



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

*Love one another as I have loved you*

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

**19 NOVEMBER 2020  
at 1700 hours**

**PARTICIPANTS:**

**John McDonald [Headteacher]  
Kevin Doogan [Chair]  
Pat Duprey [Vice Chair]  
Pat Higgins  
Bernie Mooney**

**Non-participants:**

**Peter Matthews, Bridget Pullen.**

**In attendance:**

**Liz Robinson, LA Bursar [Items 1-7 inc]  
Eileen Coyle, Minute taker**

#### **1 OPENING PRAYER, WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR NON-PARTICIPATION**

The Headteacher opened the meeting with a prayer.

He welcomed everyone and thanked everyone for their attendance at the first meeting of the newly-formed Assets Committee.

No apologies for non-participation had been received from Peter Matthews or from Bridget Pullen.

#### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Governors declared that there were no changes to the Declarations of Interest made at the Governors' meeting on 30 September 2020.

Having reviewed the agenda, the Governors confirmed that they had no personal, financial, contractual or prejudicial interest in any item on the agenda for to-day's meeting.

### **3 CONFIDENTIALITY**

The Governors agreed to maintain confidentiality in relation to all matters discussed at this meeting.

### **4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE JOINT PERSONNEL/PAY COMMITTEE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE on 16 JUNE 2020.**

Copies of the minutes of the joint Committee on 16 June 2020 had been forwarded electronically in advance to members of the Assets Committee.

The Headteacher shared a screen shot showing the minutes. He advised that the Deputy Head had since agreed to defer her retirement until 31 August 2021; the Committee had ratified the budget for 2020/21; a bid for funding the repairs to the roof had been forwarded to the Diocese; and everything was in place following the Health & Safety visit. He thanked Bernie Mooney for contacting the manager of Cherry Trees re parking on the school's behalf.

**RESOLVED: To confirm that the minutes are a true and accurate record of the joint meeting on 16 June 2020.**

### **5 MATTERS ARISING**

**5.1 RECRUITMENT OF DEPUTY HEADTEACHER:** A schedule of dates had been tentatively agreed with the Diocese, viz:

**18 January:** Governors to meet to agree the job description and person specification; **8 February:** Post to be advertised with closing date of 5 March: **Tuesday, 23 March:** Interviews/selection to take place.

**5.2 RECRUITMENT OF TEACHER:** A vacancy for a teacher will arise following a retirement in July.

A Governor enquired if filling the vacancy was affordable, given the deficit forecast at budget setting.

The bursar replied that it was expected at budget setting that the number on roll would fall by 16; meanwhile six pupils have been admitted across the school, reducing pupil numbers by ten. The retiring UPS3 teacher would be replaced by a mainscale teacher.

**5.3 ELECTRONIC ENTRY SYSTEM:** The school has purchased an Inventory system at a total cost of £9,226, funded from DFC. The new system has been installed.

## **6 CONSTITUTION AND ORGANISATION**

**6.1 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR:** In the absence of nominations in advance, Kevin Doogan self-nominated as Chair, and Pat Duprey, self-nominated as Vice Chair, subject to the Headteacher agreeing to lead at virtual meetings.

**6.2 THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSETS COMMITTEE** comprises. Kevin Doogan, Peter Matthews, Pat Duprey, Pat Higgins, Bridget Pullen, Bernie Mooney and the Headteacher.

**6.3 TERMS OF REFERENCE:** The Committee agreed the Terms of Reference for the Assets Committee, as presented.

**6.4 THREE COMMITTEE PRIORITIES:** The three priorities agreed for 2020/21 were to –

- carefully monitor the school's budget and the impact of the reduced intake;
- respond to the SFVS questionnaire, being aware of recent changes and additional questions, [eg. on benchmarking]
- monitor pupil premium and catch-up funding, ensuring that it is spent appropriately on children who are entitled to free school meals or are disadvantaged.

## **7 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**7.1 DELEGATED BUDGET: 2020/21:** The bursar shared a screen shot with the Committee showing the period 6 budget report, drawing attention to the changes since budget setting.

*[The bursar's commentary is appended].*

The Headteacher suggested that the drop in uptake of before and after clubs was because local alternative providers cater for children up to 6 pm, [compared to 4.45 pm in the school]. He explained the reasons that the school does not offer nursery provision, and discussed the possibility of extending the school day.

Referring to the Whole School Pay Policy, the Headteacher and the bursar confirmed that the recommendations in the policy had been built into the budget.

