previously made available to governors in Office 365.

It was resolved –

- i) That the minutes of the meeting be received and approved as presented, subject to the following amendments:
 - Minute 176(a) – staff working from home could be entitled to claim £6 per week (not day).
 - Minute 176(a) – the budget figure of £488K - £72K (line 133) should be shown as brought forward and not a carry-forward.
- ii) That, in the absence of the clerk at that meeting, governors place on record their thanks to Mrs Maingay for taking the minutes.

194. Matters Arising:

a) Apprenticeship Levy (Minute 176(a) refers)

The business manager reported that he was still to discuss this matter with trustees, but hoped to do so at the next meeting of the Trust Board. The headteacher further reported that she would continue to discuss with the business manager the effective use of any future apprenticeship levy.

It was resolved –

That the update on the apprenticeship levy be noted and that governors strongly urge trustees to take appropriate actions to ensure the best use of any future funds allocated to the school.

b) Back Lane (Minute 176(b) refers)

Mr Hudson reported that Staffordshire County Council had consulted on plans to change the road lay-out in Uttoxeter, including Back Lane. However, due to the costs, work was not going ahead. The headteacher confirmed that due to the continued use of Back Lane by car drivers, a risk to students remained. The school would continue to work with the Police to try and resolve this matter. Mr Hudson further reported that he too would continue to raise this matter with the Town Council to try and ensure that appropriate action was taken.

It was resolved –

That the continued unauthorised use of Back Lane by car drivers be kept under review.

c) School Transport (Minute 176(c) refers)

The headteacher reported that there had been no change to the local authority's vacant seat scheme on buses but all students were able to get transport to school.

- d) Climate Change (Minute 176(e) refers)
The headteacher reported that she would arrange for students to make contact with Mr Osborne-Town, link governor for the climate change committee, to update him on current actions being taken to support climate change.
- e) Student Laptops (Minute 177(a) refers)
The headteacher was pleased to confirm that all laptops had now been received.
- f) Free School Meals (Minute 177(a) refers)
The headteacher requested that governor support be given to funding the provision of free school meals to those eligible during the October half-term.
- It was resolved –
- That governors support the provision of free school meals during half-term with funding to come from the contingency element of the school's budget.
- g) Safeguarding Incident (Minute 183 refers)
The headteacher reported that the safeguarding incident referred to at the previous meeting remained under investigation and that the school continued to support this as appropriate. All safeguarding procedures continued to be followed.

195. Finance Report:

The business manager reported on a number of financial matters with details of all having been previously made available in Office 365.

- a) Financial report September 2019 to August 2020 (including an external audit update)
The business manager reported that the external auditor for the ULT was now Mazars Ltd and that school information was being requested to help complete the audit in readiness for the end of year deadline.

A financial report for the period September 2019 to August 2020 had been previously made available and the business manager took governors through the detail of it. Particular reference as made to the following:

- Support staff costs – these had been revised to take account of the agreed pay rise and also reflected the labour costs for work that had been undertaken around school during the summer break.
- Pupil premium – there had been an overspend in this area as a result of the previous governor decision to continue with 1:1 tuition support for students where necessary.
- Supply staff – there had been an overspend in supply staff costs and reasons for this were outlined. The business manager confirmed, however, that the overspend had been offset through savings achieved in other staff costs.
- Covid-19 expenditure – an outline was given of the agreed expenditure to help ensure that the school was ready to fully re-open at the start of the new school year.
- Energy costs – an explanation had been given at previous meetings for significant reductions in energy costs.
- Exam fees – these had been considered at previous meetings and the business manager was pleased to confirm that the school had now been credited for exams that had not been required.

- Contingency funding – there was a significant underspend in this area and the headteacher confirmed that contingency funding remained to be spent at her discretion but use was not made of it unless absolutely necessary.

Full discussion followed and governors were pleased to note the level of funding that had been raised on behalf of the school. The business manager was also pleased to confirm that the predicted shortfall in the school's budget was much better than originally forecast.

It was resolved –

- i) That the financial report for the period September 2019 to August 2020 be received and noted with thanks to the business manager for his management of the budget.
- ii) That governors place on record their thanks to the headteacher and all staff colleagues for their work in raising funds for the school to assist with additional costs due to covid-19, and that a letter of thanks also be sent to those members of staff who had been key to the various fund-raising projects.

b) Changes to School Timetable

The headteacher reported that the new 3-period timetable had been successfully introduced from September although it remained under review. A number of changes to the timetable were to be introduced after half-term and would take account the views of both staff and students. The four-week timetable would, however, remain in place.

