



GOVERNING BODY OF HIGHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

FINANCE AND PREMISES COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 17 OCTOBER 2023

Members: Bevin Betton, (Chair) , Nikesh Tailor, David Wilson (Headteacher) and Tim Guha,

Italics denote absence

Also Attending: Catherine Moens (Business Manager), David Young (Count On) -agenda item 5 only, Stephanie Morton (DHT), Mandy Newell (Minute and Advisory Clerk).

MINUTES – PART 1

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Tim Guha.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Governors were given the opportunity to declare any prejudicial interest they might have in respect of items on the agenda. No declarations were made.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Bevin Betton be Chair of the Committee for the 2023 – 24 academic year.

4. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING & MATTERS ARISING

RECEIVED the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July which were agreed as a correct record.

There were no matters arising.

5. **BUDGET 2023-2024**

(a) Second Quarterly Return

RECEIVED the second quarterly return, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub

REPORTED that David Young guided Governors through the report and the following matters were highlighted;

Income

- (i) I01 – LA Delegated Funding – there had been a £41,347 increase for Teachers’ Pay. The pay award had been 6% and the School had budgeted for 5% . 3.5% of the Award had been funded so the School had a little more money than they had budgeted for. The School has also received a music grant and dining hall rates funding. David Young explained that the rates at Highfield were split for the dining hall and the main school building but the funding personnel did not seem to realise this and only funded for the main building. The SBM was looking into this but to date there had been no response from the LA;
- (ii) I03 – High Needs Top Up Funding – there had been a £31,316 erroneous deduction made by the LA which should be reinstated. [In response to queries, David Young explained that monies had been coming in and been taken out in other Schools too which meant that monitoring and forecasting was becoming very difficult.](#)
- (iii) I05 – Pupil Premium – there had been a £1,280 increase for Looked After Children (LAC) funding but there was a £15,180 decrease when taking the actual DfE figure into account. Governors discussed the discrepancy in depth along with some issues in the LA Finance Department at present and it was explained that it should be anticipated that this money would be taken back;
- (iv) I08 – Income from facilities and services – there had been £3,081 increase for bank interest/school plus some miscellaneous and photo income;
- (v) I09 – Income from Catering – there was a £17,638 increase. Meal income was greater than expected but there would be no further income as the Mayor of London was now funding all KS2 meals but it had not been clarified how this would done for the Autumn and Spring terms;
- (vi) I12 – Income from Contributions to Visits etc showed a £7,751 increase. The income was more than expected and a large amount of this related to next year’s School journey. This income would be accrued;
- (vii) I13 – Donations and/or Private Funds – there was an increase for income from the Friends and school fundraising;

- (viii) I18 – Additional grant for Schools – there had been a £13,085 increase for UIFSM/School led tutoring/recovery premium adjustments.

Expenditure

- (i) E01 – Teaching Staff – there was a £14,839 increase for staffing updates and an increased pay award of 6.5%. [In response to Governors’ queries it was established that there should be a grant again next year to help fund this area;](#)
- (ii) E03 – Education Support Staff – there was a £24,146 increase for staffing awards. The pay award had not yet been agreed. The Headteacher explained that there had been an increase in SEND learning support and also lunchtime staff to help with the increased amount of children now having School meals. [Following a query from Nikesh Tailor, the Headteacher explained that school lunch times were from 11.30 – 1.15;](#)
- (iii) E12 – Building Maintenance and improvement – there was a £11,120 increase.
- (iv) E15 – Water and Sewerage – there was a £1,100 increase;
- (v) E17 – Rates – this needed to be reconciled as they were waiting for the LA to charge and they also needed to fund the Dining Hall rates as discussed in I01;
- (vi) E19 – Learning Resources – not ICT – it was expected the curriculum budgets would be fully spent. [In response to a question from Nikesh Tailor, it was clarified that the Friends would on occasion give the School money for additional purchases.](#)
- (vii) [He explained that the biggest issue for all Schools was the increase in SEND needs, this was a major issue due to Covid but there had been no increase in funding to support these children. Following discussion the Headteacher explained that the School also had a low staff turnover meaning that they had a number of staff on the Upper Pay Scales. The Chair considered this was a positive thing and whilst the Headteacher agreed he stated that in a School of this size there would ideally be 2-3 Early Qualified Teachers \(ECTs\) but there was only the capacity to have one at present. He felt that the School was a good place to start a teaching career, bearing in mind the number of experienced staff there were to help and advise. He recognised however, the School was in an advantageous position, bearing in mind that some schools were struggling to recruit. No area of the curriculum was inadequately funded but the costs incurred for extra needs and staffing had not been adequately funded and this was only likely to get worse. However, the Headteacher reminded Governors that the School the School did have a healthy budget at present. Following a question from the Chair, the Headteacher said he considered that there was not enough understanding from the Government about the increasing needs of SEND children;](#)

(viii) E27/28 – Bought in Professional Services – there was a £2,563 increase for Enfield Music Service/Educational Psychologist/Ed visits and a £2,000 increase for School Smart/MGS and Occupational Health;

(ix) the School projected revenue balance was £105,470 – 2.53%.

RESOLVED to agree the Second Quarterly Return.

(b) Expenditure

REPORTED that

- there were no potential purchases over the Headteacher’s Delegated Limit;
- there had been no urgent expenditure previously approved via Chair’s action;
- there were no Waiver of Contract Procedure Rules (prepared in exceptional circumstances only) to consider;
- there were no proposed virements.

