

St Oswald's Catholic Primary School
Governing Body
RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING
Held by in school
Date/Time: 10/03/22 4:30pm

Present: Mr Hegarty, M. Walsh, L. Williams, J. Jones

Also present D Hay, I Strom (Clerking)

No.	Item	Action by: (insert initials)
1.	Apologies for Absence R. Hill, J. Simm,	
2.	Declarations of Interests Members of staff declared their interest.	
3.	Notification of Additional Business 3 requests from staff	
4.	Minutes of Previous Meeting The minutes of the meetings on 18 th November 2021 had been previously considered by the full Governing Body in December 2021. Agreed as accurate	
5.	Matters arising Governors noted that the Health and safety walk by the H&S governor was still to take place. Governor asked to agree date.	
6.	Catering Update The new provision from Food For Thought commenced on 1 st February 2022. The catering staff are delighted by the change. TUPE had been relatively smooth, however school had found anomalies' in hours and extremely low salaries, below national living wage were being paid.	

Signed.....Committee Chair

	<p>School had started the staff on a higher grade, commensurate with other support staff in school. The big change for the children had been that menus have altered and generally the philosophy of the provision is noticeably different.</p> <p>A governor commented that the children were coming home and talking about the meals again. They were particularly impressed with the All -Day Breakfast and the soup options. Mrs Walsh shared that the children were getting used to the idea that they could have soup and a meal and could ask for more if they were hungry. Another governor asked if the pricing of the meals had changed at all. It was confirmed that the current price to parents had remained at £1.80 per meal. Governors were impressed that the price had remained constant but there had been an improvement in quality.</p>	
7.	<p>Finance Update</p> <p>Budget Report Mr Strom talked through the report from Gill Farrington which had previously been distributed. He pointed out that the projections for the end of the year were broadly in line with those reported at previous meetings.</p> <p>Governors asked if Agency Supply costs had still been increasing. This was confirmed although it was pointed out that this was previously anticipated so provision had been included, although costs had risen more than anticipated. Mr Strom reported that the final indicative budget provided by the City Council had been higher than the initial indicatives as predicted due to the in-year pupil number increase as previously reported.</p> <p>Mr Strom reported the energy cost rise that had been predicted by the city council energy team. It was likely that there would be a 300% rise in the cost of electricity and a 200% rise in the cost of gas. Mrs Walsh reported that the support staff salary increase had been agreed. The increase of 1.755 would be backdated to April 1st 2021. Governors asked if this would impact on the reported balances. It was confirmed that this had been included in the budget report.</p> <p>SFVS Governors had been sent the documents in advance, including some graphs from the DfE Benchmarking website. The graphs showed comparisons of school expenditure in 2020/21 financial year compared to similar sized local schools. There was a recognition that the teaching staff salaries were higher than other schools. It was felt that context was missing as we understood that</p>	