It was resolved –

That governors support the recommended changes to the 3-period timetable and that link governors be requested to discuss the implications of the changes when meeting with their heads of department.

c) Staffing Update and Central Services

The headteacher and business manager declared an interest in advance of discussions around central services.

The headteacher gave an update on the school's staffing establishment and was pleased to report that there were no major changes. Staff attendance was also very good. Governors were informed, however, that due to the school library remaining closed, Mr Hollins' contract as librarian would not be renewed.

The headteacher further reported that consideration was currently being given to central services provided by the ULT and for which Thomas Alleyne's was a key contributor. The services in particular related to financial and IT support for all schools across the ULT. As the ULT continued to grow this was increasing the need for those support services and therefore impacting on the workload of the members of staff concerned and the level of funding received by the school for these services was no longer appropriate. The headteacher undertook to provide further evidence of the financial impact on the school for a future meeting. The headteacher reported that, as such, a number of options were being considered and discussed with the CEO of the Trust with a view to achieving a quick resolution for the way forward.

Full discussion followed and governors recognised the need for a stronger structure for centrally provided services.

It was resolved –

- i) That governors record their concerns around the current level of financial and IT support given to other schools and the impact it was having on Thomas Alleyne's.
 - ii) That the headteacher be requested to continue to liaise with the business manager regarding more viable options for future levels of support and for these to then be shared with the CEO of the trust.
 - iii) That a request also be made for governor representation at any planned meetings with the CEO.
- d) Updated Income and Expenditure Five Year Projections (reflecting revised student numbers)
A report to show the updated income and expenditure projections to take account of revised student numbers had been previously made available and the business manager took governors through the detail of it. He further reported that the income and expenditure projections also took account of the new funding formula for schools. The key changes to the formula were highlighted and governors noted that some income, previously provided through grants, had now been included within the general pupil funding. The business manager also confirmed that the income was based on current and projected student numbers, but did not include planned housing developments which would generate additional student numbers in future years. Discussion took place regarding the planned new school in Uttoxeter and governors questioned the financial implications of this for Thomas Alleyne's. In response, the business manager reported that predicted student numbers only took account of the numbers provided by the middle schools. The implications of pupils leaving the new school to join Thomas Alleyne's would not impact for at least 6 years from the date of opening.

With regard to projected expenditure, the business manager confirmed that figures took account of the teaching staff pay rises including any planned increments. The headteacher further reported that a review of leadership pay would, in future, be undertaken on an annual basis rather than every two years as previously agreed. The change to the review process was to bring the school in line with the ULTs Pay policy. The implications of this had also been taken into account when looking at projected expenditure. Governors were also informed that staff employed on temporary contracts would not automatically have their contract renewed which would help ensure that staffing levels continued to reflect any fall in student numbers.

It was resolved –

- i) That the updated income and expenditure projections be received and noted.
 - ii) That governors support the change to an annual review of leadership pay in line with ULT policy.
- e) Update on Pupil Premium Funding and 6th Form Bursary
Updated reports had been previously made available in Office 365 to show the income and expenditure for pupil premium funding and governors noted the support packages in place to make use of the funding available. The business manager further reported that

funding for the 6th form bursary had been re-calculated resulting in the school receiving a reduced level of funding.

A report had also previously been made available to show the premium funding that had been made available to schools to help support those students who had missed out on teaching due to covid-19. The business manager went through the detail of the report highlighting the level of funding available to the school and how it could be spent. Governors noted that this funding was only available for the 2020/21 school year. The business manager also took governors through a report to show the catch-up funding also available to the school to support post-16 students.

It was resolved –

- i) That the pupil premium and sixth form bursary reports be received and noted.
- ii) That the reports to show the catch-up spending available to schools for the year 2020/21 be received and noted.

f) Draft SCC Internal Audit Report

A copy of the draft report following an internal audit of the school for the period June 2019 to May 2020 had been previously made available and the business manager went through the detail of it. He was pleased to confirm that it was a positive report but highlighted the following three identified medium risks:

- Debt recovery policy
- Quotations not always sought or value for money procedures carried out
- Orders not always raised in accordance with the Financial policy and procedures manual.

The business manager confirmed that an action plan had been put in place to address the identified risks and improvement strategies put in place as appropriate.