6. **THE SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD (SFVS) 2023-2024/ICFP**

RECEIVED the Schools Financial Value Standard and ICFP, copies of which included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that

- (a) the SBM guided Governors through the checklist and explained that the questions were the same as last year. She explained that the LA also required them to complete the ICFP which highlighted the areas where the School was above, within or below threshold;
- (b) Governors reviewed the school characteristics and the Headteacher determined that the ICFP was a very blunt tool. He pointed out that teacher costs were above threshold but this was due to the strength of the SLT and could be justified. He recognised however, that the data might influence decisions in the future.

RESOLVED to agree the SFVS and recommend it to the Governing Body for ratification,

ACTION: CLERK

7. **ANNUAL SCHOOL AUDIT REPORT**

RECEIVED the Annual School Audit Report, copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED that the actions from the last School Audit were highlighted and it was explained that an action plan had been put in place to ensure compliance.

8. **POLICIES REVIEW**

RECEIVED the following policy, a copy of which is available in the Minute Book, and available to view on GovernorHub.

- Disciplinary Procedure (LA)

RESOLVED to agree the Disciplinary Procedure and recommend it to the Governing Body for ratification.

ACTION: CLERK

9. **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

REPORTED that

- (a) a cupboard in a room used by the site staff had traces of asbestos. The door had been locked to ensure no one could enter. The Headteacher explained it would cost around £8k to remedy this and the LA would not help to fund this. The site staff had said they could manage without this cupboard so it would remain locked. A working permit had been put in place in order for a member of the site staff to get something out of the cupboard if absolutely necessary but the cupboard could not be cleared out;
- (b) it was planned to have someone to come and look at the fire alarms and fire safety to see if there were any further recommendations. [The Chair asked if they would have to go to tender for the works and the Headteacher explained they would if the works were over £10,000. They would need to obtain three quotes. In response to comments from Nikesh Tailor, the Headteacher agreed that it was time to sort the issues around linking the fire alarm systems and obtain relevant quotes;](#)
- (c) at present the School had agency site staff in place until the Site Manager joined at the end of October. The Agency offered a service to provide a Health and Safety report and the Headteacher said he was minded to go with their recommendations. He planned to review the report they had provided on the windows that had started to fall out. [In response to Governors' questions, the Headteacher said that it was the LA's responsibility to replace them and due to the extent of the work they had said this would take place in the Summer holidays 2024.](#) Until then the area would remain cordoned off;
- (d) the area cordoned off meant there was no access to the bike storage areas. The LA had contacted the School about their application to become part of the Safer Streets campaign. They had said that they had not been successful this year but were willing to offer them extra bike and scooter storage. The Headteacher had accepted this offer. [Nikesh Tailor asked if the LA had explained why the School had not been chosen for the Safer Streets initiative and whether they had said why the three successful schools](#)

had been. He was told that the LA had not given them any reasons for their decision but as they had already applied for the scheme they did not have to do so again . Stephanie Morton explained how hard they had tried to become part of the initiative and it was frustrating that it had still not happened. The Headteacher said that he had seen a plan for Highfield Road and Carpenter Gardens so it was hoped they would be prioritised in the future when more funding became available;

- (e) in response to queries, it was clarified that the Assistant Site Manager had joined the School in September and the Site Manager would be joining on 31 October;
- (f) following a question from the Chair, the Headteacher assured him that they would be undertaking an evacuation practice this term.

10. PREMISES WORK PLAN

RECEIVED the premises work plan, a copy of which is included in the Minute Book and available to view on GovernorHub.

REPORTED the following works and costs

Quarterly Roof Cleaning and Maintenance - £495 per visit.

Work to the pond area - £8,345

Toilets flooring first floor: £1,100 - window £300

Girls and Disabled toilet repairs: £750

New valves for tank – Boiler room: £845

Pest control: clear blockage drain/inspection + clear boiler room: £1,721

DB Replacement (Electrical panel) in boiler room:: £7,160

AGM received quotation for boiler repairs: £2,800.

The Headteacher explained that there had been a rat infestation in the boiler room. The rats had chewed through wiring and it had cost £7k to repair the damage Pest Control were now undertaking monthly checks and there were no signs of any rats when the last check was made.

11. GOVERNOR TRAINING

NOTED that all training sessions were listed in the Governor Training Brochure 2023-24, available on Governor Hub.

Governor training could be booked via the School based booker, Catherine Moens

<https://traded.enfield.gov.uk/professionallearning>.

Nikesh Tailor asked if training sessions on line could be recorded as whilst keen to attend some sessions, they were not always held at a time convenient to him. The Headteacher asked the SBM to send HEP training to all Governors.

RESOLVED that

(a) checks be made to see if online training could be recorded

ACTION: CLERK

(b) HEP training be sent to all Governors

ACTION: SBM

12. LOCAL AUTHORITY REFERRALS

Financial Briefing

NOTED the information in the Financial briefing.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cyber Security Audit

NOTED the information and that two factor authentication would be implemented and all necessary measures to ensure cyber safety were being discussed with the IT Manager.

Windrush

NOTED that the Chair presented the Headteacher with a book on Windrush for the young generation and informed him that more copies were available if the School would like some. The Headteacher thanked him and explained that Windrush was part of the Year 6 curriculum. This book would be extremely useful and would also benefit children with English as an Additional Language (EAL).

14. ITEMS TO REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL

RESOLVED that no items should be dealt with on a confidential basis.