

The Federation of Abbey Schools Academy Trust

Finance Committee

Minutes

Date & Time: 6.30 pm on Monday 9th November 2017

Present Governors: Mr J Briggs, Dr L Bryant, Mr M Fryer, Mrs H Parkinson, Mrs D Leigh and Mr P M Willson.

Also in Attendance: Mrs R Hall, Mrs J Scott, Mrs D Nielsen (Business Team) and Mrs L Hawksby (Clerk to the Governing Body).

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF DISCUSSION</u>	<u>ACTION BY</u>
1.	<p>Election of Chair for the ensuing Academic Year</p> <p>The Clerk to the Governing Body opened the meeting in the absence of a Chair. Nominations were sought for the position of Chair of the Finance Committee for the ensuing Academic Year.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That Dr L Bryant be appointed as Chair of the Finance Committee for the ensuing Academic Year.</p> <p><i>(Note: Dr L Bryant was in the Chair for the remainder of the meeting and welcomed the new Governor to the Committee.)</i></p>	
2.	<p>Election of Vice-Chair for the ensuing Academic Year</p> <p>Nominations were sought and received for the position of Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee for the ensuing Academic Year.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That Mr Willson be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Finance Committee for the ensuing Academic Year.</p>	

<p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> <p>6.</p>	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies of absence were received and accepted from:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mrs V Folkes <p>Notification of Items of Other Business</p> <p>There was one item of other Business – Whiteboards (Minute 18 below refers.)</p> <p>Declarations of Interests:</p> <p>Declaration of personal or pecuniary interests in any matters arising from the Agenda of the current meeting.</p> <p>There were no declarations of personal or pecuniary interests declared.</p> <p>Declaration of any updates for the Register of Business Interests.</p> <p>There were no updates for the Register of Business Interests.</p> <p>Approval of Minutes</p> <p>a) Approval of Minutes – Thursday 29th June 2017</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on Thursday 29th June 2017 be approved as an accurate record.</p> <p>b) Matters Arising –</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p> <p>c) Approval of Minutes – Pay Review Sub-Committee Monday 9th October 2017</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Minutes of the meetings of the Pay Review Sub-Committee held on Monday 9th October 2017 be approved as an accurate record.</p> <p>d) Matters Arising –</p> <p>There were no matters arising</p>	
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STANDING ITEMS OF THE COMMITTEE: AUTUMN TERM (Items 7- 16)		
7.	<p>Review of Financial Procedures</p> <p>Mrs D Nielsen (Business Team) presented a report on the annual review of The Federation of Abbey School's Academy Trust's Financial Procedures. The financial procedures ensure that the School maintains and develops systems of good financial management to meet the requirements of the funding agreement with the Education Funding Agency.</p> <p>The words highlighted within the financial procedures manual set out the changes made to the procedures since the last review. It was noted in relation to page 24 of the Financial Procedures the tender limit had been amended to £20,000 in line with Governors' previous recommendations and that this limit would now be reflected throughout the manual.</p> <p>RESOLVED :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) That the Federation of Abbey School's Academy Trust's Financial Procedures Manual be approved by the Committee along with the highlighted additions/amendments. b) That reference to the tender limit should be amended to £20,000 throughout the Financial Procedures manual. 	<i>Head Teacher/ Business Team</i>
8.	<p>Annual Review of the Individual School Range (ISR) of the Academy</p> <p>It was noted that there were no changes to the Individual School Range of the Academy.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the School's Individual School Range (ISR) remain the same and be reviewed again at the beginning of the 2018/19 Academic Year.</p>	<i>Head Teacher/ Business Team</i>
9.	<p>Report of Internal Assurance (Clive Owen & Co LLP)</p> <p>Further to Minute 5 (Finance Committee 29th June 2017) the School's external auditors (Clive Owen & Co LLP) had submitted a report on their ongoing independent oversight of the Academy's financial affairs, in addition to internal procedures already carried out by the Academy's Business Team. The following areas were looked at in accordance with the agreed Schedule of Work:-</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularity • Payroll • Purchases • Accounting System • Information Technology • Fixed Assets • Financial Regulations Manual • Governors meeting minutes • Governors appointments and resignations <p>There resulting recommendations made by the Auditors were as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Academy should ensure that pecuniary and business interests are completed for all Senior employees. • The Academy should consider issuing annual salary statements for support staff to demonstrate their current salary status. • The Academy should consider obtaining a suitable cyber insurance policy. <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) That the report be noted. b) That Mrs D Nielsen (Business Team Manager) be added to the declaration of Business Interests list, which is also published on the school web-site. c) That the Academy does not issue annual salary statements for support staff as non-teaching staff contracts clearly state grade and points within scales. NJC staff automatically receive an increment unless they have had a high level of sickness and or have an unsatisfactory professional development review meeting. If a member of staff was not to receive an increment, the member of staff would be made aware of this before increments were due. d) That Cyber Insurance be looked at as part of the 2018/19 insurance review, a quote be obtained and the risk considered. 	<p><i>Business Team/ Clerk</i></p> <p><i>(No action required.)</i></p> <p><i>Head Teacher/ Clerk</i></p>
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10.	<p>Premises Report (Including maintenance & planning issues.)</p> <p>Mrs D Nielson (Business Team) presented the premises report covering the period from July 2017 to October 2017. The report provided an update of work being undertaken in maintenance, management and health & safety issues across the site.</p> <p>She advised that there had been some minor problems with the new kitchen installation which had now been rectified. It was noted that the classroom decoration had taken place during the summer holidays.</p> <p>It was further reported that the internal door works on both the Junior and Infant sites were installed during the summer holidays with a working fob system. It was noted that the Year 3 corridor doors did not currently close properly after installation of new fob system and that this would be rectified shortly.</p> <p>Mrs Nielsen advised that all works for the accidental classroom damage were now completed, with the last remaining item of blind installation being completed today. All costs were being met by (horticultural services) insurers.</p> <p>The Head Teacher reported that the Business Team were currently looking at the school's PEEP plan (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan). This involves the planning for an evacuation of anyone who may need assistance in an emergency and unable to reach a place of safety unaided.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
11.	<p>Report from Human Resources</p> <p>The Head Teacher verbally updated the Committee that the Academy had:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employed 14 new staff over the last academic year • 11 staff had left the Academy over the last academic year • 8 members of staff had taken maternity leave over the last academic year • 6 members of staff had taken long term sick over the last academic year. <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	