It was resolved –

- i) That the draft internal audit report and accompanying action plan to address the risks be received and noted, with thanks to the business manager.
- ii) That governors also acknowledge that the strengths identified in the audit report outweighed the highlighted risks.

g) Crown Commercial Service – Supply Teachers

As previously requested by governors, the business manager reported that he had looked into the Crown Commercial Service to help schools recruit supply staff. He confirmed that this was a Government agency that helped to identify the large number of service providers rather than their actual recruitment. The business manager reported that the school continued to work with its preferred supply staff providers but re-assured governors that the agencies in question were included in the recognised list of providers. The contracts given by the school to supply staff were in accordance with advice given by the Crown Commercial Service.

It was resolved –

That the report on the Crown Commercial Service for the recruitment of supply staff be received and noted.

h) ULT Letter – Irregularities Identified by External Audit

The business manager reported that this matter had been discussed at a recent meeting of the full governing body and reminded the committee that trustees had received a letter from the ESFA regarding a number of irregularities identified during the last external audit. Trustees had responded to the letter but would also write to all schools to remind them of their responsibilities for the irregularities identified. Once received, he would circulate a copy of the letter to committee members.

196. Covid-19 Update:

Mrs Rudge, headteacher, reported that it was necessary for her to leave the meeting having just been advised that a student had tested positive for covid-19, resulting in a number of immediate decisions having to be taken. Before leaving the meeting the headteacher gave an update on the implications for the school due to covid-19.

The headteacher reported that a daily communication with the local authority continued, including details of where it had been necessary for students to self-isolate. With regard to Thomas Alleyne's only one student had tested positive to-date and there was currently a downward trend in the number of students having to self-isolate and the headteacher was pleased to report that most were now back in school. The headteacher further reported that a member of staff had recently tested positive for the virus and the local authority would advise on which other members of staff, or students, may need to self-isolate as a result.

The headteacher was pleased to inform governors of the positive manner in which the school community had responded to its first positive virus result and would continue to respond appropriately to any further cases should they be identified.

It was resolved –

That governors note the school's response to covid-19 issues and place on record their thanks to the headteacher and her staff team for all the work they continued to do to support the health and well-being of the school community.

197. Premises:

The business manager reported on a number of premises matters with details of all having been previously made available in Office 365. He referred in particular to:

a) Proposed Work for 2020/21

A number of proposed maintenance projects had been identified for the current school year, including work to eliminate possible risks from a number of trees within the school grounds. The business manager further reported, however, that it may also be necessary to identify other projects, including roof repairs and window replacement, should any of the CIF bids be unsuccessful.

b) Current Building Projects

The business manager gave an update on the following current projects:

- Sports pavilion – work had been completed although some signage work and snagging repairs would be undertaken during the half-term break.
- Roofs – all scaffolding had now been removed and Midland Roofing (replacement contractor) had worked well with the school to ensure that work was completed with the minimum of disruption to the school.

- CIF bids 2020/21 – the bid for funding to improve Dove House was unsuccessful and alternative future uses of the property were to be explored. In the meantime, Dove House would remain mothballed.

c) Potential CIF Bids 2021/22

The business manager reported that the following two bids would be submitted:

- Windows/fire doors/fire escape (6th form block and internal fire doors)
- Roof repairs (6th form block, sports hall block)

Discussion followed and governors asked if thought had been given to creating additional teaching accommodation in response to current limitations on the school due to covid-19. The business manager reported that the criteria for CIF bids did not include proposals to enlarge a school and that the bid would likely also be unsuccessful do to the required timeframe for such work.

It was resolved –

- i) That the premises update be noted.
- ii) That governors support the proposed 2020/21 CIF bids.

198. Health and Safety:

The business manager reported on the following health and safety matters:

a) Health and Safety Policy

A copy of the updated policy had been previously made available and the business manager outlined the changes that had been made. He confirmed that the policy continued to reflect Staffordshire County Council's model policy but the updated policy also reflected recent changes to the school environment.

It was resolved –

That the Health and safety policy be received and approved as presented.

b) Annual review of Fire Risk Assessment

A copy of the fire risk assessment had been previously made available and the business manager went through the detail of it. He confirmed that the current level of risk had been identified as normal/high risk and outlined the reasons for this judgment. The quantities of combustible material and sources of ignition were greater than a low fire risk but, due to the greater ventilation required to comply with covid-19 guidance, a fire may not be confined and could spread more quickly than normal. The business manager assured governors, however, that strategies had been put in place to control possible fire risks.

