



Gusford Primary School

The *Active Learning* Trust

"Promoting Achievement and Success"

Meeting of Finance and Property Committee held on Monday 13th June 2016, 5.30pm

Present:	Mr Gavin Fisk (Chair)	GF
	Mr Daniel Bloomfield	DB
	Mr Richard Marlow (Bursar)	RM
	Mrs Janet Shanks	JS
	Mr Colin Tapscott	CT
Apologies:	Mr Roland Fothergill	RF
	Miss Trudy Stannard	TS
In Attendance:	Mrs Toni Cornish (Clerk)	TC

No.	Item	Explanation	Who	Time
1.	Apologies:	Given and noted above.		
2.	Confirmation of Minutes and Matters Arising from the last meeting			
		The minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 th March 2016 were reviewed. The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting. TC will update the Policy Review Schedule with those policies discussed under agenda item 5.		
3.	Matters Arising			
		There were no matters arising.		
4.	Opportunity to declare an interest on any item on the agenda			
		DB declared an interest under item 6, Finance Update, due to his employment with Premier Sports, as hirers of facilities at Gusford. DB also declared an interest in the Staffing Update within this section also as his wife is a Teaching Assistant at Gusford. CT declared an interest under item 6, Staffing Update as his wife is a Supply Teacher.		
5.	Policy Review			
		There were no policies due for review.		
6.	Finance Update			
		School Budget 2016/17 – RM circulated the report to Governors ahead of the meeting and apologised for the late circulation. RM confirmed the Revenue Financial Forecast was submitted to ALT for approval. The report shows income, expenditure and in year position. This is a 5 year forecast, based on growing pupil numbers. Page two of the report shows a breakdown of the increase in		

funding and is based on census information. Despite the rising income, predicted funding will not be increased by the EFA for the foreseeable future. Pressures will be around support staffing costs, due to the national minimum wage. Lower grades will disappear, resulting in an increase in wages of approximately £30k. This sum is the equivalent to 3 TA posts. The NI contributions have risen too. The in year position as a positive can only be achieved by reducing staffing by not renewing temporary contracts. In 2016/17 one GI will be moving to become a TA and a TA will be moving in the FET behaviour team. CT referred to natural wastage and staff not being replaced.

GF questioned what are implications in terms of staff to pupil ratio and will this impact on education. CT explained how the staffing structure budget will allow a TA in each class every morning and some in the afternoon. CT is due to meet with the SENCO to discuss these arrangements further as there are a number of high needs pupils leaving at the end of the academic year which will result in allocation of SEN fitting the needs. Overall pupil to staff ratio will not be as good. The ratio has been manageable for this year but it is unsure at this stage which pupils will be at school over the next 2/3 years. The healthy carry forward allows for this.

GF questioned why the expenditure for supply teachers is currently shown at zero under page one of the Revenue Financial Forecast b) expenditure. CT explained the school do have a budget which sits under B5 agency staff forecast £29,000.

DB questioned whether these cuts will limit the quality the school is offering or will still they continue to improve. CT confirmed there are no concerns for this year however, 2017/18, 2018/19 it is unknown. The budget is based upon maintaining the FET team and behaviour support teachers, those services the school feels are important. This budget allows the school a year to scrutinise the areas of spend. 2017/18 may mean losing good quality TA's that the school would like to retain.

DB questioned if there were any creative options long term, i.e. apprenticeships, training opportunities, the school breeding their own staff. CT confirmed they already do this through GI's and cover supervisors, which are now being converted. The school take part in the Schools Direct Students and Teach First programmes, which has helped

DB questioned whether it would be feasible to use the schools own staff instead of paying for supply. CT confirmed the school already do this and that there are currently two cover supervisors in post with some supply budget available if needed. The cover supervisors are used for other interventions if they are not too busy and extra supply is used during periods of high absence.

RM explained how the school have been very conservative with their budget as they want to ensure they are covered for long term absences. There is the option to purchase insurance for this however, it only pays after a couple of weeks and it is more favourable to put a lump sum aside in the budget as a form of self-insurance.

GF noted other income is reducing to £49.2k and asked what the reason was for this reduction. CT explained this relates to Schools Direct Students (teachers training) when students are placed with the school and are paid unqualified for part. This figure may change if the school decided to take on another student.

RM explained the carry forward looks to be £30k more favourable than that shown on the sheet. This figure should be nearer £160,000 as opposed to £131,000. CT explained how the school had originally budgeted for an in-year deficit based on spending all their money as a worst case scenario.

