

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, RESOURCES AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 25TH MARCH 2025; COMMENCING AT 5.30 P.M. AT WHITESTONE INFANT SCHOOL, MAGYAR CRESCENT, NUNEATON, WARWICKSHIRE.

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Present : Mrs. N. Green, Mr. P. Johnson, Mr. M. Hartopp, Mr. D. Robinson, Mr. D. McGee, Mr. P. Stokes, Mrs. K. Ford-Lings, Mr. S. Shaw, Mrs. E. Johnson, Dr. S. Hill and Mrs. M. Burdett.

In Attendance : Mrs. J. Webster (Deputy Head, observer), Mrs. L. Knox (School Business Manager) and Miss. G. Matt (Clerk).

In The Chair – Mr. P. Johnson.

1. Welcome and Apologies.

The Chair, Mr. Johnson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs. R. Warwick and Mrs. S. Farmer.

The governors agreed to take the agenda in the following order.

6. Finance Officers Report and 7. The Budget 2025/2026.

Mrs. Y. Stainforth (Finance Manager) and Mrs. L. McFadyen (Finance Assistant) from the LA joined the meeting via a “zoom link”.

Summary Financial Officers Report to Governors Spring Term 2025 dated 12th March 2025 had been previously circulated. Copy with original minutes.

Mrs. McFadyen stated that the budget was in a better position that last term and there is a good carry forward from last year. There would be a decline in the budget for the next three years, due to a decrease in the national formula funding. Staffing costs are 81% of the budget, staffing costs over 80% are considered high. There is no teachers’ pay grant, now included in formula funding.

Expenditure. Agency costs for maternity cover in 2024/2025 and 2025/2026. 2025/2025 increase in TAs hours. 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 expenditure increasing, two teachers move to upper pay range. Increase in maintenance costs to cover the Fire Risk assessment work to be undertaken, work on the playground and general maintenance. Insurance indemnity does not cover repair of kitchen equipment.

Income had increased due to the income received from lettings.

Energy savings made this year and ITC costs decreased. Continuation of Primary PE and Sports Premium for 2025/2026 is to be confirmed. WES Fee confirmed, WES prices for 2025/2026 have been included and future years assume 2.5% inflationary rise.

Mrs. Knox had been advised to budget for water bill increase 25% to 30% on present costs. Mrs. McFadyen replied only 2.1/2% increase. Mrs. Knox stated that the water bill had decreased since last year and that she would contact Severn Trent Water to confirm increase in water charges. Pupil Premium Funding and SEN top up funding are to be confirmed in the future.

Risks for Head and Governors to consider –

- Indicative funding formula for 2026/2027 and 2027/2028 is based on estimated assumptions and so has the potential to change.
- Pay awards are estimated for future years - to be confirmed
- National insurance grant to be confirmed 2025/26 – uncertainty if grant will fully fund increased staffing costs
- Impact on apprenticeship levy costs once national insurance is revised
- Other non-staffing expenditure inflation pressures – budgets should continue to be reviewed and forecasts amended if necessary. Maternity cover – duration of maternity absence for two teachers is based on estimated return dates and may change. There may be some overlap of costs if individuals return before the start of the Summer holiday period.
- Outstanding Income Owed to WCC. As discussed during the meeting the school currently have the following outstanding invoices with WCC. Invoice in dispute £2,080. The invoice in dispute and has been creditor listed pending settlement.
- A debtor for outstanding SEN income for £14K has been included in the figures reported above. This income has been agreed but is not confirmed and if this income is not received, will negatively impact the financial position reported above.
- A proportion of the PE grant is used to cover costs of an MDS staff member's salary. If the PE grant finishes, the school must cover these salary costs from the main budget
- Other non-staffing expenditure inflation pressures – budgets should continue to be reviewed and forecasts amended if necessary

Extended Provisions (Fund 30).

The current balance of the extended provision is £7,699 and show the club is operating at a profit. It is important that governors continue to monitor club's viability to ensure the club does not become a financial burden on the main school.

Capital (Fund 07).

The current capital balance stands at £7,015 and will be carried forward to 2025/2026 when it is planned to be used on the cupboards project.

The governors had no further questions to ask and thanked Mrs. McFadyen and Mrs. Stainiforth who both left the meeting at 6.02 p.m.