It was resolved –

That the fire risk assessment be noted and that governors understand and accept the overall level of identified risk.

c) SCC Framework

The business manager reported that the school was shortly due to undertake a Staffordshire County Council health and safety audit. Governors would be informed as soon as the date of the audit was made known.

d) Staff Well-Being Survey

The business manager updated governors on the staff well-being survey and reported that the Staffordshire County Council model was being used for this purpose. Following the return of completed forms an action plan would be drawn-up and shared with governors.

199. GDPR Breach Report:

The business manager informed governors that there had been three recent GDPR breaches and briefly outlined the concerns. Advice on appropriate action to take had been sought from Entrust and governors were assured that all actions had been taken in response to the advice given. Governors were also informed that none of the three instances had been regarded as serious breaches of protocol.

It was resolved –

That governors note the GDPR breaches and were satisfied that the school had taken appropriate action in accordance with advice given.

200. Risk Register:

The business manager reported that the school's risk register had been updated as necessary although a copy had not been made available. Governors were informed that arrangements were to be made for governors to discuss the register in more detail through a short training course. The business manager further reported that the ULT trustees had revised their risk register to reflect the one used by Thomas Alleyne's.

It was resolved –

That governors note that the risk register had been recently updated and looked forward to discussing this in more detail at a future governor training session.

201. Policies:

The following policies had been previously made available in Office 365 and the business manager confirmed that all reflected policies as agreed by the ULT:

- Debt Recovery policy
- Gifts and Hospitality policy
- Safer Recruitment policy

It was resolved –

That the policies be received and recommended for acceptance by governors at the next meeting of the full governing body.

202. Disposal of Equipment:

The business manager reported that there were no items of equipment to be recommended for disposal.

203. Headteacher Performance Management:

See confidential appendix (attached).

204. Consideration Given to KPIs:

KPI 4 – Governors provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for the improving quality of teaching and the behaviour and safety of pupils.

Evidenced through ongoing discussions around the impact of covid-19 and challenge to the headteacher to ensure that all necessary measures were in place to ensure the safety and well-being of students whilst in school and to identify alternative teaching and learning arrangements to support those students not able to attend school. Recognition of the work undertaken by the headteacher and leadership team to achieve this was noted by governors. (Minute 196).

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 challenge to headteacher and business manager to ensure value for money. Challenge also to ULT trustees to ensure best use of central support staff and to lessen the impact on TAHS. (Minutes 194 and 195).

KPI7 – Governors operate in such a way that statutory duties are met and priorities are approved

Evidenced through review of Health and Safety policy and fire risk assessment and understanding of issues raised. (Minute 198).

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

Evidenced through discussion around the Pupil Premium report and to ensure the effective allocation of funding to support students. (Minute 195).

KPI 10 – Governors are taking appropriate action to ensure their responsibilities towards staff well-being are being met

Evidenced through discussions around the staff well-being survey and request of governors to monitor and review the subsequent action plan. (Minute 198).

205. Any Other Business:

Length of Meeting

The chair of governors expressed concerns at the number of agenda items to be discussed in one meeting. He would discuss this matter further with the headteacher and explore alternative options to ensure that all meetings were manageable within the time available. Any possible options would be discussed with governors before any final decisions were taken.

206. Date of Next Meeting:

Governors were reminded that the next meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee would again likely be held remotely on Wednesday, 27 January 2021 at 5.00pm.

Signed..... P. Taylor

Date..... 27 January 2021

Thomas Alleynes High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee which, due to the Coronavirus lockdown, was held remotely (via Zoom) on Tuesday, 13 October 2020 at 5.00pm.

CONFIDENTIAL APPENDIX

Present for this item only: Mr M Prescott (chair), Mrs P Curtis, Mr P Taylor.

Minute 203. Headteacher Performance Management:

The chair referred to the headteacher’s recent performance management review and confirmed that all targets had been successfully met. Recognition had also been given to the work being undertaken to ensure the health and well-being of staff and students during the covid-19 pandemic.

It was resolved –

- i) That governors present recommend the award of at least one additional salary increment.
- ii) That the headteacher’s performance management, and other members of the leadership team, would be undertaken annually in future as agreed earlier in the meeting.

Signed.....

Date.....