



## AUTUMN TERM 2020

### MEETING OF THE FINANCE, PREMISES, HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

#### DRAFT MINUTES

Date	Wednesday 7 October 2020
Time	<b>18.30</b>
Place	Holmer Green Senior School
Clerk	Angie Marchant, clerktogovernors@holmer.org.uk

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Mr. P. Davies (PD) (Chair)	Mr E. Hillyard (EH) (Headteacher)
	Mrs. T. Ellis (TE)	Ms. F. Kiss (FK)
	Mr. T. Green (TG)	Mr. S. Pilgrim (SP) (Vice Chair)

<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Mrs. L. Jackson (LJ)	Director of Finance, HR and Resources
	Mrs. A. Marchant (AM)	Academy Clerk

<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Ms. S. Stewart (SS)
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**\*\* This meeting was held remotely via Zoom Conference Call \*\***

Agenda Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Action by who/when
1	<b>Welcome and Apologies for absence</b> Mr. P. Davies welcomed everyone to the meeting. The meeting was quorate.	
2	<b>Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2020/21 academic year</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mr. P. Davies was appointed as Chair of the Committee.</li><li>Mr. S. Pilgrim was appointed as Vice Chair of the Committee.</li></ul>	
3	<b>Declarations of Interests in relation to items on this agenda</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mr. T. Green is a Member of the Shadow Executive of Buckinghamshire Council.</li><li>Mr. P. Davies is an officer for Buckinghamshire Council</li></ul>	
4	<b>Minutes and matters arising</b> The minutes were approved as a true and accurate account of the meeting with the following amendments to be noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>References to Buckinghamshire County Council should read Buckinghamshire Council.</li><li>Mr. S. Pilgrim is no longer a governor at Manor Farm Community Infant School</li></ul> The minutes will be digitally signed and retained on school file.	

