



## Finance & Facilities and Premises Health & Safety Minutes 04/02/2020

▶ Boldmere Training Room ▶ Tuesday, February 4, 2020 ▶ 08.00 ▶ Chair: Dan Mortiboys ▶ Clerk: Emma Myers

**FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked.**

### Governor Core Values:

- setting the strategic direction
- holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school
- ensuring financial health, probity and value for money.

Governors Attending: >Carl Glasgow, Samantha Kenny, Dan Mortiboys,

Governors Apologies: >Anne Darby, Nicola Silverwood

Non Governors Attending: >Peter Donovan (with voting right), Karen Armitage (no voting right), Debbie Dale (Infant School Bursar), Emma Myers (Clerk), Tina Taylor (Clerk)

Non Governors Apologies: >Roxy Willis, Becky Dewsbery (Business Manager)

### Agenda Item 1 ▶ Welcome and Apologies

The meeting commenced at 8.00am.

#### MINUTE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Anne Darby, Nicola Silverwood and Roxy Willis. It was noted that Peter Green was not in attendance and that apologies had not been received.

#### DECISION

Apologies accepted and received from AD, NS and RW

### Agenda Item 2 ▶ Declaration of Interests

#### MINUTE

There were no direct, indirect or pecuniary interests declared in the business to be discussed.

### Agenda Item 3 ▶ Urgent additional items

#### MINUTE

The following urgent additional item was added to the agenda:

- Safer Recruitment Policy (item 14 - Any other business)

### Agenda Item 4 ▶ Minutes of the previous meeting held on 21/10/19 and matters arising

It was agreed that the minutes of the previous FFPHS meeting held on 21/10/2019 would be amended and re-presented on 30/03/2020 for approval.

#### Matters Arising

6) The EHT confirmed that benchmarking had taken place with New Oscott and would be presented under agenda item 7.

#### MINUTE

6) The Chair noted that the Finance Officer was not present at the meeting, referring to concerns that had been raised at the previous meeting regarding the validity of the information contained with the monitoring reports. The EHT confirmed that he had raised the issue with Schools Financial Services (SFS).

6)The EHT informed governors that he was working with the SBM on the production of a monthly report detailing income and expenditure but that difficulties had been experienced as a result of the way in which information was currently being received from SFS and issues with the functionality of the current management information system.

#### DECISION

Minutes of the FFPHS meeting of 21/10/2019 to be amended as agreed and re-presented for approval at the next FFPHS committee meeting on 30/03/2020.

### Agenda Item 6 ▶ Chair's business, actions and correspondence

#### Cleaning contract review

The EHT reported that he had met with the Chair to undertake a review of the current cleaning contract as potential cost savings had been identified. The EHT confirmed that three quotations had been received:

- Brass Facilities £51,500
- TAME Cleaning Contract Providers £70,000
- KWB (Existing contractor) £71,000

Governors were informed that the quotations had been based on a 43 week contract for 97 hours per week. The EHT explained the quotation from Brass Facilities was inclusive of grounds maintenance and would result in an overall cost saving of approximately £23,000 per annum compared to the existing contractor.

#### MINUTE

The EHT explained that the Chair had been asked to scrutinise the quotations due to the high level of potential savings. The Chair explained that Brass Facilities appeared to be working to a 10% gross margin in comparison to an industry standard of around 30% but that the company had provided a written commitment that the costs would not increase in the second year for anything other than rising staffing costs in line with National Minimum Wage and that TUPE costs would be met by the company. The Chair explained that, based on the fact that Brass Facilities would need to increase their charges by approximately 40% in order to be more expensive than the existing provider the level of risk was acceptable.

The EHT confirmed that TUPE arrangements would take 30 days to complete and that the new contract would commence from 01/04/2020.

#### DECISION

Approved to contract Brass Facilities to provide cleaning and grounds maintenance as per the quotation received.

### Agenda Item 7 ▶ Finance matters

#### MINUTE

#### Receive budget monitoring information

The EHT referred to the Financial Monitoring Reports 2019/2020 and Strategic Financial Forecasts for 2020-2022 for both the Infant and Junior schools, having been circulated in advance of the meeting. Governors commented that this had been the second consecutive meeting at which the Finance Officer from SFS had not been present.