**A cumulative credit balance of £142,945 is projected for 2020/21, a credit of £159,055 in 2021/22; a credit of £103,829, in 2022/23, and a credit of £31.399 in 2023/24.**

The Headteacher thanked the Bursar, and she withdrew.

**7.2 DEVOLVED FORMULA CAPITAL:** The Headteacher shared the screen showing DFC funding for 2020/21, indicating that £694 remained unspent from an allocation of £15,343.

Expenditure totalling £772,20, including 10% Diocese liability, had been incurred on a new entry system to improve safeguarding, and to purchase laptops to ensure that every staff member has the use of a new laptop.

The Headteacher outlined a proposal to replace the existing lighting within the school with LED lighting, based on a leasing arrangement with E-light. He had discussed the proposal with the Diocese's representative, who had suggested that another company looked at.

Bernie Mooney raised questions about the legal aspects, she mentioned the word '*salesmanship*' and urged a cautious approach, adding, '*If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is*'.

Kevin Doogan, asked: *Who takes over the contract if the company ceases to exist?*

The Headteacher gave a commitment to find answers to the questions and to present quotations and full information at the Board meeting on 24 November.

**7.3 CHARGING POLICY/BEST VALUE/DELEGATED AUTHORITY :** The Headteacher reported that there were no changes to the Charging Policy or to the delegated authority.

**7.4 BENCHMARKING:** Some work had been carried out on Benchmarking, the item would be included on the agenda at a future meeting.

**7.5 REVIEW OF SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD:** The nominated governor for Safeguarding, Nicola Boyd, would visit the school shortly to review the record.

**7.6 Safer Recruitment PROCESSES: GOVERNOR INVOLVEMENT:** Kevin Doogan and Bernie Mooney expressed a wish to renew their Safeguarding Training.

The Headteacher gave an undertaking to arrange the training required.

## **8 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Headteacher stated that the policies were all Wirral policies, he referred to the consultation that had taken place with the appropriate bodies, and highlighted changes in 2020/21. He read out the list of new/revised HR

policies and procedures, invited questions, and recommended that the Committee adopts –

- **The Whole School Pay Policy: 2020/21**
- **The Performance Management/Appraisal Policy 2020/21**
- **The Whistleblowing Policy**
- **The new/revised HR policies and procedures, as listed.**

The Headteacher advised that Governors need to devote a considerable amount of time and attention to carrying out a thorough review of the school's Financial Policies and Procedures manual.

He suggested that the item is included as a major agenda item for the next meeting of the Committee, when responses would need to be given to the SFVS questionnaire.

## **9 PREMISES/HEALTH & SAFETY**

The Headteacher suggested that the review of the school's Health & Safety Policy, and ensuring it is effectively implemented, is deferred to a future meeting.

The Headteacher reported on premises issues, as follows:

- Risk Assessments for Covid-19 reflect changes in the arrangements
- Work on the roof and replacement windows will be costly. Window winders will cost about £5,000.
- All actions identified in the last Health & Safety inspection have been completed.
- The emergency plan has been updated.
- All procedures have been checked and updated
- The school is moving towards a system of Parent Pay whereby parents can choose meals in advance, and highlight any allergies to bring to the attention of Edsential.

## **10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2020 at 5 pm.**

## **11 OTHER BUSINESS**

**11.1 FRONT PERIMETER FENCING:** A bid for funding has been made to the Diocese to increase the height of the anti-climb fencing at the front of the school to 2.3 metres, which may need planning permission. The increased height would allow the outside area to be used more productively for the benefit of the children.

**11.2 EARLY YEARS' PROVISION:** The design and layout of the building restricts its use. Dividing the main corridor by adding two doors would enable

Reception children to go from the classroom straight to the outside area. A bid for funding for the two doors, fitted with magnetic locks, had been submitted to the Diocese.

**11.3 MAXIMISING OUTDOOR SPACE:** Although this proposal may be controversial because it affects the staff car park, the Headteacher had sought advice from the LA's Chief Building Officer about the possibility of extending the car park area almost as far as the Parish hall to provide more outdoor space for use by Reception children, advising the officer that the school had no funds to pay for the work. There are two drains in the area, which the building officer stated could be moved, without difficulty. Risk assessments would need to be carried out, and the whole area would need a play safe surface.

In closing the meeting at 1821 hours, the Headteacher thanked everyone for their support and gave a commitment that all the agenda items would be covered fully at the next meeting.