DB questioned whether the school could secure any sponsorship for equipment and resources from local businesses. RM explained he has tried this approach in the past which proved quite difficult as there are very limited funds for schools. RM had also tried to get sponsorship of sports kit without success and the time commitment spent trying to generate sponsorship outweighs the result. CT/RM would welcome any thoughts on how the school could generate sponsorship and DB agreed to discuss this

<p>further with them. GF explained how his son plays on a 3g pitch at The Oaks (like Astro Turf). The pitch is let out by the school to generate income and the school should not lose sight of opportunities to generate income.</p> <p>JS spoke of the schools lunch time provision where they approached local supermarkets for donations of arts and crafts activities and not one response was received. JS recognised businesses can be quite cautious; believing funding for schools comes direct from Government.</p> <p>GF said he was pleased to see the tokens at Asda and Tesco for Gusford. RM confirmed £500 received was received from this initiative.</p>		
<p><u>Management Accounts</u></p> <p>RM confirmed he has looked more closely at individual budgets. One of the largest changes is attributed to catering income and expenditure. The new funding arrangements with Caterlink means they handle all the cash and the only meals the school need to pay for are Universal Free School Meals. Income is lower than budget (GPS1125) and expenditure (GPS5000) will also be less. These figures are added to the carry forward. RM reported there are no other significant changes. GPS5140, professional services, will be over budget due to behaviour support however, there has been an increase in SEN income to compensate.</p> <p>Staffing costs may also go over budget as when the budget was set the school were not aware of the national minimum wage. The school have taken into account the national minimum wage increase, rising NI costs and pension costs. CT explained this is being managed due to the increase in pupil numbers and natural movement.</p> <p>RM explained the impact of the apprenticeship levy, which will need to be paid next year and will increase further.</p> <p>CT confirmed ALT partake in the apprenticeship programme and in turn expect schools to do this too. The school previously had an apprentice in the office and these roles can be positive if worked carefully.</p> <p><u>GF questioned if the budget takes into account savings on grounds if Ipswich Borough Council were to take on the contact.</u> RM confirmed not at this stage.</p> <p><u>GF questioned if there was any income from the solar panels.</u> RM confirmed the school does not receive an income as they do not own the equipment, but are making savings through receiving free electricity. If the school had chosen the option of paying for the equipment, the charges would have been far larger and not been paid off for many years. RM believes the pool is now being heated for free.</p> <p><u>JS questioned why there was an allowance for teachers overtime (GPS2015).</u> RM explained this is for teachers who cover other teachers, i.e. a part time teacher working 3 days a week could be asked to cover an additional day. The cost in overtime is cheaper than agency supply and it is also about the quality of cover. Full time staff cannot claim.</p> <p><u>JS asked about D0 Educational Supplies and Services (books/equipment), and whether the school anticipate this will be spent.</u> RM confirmed yes.</p> <p><u>JS referred to GPS6500, trips travel costs and sought clarification on these figures.</u> RM explained that income and expenditure should be level and how the school do not need to budget for income as they are not aware what this will be therefore there is no budget for expenditure. These budget headings are purely to allow for payments for those children in receipt of FSM.</p> <p><u>GF questioned whether the commitment given ALT has increased with inflation and how does this increase year on year.</u> RM confirmed this has currently remained the same (4.5%) but it far lower than SCC (8%). The contribution will increase as income has increased although this 4.5% is only paid on core income from Government. The service and quality from ALT is considerably better than that of SCC and the proof is</p>		

