

MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, RESOURCES AND STAFFING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 5TH DECEMBER 2023; COMMENCING AT 5.30 P.M. AT WHITESTONE INFANT SCHOOL, MAGYAR CRESCENT, NUNEATON, WARWICKSHIRE.

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Present : Mrs. N. Green, Mr. C. Atkins, Mr. M. Hartopp, Mr. P. Johnson, Mr. D. Robinson, Mrs. R. Warwick, Mr. P. Stokes, Miss. K. Ford, Mr. S. Shaw and Mrs. Farmer.

In Attendance : 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 Dr. S. Hill, Mrs. M. Burdett, Mrs. E. Johnson and Miss. J. Ivers (Deputy Head and observer).

The Governors re-elected Mr. Robinson to serve as Co-opted governor for another four year term of office from 20th November 2023 until 19th November 2027.

ACTION The Clerk to inform the LA that Mr. Robinson has been re-elected to serve as a Co-opted governor for another four year term of office from 20th November 2023 until 19th November 2027.

2. Election Of Chair.

In the Chair – The Clerk.

Mr. Johnson, proposed by Mr. Hartopp, seconded by Mr. Robinson and agreed by the governors. There being no further nominations, Mr. Johnson was elected to chair the FRS committee for the academic year 2023/2024.

In the Chair – Mr. Johnson.

3. Minutes and Matters Arising.

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 11th July 2023 were read, agreed and signed by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

4. Declaration of interest.

Mr. Atkins declared an interest in items relating to Chetwynd School and Etone College.

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

Mrs. Farmer declared an interest in items relating to Croft Junior School.

5. Finance Officers Report.

Summary Financial Officers Report to Governors Autumn Term 2023 dated 10th November 2023 had been previously circulated. Copy with original minutes.

Mrs. Green and Mrs. Knox had met with the Finance Officer regarding the financial situation. Mrs. Green reported that the school is showing a growing structural in-year deficit in all financial years. The reason for this increase each year is due to a reduction in other income (mainly SEN and pupil premium) and increasing staffing costs due to assumed pay awards.

We have tried to use less agency staff during this academic year, but this is not possible due to the needs of the school. TA hours have increased by 73.5 since September 2023, to support pupils with additional needs. The SEN allocation never meets the actual costs, the gap is taken from the schools budget. An SEN Audit is to be undertaken and review continuation of provision including the Owl's Nest nurture provision.

A deficit recovery plan must be produced by the governors and the Head and be shared with colleagues in the LA evidencing how the deficit balances are to be addressed. The plan will then be used to monitor the balances and ensure the agreed targets of eradicating the deficit balances are achieved.

ACTION Governors to write a deficit recovery plan.

By 2026, Whitestone will have expanded into a four form entry school and therefore employ three extra classroom teachers; the additional pupil intake would bring money into the school's budget.

Mrs. Knox stated that we never know the actual pupil numbers until the start of the academic year. In July 2024, we will lose 17 pupil premium pupils. When we replace teachers we look at the salary paid. With benchmarking, Whitestone is in line with other schools.

Risks for the Head and Governors to consider:-

- Funding Formula figures for 2024/25 and 2025/26 reflect increased funding in the region of 2.5%. Future funding to be confirmed.
- Pay awards are estimated - to be confirmed.
- Energy costs must continue to be reviewed due to current circumstances.
- Other non-staffing expenditure inflation pressures – budgets should continue to be reviewed and forecasts amended if necessary.
- DfE will recover any unspent balances of PE Grant at the end of academic year 2023/24. Please read the updated Sport and Activity Action Plan July 23 and use the new Digital tool for reporting from summer 24 (Trial of the tool 23/24).
- National Tutoring Programme (NTP) 2022/23 academic year- you must record the total cost you incurred and the number of tutoring hours delivered which you will be required to share with DfE via the funding return that is open until 29th September 2023.

Capital (Fund 07) – The current capital balance is £7,015 and is currently being used to support the cost of installation of replacement roller shutters (electric shutters).

Other Matters - The DfE has produced a useful document with ideas to help schools manage their resources and money. Whitestone is to monitor monthly salaries and keep records for audit.