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	<p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Item 4.2.2 Budget forecast – the budget has been submitted and is dealt with under item 6.5 of this meeting.</li> <li>• Item 5 – relating to the caterer’s contract. There is no change to the catering contract at the moment. Innovate have treated the school well and did not charge us a management fee during lockdown.</li> <li>• Examination fees – this will be revisited. We have been told we will get a refund but have not had clarification of what this is yet. We had no Y13 students wanting to re-sit A Levels. A few students are re-sitting English and Maths and about a dozen students are taking other exams so this is a small entry which can be facilitated in a couple of small rooms.</li> <li>• Item 6.1 – LJ has reinstated the missing column in the accounts for prior year actuals. The Growth Fund payment has all been received from Bucks.</li> <li>• Currently the school has 5.1% students with EHCPs which is well above national at the moment. The ARP has 26 places; we are looking at the spread of students in the local secondary schools with Bucks as it puts a lot of pressure on the school. The first tranche of money needs to be funded by the school and the distribution across schools and in our year groups isn’t a fair process We have received 25 applications for pupils with EHCPs from September. We cannot meet all their needs and are seeking legal advice. This will impact our admissions.</li> <li>• LJ reported that the school has changed finance packages and coding structures over lockdown and we are now using SAGE. We have also changed to the new DFE coding structure. Consequently, we were meant to have an interim audit in June, hoping to sort out quite a few issues but none of that has happened due to COVID and the new training on the new finance package has been difficult because it has all been remote. As far as we know, the Auditors are planning to come on site to complete the audit on 4<sup>th</sup> November. We are preparing for them to come on site and in conversations with them this week they are expecting to come in. We need them on site to get our issues properly sorted out.</li> <li>• The issue with balance sheet figures is we do not want to bring over historical issues with FMS postings. LJ is waiting for advice from audit about what to transfer across.</li> <li>• SAGE implementation – in the notes from last meeting it said that the system will be able to provide management accounts but we have not had internal audit in to be able to agree what to put in place in terms of posting opening balances on SAGE. We are working with figures up to 31<sup>st</sup> March on FMS. We want to export to SAGE but need to sort out the balance sheet figures first. The year-end will be finished in SAGE and then we can have monthly reports moving forward.</li> <li>• <b><u>Q. How is cash flow working?</u></b> A. LJ responded that we are hoping to generate reports from SAGE but we haven’t had the training that we would have had if we hadn’t been in lockdown. We are hoping for some instructions very soon.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Q. Is there some vulnerability financially whilst we are in this transition period?</u></b> A. LJ reassured that day to day accounting is under control, it is just the assimilation of the two packages that needs to be done so that we can produce meaningful reports covering the period September 2020 – March 2021.</li> <li>• <b><u>Q. As Governors we do need to know what is going on in terms of cash flow and how much money is in the bank.</u></b> Action: LJ will produce a report from SAGE which will give the reconciled bank balance and circulate this to the committee.</li> <li>• The committee also requested timetabled actions and deadlines from audit. Action: LJ to action.</li> <li>• Item 7 – <b><u>Q. Do we require an Audit Committee?</u></b> A. Currently the Finance Committee fulfils the audit function. This will be tabled at the FGB for a decision next week. A separate audit committee from the finance committee would need to be made up of different people (at least four) on each committee. Audit seems to sit quite comfortably within this committee and the difficulty will be having enough people and with the right skill set to sit on a separate committee. The guidance that had been circulated is for academy trusts rather than a single academy.</li> </ul>	<p>LJ - actioned.</p> <p>LJ to request.</p> <p>FGB agenda item 14/10/2020</p>
5	<p><b>Terms of Reference 2020-21</b></p> <p>To be circulated. There are no proposed changes unless the audit monitoring is taken out of this committee’s remit. This will be decided at the FGB on 14/10/2020.</p>	<p>FGB agenda item 14/10/2020</p>
6	<b>Budget</b>	
6.1	<p><b>Final Income/Expenditure 2019/20</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A spreadsheet and two commentaries had been circulated.</li> <li>• <b>Income</b> - The 2019/20 commentary has itemised detail in terms of funding received and lettings. Covid had quite a big impact and we had no lettings from March 2020 onward. Unfortunately, SLS, the company that was managing our lettings prior to that, went into administration. We have invoices lodged for £1,500 but are likely to have to write this off.</li> <li>• <b>Expenditure</b> – details were shared on staffing to year end. We had some savings where staff left us at Easter and we did not replace them until September due to lockdown.</li> <li>• <b>Exams</b> – we are expecting a credit but have not had an indication yet from the exams boards about this. LJ will speak to audit about how this is to be recorded in the accounts. Each exam board will also pay back using a different formula.</li> <li>• There were some savings made on agency fees due to Covid meaning we did not have to pay for supply teachers.</li> <li>• <b>ICT</b> – this is an area where some things have been double counted for in FMS and SAGE and this needs to be adjusted.</li> <li>• <b><u>Q. Regarding E28 - Redundancy procedure – would any of this have been avoidable?</u></b> A. LJ responded, no. The school had a few legal issues this year, and they have been dealt with as swiftly as they could have been. As an outcome, we now have a new Head of</li> </ul>	