INFANTS - Referring to concerns raised regarding the validity of the information contained within previous reports, the Chair asked the EHT if he was satisfied that the reports were accurate. The EHT responded that the reports were based on the worst case scenario, adding that the reports were accurate as at 13/01/2020 when they had been produced but that the financial picture had since changed. The EHT reported all expenditure had now been closed for the financial year and there would be no additional unexpected expenditure. Governors were advised that the Business Manager would calculate the outturn figure in due course.

The Chair referred to questions relating to the reports that had been circulated prior to the meeting for consideration. Highlighting that the anticipated deficits in both schools had reduced since the last reported position, the Chair queried whether this had been as a result of management action. The EHT provided an overview of the reasons for the deficit reductions in each school as detailed within the reports.

The EHT reported that all additional income was due to be received as per the forecasts.

The EHT highlighted the staffing spend at 81.1%, stating that any further reductions to staffing as a result of the deficit would be detrimental to safeguarding and child protection.

The Chair suggested that the financial situation was only likely to worsen and highlighted the need for benchmarking to be undertaken in order to share best practice. The EHT acknowledged and agreed, adding that the use of carry forward to balance the budget would mean the schools were likely to be a focus of the LA.

Governors asserted the need for accurate figures moving forward in order to be able to make appropriate decisions. KA highlighted that it was difficult to extract information from the management information system and that the system was not as good as it should be. The EHT confirmed that he had raised governors' concerns with SFS and suggested that governors could consider retendering the contract. The Chair agreed this would be prudent and agreed to support the tendering process. Governors were unanimously in agreement to retender the contract for financial services.

JUNIORS - It was noted that the £50,000 budget for school development as referenced on page 5 of the report was incorrect and should have read £5,000.

A governor queried whether any carry forward in excess of 8% would be clawed back by the LA. The EHT confirmed that an LA policy relating to carry forward clawback was in the process of being approved.

The EHT informed governors it was anticipated the deficit would reduce further by between £20,000 and £30,000, adding that any carry forward was being used on staffing and resources for existing pupils. KA highlighted the importance of ensuring future carry forward balances in excess of 8% were committed.

The Chair highlighted that staffing was 86% to which the EHT responded to confirm that the figure would reduce.

#### Schools Financial Value Standard

It was confirmed that the completed assessment form would be presented at the next meeting of the FFPHS committee in order to be approved as a Chair's Action by the Chair of Governors and submitted by the 31/03/2020 deadline. It was agreed that the Chair's Action would be approved at the FGB meeting on 21/04/2020.

#### Quotes/Tenders for work

Discussed under agenda item 6.

#### Review and adopt internal financial management procedures

The Bursar confirmed that the school adhered to the LA Schools Financial Procedures Manual, adding that procedures had not been raised in any recent audits as an area of concern. It was agreed that the Chair would undertake a spot check of the procedures and would report back at the next meeting of the FFPHS committee.

#### Review of service providers / traded services

The EHT confirmed that a review of all contracts had been undertaken.

#### BJS School Fund audit

The EHT referred to the School Fund Audit Report 01/01/2018 - 31/12/2018, having been circulated in advance of the meeting. The EHT highlighted that one recommendation had been made in respect of the use of the LA self-evaluation.

#### School Lettings

The EHT provided an overview of the letting agreements in place for the training room, teaching school and external clubs.

#### Benchmarking

The EHT reported that benchmarking had been undertaken with New Oscott and provided an overview of the findings. Governors discussed the savings identified from retendering the cleaning contract as a result of benchmarking and possible further savings by changing catering contractor. The EHT highlighted that the anticipated end of year position for New Oscott would be a £26,000 deficit.

The Chair sought assurance in relation to staffing percentages. The EHT reported that the average across the Sutton Coldfield Consortium was 88%, adding that the recommended 70-75% was unrealistic.

#### ACTION

Chair to undertake a spot check of financial management procedures and report back at next FFPHS meeting.

#### DECISION

Contract for financial services currently provided by SFS to be re-tendered.  
Receive and accept the Financial Monitoring Reports 2019/2020 and Strategic Financial Forecasts for 2020-2022 as presented  
Receive and accept the BJS School Fund Audit Report 01/01/2018 - 31/12/2018

#### CHALLENGE

**Is the EHT satisfied that the financial reports are accurate?**  
**Is the reduction in deficit budgets a result of management action?**  
**Benchmarking should be undertaken in order to share best practice.**  
**Will balances in excess of 8% be clawed back by the LA?**

#### Agenda Item 8

##### ► City Wide Follow Up Audit

#### MINUTE

The EHT referred to the Citywide follow-up validation action plan, having been circulated in advance of the meeting. The EHT highlighted references to the use of carry forward to set a balanced budget.