<b>FOR ACTION BY HEADTEACHER</b>		
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>WHEN</b>
<b>Replacement of school lighting Min. 7.2</b>	<b>Respond to Governors' questions. Present quotation, full specification and other information to Governors.</b>	<b>Board meeting 24/11/20.</b>
<b>Benchmarking Min. 7.4</b>	<b>Include as a major item on the agenda.</b>	<b>Future meeting of the Assets Committee.</b>
<b>Governor Safeguarding Training Min. 7.6</b>	<b>Arrange training for Kevin Doogan and Bernie Mooney.</b>	<b>ASAP</b>
<b>Financial Policies &amp; Procedures Min. 8</b>	<b>Support and facilitate the Assets Committee in carrying out a thorough review of Financial policies manual, and in responding to the SFVS</b>	<b>Spring term 2021 meeting of Assets Committee.</b>

	questionnaire.	
Other business – Building/structural issues. Min. 11	Update the Assets Committee on the three proposals relating to changes to the building and external environment.	Ongoing, as and when progress is made.

**ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**ASSETS COMMITTEE:**  
**19 NOVEMBER 2020**  
**LA BURSAR'S COMMENTARY**

HEADING	COMMENT
INCOME	<p>Overall, income has increased by £12,346, made up of various grants that were unknown at the start of the financial year.</p> <p>The future of the teachers' pay and pension grants were uncertain, but from 2021/22 onwards these costs would be subsumed into the DSG and no longer be shown separately.</p> <p>Although there are fewer numbers on roll, the budget allocation will increase overall by £70,000.</p> <p>Universal free school meal numbers are down considerably which will reduce the pupil premium this year. To be realistic, the PP budget for next year has been reduced accordingly.</p> <p>There had been uncertainty about the continuation of the DfE Sports/PE grant, but it has been assured for this academic year. The income has been offset by spending shown in the Expenditure section.</p> <p>The school has been awarded catch up funding totalling £18,167, [based on 386 pupils at £80 per pupil] paid in three tranches, with a final tranche of £12,510 in the next financial year.</p> <p>Schools are allowed to reclaim from the DfE additional expenditure incurred in the Summer term as a result of Covid-19. This school has been reimbursed £10,320, for additional cleaning costs, PPE, sanitisers, dispensers etc.</p> <p>The indicative figure for the Pupil Premium was in the region of £145,000, £150,860 has been received, without taking account of additional Children Looked After</p> <p>Income includes £222 - parental contributions for trips and PTA contributions.</p> <p>Parents are tending to send their children to school with packed lunches; reducing considerably the number of hot meals provided by Edsential. This is the worst case scenario, the numbers might pick up in the winter months, and will be reviewed at period 9.</p> <p>Whereas in the past, before and after clubs have been full with waiting lists, the numbers attending now are down. <i>[Please see Headteacher's comments in main minutes.]</i></p> <p>Recharges: SEN units. Budget £28,340. Income to date £10,900,</p>



	<p>based on 5 units in summer and autumn, and 7 in spring. Estimated income reduced for next three years. .</p> <p>Wirral LA is consulting on changes to the Minimum Funding Guarantee. If the outcome is as expected, this school could be in a slightly better position.</p>
<p><b>EXPENDITURE</b></p>	<p><u>Teachers' Pay.</u> The figures show the saving that can be expected by recruiting a main scale teacher to replace a UPS3 teacher mentioned earlier.</p> <p><u>APT, non-teaching staff:</u> A budgeted pay increase of 3% came in at 2.75%, producing savings of £2,105.</p> <p>Savings have been produced by the additional cleaning hours built into the budget have not being worked every week.</p> <p><u>Premises:</u> Budget has been spent for the most part.</p> <p><u>Cleaning Materials.</u> An overspend of £2,000 has been offset by reimbursement of additional costs incurred due to Covid-19.</p> <p><u>Classroom supplies,</u> code 2005, needs to be closely monitored. Spending reduced in the summer when pupils were not in school, but increased substantially on their return. Only £5,000 of the £25,000 budget remains to cover the second half of the year. The budget has been increased to £30,000 for the next three years.</p> <p><u>Swimming Baths:</u> As expected, nil expenditure was incurred in the Summer term. The budget from next year has been doubled to cover the costs of lessons for non-swimmers in year 4, and to enable years 5 and 6 to reach the minimum standards for swimming and life saving.</p> <p><u>SLAs:</u> The only external provider is Edsential [meals]. The number of children entitled to free school meals who are actually taking a meal is unknown. Will be reviewed at period 9.</p>