
School: Round Hill Primary
Meeting title: Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee
Date and time: Tuesday, 22 March, 2016 at 6.00pm
Location: At the school

Membership
'A' denotes absence

Mrs H Craik
Mr M Joyce
Mr R Jones
Mr R Di Miceli
Mrs L Wilson
Mr D Hanslow (chair)
Mr A Nash (headteacher)
Mr P Smith

In attendance

Mrs I Greenhalgh (business manager)
Mr H Jones (minuting secretary)

F&GP/01/16 Apologies for absence **Action**

There were no apologies for absence.

F&GP/02/16 Statement of pecuniary interest

There were no declarations of interest, either direct or indirect, for items of business on the agenda.

F&GP/03/16 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th November 2015, having been previously circulated, were approved as a true record.

F&GP/04/16 Substantive item (F&GP/22/14)

Do we have sound financial strategies, get good value for money and have robust procedures and financial systems?

Best Value Statement

Mr Nash reported that the school's BVS was the best it had been for a number of years. There were no major changes, except for dates being updated.

Governors

approved

the BVS.

Draft budget 2016-17

Mrs Greenhalgh and Vickie Lievesley (finance officer) have been working on the Budget Report, which provides details of where the budget has been allocated and where funding is to be received.

The end of year forecast for 2016-17 indicates a carry forward of £47, 060 (2.89%)

The underspend for 2015-16 is expected to be £18,000 (1.1%).

Q. Why is spending more than identified by the surplus?

A. Mr Nash stated that originally an extra teacher was being considered, but now is not needed and, therefore, there will be savings. Also, there should be 15 more pupils next year, which will add to the budget.

However, we must also consider additional contributions to pensions and other outside factors, so the budget will need careful monitoring.

Q. Why is there no Early Years Pupil Premium indicated on the budget?

A. The exact number of pupils are not yet know, but will be added.

Q. Will any changes to the budget come through governor committees?

A. Yes.

Mr Nash added governors have received a summary of the Budget Planner, with Mr Hanslow receiving a more detailed version.

Mr Nash reminded governors the importance of reading the DfE National Funding Formula document.

Govs

Governors

approved

the draft budget 2016-17.

Staffing structure

Mr Nash shared the staff structure document with governors. Governors had already viewed the document on the governor's link of the website.

Mr Nash stated that a class teacher was needed for September 2016 due to increased pupil numbers and this has been budgeted for.

Governors

approved

the staff structure.

Services to Schools

Mrs Greenhalgh stated that LA bought back services would be the same as last year (e.g. OH, risk and insurance, finance, catering, grounds maintenance, cleaning, ICT, payroll). In 2015-16, the cost of Services to School had been approximately £14,000.

Mr Nash and Mrs Greenhalgh added that for staff absence insurance the school are investigating using Schools Advisory Service instead of the LA staff insurance, and explained that the main difference between the SAS insurance (£17,144) and LA insurance (£17,084) surrounds the amount paid to the school after the 2nd or 3rd day of a teacher's absence, and payments for TA absences (with LA insurance, TAs are not covered for the first 21 days).

IG/AN

After discussing Services for Schools, governors requested a breakdown of the services from the last few years for comparison purposes. Mrs Greenhalgh agreed to email these details to governors.

IG

Q. If we decided to use the Schools Advisory Service for staff absence insurance could we re-join the LA insurance at a later date?

A. Yes. Mr Nash recommended using SAS for a year, commencing on 1/4/16 and then re-assess after a year.

Governors discussed the need normally to get 3 quotes if a change of staff absence insurance was being considered but, due to the short timescale involved,

agreed

to the 2 quotes (from LA and SAS), in this instance.

Governors

approved

the Services to Schools.

F&GP/05/16 Matters Arising

F&GP/24/15

The H&S Walk Report is now on the school website.

F&GP/24/15

Mr Nash reported that Risk Assessment reviews would be covered at the next meeting.

Agenda

F&GP/24/15

A discussion took place about the school's mini-bus. Mr Nash stated that there were issues about the min-bus – it was in the school car park, not able to be used, costing the school money, Mr Nash is the only member of staff able to drive it. Mr Nash added it was a sensitive issue because of PTA involvement.

Q. Can the PTA be told that the school now needs to end the use of the mini-bus?

A. Yes, we could.

F&GP

agreed

for Mr Nash to inform the PTA that the school intends to get rid of the mini-bus.

AN

F&GP/26/15

Mr Nash is investigating the use of a permanent cover supervisor instead of using existing staff. **AN**

F&GP/26/15

Mrs Greenhalgh reported that supply costs last year had been £74,000. This was largely due to 3 maternity covers, and NQT and PPA cover. This spend will need highlighting for benchmarking data purposes.

Q. Could a supply cover teacher be appointed on a zero-hour contract?

A. Mr Nash stated it might be worth investigating.

GB/04/16

GB/05/16

The Lettings Policy has been amended to include an item from the Prevent Policy and will be reviewed at the next meeting. **Agenda**

GB/04/16

Mr Nash stated the school already has many links with local schools and beyond, but should continue to be outward looking and thinking. These collaborations are not at the formal stage and Mr Nash added that there is no rush, at this stage, to formalise links.

Mr Nash and Mr Jones are attending the next meeting about collaboration on 30/3/16.

GB/06/16

Governors discussed the LA Management Information (MI) summary document which updates school data on pupil population, budget, staffing costs and profile, Ofsted ratings, admission projections.