	<p>we had a significant number of teaching staff that were at the top of their scales but couldn't be certain if this was the case in other schools. Governors also looked at the SFVS dashboard which also showed that St Oswald's was in the top 20% of schools according to teaching costs. This was acknowledged. Governors reviewed the SFVS checklist and were satisfied that it had been completed accurately and agreed to sign off the document.</p> <p>Banking This is still an area of concern. The current banking arrangements mean that the only counter service available is in Lord Street in Liverpool. This is not a convenient way of banking, however, recently, no banks were willing to take on new business from schools. Mr Strom is attending a conference on 16th March where a representative from another bank will be attending and he hopes to have some news from that.</p> <p>Statement of Internal Control This document had previously been distributed. The key recommendation was to update the asset register. Governors were happy to sign the document.</p> <p>Best Value Statement This was distributed to governor's in advance. It was agreed.</p> <p>Financial Regulations and Procedures. An updated version of the document was provided to governors. It has had a major review and is now more comprehensive. It brings together a number of regulations, procedures and policies into one document. Mr Strom talked through some of the key differences in the old and new documents. These included provision for using Ebay, Amazon and PayPal, and the possibility of using BACS payments. Governors thanked Mr Strom for the overview and agreed the document.</p> <p>Scheme for Financing Schools. Mr Strom reported that there had been no changes from the previous document. This was agreed.</p> <p>Service Level Agreements. Mrs Walsh proposed that for the majority of the Local Authority SLAs we would continue to purchase at the same level as previously. However, there were 2 areas for discussion.</p> <p>Cookery DT – The LA have provided a SLA for pupils in</p>	
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	<p>the past. This was a good service; however, school was required to purchase and store ingredients and equipment for the sessions. Food For Thought are starting to provide a service which can be bespoke to school and incorporated into the curriculum. They provide all ingredients and equipment as well as liaising with school staff on curriculum planning and integration with other lessons. The costs of the service were discussed and it was agreed to be good value for money. This is a new service and still developing. There is currently only one member of staff involved in the delivery which is a minor concern. Governors agreed that this was a preferable option and agreed to take this forward.</p> <p>HR Support – The HR Support contract with Ellis Whitam (now Worknest) is due for renewal. Mr Strom provide financial calculations on three providers including the current provider and Liverpool HR. The third was a company called Browne Jacobson. Mrs Walsh said that Liverpool HR had been very positive and collegiate during the pandemic, providing advice to all schools, not just those in their SLA. They had also been the source of many of the policies we still implement as they have been agreed with unions. However, they had been risk averse in previous casework, and there was a feeling that some of the officers were very good but there was a variation in quality. Ellis Whitam had provided a good service and the onsite support had been particularly good, although at an additional cost. They were timely with their responses to queries. Their service also included a Health and Safety strand as well which had recently been utilised positively. Mr Hegarty said that he was aware of Browne Jacobson as they were associated with the NAHT. Their proposal was similarly priced to EW but wouldn't include additional charges for onsite support for complex meetings. Mr Strom informed the meeting that he had received on the day of the meeting an email from Ellis Whitam to offer the onsite support for complex meetings within the proposal on the table.</p> <p>Governors debated the pros and cons and agreed to renew the contract with Ellis Whitham (Worknest).</p> <p>Photocopier contract Mr Strom had distributed the options on GovernorHub. Six companies had submitted proposals. 4 companies had proposed replacing the current fleet with new versions of the same or similar machines using a lease for the equipment and a cost per copy charge for servicing. Of these, ASL provided the best value for</p>	
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	<p>money. They were also a current provider and the servicing was considered to be of a good standard. Riso offered a different type of machine. The Riso machine uses ink instead of toner and because there is no heat process in attaching the ink to the paper unlike toner, it is a more eco friendly option. The machines are also very robust and don't break easily but for this reason, only a 5 year lease would be economically suitable as the shorter lease options are much more expensive. The cost per copy for colour on the Riso was half the cost of the cost per copy for colour for other machines. 24/7 Technologies had offered a fleet of new copiers and a very low cost per copy rate, but also offered a fleet of ex demonstration models of exactly the same specification as the current fleet which was approximately £3.3k cheaper per year than the ASL proposal. They were also offering an unlimited copy option which meant that the servicing would cost a set price and wouldn't depend on the number of copies. Mr Strom had calculated that the cost per copy option and the unlimited option would be very comparable on the current copy volumes but if the volumes increased the unlimited option would be favourable financially. A governor expressed that whichever option was chosen, there should be a push to reduce the amount of usage the machines received as the cost would still increase as the amount of paper used would increase.</p> <p>Governors discussed the options. They asked if the ex-demonstration models were likely to need more servicing than new machines. Mr Strom reported that 24/7 had sent an email that morning offering to replace any machine that became irreparable with a brand-new machine. Governors commented that this indicated that the company seemed confident in the robustness of the machines they were providing. With this in mind, Governors chose the 24/7 ex-demonstration with unlimited copies option, subject to the contract being agreeable.</p>	
8.	<p>Premises Update</p> <p>Covid Controls Risk Assessments are still in place until April 1st. We are still awaiting guidance on what measures need to be in place after April 1st. This will not only take the national picture into consideration, but also look at local and school circumstances.</p> <p>Building Work</p>	

