

The Swanage School  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE & PREMISES COMMITTEE**  
 Tuesday 8 March 2016, 5.30pm

Present: William Knight (Chair), Geoff Atkinson, Tristram Hobson (Headteacher), Steven Parker, Amanda Rowley, Isobel Tooley

In attendance: Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Mark Hatto (Governor Observer), Katy Kerr (Business Manager)

Item		Action	Lead	Date
FP5.1	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b>            Apologies were received from Carl Styants.</p>			
FP5.2	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b>            There were no declarations of interest or conflict of interest arising from any agenda item.</p>			
FP5.3	<p><b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b>            The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2016 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed.</p>			
FP5.4	<p><b>Matters Arising &amp; Actions</b></p> <p><u>FP 4.5.2.iv Reportable Accidents</u>            KK confirmed that a recent incident, queried at the last meeting, did not meet either of the criteria necessary for a RIDDOR report. It was confirmed the health &amp; safety governor will review the RIDDOR process on her next health &amp; safety walk.</p> <p><u>FP 4.6 Policies</u>            The Clerk confirmed the policies approved at the last meeting had been updated as agreed and published on the website, with the exception of the Fire Evacuation Procedure which was still to be finalised.</p> <p><u>FP 4.6.5 Security – Thumb Printing of Governors</u>            KK confirmed that governors would be thumb printed, to allow easier access for out-of-hours meetings, and that she would email governors to make arrangements.</p>			

	<p><u>FP 4.8 Contracts Review</u>  KK had circulated a revised list of contracts and invited questions. It was noted that the cleaning contract was due for renewal in August and that consideration would be given, prior to this, as to whether cleaning should move to an in-house operation. The Chair queried the high costs of the photocopying contract and, whilst noting that this was fairly usual for schools, KK agreed she would review it to ensure that the contract is the most cost effective option.</p>	Review	KK	May 2016
FP5.5	<p><b>Reports</b></p> <p>1. <u>Premises</u>  KK reported on a series of meetings, with Kier on 23 February 2016 for a discussion on the status of the major outstanding defects, and with Trish Martin from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) on 26 February 2016 to discuss the EFA intervening to facilitate resolution, given that significant defects remain for which there is no agreed solution. Trish Martin will report back to the school after she has met with Kier.</p> <p>A temporary fix for the window leaks has been put in place, and some smaller remedial works were undertaken during the half-term week in February. The school have asked Kier to provide evidence of a claimed derogation in relation to sound-proofing of the music suite.</p> <p>The committee recorded thanks to the Premises Manager, Gary Stone, for his continued work in relation to snagging issues.</p>			
	<p>2. <u>Business Manager</u>  The following aspects of the Business Manager's written report were discussed:</p> <p>i) <u>Budget Monitor</u>  KK noted that the budget and cashflow positions did not vary much from those reported at the last meeting. In response to questions about the budgets for teaching staff (E01 Teaching Staff; E02 Supply Teaching Staff and E26 Agency Supply Teaching Staff) which together showed a projected £25k shortfall against budget for the year, KK offered to circulate a note with further detail. One significant area of unbudgeted spend on staffing had been the recruitment of a Safeguarding Welfare Officer.</p> <p>KK was asked about the level of high needs top-up funding which was showing a year to date variance of -£2.5k, and noted that this was due to one student being educated part-time by an alternative</p>	Further detail	KK	April 2016

	<p>provider (the funding having moved with the student).</p> <p>ii) <u>Cashflow</u>  The Chair noted that the Charity Aid Foundation (CAF) bank offer good interest on a 60-day notice account and asked the committee to consider whether there is a case for transferring cash to such an account. As the reported cashflow showed month-end positions, KK noted that a buffer would have to remain in a non-restricted access account for mid-month, but agreed in principle that some monies could be transferred and suggested the staff absence fund and maintenance fund would be a good starting point.</p> <p>iii) <u>Health &amp; Safety Audit</u>  KK noted that Wills Towers Watson had conducted a health and safety risk assessment audit on 2 March 2016 on behalf of the Department for Education. An overall rating of “good” is expected, with some recommended actions. A report will be forwarded to the school by Wills Tower Watson in due course.</p> <p>iv) <u>Funding for 2016-17 and Student Roll</u>  The school had received notification that just under 60 places had been allocated for the Year 7 intake in September 2016 which was considered disappointing, particularly given the work that had been done with the local primary schools. In percentage terms, however, only one primary school had shown a significant difference in the percentage of children having applied for (and been allocated a place at) the school. KK noted that the implications for the budget would be modelled, both with this size cohort as a norm and as an anomaly. Funding from the EFA has been confirmed for 356 students, which is in excess of the anticipated roll. Funds will need to be retained to repay funding in excess of October 2016 census figures.</p>	<p>Consider further and action</p> <p>Budget modelling</p>	<p>KK</p> <p>KK</p>	<p>May 2016</p> <p>May 2016</p>
	<p>3. <u>Responsible Officer</u>  SP presented a paper setting out a recommendation for the creation of a designated reserve of £100k from the restricted general funds, earmarked for building and equipment repairs and renewals, both those planned under a maintenance schedule and any unforeseen costs. He proposed this be considered as an initial contribution for the 2016 and 2017 financial years. Later consideration would need to be given to the appropriate level of recurring contributions to the fund from 2018 onwards, which should ideally depend on the identification of likely renewal and replacement costs in a maintenance schedule. His paper outlined the background and points for consideration, which he highlighted for the committee.</p>			