Mrs. Green stated we have already made savings on last year. GB stated we have high staffing costs but this reflects in the excellent outcomes at Whitestone.

Mrs. Green stated that benchmarking had taken place and we are in line with other schools.

ACTION Governors discussed future finances and agreed the Budget 2025/2026 and to look at the budget again in the Summer term 2025.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising.

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 5th December 2023 were read, agreed and signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

3. Declaration of interest.

Mr. Johnson declared an interest in items relating to Stockingford Academy, Nursery Hill Primary School, Arley Primary School and a Trustee of Nuneaton Food Bank.

Mrs. Johnson declared an interest in items relating to Central England Academy Trust.

Mrs. Burdett declared an interest in items relating to Holy Spirit MAT.

4. Headteacher's Verbal Report.

Mrs. Green gave her verbal report.

Mrs. Stubbs the agency teacher is covering Mrs. Mistry's maternity leave until the end of the Summer term 2025, she has settled in to Whitestone extremely well, it was a good transition. Mrs. Stubbs has stated that she enjoys working at Whitestone. Mrs. Stubbs is not doing PPA, Whitestone staff are undertaking this.

The Safeguarding Audit Report was submitted on 13th March 2025.

Two Attendance Contracts are in place.

A Reception pupil as safety behaviour concerns with other pupils. The school is supporting the family and external agencies are involved. The school policy procedures are being followed. Whitestone is an inclusive school.

There are two vacant places in school. These will be filled within the next two weeks; one will be a pupil with an EHPC.

In September 2025, commencing in Reception will be ten pupils with EHPC.

GB thanked Mrs. Green for her verbal report.

5. The Budget 2024/2025 up date.

WES fees discussed. GovernorHub package does not include training costs at £1,000 for governor training; the fee was £450 last year.

Mrs. Green reported the various tracking systems are being investigated, e.g. "O" track.

8. SFVS (Schools Financial Value Standards).

SFVS had been previously circulated. Copy with original minutes.

The SFVS helps to provide schools with assurance that they are meeting the basic standards necessary to achieve a good level of financial health and resource management.

The SFVS checklist asks questions of governing bodies in six areas of resource management to provide assurance that the school is managing its resources effectively. This can be used to identify possible areas of change that resources are being used to support high-quality teaching and the best educational outcomes for pupils.

Mrs. Green, Mrs. Knox and Mr. Johnson had met last week and discussed the catering costs, the schools is paying 27p more a meal than receiving, a yearly £9,000 shortfall. The school's present catering contract with Educaters expires next year. Plans to look elsewhere for a more competitive catering contractor will be explored, especially regarding the meal costs.

ACTION GB held a focused discussion and agreed to look for alternative school caters when the present catering contract end in 2026.

ACTION The SFVS was dated, signed off by the chair of governors and forwarded to the LA as a legal requirement by the end of the financial year 2025.

9. Policies.

Attendance policy. Part of inclusive attendance, incentives are encouraged for good attendance, which is everyone's responsibility. If in the future parents are fined for pupil's non-attendance in term time for holidays, parents will be give plenty notice of the implementation.

Finance and Administration policy. This is to enable the GB to ensure effective financial management and administration and that the school complies with the legal requirements as laid by the DFE.

Learning Behaviours policy. This covers behaviour procedures within school. We are undertaking much work with Nuneaton Educational Alliance.

ACTION After a focused discussion governors agreed the Attendance policy, Administration policy and Learning Behaviours policy that were all signed off and dated by the chair.

10. Any Other Business.

(a) Mrs. Green reported that following the benchmarking exercise, Whitestone was low on administration hours. The new Arbour system will require staff training time. The situation will be explored for the possible increase in admin hours.

(b) The LA has confirmed that the repairs needed to Whitestone Community Centre's ramp are their responsibility and not the schools. The car park spaces outside the Community Centre can be used by the school.

11. Dates of next meetings.

Governing Body – Tuesday 13th May 2025; from 5.30 p.m. until 7.30 p.m.

P&S – Tuesday 8th July 2025; from 5.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m.

Pay Committee – Thursday 3rd July 2025; from 5.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m.

FRSC – Tuesday 1st July 2025; from 5.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.

Date Signed

(Chair)

