

The Swanage School
MEETING OF THE STAFFING, FINANCE & PREMISES COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 15th May 2024 5.30pm

Minutes

Present: Tanya Hamilton- Fletcher (Chair), Isobel Tooley, Jenny Maraspin (Head), William Knight, Amanda Rowley, Claire Barnes, Dan Parker (on Teams)

In attendance: Andrew Thomas (Business Manager), Sarah Percival (Clerk)

Item		Action	Lead	By
SFP 5.1	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Tim Marcus			
SFP 5.2	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest			
SFP 5.3	Minutes of the Last Meeting The minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting held on 20 th March 2024 were approved, subject to minor amendments.			
SFP 5.4	Matters Arising & Actions Where not elsewhere on the agenda			
	SFP 2.13 TLR & UPS objective setting- JM to produce a couple of staff anonymised examples for the meeting Autumn 1	Produce examples	JM	Autumn 1
	SFP 4.5 No update on extra SEN funding as meeting with Dorset delayed to May.	Update next meeting	AT/ MB	Summer 2
	SFP 4.4 Canteen costs/ healthy eating- action clarified: AT to work with MC & kitchen staff and provide overview/ proposal to encourage more healthy eating and to take environmental effects into account	Prepare proposal	AT	Autumn 1
NOTE	<i>Items SFP 5.11 and 5.12 were taken early to accommodate Dan Parker's (Health & Safety Link Governor) availability.</i>			