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	<p>Performing Arts who will revitalize the department. He has great plans for what he wants to do in the school as and when he is able to do so. It has been a good outcome for everyone and a fair process. EH will reflect on the amount spent on legal fees, however not acting would have an impact on how well students would have done in Performing Arts. The second main legal expense was relating to a safeguarding case which had to be fought to protect a student.</p>	
6.2	<p><b>Budget 2020/21</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Figures include the teacher salary increases and working on a 2% increase in April for support staff.</li> <li>• Y7 Catch up funding has been taken away and been replaced by Covid Catch Up. This amounts to £67,120. £20K had already been assigned for the year so we need to target students who need support. We have planned for overstaffing in English and Maths to provide small group or one to one work which will have the biggest impact. We currently do not have any overstaffing in Maths and are advertising for more staff.</li> <li>• Lettings have been reduced given the Covid situation. We cannot bank on the money at the moment and cannot be spending against the income at the moment.</li> <li>• ARP funding is roughly £10K per placement. Bucks are looking at a new formula for issuing funding in bandings. It has been postponed from starting in September. EH thinks it will be a money saving exercise and schools will receive less funding whilst also being given more complex cases as there are not enough special school places. In terms of our number of EHCP students, we have a lot and it is making the education of others inefficient, which is an argument we could look to use. At one point we might need to look at reducing the number of places in the ARP as we seem to have the same amount of students with an EHCP outside of the ARP. We cannot say we are full and can be directed to take students by the council. This is where EH is getting some legal advice.</li> <li>• <b>Expenditure</b> – the teachers’ pay review is included with tapering amounts as will be discussed in agenda item 6.4.</li> <li>• <b>Staffing</b> – Our Psychology teacher has increased her hours. This will allow us to add on some subjects such as offering Sociology to students. We plan to take her on full time from September 2021.</li> <li>• We have two additional LSAs and an additional Pastoral Manager which means we have a team of four now to support students.</li> <li>• We have taken on a member of staff in admin as a dedicated PA to the SLT.</li> <li>• There is a reserves forecast of £914,148. EH would like to consider putting some money aside on an annual basis for capital projects.</li> <li>• <b><u>Q. With regard to the students’ new laptop arrangements – are we going to need to consider additional manpower?</u></b> A. EH responded that they have already been set up so that they will be controlled centrally and it shouldn’t be massively onerous. We will also have some spare laptops and will have to see how it pans out. Our IT system is stable and tied down and we do not have a huge</li> </ul>	

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	<p>amount of IT issues on a day to day basis. We do not anticipate a huge increase in workload. We have agreed that we will not commit to any other funds in that budget until the project is up and running smoothly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Q. Can we invite the SLT to put forward a wish list for capital improvement?</u></b> A. EH has some suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We are looking to cover the quad behind the library in order to double the size of the library.</li> <li>○ MUGA for the sports department</li> <li>○ Immersive Room for students and the community – this is an interactive way of experiencing a trip which is especially important whilst Covid travel restrictions are in place.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> EH to put a costed proposal together.</p>	<p>EH to progress</p>
<p><b>6.3</b></p>	<p><b>Interim Audit Report</b> This has not been carried out yet due to the lockdown situation. See above.</p>	
<p><b>6.4</b></p>	<p><b>Teachers' Annual Salary Review</b> A paper from the unions had been circulated. The announcement from the government was a 2.75% increase for teachers and 5.5% increase for minimum grade. This is a bigger cost to the school than previously thought. Other local schools are going to go with the tapered option for recruitment and retention. The difference with or without the tapered option is quite modest.</p> <p><b><u>Q. To what extent does performance work its way into this?</u></b> A. This is on top of performance management. Teachers will move up the grades if they have met their targets. <i>FK and EH did not vote due to having a conflict of interest.</i></p> <p>The Committee voted and <b>approved</b> the tapered option which will be applied and backdated to September's pay.</p>	<p>Teachers' salary increase approved.</p>
<p><b>6.5</b></p>	<p><b>Returns to EFSA – BFRY3 submitted</b> The budget forecast return was submitted.</p>	
<p><b>6.6</b></p>	<p><b>Review of 2018/19 School Fund</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was actioned in lockdown. Mr. T. Green approved the accounts due to them needing to be uploaded.</li> <li>• The fund is stable.</li> <li>• The Committee retrospectively <b>approved</b> the 2018/19 School Fund.</li> <li>• We have always had separate trustees for the fund. Mr. D. Greenwood resigned in March. The other trustees are Mr. E. Hillyard, Mr. T. Green and Mrs L. Jackson. An invitation will be extended to all Governors see if anyone else would like to become a trustee for the account.</li> </ul>	<p>FGB agenda item 14/10/2020</p>

