

MELLOR PRIMARY SCHOOL
FINANCE AND RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE

24th November 2021, 6.30pm

Date: 24th November 2021

Time: 6.30pm

Venue: School

TRUSTEES PRESENT

Mr B Humphrey-Taylor (Chair), Mr J Nicholson (Headteacher), Prof D Hoult, Mr P Armstrong, Mrs K Scott.

IN ATTENDANCE

Miss E Wyborn School Business Manager (SBM)

Ms G Parkin Observer (Deputy Headteacher)

Ms J Castledine Governor Support Officer

1. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Trustees were welcomed to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence to be considered.

2. **DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS**

Trustees were asked to declare any business, financial or personal interests in any agenda items; no declarations were made.

Trustees were reminded that they should declare any interest which arose during the meeting.

3. **MINUTES OF THE SUMMER TERM**

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the Finance and Resources committee held on 23.6.21, copies circulated previously, be APPROVED.

4. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

MINUTE POINT	ACTION REQUIRED	ACTION FOR	UPDATE
6	SBM to investigate 2021-22 increase in non-staff costs	AB	Completed – See below table
6	3 year budget forecast including all cost centres to be shared at FGB	AB	Completed
7	Investigation into high energy costs	AB	Completed

8	SRMA recommendations document – timescale and action plan to be drafted and shared after board approval	DH & JN	Completed
10	Actions relating to future pupil numbers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain live birth data from Stockport LA • Publicise the school more widely • Prepare termly information indicating interest from cross-border families in particular 	JN	Completed – see item 14
12	Contact LG re: appointment of interim SEND link governor. Contact prospective link governor	DH	Completed
14	Discuss amendments to Finance Manual and bring to October FGB meeting	BH-T & SBM	Carry forward ACTION
14	Creation of a sub-group to work on a Business Continuity Plan to be added to July FGB agenda	Clerk	Completed

Increase in non-staff costs 2021-22 – the DHT explained that this was due to a final payment of £6,033 for the lease of interactive whiteboards. As the school managed to make savings for the current year, the final lease payment created a 'bump' in non-staff expenditure for this year only.

5. HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE MINUTES

The committee minutes were noted.

6. OCTOBER MONTHLY BUDGET UPDATE

The SBM was welcomed to her first meeting and invited to speak to the committee.

Expenditure

Expenditure is slightly lower than this time last year – this is due to Covid having an impact upon invoicing last year and causing a slightly higher than anticipated expenditure in last October's figures. Spending over the 2021-22 financial year is anticipated to be higher than last year but in line with the budget.

Income

Friends of Mellor have started some fundraising activities again.

Out of School Care is showing signs of recovery but this will be a slow process as many parents are still working from home and therefore do not require the facility as much as pre-Covid.

Cash Flow

There is no cause for concern with the current cash flow. The October bank balance is lower than at this time last year but this is due to delays in the processing of payroll.

Staffing

The committee was updated upon the current staffing structure. A fuller update was given at item 24.

Upcoming Issues

The control panel in the kitchen will need to be replaced at some point at a cost of approximately £1,100 including VAT. The extractor fan in the kitchen is causing issues and will need to be replaced.

What assumptions have you made about increases to pay-related costs going forward? This year there is a pay freeze for teachers; going forward 2.5% has been factored into the budget. The Headteacher cautioned that pension contributions from employers may be increased; he asked the SBM to check what was currently in the budget and how it was mapped out going forward **ACTION**.

7. INTERNAL SCRUTINY

- Approve the assessment of internal controls 2020-21
- Discuss schedule of work for 2021-22

The Headteacher explained that the internal controls process can no longer be offered in the same way by the local authority. The SBM has started to look for a new provider. The assessment was APPROVED by the committee.

The schedule of work for 2021-22 will be agreed at the spring term meeting **ACTION**.

8. EXPENDITURE RECOMMENDATION FROM EDUCATION & STANDARDS COMMITTEE

The DHT explained that the recommendation was for £10,000 to upgrade the school's wifi and purchase additional chromebooks. She has received 3 quotations and is waiting for one from AVA, the school's IT support provider.

The Chair asked for a written proposal to be brought to the December FGB meeting for consideration. **ACTION**.

9. CONDITIONS IMPROVEMENT FUND (CIF) BID

The Chair introduced this item, stating that the board was in agreement that the roof is in need of refurbishment and the doors and windows throughout the school are in a poor state of repair.

The school went out to tender for an agency to submit a CIF bid for the work; three agencies responded, due diligence was carried out and Lancaster Maloney has been appointed. Trustees were referred to the documents uploaded to GovernorHub prior to the meeting.

The SBM explained the contributions scale and points system to the meeting. Trustees discussed the merits of making a contribution from reserves or taking out a loan. It was AGREED that the school's contribution to the CIF bid will be 10% of the total cost funded by a loan to be repaid over a 5-year term.

10. MAT CONVERSION COSTS

A paper was circulated by the Chair of the trust board (CoTB) prior to the meeting. The Headteacher explained that he and the CoTB have started to establish the costs relating to Mellor Primary's conversion from SAT to MAT and Torkington Primary's conversion from LA maintained school to academy. Government funds are available for some conversion costs; a bid for financial support from the Trust Capacity Fund (TCaF) can be made by the 17th December.

The committee AGREED to delegate the responsibility for submitting a bid to the TCaF to the CoTB and Headteacher.

11. TRADE UNION RECOGNITION AGREEMENT (TURA)

The TURA was circulated prior to the meeting. It was noted that the agreement would be amended and expanded upon in line with the creation and growth of the MAT. **Are staff aware of the agreement?** It will be given out as part of the induction pack and will be re-circulated as part of the MAT conversion paperwork.