12.	<p>Annual Report of Insurance Arrangements</p> <p>The Head Teacher confirmed that insurance arrangements were in place for the School. The School's Insurance broker remained as 'Blue Fin' and the insurers were Zurich Insurance.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the report be noted and if practicable future consideration of the annual insurance arrangements be reported back to Governors in the Summer Term instead of the current Autumn Term.</p>	<p><i>Head Teacher/ Business Team</i></p>
13.	<p>School Improvement Plan – Financial Implications</p> <p>The Head Teacher reported on the financial implications of the 2017/18 SIP (School Improvement Plan). He advised that £10,000 had been committed to the purchase of the termly summative assessments (Puma maths and Pira reading) to support Teacher assessments. The Committee enquired whether these tests could be re-used in order to help save money. The Head Teacher advised that this was not possible.</p> <p>With regard to ensuring pupils made progress in writing, the Head Teacher advised that a SLE (Specialist Leader of Education) for English was due to come in and support the school after the Autumn half term at a cost of £300. This role would help develop the capacity and capability of other Teachers in the school so that they have the skills to lead their own teams and improve practice in Abbey school. The literacy shed had also been purchased to inspire learning through text and video.</p> <p>To help with Pupil Premium children's progress Third Space Learning 1 to 1 intervention for maths had also been invested in and a new member of staff has been appointed to support Pupil Premium children. Dynamo maths was also going to be used by those significantly below age related expectations,</p> <p>Mr Keeler, a current HMI inspector, had also come into the School to help work with the Senior Leadership Team on the School's SEF (Self Evaluation Form).</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the current financial implications for the 2017/18 SIP be noted.</p>	