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7	<p><b>Fund Raising for Indoor Tennis Centre – update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We had an FGB of the Chairs to make decisions over the Covid situation.</li> <li>• The Air Dome was brought in early for the September reopening once we received the guidance for managing pupils on site.</li> <li>• We needed to have sufficient all weather cover for PE. We have not been able to use the changing rooms.</li> <li>• It was agreed to take the money out of reserves to pay for it but we would like to apply retrospectively for funding. LJ will be looking at getting some HS2 funding.</li> <li>• Planning is still pending; this is going to committee on 17<sup>th</sup> November.</li> <li>• As and when it is allowed to, the First School and Middle School can use the facility.</li> <li>• TG has spent a lot of time with regard to this. There is a lot of misinformation going around about the dome and how much people knew about it. It has been one of our aspirations as a school since last year and the First school were aware of this. The expansion team have known about it and it is not known if they communicated it to the property department who are saying we are in breach of our lease for not notifying them.</li> <li>• There is a lot of incorrect information about it on the council planning portal website. It is difficult to see it outside the school perimeter. The noise created from the fan that keeps it inflated is less than the background noise in the surrounding area and can be baffled further, if it is given permission.</li> <li>• We have invited parish councils and district councils to see the facility and made representations with them. EH is trying to build bridges with the community. Our remit was to open the school in September. This is not the normal way we would have gone about things but we were in unusual circumstances. If we did not have the dome, we would have found it difficult to open the school. The students enjoy not being wet during PE and to be able to run around at break and lunchtimes. They are really excited and overjoyed about having the facility and it will be a huge asset to the school.</li> <li>• We have also taken two year groups with an additional class in each year group with no expansion for this.</li> <li>• There are five houses that are affected in terms of their view of the dome. LJ has personally met with two of the residents and EH is writing a letter of apology to residents along that side of the perimeter and will invite small groups of residents in after school to see the facility and ask questions.</li> <li>• EH confirmed that it is not illegal to build a structure without planning permission, but there is obviously a risk in doing so, however we have been going through a difficult period recently with Covid.</li> <li>• The First School were aware of this and it has been discussed and minuted at their FGB prior to the summer.</li> <li>• <b><u>Q. Is being inside the dome, 'inside' or 'outside'?</u></b> A. EH responded that you are very socially distanced in the dome.</li> </ul>	

