

THE GOVERNING BODY OF RAVENSHALL SCHOOL

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee held at 4.45 pm at the school on Wednesday, 15 May 2024.

PRESENT

Mr R Robinson (Head Teacher), Mr L Crowther, Ms K Dickinson, Miss S Hoffmann, Mrs J Kilbride, Ms S Lee

In Attendance

Ms C Blackburn (Observing)
Ms R Thackray (School Business Manager/Associate Member)
Mrs L Howatson (Minute Clerk)

25. ELECTION OF CHAIR

The meeting was taken out of order at this point, to allow for the arrival of Ms K Dickinson.

26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, CONSENT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Ms K Dickinson arrived late to the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest.

27. NOTIFICATION OF ITEMS TO BE BROUGHT UP UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items were notified to be brought up under any other business.

28. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2024

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the last meeting held on 17 January 2024 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

29. MATTERS ARISING**(a) SFVS**

This was an annual check of the school's financial capability and the opportunity for governors to ensure that the school was managing finances effectively. Governors were invited to contribute to the document.

Ms Thackray advised that the SFVS had been approved and submitted to the LA.

(b) Feedback on Leasing of Buses

Following a successful appeal, the school had leased two replacement mini buses and awaited delivery.

30. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

Ms R Thackray distributed copies of the Finance Report to the Governing Body and provided an update to the committee.

(a) End of Year Report 2023-24

Ms Thackray presented the Final Outturn Budget Monitoring Report for 2023-24.

She explained that the Budget Monitoring report from the LA had been balanced to the school's financial records. The closing balance was presented to governors alongside the Final Outturn Budget Monitoring Report.

A carry over from last year was recorded at £229,466 and this would be used to top up the teacher's budget

(b) Overspend/Underspend

The main areas of underspend were in Classroom Support Staff and Admin and Clerical. The main areas over overspend were seen in supplies and services.

Ms Thackray advised that a government grant had been received to fund the teacher pay increase. An internal income surplus reflected staff insurance income received in excess of the budgeted figure

(c) 2024-25 Budget Planning

Ms Thackray advised that staff costs accounted for 96.8% of the budget and that staffing was therefore considered the focus of any meaningful savings.

Ms Thackray explained that she had applied a 5% increase across staffing. The LA suggested 6%, but having discussed this with the Head Teacher, and the LA Finance Officer, 5% was agreed in an effort to help set a balanced budget.

By comparison, 3.5% was being offered by unions.

Q. How long will the pay increase be in place for?

A. It might be after Christmas 2024 when we find out what teachers' pay rise will be, and this will be backdated to September 2024. So it's difficult to know what the forecasts are.

Governors were advised that, in order to achieve a balanced budget for submission to the LA, a number of costs had been reduced. There was no contingency included in the B3 for the coming year.

Governors discussed the fact that school budgets were under pressure and that Ravenshall School was not an exception to this trend. Unless additional grants were made available by the DfE, then staffing costs could not exceed the budget.

Following discussions with the LA's Finance Officer, Ms Thackray explained that the school had estimated the teachers' pension grant. All mainstream schools

knew what they were to get, but Ms Thackray explained that a different mechanism was in place for special schools. A grant of £255k was eventually offered.

Our teacher pay grant was £90, so on that basis, school was allowed put £125k.

Q. Will this cover the pension grant?

A. We don't know yet.

Ms Thackray advised that she had checked any staff who currently did not pay into the pension scheme. Governors were advised that a number of staff did not, and that this had saved the school nearly £40k which was an indication of how stripped back the budget was.

Ms Thackray proposed taking the budget to FGB and asked that governors agree it tonight.

RESOLVED: That the budget be approved for submission to FGB.

(d) Premises and Resources

It was noted that work continued with Pinnacle FM to ensure that premises resources were maintained through the Life Cycle budget. Recent repairs were undertaken on the all weather play surface in the Discovery Playground, repairs to the Modular Building and the replacement of blinds in the dining hall.

A schedule of repairs/works were being discussed and would include decoration in a number of classrooms and some new flooring. Work was expected to be completed during the summer break.

Ms Thackray advised that the PPP contract was due to end shortly and this had triggered a series of expiry meetings with the LA. It was understood that the school's input into work would increase at 5 years expiry. Governor involvement may be required as the end of the contract came closer. Updates would be shared with the Resources and Finance Committee.