	demonstrated by Gusford being an improving school.		
	Staffing Update - Please refer to Part B, confidential minutes for further discussion in relation to this item.		
7.	<p>Health and Safety Action</p> <p>Evacuation of whole school following bomb hoax (27th May 2016). Governors were notified via email on 27th May 2016 by RM.</p> <p>27th May 2016 – 16:05pm Some of you will be aware that we have had to evacuate the site today. We were contacted by phone at about 10.30. It was an automated message saying there was a bomb on site that would be detonated within an hour. All the children were immediately evacuated to Sprites Primary School with a few members of staff remaining here to liaise with the police. The school's evacuation procedure worked smoothly and all pupils were kept safe. The Trust were informed as soon as possible and a statement was issued to the media which read:</p> <p>“Gusford Primary School can confirm there was an incident this morning involving a telephone call regarding a suspect package at the school. All the children and staff were evacuated calmly and safely. Parents have been informed and are collecting their children. Staff at the school are currently working with the police and as such we cannot comment further at this stage.”</p> <p>Parents were informed of the evacuation as soon as possible. The site was searched and no devices were found. The search wasn't completed in time for the pupils to return here for lunch, so the decision was made for the pupils to be collected from Sprites. A message was later sent via social media and ParentMail asking parents to collect pupils belongings from their classrooms.</p> <p>Apologies for not contacting you earlier. Let me know if you have any questions. Richard Marlow.</p> <p><u>DB confirmed a few parents mentioned to him that the press were very probing.</u> CT confirmed he has requested a meeting with the Editor to discuss.</p> <p>Following the evacuation improvements were identified and the plan had worked very well. There were a few problems with communicating to parents through ParentMail, PMX and logging in at Sprites. Discussions had taken place with the ALT Press Officer as to whether the school communicated early enough through official channels as it was recognised that the social media network works much quicker.</p> <p><u>GF received feedback that emails sent by PMX were received earlier than others.</u> However, on Facebook parents were defending the school, answering back to the negatives. CT confirmed the school had received cakes as a thank you from parents.</p> <p>It was noted the police 40 minutes to arrive and when they did, it was one policeman and RM and the Premises Manager searched the building. CT has asked for a meeting with the police to review their procedures as they had addressed this as a hoax although he has not yet received a response. GF was concerned that the media coverage may lead people into a false sense of security.</p> <p>Governors were disappointed that the police have not contacted the school and felt that if CT does not get response, he should contact the Police and Crime Commissioner. CT agreed he will pursue further. It was noted that the police did contact other schools later that day to advise on the procedure should they receive a similar call.</p> <p>CT explained that Mrs Hennell-James, a local Headteacher provided support to Mrs Clayton and RM, part of an informal arrangement the school has made that if any school within the pyramid is in need, the school can call on their help. Mrs Hennell-James praised Mrs Clayton and RM. RM confirmed his assistant, Deborah Campbell, had spent a lot of time reviewing the evacuation procedures coincidentally in advance of this incident. Ensuring they were robust.</p> <p><u>GF questioned whether Brookside followed the same procedure.</u> CT confirmed they did and were alerted. They were aware they did not have their own evacuation procedure</p>		

	<p>in place and will now review this.</p> <p>Please refer to Part B, confidential minutes for further discussion in relation to this item.</p>		
	<p>Verbal update on recent inspection of external grounds - GF confirmed he had inspected the external grounds but has not yet written up these notes. These will be circulated once available.</p> <p>Handsam/Review of H&S governance – GF confirmed he has had conversations via email with CT and MT. MT has agreed to contact GF and advise if there are any further inspections planned by ALT to ensure GF is available. GF will continue to carry out internal and external inspections once a year. <u>GF questioned whether CT felt there was the right balance of H&S visits.</u> CT confirmed it is good Governors are checking and the standard is sound. Handsam are rigorous and ALT do carry out spot checks. Handsam are scheduled to carry out an external audit in autumn term. The Handsam system ensures inspections cover the right areas. Although it was noted it can be a struggle to keep up with item as sometimes these are irrelevant to the school. Ideally the school would like an ALT Hub H&S officer but the funding is currently not available.</p> <p>RM showed Governors an overview of the Handsam dashboard via a TV feed, showing tasks completed, the majority of these being green. GF questioned if there were any opportunities to be smarter, to spread out the visits more evenly. Feedback can be given to Karen Jarvis from ALT to demonstrate better reviewing.</p>		
8.	Income Generation		
	Governors noted income was received from supermarket tokens of £500 the PTA raffle at the Y3/4 performance and photographs of £360 and a dividend from the Co-op PTA account of £682.		
9.	Premises Matters		
	<p>RM held a meeting with IBC grounds to discuss their contract. It has been agreed all schools within the ALT trust will move to IBC and the annual costs will be reduced by 5%. Joy from ALT was in attendance when this was negotiated.</p> <p>RM confirmed the school have a new contract with a company for maintenance of the kitchen equipment. Thorough testing took place of the equipment and as a result a Co2 test raised the need to close down one of the ovens, due to readings being too high. Ventilation and extraction needs improving. An electric oven will be purchased, costing just under £3,600 and ventilation will be improved. Short term the school are looking at a fan to lower readings. To update the ventilation system this will cost £11,500 plus VAT. Gusford own the equipment to supply to Caterlink and Co2 levels would be too high with three gas ovens. Equipment is depreciated.</p> <p>GF questioned if there is a carbon monoxide detector in kitchen. RM will explore and report back to CT outside of the meeting.</p>		
10.	Any other business		
	There were no items discussed.		
11.	Date and time of next meeting		
	The next meeting will held at 5.30pm on Monday 17 th October 2016.		

The meeting closed at 19:10pm

Minutes Agreed

Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____