	PREMISES & INFRASTRUCTURE			
SFP 5.11	<p>Health & Safety The Business Manager (Andrew Thomas, AT) thanked the Link governor for his thorough report. It was confirmed that the items raised by the Dorset Council H&S audit were in hand and would all be completed by the summer. Overheating in the Science room is an issue and solutions are being investigated.</p> <p>Some questions were raised in reviewing the Health & Safety Policy. It was agreed that the Business Manager, H & S link governor and the Facilities Manager would discuss these and bring the policy to the next meeting for reapproval. It was noted that the introduction of Martyn's Law (legislation being written in response to the Manchester Arena bombing) may have ramifications but there is no date set for this as yet.</p>	Review & bring to next meeting	AT/ DP/ IB	Summer 2
SFP 5.12	<p>Building & Premises Strategic Sub Group AT gave a verbal update on Lockdown/ Security Plan & costs and the progress of CIF bids. It is thought that the bids are likely to be successful as they come under the criteria of keeping the school open and safety & well-being. <u>Bid 1</u> to be submitted in November- repair/ replacement of gabion walls to stop the sports hall flooding- £30-40k. Potential match funding of 5-25%. <u>Bid 2</u>- lockdown system and security fence. Possible cost £100k, with match finding of £20k. AT is investigating solutions over the summer and will involve the e-safety Link Governor in the discussion around lockdown communications. The bid results would be expected early 2025, with construction summer 2025, complete by autumn 2025. There were no recent security concerns to report, except the theft of a spare wheel from a minibus. (Dan Parker left the meeting 6.10pm)</p>			
	FINANCIAL MATTERS			
SFP 5.5	<p>Business Manager's Reports- Budget Report & Management Accounts The report was included in the meeting pack. It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income is on track and the extra SEN funding from Dorset Council has not been factored in. 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-staff costs are under control, but maintenance of the school still has to be covered. • The overspend on staff is due to the cost of long-term sickness and compassionate leave, neither of which can be budgeted for. A discussion followed on whether these costs are managed effectively, balancing the duty of care with responsibility for managing costs. It was questioned whether the school needs to be more assertive in assessing claims, but the Head reassured the committee that cases were carefully considered and she is confident that the costs were justified. • A governor asked why there were extra costs for national tutoring. AT explained that funding from the National Tutoring Programme post-covid has now stopped, but the paid tutoring sessions to support students through GCSEs have continued. • The committee praised the Business Manager for keeping normal staffing costs under control. <p>(Claire Barnes left the meeting.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternity leave was not included in the budget and cover is being managed by other staff, although the knock-on effect is increased workload. • The Science teacher vacancy has been advertised with no response. The Head commented that recruitment is in crisis nationally, as well as locally. • Asked what the predicted deficit for the year would be, AT confirmed the position would be clearer by the end of June and the figure would be likely to reduce to around £65k (excluding any extra funding from Dorset Council). • Concern was raised that the deposit account is continually falling. • Providing Chromebooks for the incoming Y7s was discussed and it was agreed that this should continue as it has been promoted to parents, and they are now fundamental to the way teachers plan lessons. It was suggested that the school could ask parents for a contribution, and explain that the cost of the Chromebooks is not covered by council/ government funding. • In order to control costs, staffing for courses which have small groups and use specialised equipment needs to be carefully managed and the range of subjects offered could be revised. 			
SFP 5.6	<p>Draft Budget 2024-2025 to 2026-2027</p> <p>The draft was included in the meeting folder. The following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figures are based on 3% annual increases. • The number of teachers is broadly remaining the same. 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger staff in post are now maturing and progressing in pay scales. • Balance is important in recruiting the right person but keeping this affordable. • The Teachers Pension Scheme employer contributions are increasing by 5%. • Any extra SEN funding will need to be shared between SEN support and other costs within the budget. • The rise of 21% in clerical costs was queried: AT explained this was the new cost of the planned Attendance Officer. • The projected deficit is a growing concern and there is pressure to get the budget to surplus, especially considering the planned match funding for the CIF bids. <p>The Business Manager is positive about working towards a budget of 0%, apart from anything unforeseeable (such as long-term sickness costs) but the school will need to keep a tight control on spending.</p>			
SFP 5.7	<p>Policies The Finance Procedures Policy was APPROVED</p>	Publish	Clerk	
	STAFFING MATTERS			
SFP 5.8	<p>Data Protection The Business Manager confirmed on behalf of the DPO (Handsam) that there were no issues to report.</p> <p>The Data Protection Policy was reviewed and it was agreed that the Business Manager and William Knight would address the comments raised and bring the policy to the June meeting for reapproval.</p>	Review for reapproval	AT/WK	Summer 2
SFP 5.9	<p>Mental health Training for staff</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual report- received from the DSL in the meeting pack. The committee commented that it was very clear and helpful, showing how training enables teachers to support students with mental health needs. A few areas could be improved, as reflected in the staff voice. The recent Aspire training was beneficial. 2. Staff Feedback- the Head had circulated a summary of the recent staff survey, which was mostly positive. A governor noted that one or two people seemed disgruntled and asked how this was being followed up, adding that it is important 			

	to acknowledge their voice has been heard. The Head explained that she has been working with particular teachers and that situations are improving but it takes time for that to be perceived. The Chair commented that the survey was generally positive and reassuring.			
SFP 5.10	<p>Staffing The Head was thanked for a clear, informative report which was in the meeting pack. She added that there has been a recent resignation.</p> <p>Staff absence- AT noted that, although figures are increasing, this is being carefully monitored, with individual measures in place to make improvements, and small rewards for zero absence. There was a request to amend the table to include FTE available days.</p>	Include FTE in absence table	JM	
SFP 5.13	<p>Risk Register The risks owned by SF&P Committee, and 2 new risks added by Student Committee, were reviewed. Updates to be added to the Register.</p>	Update Risk Register	SP/ THF	Summer 2
SFP 5.14	<p>Any Other Business Purbeck Coast Radio has closed down and donated £3K worth of equipment to the school so a radio studio is being set up.</p>			
SFP 5.15	<p>Confidentiality No items were deemed confidential.</p>			
	<p>The meeting closed at 7.50pm. Next Meeting 26th June 2024 5.30pm to include: Approval of 3-year budget Review of insurance cover Convene Head appraisal panel & confirm process SDP end of year review</p>			