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<p><b>8</b> <b>8.1</b></p> <p><b>8.2</b></p>	<p><b>Premises Report</b></p> <p><b>Current Works</b></p> <p><b>Roofing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have two CIF bids in for the boilers and roof. The Roof project should be finished by the end of December. Ventilation will be improved by reusing sky lights for the fitness suite and changing rooms.</li> <li>• Our Reception windows are also going to be replaced and the school will really benefit from the project being completed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Covered areas</b></p> <p>The foundations are going in at present and hopefully covers will be in place at the end of October half term.</p> <p><b>Expansion Plan Update</b></p> <p>This is all going ahead. The contract is to be signed imminently. We are aiming for a start date of 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020.</p> <p><b>Dome</b></p> <p>Covered above.</p> <p><b>Boilers</b></p> <p>We did not get the money for the boiler and have appealed this. Bucks Council have agreed to pay for our boilers to go in and they will be replaced this academic year.</p> <p><b>Insurance claims</b></p> <p>We have had an employment tribunal going through which was settled out of court. It has been settled with no cost to HGSS. This is a good outcome for the school.</p>	
<p><b>8.3</b></p>	<p><b>ICT – Laptops for Students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various options had been looked at, and we were impressed with the company Freedom Tech. We have just released the third wave for parents to purchase through school this academic year.</li> <li>• A paper had been circulated giving the background to the initiative, plus a paper on the summary of the project and a paper with the summary of uptake which has been really good and welcomed by parents.</li> <li>• The distribution of devices is mostly in the lower year groups.</li> <li>• EH will put out a letter to parents about the delivery timescales and what they will be used for in the classroom and that we will be preparing to go live in January.</li> <li>• We have sufficient facilities in school to access laptops for children who have not purchased a laptop. We have also got 15-20 laptops for vulnerable children from the DfE scheme and have provided laptops for students who are self- isolating at home. We will keep monitoring this as cases arise.</li> <li>• <i>A Governor commented it is a really good story in terms of how the school is supporting students.</i></li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Q. Are we providing any support for internet connections for Pupil Premium students?</u></b> A. We have got the option to do this and KJ is looking at that and purchasing some dongles if required for students working from home, particularly if we go into a Tier 2 situation. This will either come out of the PP budget or IT budget. We are using the pastoral teams to try and identify individuals that need help.</li> </ul>	
8.4	<p><b>Third Party Lettings Provider</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As previously mentioned, SLS went into administration at the end of July and we had to rapidly find a company to sort out our lettings from September for us. We have gone with a company called Bookings Guru who offer a managed bookings service – 80/20 in terms of income in favour to the school and we also have to pay an on-site management fee.</li> <li>• Our Site Manager has been set up with a separate zero hours’ contract for lettings. We also have someone who lives locally who is a caretaker at another school who is looking for some extra hours and he could do some work for us, again on a zero hours’ contract.</li> <li>• As we come out of Covid, we might have to take some more people on. With Bookings Guru, the money comes to us first and then we pay the commission to Bookings Guru which is a better guarantee of payment.</li> <li>• <b>Tennis Club bookings</b> – we will not be using the dome until we have got planning permission but are meeting with the Tennis Club to see what interest they have in booking the dome.</li> </ul>	
8.5	<p><b>Electricity Contract renewal</b></p> <p>The contract was up for renewal at the end of September. We have gone for 24 months with EON for a 5.6% increase to see the school through a very volatile couple of years. We were already with EON. The Committee <b>approved</b> the contract renewal.</p>	Contract approved.
9 9.1	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety matters</b> including:</p> <p><b>Termly visit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A report had been circulated. The visit took place as we were coming out of Lockdown and had two year groups in. The site team has been great. We have spent a lot on sanitisers, wipes and masks.</li> <li>• <b>Fire Doors</b> – we have managed to secure a new member of staff and it is now a top priority to get this sorted.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action:</b> Completion dates for priority 1 actions to be added in. Any Priority 1 actions relating to expansion programme should be clearly annotated as such with deadlines where possible. Priority 1 to be taken off expansion plans. We are hoping with the additional member of staff we have got the capacity to tackle the projects in house. Report to be brought back to next meeting.</p>	LJ to progress
9.2	<p><b>Health and Safety Audit Updates</b></p> <p>LJ is waiting for the H&amp;S auditor to come back to see what we can do. It is difficult to have visitors in during the day.</p>	



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9.3	<p><b>COVID Risk Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The committee commended this as an incredibly comprehensive document.</li> <li>This is a live document which is being continually updated.</li> <li>We have had our first positive Covid test from the student body and have developed a process in order to identify students who need to self-isolate. Seating plans have meant we only had to ask 30 students to self-isolate. They are due back in on Monday as well as two members of staff. None of them are showing any symptoms at the moment. It looks like we have hopefully contained that potential outbreak.</li> <li>We were given ten emergency test kits but they have not lasted long. We have ordered a batch of twenty but they have not turned up yet. There was a period of about a week when tests were really difficult to get hold of and we had staff out and staff with children out so we purchased some private tests. All staff and family members tested negative and are back in school. It will be like this for the foreseeable future. Private testing takes 24-48 hours and the turnaround for NHS testing hasn't been too bad.</li> </ul>	
10	<p><b>Policy Reviews and Approvals</b> None for this meeting.</p>	
11 11.1  11.2	<p><b>Dates and times of next meetings</b></p> <p><b>To note the next scheduled date</b> Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020</p> <p><b>To consider starting meetings at 18.00 to align with other committees.</b> Agreed.</p>	
12	<p><b>Evaluation of Meeting</b> Governors confirmed that the meeting was conducted in an open manner and that all governors were invited to participate and contribute to discussions. It was confirmed that all members of the Governing Body would have access to these minutes.</p>	

Meeting closed: 9.00 pm

**Minutes approved by the Committee:**

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Mr. P. Davies – Chair of Committee

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Date