

Beaford Community Primary and Nursery School

Minutes of Governors Meeting for Finance, Personnel & Premises

Thursday 26th January 2017

Summary of Outcomes & Decisions

- FRS statements were reviewed and budget changes agreed.
- The CFR for 2015/2016 was agreed and the benchmarking data reviewed. The previous year's action plan was reviewed and updated. Actions for the following year were agreed.
- The following policies were agreed:
 - Governor Allowances and Expenses
 - Health & Safety
 - Outdoor Education and Offsite activities
- Outcomes from the recent DCC H&S audit were shared with governors

Present: Annette Yates (AY), Sam Doidge (SD), Alex Heal (AH)

Minutes taken by: Helen Wright (HW)

1 Apologies Accepted

1.1 No apologies

2 Declaration of Interest

2.1 None

3 Minutes of Last Meeting

3.1 The minutes from the 10th November 2016 meeting were agreed and signed by SD.

4 Review of Actions

4.1 No actions to review

5 FRS Statements

5.1 **School Budget Share.** There is a predicted carry forward of £4250, although this may be higher as £5600 is currently allocated for maintenance of the flat roof and old school house. It is likely that this will not be done until next financial year as it is taking longer to get quotes than anticipated.

5.2 **Governors queried the overspend on TA staff.** TA hours are higher than the budget as additional TA hours have been needed to ensure adequate cover in the Foundation unit due to an increase in pupil numbers and for additional training requirements.

5.3 Income for support to other schools is on budget and £2100 has been invoiced to Babcock for additional headteacher support visits. Governors recognised how important this support is and that the income received contributes greatly to the sustainability of the school budget.

5.4 When completing the benchmarking report it was identified that photocopier charges had not been apportioned correctly. These are currently all paid under admin supplies. They should be split between admin supplies and curriculum costs (where copying is used for teaching/curriculum). A journal will be completed to transfer 70% of the costs to the curriculum cost centre. This will also ensure the

coding is correct for Benchmarking comparisons. The office costs budget will be reduced to £5655 and curriculum increased to £6900 to reflect this change in coding.

- 5.5 Rates have been re-evaluated by Torridge and reduced from a rateable value of £27250 to £25000 dated back to 2010. A refund of £6888.24 is due which will be retained by DCC as payment for rates is provided as part of the funding formula.
- 5.6 **Capital** – There is an estimated carry forward of £7932. £1850 has been spent on a new LED touchscreen for Owls classroom. No further spending is anticipated this year. Governors were advised that quotes are still be obtained for maintenance work including repairing or replacing the flat roof which is leaking , redecoration of the external woodwork around the old school house and refurbishment of the school hall. The floor in the hall has been lifting for several years and in the next few weeks a camera will be used to ascertain if this problem is caused by damp beneath the floor. The school would like to apply for Awards for All lottery funding to refurbish the hall – including the floor, ceiling, windows and heating. The hall is now used as a community facility, with brownies, guides and the before and after school club using it daily. The application will be completed when quotes have been received. There is also a possibility of applying for Heritage Lottery funding to pay toward the cost of the old school house.
- 5.7 **Extended Services** - There is predicted carry forward of £490. The before and after school club continues to be popular and is currently running at a small profit.

6 CFR Benchmarking

- 6.1 The CFR report for 2015/2016 was agreed. The benchmarking data has only just been released by the DfE (it is usually available in November).
- 6.2 Benchmarking is the process for comparing income and expenditure with that of similar schools to consider whether and how the school can use resources better and identify where changes can be made. Benchmarking is used to :
- Focus on planning and manage the budget
 - Identify areas for improvement
 - Set targets for improvement
 - Achieve best value
 - Improve effectiveness of expenditure to improve performance
- 6.3 Data showing benchmarking for the financial year 2015/2016 was reviewed along with data for the last 5 years which can be used to identify fluctuations in expenditure or income.
- 6.4 Most areas have average spend and income per pupil when compared with similar schools. In some areas there are discrepancies where the schools spend appears to be higher or lower than similar schools.
- 6.5 Governors recognised that school generated income which includes income from the sale of meals, nursery lunch club income, extended services income and income for supporting other school is very high and has increased over the years.
- 6.6 Governors asked why educational supplies were very low compared to similar schools yet administrative supplies were high. Educational supplies include learning resources, contributions for visits and ICT. Administrative supplies include admin stationary, printing, copying, bank charges and telephones. It was discovered when doing the benchmarking that photocopying costs (£4877 for the year) are currently all included under admin supplies. Under CFR this should be apportioned between admin supplies and educational supplies as the photocopier is used to help teach the curriculum. An adjustment has been made for this year's CFR to apportion copier costs as 30% for admin and 70% for educational supplies.