<p>14.</p> <p>CQ</p> <p>15.</p>	<p>Budget Update – 2017/18</p> <p>Mrs D. Nielsen (Business Team) provided an update of the 2017/18 Budget and advised on the monthly summary report which was appended to the Agenda.</p> <p>It was noted that there had been a pay award increase which was reflected in the outturn figure for Teaching Staff. There had also been small adjustments to contracts and a new member of staff appointed to an existing vacant post in the Business Team. The Committee were advised that there was currently a projected overspend of £17,000 (which included work on the external junior gate which is detailed in the paragraph below.)</p> <p>It was also noted that an extra cost of transport for swimming had been built into the outturn position. A planned improvement to the external gate on the junior playground, to help improve safeguarding, had also been included in the outturn position. The most expensive quote currently received for this work had been included in the current budget, although this was subject to change and may be lower depending on the final approved quotation.</p> <p>With regard to income, the SEN (special educational needs) funding is anticipated to be £7,000 less than budgeted. This is due to a conclusion of a case being awarded at a lower grade than expected.</p> <p>The Committee enquired what was being done to increase the current numbers on roll? The Head Teacher advised the Open Days/Evenings had been very successful with positive feedback from potential parents viewing the facilities the school had to offer. The School had been promoted in local nurseries with staff visiting the nurseries with information/flyers regarding the open days to distribute to potential parents/carers.</p> <p>Mrs D Nielsen advised that the catering budget remained on track, with any surplus helping fund other parts of the school.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
	<p>Management Accounts Cash Flow</p> <p>Mrs D. Nielsen (Business Team) provided an update on the Management Accounts Cash Flow, details of which were attached to the Agenda. She advised that the cash flow was in a healthy position.</p>	

	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the report be noted</p> <p>16. Service Level Agreements</p> <p>The Service Level Agreements for 2017/18 were set out in the report appended to the Agenda and were noted to be the same as for 2016/17.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p>17. Annual Review of Terms of Reference and Standing Items for the Finance Committee and Pay Review Sub Committee</p> <p>Consideration was given to the annual review of the terms of reference and standing items for the Finance Committee and Pay Review Sub Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the terms of reference and standing items for the Finance Committee and Pay Review Sub-Committee be approved subject to the inclusion of the annual review of the insurance arrangements being moved to the Summer Term if this aligned with the insurance renewal date.</p> <p>18. Item of Other Business – Whiteboards</p> <p>Further to Minute 4 above, the Head Teacher requested that consideration be given to the purchase of new whiteboards for each class in the school. The Committee questioned whether this was necessary? The Head Teacher advised that the whiteboards were now out of date with many not functioning correctly as they were 17 years old.</p> <p>Different models had been considered with differing costs, details of which were circulated at the meeting. It was noted there was little residual value left with any of the boards after purchase. The Committee after consideration, agreed that it would be best to choose the required model and then go through a tendering procedure. The tender could then be made on the basis of a lease or capital purchase (with the inclusion of maintenance if possible.)</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the ‘Alpha’ model specifications be chosen, subject to references, and if suitable be taken to tender on the basis of lease or capital purchase (with the inclusion of maintenance if possible.)</p>	<p><i>Head Teacher/ Clerk</i></p> <p><i>Head Teacher/ Business Team</i></p>
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<p>19.</p>	<p>Agenda Items for the Next Meeting :</p> <p>Standing Items:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Improvement Plan (SIP) – Financial Implications. • Service Level Agreements – Darlington Borough Council and contracts SLA. • To review the school staffing structure. • Reports: Internal Assurance, Premises and Human Resources. • Financial monitoring. • Management Accounts 	<p><i>Clerk</i></p>
<p>20.</p>	<p>Policies Scheduled for Review</p> <p>Note: No policies are due for review at the next meeting of the Finance Committee.</p>	
<p>21.</p>	<p>Approval of Documents for Public Inspection</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Agenda, supporting documents and approved Minutes be made available for public inspection.</p>	<p><i>Clerk</i></p>
<p>22.</p>	<p>Date & Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the next meeting of the Committee be confirmed once the date had been approved at the Governing Body scheduled for the 4th December 2017.</p> <p>The Meeting concluded at 7.40 pm</p> <p>Approved by the Finance Committee</p> <p>Date: _____</p> <p>Signature (Chair): _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p>	<p><i>Clerk</i></p>

(Note: CQ – Challenging Question)