	<p><b>APPROVED</b> for recommendation to the full governing body the creation of a designated reserve fund for building repairs and renewals, with an initial deposit of £100k for the 2016 and 2017 financial years (either as a single sum, or as £50k + £50k) agreeing that the fund would not be used for recurring day-to-day maintenance costs but to cover significant or unexpected costs. Use of the funds would be compliant with the usual financial delegation limits.</p> <p><b>AGREED</b> that a rolling maintenance schedule be created, to identify all areas of the building that may need maintaining or renewing, the probability of failure, likely time-frame and predicted cost.</p>	FGB Agenda	Clerk	May 2016
FP 5.6	<p><b>School Development Plan (SDP): Mid-Year Review</b>  KK had defined the action and monitoring criteria for the objectives in the “Operational Excellence” section of the SDP.</p> <p>There was some discussion on how the objective of “ensuring IT services support optimum learning” could be measured as successful, it being agreed that to a large extent this relied on qualitative evidence and judgments after talking to staff, parents and students. Monitoring the effective use of IT is also to be added to the learning walks (classroom observations) undertaken by the Leadership Team and added as a question on the staff survey. TH noted that the use of software should be reviewed annually, particularly subscription software, to ensure a significant number of staff find it useful and continue to use it. It was agreed that reviewing the effective use of IT should become a regular item for leadership team meetings and that logs of usage might also prove helpful.</p> <p>To improve parents’ and students’ experience, several governors recommended the school consider creating a single page on the website to act as a portal from which relevant parent/student software programs can be reached, for example Progresso, Show My Homework and SAM learning.</p> <p><b>AGREED</b> that parent and student portal pages be created on the website, with the feasibility of having a single log-in for all services investigated as a second stage.</p> <p><b>AGREED</b> to accept a change to the SDP to drop an objective on fund generation, which the Senior Leadership Team proposed to defer [to be reported to the full governing body].</p>	Parent/student portal pages  FGB agenda	KK/TH  Clerk	July 2016  Mar 2016
FP 5.7	<p><b>Solar Panels</b>  At a recent meeting, Dorset County Council / Dorset Community Energy Trust (DCET) had expressed a desire to install the solar panels during the May half-term and therefore bring forward all milestones in signing</p>			

	<p>off the agreement. Legal aspects and a structural roof survey could be prepared by mid-April and it was <b>AGREED the committee would seek delegated authority from the full governing body to sign off the contract at its meeting on 4 May 2016.</b></p> <p>Re-siting the existing solar panels had been suggested by the DCET, and governors were satisfied that the DCET would be best placed to advise on where they go. This would mean all panels on the main roof would have the same maintenance and life-span as well as the overall effect being more aesthetically pleasing.</p> <p>It was noted that software will be provided to record usage and generation, which could be used as a learning resource.</p>	FGB agenda F&P agenda	Clerk Clerk	Mar 2016 May 2016
FP 5.8	<p><b>Catering</b> It was agreed to revisit this item at the next meeting as governors had picked up inaccuracies in the figures, and also as figures could be reworked in light of news on the student roll from September 2016.</p> <p>Governors asked about the school moving towards School Food Standards. It was agreed that the school’s approach should be expressed as catering “broadly in line” with the standards rather than in “full compliance” with. This was due to the standards being very prescriptive and as it was possible to deliver healthy nutritious menus without fully adhering to them.</p> <p>Governors suggested that there may be benefit from considering ways to expand the percentage uptake of meals, e.g. through marketing and development of what is on offer, rather than anticipating that income will rise only as a result of additional student numbers as the school grows. The potential for catering for the local primary schools was raised, but the SLT did not believe that the school yet had the capacity for this particularly given the logistical challenges it would create.</p> <p>[Clerk’s note: the paper was recirculated after the meeting, it being noted that the “staff costs” line had been hidden on the original, with the bottom line having been correct].</p>	Next agenda	Clerk	May 2016
FP 5.9	<p><b>Insurance</b> KK reported that insurance cover was now provided by the Risk Pooling Arrangement (RPA), which was less than half the cost of previous insurance for the same coverage. Three areas are not covered under the RPA, on which the school already had separate cover – vehicle insurance, overseas travel and engineering insurance. These had been arranged by a broker, Marsh, and three quotes would be sought when they are reviewed at the end of the year, rather than them being automatically renewed.</p>			

FP 5.10	<p><b>Any Other Business</b>  <u>Cricket Club</u>  Two successful meetings had been held with the Cricket Club in relation to the arrangements for them using the facilities. Under the terms of the RPA, the Club is able to become a key-holder which would negate the need for SchoolsPlus to charge for a key-holding service when the Club wished to take up the time-slots reserved for them. The new Youth Team Leader, Tim Ives, would be the key-holder and was said to understand the need to review times of access in future years and to begin a longer-term conversation about setting an end-date to the agreement. He would also do coaching with the school.</p>			
FP 5.11	<p><b>Confidentiality</b>  No items were considered to require confidential minuting.</p>			
FP 5.12	<p><b>Next Meeting/s</b>  Full Board of Governors – Wednesday 23 March 2016  Finance &amp; Premises Committee – Wednesday 4 May 2016</p> <p>Provisional agenda items for next meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft budget and 5-year budget plan</li> <li>- Premises annual report, maintenance plan &amp; risk register</li> <li>- Review of financial controls/procedures</li> <li>- Annual IT report</li> <li>- Solar panels agreement</li> </ul>			
	<p><b>The meeting ended at 6.55pm</b></p>			