#### DECISION

Receive and accept the validation follow-up action plan.

#### Agenda Item 9

##### ► Staffing matters

#### MINUTE

##### Staffing update

The EHT provided an overview of the placement of staff and current staff absence. Governors were advised that temporary teaching contracts were under review.

The EHT confirmed that Business Manager services continued to be purchased from Minworth and that the future sustainability of the arrangements were in the process of being reviewed.

The EHT reported that staffing ratios had reduced slightly as a result of a staff resignation. Governors were advised that a replacement was being considered with a view to looking at potential opportunities to offer staff progression with a view to ensuring retention.

Governors were advised that additional BIB funding would be utilised to fund a teaching assistant post.

**SLT feedback on staffing (with a focus on outcomes)**

It was agreed that this matter would be addressed at the next Education and Standards Committee meeting.

**Agenda Item 10 ▶ Premises and Health and Safety matters**

**Update from Health, Safety and Wellbeing Governor**

PD provided an overview of progress towards actions as reported at the previous FGB meeting. Governors were advised that the Welfare Policy was under review and that progress on an internal staff capacity audit would be shared at the next FGB meeting.

PD confirmed that a meeting was due to take place with the Site Manager to complete a site tour and review the accessibility audit findings. Governors were advised that the snagging list was in the process of being digitised.

**MINUTE**

Governors agreed that future reports would be in a standard format and it was agreed that the job description for the health and safety governor as produced by The Key would be adopted.

The Chair expressed thanks to PD on behalf of governors for his work and contribution.

The EHT reported that a defects meeting for the BIB building had been undertaken, a snagging list had been provided to Ash Construction for completion and that the building had been handed over to the federation.

**DECISION**

Future reports to be in standard format as presented.  
Job description for health and safety governor adopted.

**Agenda Item 11 ▶ PTA funding**

SK reported that there had been no recent PTA meetings, with the EHT adding that funds available were approximately £18,000. The EHT provided an overview of the funding request process and advised governors that a request for £8,000 to fund a sensory garden for the BIB would be submitted but that a bid would also be made to Sutton Coldfield Municipal Charities.

**MINUTE**

Governors were informed that the PTA had funded the continuation of Athletics.

The EHT informed governors that he had approached McCabe who were completing nearby development to discuss the possibility of undertaking a community project under section 106 and that a meeting to discuss possible projects was due to take place.

**Agenda Item 12 ▶ Review policies**

**Model Pay Policy**

**MINUTE**

The EHT referred to the Pay Policy 2019, having been circulated in advance of the meeting for governors' consideration. The EHT explained that the policy was an LA model policy which had been personalised for the federation.

**DECISION**

Adopt the Pay Policy 2019 as presented.

**Agenda Item 13 ▶ Clerking matters**

**Confirmation of confidential items**

The Chair and EHT confirmed that no business discussed would be recorded confidentially.

**Items for information and LA items**

**MINUTE**

The EHT advised that Schools Financial Benchmarking information had been published by the DfE. Governors were provided with copies and it was agreed that the report would be uploaded to TTG.

The clerk reminded governors that the SFVS had changed from April 2019 and now included 29 questions - with some previous questions being removed, new ones added and existing one amended.

**Agenda Item 14 ▶ Any Other Business**

**Safer Recruitment Policy**

**MINUTE**

SK advised that, following an audit of the Single Central Record, it had been recommended that the currently adopted BCC model policy be amended to include that the school undertakes new DBS checks for all new members of staff.

**DECISION**

Approved to amend the Safer Recruitment Policy as detailed and to re-adopt.

**Agenda Item 15 ▶ Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The date and time of the next FFPHS meeting was confirmed as Monday 30 March 2020 at 8.00am.

**MINUTE**

With there being no further items of business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions and closed the meeting at 9.35am.

**Governor Agreed Actions set during this meeting: 0**

Finance & Facilities and Premises, Health & Safety meeting (Spring1 2020) *dated:*  
04/02/2020

Minutes approved by Tina Taylor