Mr Nash would also include this information in the summer headteacher's report.

Mrs Wilson will keep governors up to date with MI issues on the blog.

LW

F&GP/06/16 Audit Report

The Audit findings referred to controls met, controls not met, controls partly met and controls mostly met. As a result, all controls have now been actioned or are in the process of being actioned to meet the audit requirements.

Mr Nash and Mr Hanslow have had 2 meetings to work on the Audit Report and added 2 colour-coded columns (update column and control met column) which will help identify those areas met and those being worked on.

Mr Hanslow added that all areas will need to be completed before being signed off.

The auditors are expected to return, but no date has yet been set.

Mrs Greenhalgh agreed to email F&GP governors the audit report.

IG

F&GP/07/16 Schools Financial Health and Efficiency Tools and Schools Efficiency Metric

Mrs Craik explained that these documents provide schools with information on how efficient they are and compares attainment with expenditure. The information compares spending efficiency with a 50 school Efficiency Neighbouring set.

The information covers 2013-14, with the latest version to be published in Spring 2016.

Q. Is this information of value to us?

A. Probably not yet because not many schools are aware of it, but will become more relevant and important in the future.

Governors stated it is a useful tool to indicate how efficient the school works with its finances and agreed to look at it in more depth when the Spring 2016 information is published.

Mr Hanslow referred governors to the 'Planning Check for Governors' document to consider for next year.

Govs

F&GP/08/16 F&GP Annual Planner

Mr Nash explained the school use the LA Annual Planner template. The Planner should be used to allocate F&GP budget monitoring throughout the year.

F&GP/09/16 Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)

SFVS has been worked on by Mrs Greenhalgh, Mrs Craik, Mr Hanslow and Mrs Wilson, and has to be submitted by 31/3/16.

Mr Jones approved and signed the SFVS, but it needs final approval from Full Governing Body.

FGB

F&GP/10/16 Finance Policy

Mrs Greenhalgh stated the Finance Policy had been up-dated to include committee membership, dates and bank mandates.

Governors

approved

the Finance Policy, with the up-dates.

F&GP/11/16 Inventory Report

Mrs Greenhalgh reported that the Inventory had been up-dated as a result of the audit on 10/11/15. Mrs Greenhalgh added she is now monitoring the checking off of items as they arrive.

It was **agreed** that a governor will check 30 items on the inventory each September. Governors added that the disposal of items should always be signed off.

Gov

F&GP/12/16 High Needs Funding Reform

Mrs Craik stated the HNF reform is still at the consultation stage, until 14/4/16. Historically, Notts CC have been underfunded compared to authorities in the south of the country, but this year due to changes in the funding Round Hill may be 'winners'.

Q. Can schools respond?

A. Mrs Craik recommended all governors should go to the government website to express their views and help bring about the changes needed.

Govs

Q. Can parents respond?

A. Mr Nash stated the school would put this item in the next newsletter to parents and recommend they also respond.

AN

Q. Are the LA responding?

A. Think so, but their response would just be one voice, so the more that respond the better chance of changes being made.

F&GP/13/16 Maintenance and Estates

Mrs Greenhalgh stated the next Health and Safety audit is not until December 2017 and takes place every 2 years.

Mrs Greenhalgh updated governors on recent 'maintenance and estates' issues:

- The water leak has been fixed.
- A blocked drain has been fixed, but when this work was carried out the plumber identified that the thermostat mixer valve needed checking. This check is to be done during the Easter holiday.
- A section of ceiling/flat roof collapsed and is being repaired.
- The indoor and outdoor PE equipment has been serviced.
- The Trim Trail is longer able to be used and has been taped off. The PTA have been asked if they would like to contribute to replacing the Trim Trail (£10,000 - £20,000).
- Some work on the boiler has been carried out.
- Work on some tree roots has been carried out.
- Areas of the playground continue to have pools of standing water after heavy rain. It has been estimated that to resurface the playground would cost £38,000. Resurfacing would need to be done in stages.

Q. Do we have a 'schedule' of maintenance to be done over a period of time?

A. Yes, but we really do need to plan ahead carefully to ensure work is identified and carried out.

Q. Do we have preventative work going on?

A. Yes.

Health and Safety Policy

The Policy is the same as last year, with the following amendments – names, dates, how risk assessments for outdoor visits are completed.

Governors

approved

the Health and Safety Policy.

F&GP/14/16 Standard F&GP items

- Mr Nash stated the school would like to introduce a new maths scheme which has been trialled with Y3 and Y6. The scheme ('Maths No Problem') has been used very successfully in Singapore. The cost is approximately £10,000, with possible on-going costs. Some of this could be paid for from this year's carry forward.

As the purchase is over £5,000, Mr Nash sought approval from governors. Governors stated that because there is only 1 supplier for this maths scheme, 3 quotes would not be necessary.

Q. Will this change how maths is taught at Round Hill? Would there be workshops for parents?

A. There would be some changes and we are not sure yet how it would be taught in mixed year classes. We would introduce the scheme through the Parents Forum and get parents feedback on workshops, if appropriate.

Governors

approved

the purchase of the 'Maths No Problem' scheme.

- At the end of the meeting, Mr Hanslow signed the school logs.

F&GP/15/16 Determination of confidentiality of business

Governors considered whether any items discussed during the meeting should be deemed confidential.

It was

resolved

that nothing discussed should be deemed confidential.

F&GP/16/16 Date of next committee meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 5 July, 2016 at 6.00pm.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Signed(chair) Date

HJ/jag