To cut back on school cover would result in staff undertaking less moderation, training e.g. in school. Monitoring sheets are uploaded every month by Mrs. Knox. Monthly electric metre readings are taken from "Stepping Stones" and Whitestone receives 50% of the cost and the LA 50%. Whitestone receives money for the moderation that Miss. Ivers undertakes outside of school.

Governors enquired were any known staff members leaving this academic year. Mrs. Green replied yes, the TAs who undertake 1:1 will leave when SEN pupils they support leave Whitestone in July 2024.

6. Current Budget – Update.

Current Budget Forecast by CFR had been previously circulated. Copy with original minutes.

Governors monitored the current budget and noted its contents.

7. Pupil Premium – Update.

Governors watched a video regarding Pupil Premium in schools.

Mrs. Green and Mr. Shaw (PP governor) met on 18th September to discuss PP issues.

Next week Mrs. Green will attend a workshop on PP statements, reflections and amend PP report before publication.

Mrs. Johnson last week held a meeting re the promotion of FSM (Free School Meals). A flyer has been handed out to parents explaining what they are entitled to if they apply for FSM. This includes school uniforms or a £50 voucher, breakfast at school and before & after school clubs. Some parents have applied and have been successful. This is positive and we need to encourage more parents to take this up. All FSM applications are treated in confidence.

There have been cases where pupils have come to school without having a breakfast, due to no food in the home. **Governors suggested in such cases, that Whitestone offers a free pantry.**

At this point Mr. Atkins left the meeting at 6.20 p.m.

8. Sports Premium – Update.

2024-2024 PE Grant Tracking had been previously circulated. Copy with original minutes.

Total funding for the academic year 2023-2024 is £19,593.41. This funding had made a high impact, giving the opportunity and options for different sports. It offers MDS to undertake activities with pupils at lunchtimes. There will be a Sports Show Case held at the Pingles, where schools will compete against each other.

Mr. Shaw read out a list of activities that MHR (sport provider that have taken over from Premier) will run at Whitestone. They will run a club over the Christmas holidays and a Sports Festival in the summer. Year 1 skipping workshop. Dance festival including pupils from Oakwood School. A much improved selection of after school clubs. Spring 2, try any pre School club and it will be free. Cookery club and Art club are already full.

Mrs. Pratt TA part-time is supporting a pupil with an EHCP. Currently there are 8 pupils with EHCPs and a further 2 pupils with EHCPs in process (due to complex issues). There has been a yearly increase in pupils with EHCPs.

9. Pay Committee – Update.

See confidential separate sheet.

10. Policies.

Pay Policy had been previously agreed by the governors and was then signed off and dated by the chair.

Mental Health Policy had been previously agreed by the governors was then signed off and dated by the chair.

ACTION The governors agreed the Pay Policy and Mental Health Policy that were both signed off and dated by the chair.

11. Any Other Business.

(a) The Clerk has emailed the Governors Information from the L.A.

(b) Mrs. Knox reported that there has been another meeting with Solar for Schools and progress with the project has moved on to the next level and the LA informed. There will be another meeting in January 2024. The project will include the new build. If any panels are removed they will be put back by the company. All work is guaranteed for twenty-five years.

(c) At 6.40 p.m. Mrs. Green, Mrs. Knox and Miss. Ford left the meeting.

12. Dates of next meetings.

Pay Committee – Tuesday 28th November 2023; from 5.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m.

FRSC – Tuesday 5th December 2023; from 5.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m.

Performance & Standards – Tuesday 23rd January 2024; from 5.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m.

Governing Body – Tuesday 20th February 2024; from 5.30 p.m. until 7.30 p.m.

FRSC – Tuesday 19th March 2024; from 5.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m.

Governing Body – Tuesday 14th May 2024; from 5.30 p.m. until 7.30 p.m.

Performance & Standards – Tuesday 2nd July 2024; from 5.30 pm. until 6.30 p.m.

Pay Committee – Thursday 4th July 2024; from 5.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m.

FRSC – Tuesday 9th July 2024; from 5.30 p.m. until 6.30 p.m.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.40 p.m.

Date Signed
(Chair)