- 6.7 Total energy spending (identified as high in last year's benchmarking) has decreased over the last 3 years. This will continue to be monitored.
- 6.8 Cleaning and caretaking continues to be high. This has been looked at as part of last year's plan and quotes were received from alternative companies. These were no cheaper than using Norse and the cost is high as the school covers a large area in relation to the amount of pupils. Cleaning and caretaking will be reviewed if the school becomes a MAT.
- 6.9 The previous year's action plan was reviewed. Cleaning and caretaking was reviewed by the business manager and SD and after talking to other companies and receiving a quote it was decided to stay with Norse, but continue monitor the costs. Energy costs have been decreasing and this will continue to be monitored.
- 6.10 It was agreed that the previous years benchmarking action plan would be updated with areas identified from this year's data. This will enable governors to identify if there are particular circumstances that create valid reasons for the discrepancies. If no reasons are known then it will be necessary to identify what factors have led to the overspend and how the use of these resources can be improved in the future. It will be difficult to implement the plan this year as the data was available so late in the financial year. The benchmarking plan will include:
- Educational supplies and administrative supplies – check that these are more in line with similar school next year and that the cost of the photocopier is apportioned correctly.
 - Continue to monitor energy spending.
 - Monitor catering income and expenditure as it is anticipated food costs will rise by an average of 20%.
- 6.11 A copy of the benchmarking data is attached.



cfr 2016.doc

Action 47 – SD to add the 2015/2016 actions to the previous year's action plan for review at future meetings.

7 Policies

- 7.1 **Governor Allowances/Expenses** – No changes have been made to this policy. This was reviewed and agreed by governors.



Governors Expenses
Policy_17.pdf

8 SFVS

- 8.1 Governors have been provided with a copy of last year's SFVS to review. This needs to be completed annually by governors by the 31st March.

Action 48 - Governors to read through last year's SFVS and comment on all areas to confirm if the actions are taking place (and the evidence for this) or if they feel the standard is not being met and would like to see the evidence. This will be reviewed at the next finance meeting.

9 Outcome of Health & Safety Audit

- 9.1 The school was audited in January and received a score of 99%. The only action was to have the chains which secure the theatre lighting in the hall checked. As this lighting is not used it was agreed that it will be removed. Governors have received a copy of the report.

10 Trees in School Grounds

- 10.1 A request has been received via a third party source from a neighbour to remove or thin out the canopies of the trees along the border of the school to the east of the playground as they restrict light into their garden. A quote to reduce the height of all the trees by 3 meters has been received for £960 (there are 23 mixed trees along the boundary). The tree surgeon has said it is not advisable to reduce them by more than 3 meters. After discussion governors felt strongly the trees should remain as they form part of an important play space and nature area.

11 Policies

- 11.1 Health & Safety – this is a new, updated policy provided by DCC. It was reviewed and agreed by governors and will be agreed at the next FGB meeting.



health and safety
jan 2017.doc

- 11.2 Outdoor Education and off Site Activities - this is a new, updated policy provided by DCC. It was reviewed and agreed by governors.



outdoor education
school jan 2017.pdf

12 Date of Next Meetings

- 12.1 Thursday 9th March 2017, 9.30am

13 Summary of Actions

Action 47 – SD to add the 2015/2016 actions for benchmarking to the previous year's action plan for review at future meetings by the next meeting.

Action 48 - Governors to read through last year's SFVS and comment on all areas to confirm if the actions are taking place (and the evidence for this) or if they feel the standard is not being met and would like to see the evidence. This will be reviewed at the next finance meeting.

Minutes Authorised By:

Date: