



ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL JOINT MEETING OF
THE PERSONNEL/PAY COMMITTEE AND
THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

16 JUNE 2020

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

**Apologies for
non-participation:** None

In attendance: Ann Evans, Deputy Headteacher
Ollie Price Business Manager
Liz Robinson, LA Bursar
Eileen Coyle, Minute taker

1 ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED: To elect Pat Duprey Chair of the joint Committee meeting.

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PAT DUPREY in the CHAIR

2 OPENING PRAYER, WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR NON-PARTICIPATION

The Chair opened the meeting with a prayer.

She welcomed and thanked everyone for joining the virtual joint meeting of the Personnel/Pay Committee and the Finance Committee.

All members of the two Committees were participating therefore there were no apologies for non-participation.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Governors declared that there were no changes to the Declarations of Interest made at a Governors' meeting.

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 joint meeting.

4 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE on 25 February 2020

Copies of the minutes of the Finance Committee on 25 February had been forwarded electronically in advance to members of the Personnel/Pay Committee and the Finance Committee.

The Governors who had attended the meeting -

RESOLVED: To confirm that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance Committee on 25 February 2020 are true and accurate account of that meeting.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON 25 FEBRUARY 2020.

There were no matters arising from the meeting of the Finance Committee on 25 February 2020.

6 PERSONNEL ASPECTS

6.1 RECRUITMENT OF DEPUTY HEADTEACHER: The Headteacher thanked Ann Evans for kindly agreeing to help the school by delaying her retirement until Christmas

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2020; a gesture that was of considerable benefit to the whole school community, and was very much appreciated indeed.

Prior to the lockdown, three applications had been received following advertisement for the vacant post of Deputy Headteacher. The three candidates had been advised that the recruitment process has been paused until further notice, that the vacancy will be re-advertised, and that their applications will be kept on file and considered at the appropriate time.

The Headteacher was hopeful that schools would be back to normal in the Autumn. He invited the views of the joint Committees on a proposal to re-advertise the post at the end of August/early September and to complete the appointment process within a time scale that would allow the successful candidate to give notice to their current employer by 31 October. An adviser from the Diocese would be involved throughout the process.

RESOLVED: To approve the process outlined for the appointment of a Deputy Headteacher from 1 January 2021.

6.2 CONTRACTUAL CHANGES: The Headteacher reported that some TAs were on fixed term contracts, two mid day assistants were contracted to the end of the year; one contract would not be renewed.

A teacher had given notice to leave due to moving to live in another area.

Budgetary provision has been for a replacement teacher at the top of M6 salary scale, but clearly savings could be made if the successful candidate is a newly qualified teacher.

The Headteacher asked the joint committee for agreement to advertise the vacancy internally within the school and externally outside the school.

RESOLVED: To note the resignation and approve the arrangements proposed by the Headteacher for the recruitment of a replacement teacher.

6.3 Shielding staff: A small number of staff members who are vulnerable or anxious about being in school are currently being shielded due to Covid-19. The school is being very supportive and gentle in its approach to these members of staff, and, as yet, no-one has yet been asked to complete a self-declaration form.

The advice from HR is not to be too confrontational and the school is calling on all the resources it has to help those people.

A governor agreed with the approach, adding that it is also necessary to do what is right for the person as well as the school; there are no hard and fast rules but there is a need to believe that people are doing the right thing in their particular circumstances.

In reply to a direct query from the Chair, the Headteacher advised that five members of staff - two TAs, one support staff member, and two cleaning staff - were shielding

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at home. All members of the teaching staff are attending school and working, according to the rota.

The Headteacher continued that some extra cleaning hours have been incurred. The school can reclaim additional expenditure incurred due to Covid, eg for signage and sanitizers, using a special expenditure code

6.2 STAFFING STRUCTURE: 2020/21: The Headteacher paid tribute to Ann Evans, describing her as the *'oil that smoothes everything, and the rota queen, she does a fantastic job behind the scenes'*. He added that relationships are key to any good organisation; staffing levels are stable, everything will be all right until Christmas, and hopefully going forward.

7 DELEGATED BUDGET

The Chair welcomed the bursar to the virtual meeting.

7.1 OUTTURN: The bursar directed the Committee to the information at the bottom of page 4 of the budget report. She reminded the Finance Committee that period 9/10 last year predicted an outturn of approximately £83,000. An additional grants [for Pupil Premium and free school meals] received in the final quarter increased the outturn to £89,876.

The information given below has been extracted from the budget report:-

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Delegated budget C/F | 0 | -£89,876 |
| LMS reserve | -£70297 | -£137,763 |

7.2 Three year projections:

| Year | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/14 |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Delegated budget c/f | -£137,763 | £11,161 | £163,611 |
| LMS reserves | £11,161 deficit | £163,611 deficit | £333,022 deficit |

The bursar's commentary is appended.

The Headteacher stated undoubtedly, both Committees would have some important questions to ask in terms of what can be done to address the projected deficits going forward. The situation would require careful planning and careful management going forward. There would be a need to review the staffing structure and to consider other ways reducing costs and generating additional income.

The bursar stated that it was not unusual for schools to have those huge figures; it all depends on what the DfE decide to do in September. It is already known that the

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per-pupil allocation will increase from £3,750 to £4,000, but information is still awaited on the school's final intake in September.

The bursar drew attention to the final sheet which indicated that a credit balance of £137,763 would be produced in 2020/21, a deficit of £11,161 in 2021/22, increasing to a deficit of £163,611 in 2022/23 and a deficit of £333,022 in 2023/24.

A governor commented that some people who are furloughed may not have a job when the scheme ends, therefore more children may qualify for free school meals. There is a need to encourage more engagement with the parents, especially those who may not be aware that they qualify for free school meals.

The Committee recommended that the questionnaire to parents about their eligibility for free school meals is re-sent.

The Committee was pleased to note that the Government had to-day agreed to extend the voucher scheme throughout the school holidays.

A governor stated that many children are living in poverty and enquired if the school was looking at bids for funding it could apply for.

The Headteacher replied that he was aware that the Headteacher at New Brighton Primary School is co-ordinating a scheme to help families and is receiving funding for hampers. He suggested the action points –

Find out what is available, including the funding streams that look at the development of the school building, so it doesn't come out of the school's budget, eg Sports England should be able to help with playground space. Re-send the questionnaire re eligibility for free school meals to parents.

The staff governor highlighted the fact that this school coordinates hampers with input from the staff who contribute to and deliver hampers to many families.

The Committee acknowledged the generosity of the staff and thanked them for their efforts.

RESOLVED: To –

- i. approve the school's budget for 2020/21 as presented and recommend that it is ratified at the next Governors' meeting;**
- ii. thank the bursar for her efforts and hard work in preparing the budget, for her useful commentary, and for participating in the virtual meeting.**

The bursar withdrew from the virtual meeting.

8 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE/MAINTENANCE PRIORITIES

The Headteacher reported that the only capital expenditure was £1,200 spent on the entry point to the school.

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The school's allocation of DFC funding for this year totalled £12,000, for use in maintaining the premises and for IT.

Discussions with staff had taken place on the possibility of having an electronic entry system, which would eliminate the needs to maintain lists when children go off site etc. Quotations in the region of £3,500 have been received.

A leak in the roof has resulted in some water damage to the floor. The Diocese has been made aware of a roof survey which estimated that the work required would cost almost £200,000.

RESOLVED: **To -**

- i thank the Headteacher for the update on maintenance priorities;**
- ii receive and consider the quotations or the electronic entry system at the next meeting.**

9 OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 LA Internal Auditor's Visit, Report and Recommendations. The LA's Internal Audit Service had carried out an audit of the school on 19/20 June 2019.

The auditor's report dated 12 July 2019 stated: *'The objectives of the audit were to evaluate the effectiveness of the control environment at the school. A review of responses and evidence provided during the visit suggested that a **satisfactory** system of control is in place. Areas for improvement identified during the visit related to improving the system in operation'*.

The improvements related [*inter alia*] to: Terms of reference for Governors' Committees, the delegated limits and authorised signatures list, declarations of interest, purchases, SLAs, and the assets register.

The former Headteacher had overseen the actions taken to address the recommendations. An outstanding action referred to the lack of terms of reference for Governors' Committees.

The Headteacher advised that he intended to bring forward proposals for the rationalisation of the current system for Governors' committees for implementation from Autumn 2020. Any changes should be Governor led and he would very much appreciate input by the Governors. A complete set of terms of reference which would give clarity on the responsibilities and decision-making powers of each Committee would be produced as part of the exercise.

RESOLVED: **To –**

- i. receive and note the Internal Audit report and recommendations;**
- ii. ask the Headteacher to convene an extraordinary meeting of the Governing Board in early July/September 2020 to review and consider ways to improve the current Committee system, and to produce terms of reference for each Committee.**

9.2 LA Health & Safety Inspection Report and Recommendations: The Local Authority's Health & Safety Team had carried out a Health & Safety inspection of the school premises on 7 February 2020.

The report stated: **The audit process was very well prepared for and there is a clear safety culture from the team. The school is tidy and well-presented and the documentation is well ordered.**

The report included a series of recommendations.

The Acting Headteacher, Ann Evans, had signed off all the actions as completed, except training on the use of the evacuation chair, which was outstanding due to difficulty in identifying a trainer due to Covid-19. Training would be arranged in the Autumn term 2020, and following completion, the reviewing officer would be notified accordingly.

The reviewing officer's further comments stated: *Many thanks for all the information provided during the audit. It is recognised that the school has worked hard to comply with what is required and it has made good steps towards having all the documentation in place as directed on the Governors/Self check list.*

I can confirm that all evidence was in place other than the actions that form the body of this report.

At the meeting of the Finance Committee on 25 February 2020, the Acting Headteacher had given an in-depth account of the inspection and the progress made in addressing each recommendation.

The Headteacher produced a letter from the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service which confirmed that the school building was fully compliant with current Fire Regulations.

RESOLVED: To –

- i. receive and formally sign off the report and recommendations on the LA's Health & Safety Inspection of the school's premises;**
- ii. thank the then Acting Headteacher, Ann Evans, for her tenacity and determination to address the recommendations at a time when she was undertaking extra senior management duties and responsibilities in addition to her teaching role;**
- iii. ask the Headteacher to pass on the thanks of the Committee to Jon, the Caretaker, and commend his competence, skill and expertise, in addressing the issues highlighted, at minimum cost to the school;**
- iv. note that confirmation has been received from the Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service that the school building is fully compliant with Fire Regulations.**

9.3 CHERRY TREES CAR PARK: The parking space on the school's ground is being used to accommodate two extra bubbles in the current crisis. The staff are using the Cherry Trees car park, which is free at present.

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The Headteacher asked a Governor if she was aware of anything in relation to the parking.

The Governor replied that she would pop in next week and have a catch up.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their participation and input and closed the virtual meeting.

**SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD OF THE VIRTUAL JOINT MEETING OF THE
PERSONNEL AND FINANCE COMMITTEES ON 16 JUNE 2020.**

CHAIR

DATE:

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APPENDIX

ST ALBAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
JOINT PERSONNEL/PAY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE:
16 JUNE 2019
LA BURSAR'S VERBAL REPORT

| HEADING | COMMENT |
|---|---|
| PROJECTIONS Costings at budget setting for 2020/21 etc. | 2020/21. Projected credit, £47,886 actual. All confirmed, based on the number of pupils in the October census. |
| I N C O M E | <p>Pupil Premium is based on Ever 6, free school meals, and LACs based on the census. They are static at the moment.</p> <p>The other income is a mixture of universal and free school meals, the pupil premium grant, the PE grant and any self-developed income from before and after school clubs, residentials, and non-curriculum trips.</p> <p>The total income for 2020/21 is £1,908,753.</p> |
| E X P E N D I T U R E | |
| STAFFING | <p>2.5% pay rise for teachers and 3% pay rise for non-teaching staff has been built in to the budget.</p> <p>The pay and pensions grants have stopped this year. 18.2% has been built in for pension commitments for staff who retired between the ages of 50 and 65. The situation will be reviewed at periods 6 and 9, and if not taken up by period 9, the amount will be put back in the outturn.</p> |
| OTHER COSTS | <p>Last year's budget has been rolled over for the majority of spends. Any increased spends for Covid or changes to school insurance and other changes have been built in.</p> <p>In September, a prediction will be made of how much the budget will be. The drop in pupil numbers [16] this year, given that each pupil is worth £4,000, means a drop in budget share of £64K.</p> <p>There has been a drop of 10% in the birth rate in Wirral. Assumptions have been made that it is a one-year blip, but if it is a trend, there is likely to be a further drop in intake going forward. This is something the Governors and the school need to take account of.</p> <p>Information is awaited on the PE grant. A one-year extension was given last year. The grant is paid from September to August. . An assumption has been made for budget setting purposes that the grant will cease in August 2020.</p> <p>Information is awaited on the Teachers' pay grant. Assumptions have been made that it will be incorporated into the DSG in future.</p> <p>Hopefully, from next year, the school will receive more pupil premium, but it will receive less universal free school meals, because it is not funded twice.</p> |