	<p>The certificates of practical completion and financial sign off for phase 2 had previously been distributed. The next phase was now in the planning and plans had been distributed for governors to review. It was hoped that the build would start soon but probably not before Easter. A meeting with Arcadis is due to take place next week and any developments will be reported at the Full Governors Meeting at the end of March.</p> <p>Wi-Fi St Oswald's was successful in a bid to the DfE to be part of the Connect the Classroom project. This is providing schools in certain areas with funding to improve the Wi-Fi system in school. The equipment is at a very high specification and the whole project is fully funded and will cost over £60k. Work has already commenced with some cabling works already complete.</p> <p>Health and Safety</p> <p>The H&S governor walk is still to take place.</p> <p>The garden in the junior playground has been a safety issue for a number of years. The size of the plants meant that there were many blind spots and this caused a safety issue. This has now been addressed with the plants being removed. The peripatetic gardener will use the space with the children as part of their curriculum, potentially planting vegetables and wild flowers. We are currently gathering costs with regards to installing lights to cover the area from the infant to the junior building. During the winter months the walk is very dark, particularly after school. Governors asked if it was possible to contact church representatives to see if there was a possibility of attaching lights to the building. Mr Strom to progress.</p> <p>Parking – The PTFA have purchased a number of portable bollards with pictures of children on. They have been stationed on the zig zag lines on Montague Road. So far it has been very successful.</p>	<p>LW</p> <p>IS</p>
9.	<p>Staffing Update</p> <p>Two teachers have resigned with effect from September 2022. Mr Wall and Mr Loughran have secured employment in Dubai. Mr Wall is currently on paternity leave and Mr Crowther will be taking paternity later this term.</p> <p>There are a number of teachers on maternity leave. Mrs</p>	

	<p>Black had her baby on 31st January. Governors sent their congratulations. Miss Kirwan returned from maternity in February and will take further maternity leave towards the end of the summer term. Miss Hughes has just reached 28 weeks. Miss Townley will be returning maternity leave in April and Miss Wild will be leaving at that point so she will take 4MW.</p> <p>Governors were informed of a number of staff who have been on long term sickness, one of whom is on a phased return at the moment. Governors were also informed of a member of staff who would be having an operation in May.</p> <p>Covid We are currently looking at how we need to support pregnant staff now that the Covid advice is changing. Risk Assessments have been completed and reviewed by our H&S advisor who also visited to understand the areas affected. There is conflicting advice coming from different professionals and no definitive guidance from the health professionals at a national level so much is down to personal interpretation. One member of staff is very anxious at the moment and there are a number of options. The likelihood is that the class will need to be covered sooner rather than later, even if the member of staff comes to school and works in an alternative environment.</p> <p>Staff absence reviews Miss Hay talked through the document previously distributed on GovernorHub. The report updated the statistics from the November meeting. 9 staff are currently on attendance reviews with 4 on an extended review who will be attending a review with the attendance governor. A governor commented that the attendance statistics went some way to explaining the additional agency costs.</p>	
10.	<p>Policies</p> <p>The following policies were reviewed and agreed as per the discussions in paragraph 7.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme for Financing Schools • SFVS • Statement of Internal Control • Best Value Statement • Financial Regulations and Procedures 	

	<p>Children's Mobile Phone Policy</p> <p>Children bringing mobile phones to school is becoming an increasing issue. Governors asked what the main difference was from the old policy. It was explained that the old policy restricted phones to a few specific instances. This would widen the number of children allowed to bring in phones to all of those who have permission to make their own way home but would mean they would hold the phone away from the classroom during the day but with a clear understanding that school was not responsible for the phone whilst it was on the premises. Currently, some pupils who make their own way home, bring in their phone without permission and secrete it away. This can lead to temptation to use it inappropriately. The new policy should remove the need for secrecy and would therefore manage the misuse problem better. Mrs Walsh asked governors for their thoughts on smartwatches in school. Governors agreed that there was no real need for them in school. Governors agreed the new policy.</p>	
11.	<p>Notified Business</p> <p>Miss Duncan has requested that when she returns from maternity leave that she returns to a 0.8 full time contract. Mrs Walsh commented that the notice given for this request gave plenty of time to plan and the number of part time contracts at the moment meant that this should be able to be accommodated. Governors agreed to the request.</p> <p>Mrs McBrien has asked if there would be a possibility of increasing her part time hours from 0.7 to 0.8. Mrs Walsh commented that the school had gone from having 2 deputies and 2 assistant heads to having one deputy and a part time assistant head. This left the leadership of the school quite light and the extra 0.5 would be a valuable asset. Governors agreed to the request.</p> <p>Miss Mullen has requested unpaid leave to attend Glastonbury Festival. She originally bought tickets for the 2020 festival 2 years before her employment at St Oswald's and the festival's subsequent postponement due to Covid means that this is the first opportunity to attend. Mrs Walsh informed the governors that Miss Mullen had shown her proof that the tickets had been purchased prior to her employment at school. Governors agreed to the request.</p>	

12.	Date and Time of Next Meeting 17 th May 2022.	
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