The agreement was reviewed and approved by the committee; it will next be reviewed in autumn 2022.

12. ESFA COMMUNICATION

The communication was noted by the committee.

13. BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

The Chair stated that the business continuity plan should be created for the MAT rather than for Mellor Primary School. It was AGREED that a working party will convene comprising of: Prof Hoults, Headteacher, SBM, Mr Humphrey-Taylor, Headteacher and Chair of Torkington Primary School.

14. PUPIL NUMBERS PROJECTIONS

The school has had 19 visits from prospective parents so far this term. Of those 19, 16 are from families living out of catchment. The Headteacher expressed some confidence in a healthy intake in September 2022. The Headteacher stated that the MAT will need to carefully consider effective promotion of its schools in the future.

The Headteacher referred to the live birth data in the SRMA report and the complexity regarding the wide area from which Mellor Primary receives pupils, including cross border/LA. The CoTB noted that a recommendation from the SRMA's report was for the school to request population data from the local authority. The Headteacher advised that live birth data had not yet been sourced from the local authority as the wide scope of applications reaches beyond the catchment area to the school. The school will pursue data for the number of pre-school children in the local community. **ACTION**

15. MAT WEBSITE

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the formation of a working group to developing a communications strategy for the MAT would be an agenda item for the next FGB meeting. **ACTION.** Trustees agreed that membership of the working group should include governors from Torkington Primary and either Mr Armstrong or Mrs Ashton as parent trustees.

Mr Armstrong offered to put the SBM in contact with a web design company he had been impressed by at a recent conference.

16. REVIEW OF SERVICES BOUGHT BACK

The SBM is carrying out a detailed review of all services bought back. Trustees noted that the school is in the process of purchasing an alternative Management Information system to replace SIMS at the end of March 2022; Scholar Pack has been identified as the preferred replacement.

A HR and Payroll system will need to be put in place for the whole MAT.

The DHT explained the SHAPES membership which is paid for from the Sports Premium Grant.

The SBM will provide an update at the spring committee meeting **ACTION**

17. PUBLICATION SCHEME

To be deferred to the spring term meeting **ACTION.**

18. RESERVES POLICY PROPOSAL

The reserves policy was discussed by the committee and comments were invited. The Headteacher noted the challenge of keeping the school financially robust whilst also adhering to DfE guidance that all money should be spent on children's education. ***We need a policy which gives flexibility to adapt to the turbulent circumstances the school is working in.***

The CoTB volunteered to circulate a draft policy for committee consideration and recommendation to the full board. [post meeting, the following proposal was agreed by the committee for full board consideration: *The academy's policy is to carry forward a prudent level of resources. To that end, the academy will aim to maintain reserves at a level between 5% and 10% of annual income. The policy will be subject to annual review.*] **ACTION.**

19. APPROVAL OF POLICIES

- Charging and Remissions
- Gifts, Hospitality, Anti-Bribery and Corruption
- Lettings
- LGPS Employer Discretions

The above-named policies were APPROVED by the committee.

The committee agreed to defer review and approval of the following policies to the spring term meeting **ACTION:**

- Data Protection
- Data Breach
- Consent
- CCTV

20. UPDATE ON PUPIL PREMIUM GRANT, SPORTS PREMIUM

Trustees were encouraged to read the Covid Catch-Up Premium Plan and Impact 2020-21 which has been published on the school website.

Pupil Premium and Catch-Up Recovery will be combined into one document and published as a 3-year plan by 31.12.21. The school is in receipt of a total of £12,500 for Pupil Premium, Covid Catch-Up Premium, and National Tutoring Programme.

The school is in receipt of just under £18,000 for Sports Premium. The new PE lead will write a 3-year spending strategy with support from the DHT.

21. PREMISES, HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

The health and safety audit took place last week. The final report will be considered at the spring term meeting **ACTION.**

22. STAFFING AND APPOINTMENTS UPDATE

Three members of staff will leave the school at the end of the autumn term – PE coach, a TA with midday duties, and a midday assistant. The school is considering recruiting a HLTA

to replace the TA and to support with the provision of PE, and will also recruit a new midday assistant. Trustees were advised that colleagues leaving the school were doing so for personal reasons rather than due to dissatisfaction with their roles.

23. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16th March 6.30pm

24. A.O.B.

With no further business to discuss, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 8.30 pm.

MELLOR PRIMARY SCHOOL
AUTUMN TERM 2021 FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES
MEETING ACTION POINTS

MINUTE POINT	ACTION REQUIRED	ACTION FOR	DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED
4	Discuss amendments to Finance Manual and bring to spring FGB meeting	BH-T and SBM	Spring FGB meeting
6	Pension contributions from employer - check what is currently in the budget and how it is mapped out going forward	SBM	Post meeting
7	Agree a schedule of work for 2021-22 for the internal scrutineer	F&R committee	Add to F&R agenda 16.3.22
8	Expenditure proposal to be submitted for consideration at December FGB meeting	GP	8.12.21
14	Pursue data for the number of pre-school children in the local community	Headteacher	Post meeting
15	Formation of a working group to develop a communications strategy for the MAT	FGB	Add to FGB agenda 8.12.21
16	Provide a review of services bought back	SBM	Add to F&R agenda 16.3.22
17	Review of publication scheme to be added to spring F&R agenda	Clerk add to agenda	16.3.22
18	Consideration and approval of Reserves policy to be added to FGB agenda	Clerk add to agenda	8.12.21
19	Review of the following policies to be added to spring F&R agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection • Data Breach • Consent • CCTV 	Clerk add to agenda	16.3.22
21	Consideration of H&S audit report to be added to spring term F&R agenda	Clerk add to agenda	16.3.22