



## **ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **MINUTES OF A VIRTUAL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE ASSETS COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, 18 MAY 2021 at 1800 hours.**

**PARTICIPANTS:** Kevin Doogan [Chair]  
Pat Duprey  
Pat Higgins  
Bridget Pullen  
Bernie Mooney  
Peter Matthews  
John McDonald [Headteacher]

**Non-participants:** None

**In attendance:** Eileen Coyle, Minute taker

*The Headteacher opened the meeting with a prayer.*

### **KEVIN DOOGAN in the CHAIR**

#### **1 FORMALITIES**

**1.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:** The Governors confirmed that there were no changes to their declarations of interests made in the Autumn term, and that they had no pecuniary interests in the agenda item being discussed this evening.

**1.2 APOLOGIES FOR NON-PARTICIPATION:** There was full participation, therefore no apologies for non-participation were received.

## **2 THE PURPOSE OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING**

The extraordinary meeting of the Assets Committee had been convened to consider the completed School's Financial Value Statement [SFVS] for the 2020/21 financial year.

## **3 SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUE STATEMENT [SFVS]**

The purpose of the SFVS is to provide the governing board with assurance that the school is meeting the standards necessary to achieve a good level of financial health and resource management.

The checklist comprises seven sections – governance, strategy, annual budget setting, staffing, value for money, protecting public money and a dashboard. Each of the 29 questions needs to be answered to assure the LA that resources are managed effectively.

All maintained schools are required to complete the SFVS annually and to submit it to the Local Authority by 31 March. This year, the return deadline had been extended to 28 May 2021 due to the impact of the corona virus on schools.

## **4 PRESENTATION OF THE SFVS**

The Headteacher had forwarded the completed SFVS to members of the Assets Committee for reading in advance of the meeting, and to the school's bursar.

A member of the Committee referred to question 3 of the SFVS, viz:

**Does the governing body receive clear and concise monitoring reports on the budget position at least six times a year? Commenting that the answer, 'In part' had been given.**

The Headteacher replied that in accordance with the current Scheme for Financing Schools, and the provision of the SLA, the Assets Committee receives comprehensive financial reports from the Bursar three times a year, [ie. at each termly meeting]. At each Board meeting, the governors receive the minutes of the Assets Committee, together with a verbal account of the proceedings at the Assets Committee, and a verbal budget update from the Headteacher or the Finance Chair.

The intention is to look towards providing summary budget reports between meetings in order to comply with the requirement for the Governors to receive budget reports at least six times a year.

## 5 THE DISCUSSION

During the ensuing discussion, the Headteacher amplified as follows:

- The process for placing orders and authorising invoices has been clarified. One member of staff [usually the Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher] raises an order, and another member of staff authorises payment of the invoice.
- The debit card has been exchanged for a credit card. Unlike a credit card where it is necessary to wait for a statement to be issued, transactions using the debit card are taken from the bank account immediately. [A policy is needed to reflect this].
- Another child has joined the school – hopefully, a few more children will join the school prior to September.
- All the required financial policies and procedures are in place.
- The importance of making sure that everything is aligned with the School Development Plan had been discussed previously. This has been done by the Headteacher, although possibly the governors are not fully aware at present of where and how money is being spent. This is particularly important for the catch-up premium, and the pupil premium, which has changed recently.
- When the governors receive the pupil premium report, they will see that the Headteacher has modelled it on finance-based research to show how impact is measured. For example, Maths Whizz is an evidence-based programme whereby children have a virtual teacher, and if a child gets something wrong, the virtual teacher re-teaches it. The programme is expensive, therefore it is a question of whether to fund it using a mixture of the pupil premium and the catch up premium. In the past, some aspects were not evaluated as they should have been; it's a matter of bringing more rigour into what the school is doing.
- Several governors have high levels of financial expertise. Some run their own businesses and others work with financial institutions, and therefore have a good understanding of finances.
- A meeting with the trade unions will take place imminently looking at the staffing of the before and after school clubs, including the separation of contracts of employment, based on the school's needs with a separate contract for any additional hours worked. No staff member will suffer financial detriment; conversely it will provide an opportunity to increase their earning capacity. The salary payments will run through the school's budget but will be shown separately. Income will be channelled into the school's budget

- Responding to the consultation with parents, the intention is to provide wrap around care from 7.30 am, to 5.30/6.00 pm daily.

## **6 THE COMMITTEE'S RESPONSES**

A governor commented: The Headteacher is doing everything right, it would be beneficial to the staff, the parents and the children, and to the school, it is moving in the right direction and the Headteacher is enabling that correctly. I'm looking forward to the meeting when the Governors would find out the detail.

The Chair commented: The SFVS is an opportunity for the school to evaluate its procedures. Looking through the statement, the evidence has been provided, and unless anyone has an objection, I agree with the SFVS and am happy to sign it off.

No objections were raised and no further comments were made by the Committee.

## **7 THE DECISION**

The Chair reiterated that he was satisfied that the SFVS and that associated matters had been discussed fully.

**The Governors approved the SFVS for the 2020/21 financial year, without addition or amendment.**

## **8 THE FURTHER ACTION and TIMESCALE**

The Headteacher to make arrangements for the Chair of Governors to sign the SFVS electronically, and submission to the LA before 28 May 2021.

## **8 CONCLUDING COMMENTS AND CLOSURE OF MEETING**

The Chair thanked the Headteacher for completing the SFVS on behalf of the Governing Board, and for identifying the evidence to support the answers given.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the extraordinary meeting at 1847 hours.