Governors were advised that the school was in the early stages of investigating the cost and benefit of solar panel installation. It was hoped that this was a project which would involve all three schools included in the PPP contract, and that Ravenshall would possibly benefit from savings as a result.

Some grants were available for this type of work, for example the Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) grant. Governors were advised that Ravenshall's balance was currently approximately £85k, and the 2024 allocation was yet to be confirmed.

It was noted that the school car park was also being considered for improvement, with the addition of 10 spaces having been identified as being required. This work, if it was to go ahead, would be dependent on using DFC.

(e) Photocopiers

Governors were advised that the 5 year contract with IT@Spectrum was to come to an end soon. A quote was received from the current supplier in the

amount of £3,450 per quarter, which included new and upgraded machines as well as conversion to a cloud based server. Comparative quotes had been received from other suppliers, but whilst these were cheaper, other schools who use them had reported numerous difficulties with breakdowns and poor service. Governors were asked to agree that the school could renew it's existing contract with IT@Spectrum.

RESOLVED: That the existing contract with IT@Spectrum could be renewed.

32. SCHOOL LED TUTORING CLAIM

It was noted that the school would not submit a claim this year. The school had had an allocation for spring and summer, but there was no requirement for any more. It was noted that the school would pay this back in January but had set aside £6k for this.

ACTION: GCS to remove this item from future agenda.

33. IMPACT OF RISING ENERGY COSTS ON SCHOOL BUDGET

This was not discussed.

ACTION: GCS to remove this item from future agenda.

34. IMPACT OF STAFF PAY RISES ON SCHOOL BUDGET

This was not discussed.

ACTION: GCS to remove this item from future agenda.

35. HEALTH & SAFETY

Governors were advised that Mrs Kilbride had visited the school. A walkabout of the full school had taken place. Mrs Kilbride was pleasantly surprised when she visited the secondary school that nothing untoward had been found.

RIDDOR

Governors were advised that there had been two incidents where a serious incident form was required to be filled in. One of the incidents had led to a member of staff being absent from school for 3 days.

Q. Have actions been implemented?

A. Yes, and we are waiting for the department leader to put together a risk assessment.

Governors were advised that someone had tripped over a defective carpet strip. This had resulted in Pinnacle being called out. A move around of furniture in the classroom concerned was undertaken to mitigate any future incidents.

Q. Would staff inform you, usually, if they had noticed any risks?

A. Yes, we regularly receive notification of risks and/or potential hazards and we always act upon them.

Q. Do you have any pupil ambassadors involved in raising health and safety concerns?

A. No, but this would be worth thinking about doing.

36. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

Ms K Dickinson arrived at 5:25 pm and the meeting returned to Agenda item 1 at this point.

Before requesting nominations, it was agreed that the term of office of the new chair would be one year.

Nominations were sought. Governors agreed to elect Ms S Lee as Committee Chair.

RESOLVED: That Ms S Lee be elected chair for a period of one year.

37. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of any other business.

38. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS AND POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS

Autumn term dates were yet to be agreed. The Head Teacher asked governors if they were happy for him to schedule the equivalent times and days for next year. Governors were happy for the Head Teacher to do this.

ACTION: The Head Teacher to share dates of meetings for the next academic year.

39. AGENDA, MINUTES AND RELATED PAPERS – SCHOOL COPY

RESOLVED: That no part of these minutes, agenda or related papers be excluded from the copy to be made available at the School, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

The Chair closed the meeting at 17:37 pm.

ACTION LOG:

No.	Min Ref	Action	By Whom
1	22(i)	That governors would review the SFVS document and email any questions or comments to the SBM.	Complete
2.	22(iii)	That governors were asked to feedback any more thoughts on the leasing of buses to the SBM.	Complete
3.	32	School Led Tutoring Claim - GCS to remove this item from future agenda	GCS
4.	33	Impact of rising energy costs on school budget - GCS to remove this item from future agenda	GCS
5.	34	Impact of staff pay rises on school budget - GCS to remove this item from future agenda	GCS
6.	38	The Head Teacher to share dates of meetings for the next academic year	Head Teacher