



The John Fisher School

Resources Committee – 3rd July 2024 – Part A minutes

Governors: Mr Noel McEvilly (NM) Mr Aidan Tierney (ATi) Mr Andrew Theobald (AT) Ms Grainne Grabowski (GG) Dr Anita McGowan (AM) Mr Robert Teague (RT)	Foundation Governor - Co-Chair Foundation Governor - Co-Chair Foundation Governor Foundation Governor Foundation Governor Headteacher and Ex-Officio	Present Present Present Present Present Present
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Attendees: Mrs Y Epale (YE) Diocese
Mr A Dean (AD) Assistant Headteacher
Mr Michael Boyle (MB), Finance Manager
Mrs J Beeson (JB) - CEP Governance Clerk

ITEM	MINUTES	Action
1.	<p>Apologies for absence and declarations of interest</p> <p>The meeting was quorate.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest in any agenda items.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes from the previous meeting</p> <p>DECISION: The minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2024 were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and approved by all governors.</p> <p><u>Update on Actions</u></p> <p>6 – Update on gas and electricity, 3 meters were changed 1.4.24, 1 will be done in October and 4 meters will be done by on 31st December. The expenditure has gone from £320,000, down to £250,000 and it anticipated to go down to £131,000. We have 7 smart meters and only one not a smart meter. We were doing readings and didn't need to do it.</p> <p>7-10 reported back – closed</p> <p>11 – agenda item as part of facilities update – item 4</p>	
3.	<p>Partnership work and Fundraising</p> <p>3.1 AD talked about the different amounts on the sheet provided and it is less. There has been no significant fundraising activity this year and things are tighter over the last couple of years. Old Boys' Association is looking to re-home themselves is moving to Plough Lane and would need an agreement and this would give income and 4G pitch and alumni would give a significant amount c£1m.</p> <p>3.2 A governor suggested 4G pitch would be better up at the school site and there would be no restrictions on lighting. He asked what happened to the £30,000 committed?</p> <p>AD said the school has appointed Ms Butterworth for marketing two and a half days a week</p>	

	<p>which would move to full time. She has a temporary contract until 31st August. A governor asked who her employer is?</p> <p>AD said it was John Fisher.</p> <p>The same governor stated that once KB goes back to her previous contract we may not need her to return to the hours she was on for Admissions. Role will be Admissions for alumni and when she reverts back she will be assessed whether she continues in her role or has a different one.</p>	
3.3	Carnival things was last weekend. This made £1500 to £2000.	
4.	<p>Facilities Update <i>(report presented by AD)</i></p> <p><i>(AD had previously distributed his report)</i></p>	
4.1	AD outlined that they were working with a small facilities team. The new cleaning contract was doing more and they were getting more out of it.	
4.2	<p>There is an open day tomorrow (4.7.24) and it would be great for governors to attend and they would welcome any governor feedback. In preparation, there had been some touching done up around the building and this review has also given them some work which they need to work on further.</p> <p>A governor asked about the skirting in the David Laine building which is falling off.</p> <p>AD said this was now screwed back on and although not aesthetic is was OK.</p> <p>The same governor commented the school cannot keep kicking the can down the road and needs to take action.</p>	
4.3	<p>Asbestos - AD added that the H&S review which David Charles had seen as part of his report. They had categorised tasks to establish the urgent and very urgent. They need to have an Asbestos Survey and a Fire Risk Assessment done because they did not have either of these.</p> <p>A governor referred back to a document which had formerly identified where all the asbestos was.</p> <p>NM confirmed that regulations since then had now changed. He said the document explained the requirement but there were 19 locations which had not been tested.</p> <p>A governor asked when the report had been done.</p> <p>MB said this report was in provided in September 2023, the review was done in July 23.</p> <p>The same governor asked if it established was need doing why this had not been done?</p> <p>RT said there were issues which had not been flagged up.</p> <p>A governor asked why the serious matters had not been addressed?</p> <p>NM explained that everything would have to be shut down while much of the work was being done. He said the 2 classrooms at the top of the landing were the worst concern. The key problem was they do not know the extent of the debris. They would have to isolate those rooms. He ran through a list of the area which he believed were of most concern.</p>	

	<p>A governor asked what was being done with regard to the matters detailed on Pages 6 and 8? These are areas where children go, therefore this is serious.</p> <p>A governor said they need to get quotations and get it fixed, but wanted to know how long the work would take?</p> <p>NM confirmed that the work has to be done within 2 years of the report i.e. by September 2025.</p> <p>AD said they had the report and had now got a consultant who had prepared specs and he (the consultant) would get 3 quotes from companies. One quote had come in at £104K and they want to do a further survey to establish whether the extent of the work can be shrunk down. It costs £6K for the survey.</p> <p>A governor questioned the value of getting a further survey and spending more money.</p> <p>AD said this was the choice for the governors to make.</p> <p>MB asked why they had not engaged a second person?</p> <p>NM confirmed that any contractor who was certified could do the work and they would certify the area was clear.</p> <p>A governor summarised that the work had not been done because the findings of the report had not been taken further.</p> <p>A governor detailed that last year they had expressed concern about both the tree and the asbestos issues. Therefore they had commissioned these surveys which should be done every 10 years.</p> <p>RT confirmed that they needed a more focused opinion on certain areas i.e. the 19 rooms not tested.</p> <p>MB said that there is no cash to do the work identified so they would have to go to Sutton. He said that whilst he endorsed the need for speed, this should also be taken into account. He agreed that a second opinion should be sought because HSF did the survey and they are also getting the quotes.</p> <p>A governor said the risk assessment was for the school to do in terms of what are the issues and what has the school to do. For the governors, it is that they need to know the way forward planned by the school.</p> <p>A governor proposed that they speak to David Charles to recommend somebody for a second opinion and to look at those additional areas.</p> <p>Decision – the governors agreed that the school should seek a second opinion about the extent of the asbestos issue and work required to be done.</p>	
4.4	<p>AD added that the advice received was that either they remove or paint over the areas, this will get the same result. He has already contacted David Charles and he has got companies who could do it.</p> <p>MB asked who was coming in?</p>	

	<p>AD said they need to get the companies to come in and do quotes.</p> <p>A governor said that they should get those companies to look at all the rooms and get quotes for all the job.</p> <p>NM agreed that the companies could do an update on the existing report and use the addendum.</p> <p>A governor said this would mean that HSF had got 3 quotes and the school should get 2 other companies.</p> <p>A governor queried why it had taken from September to now to get this information to governors? She said that governors should be fully informed of what they need to know as this will affect the DRP.</p> <p>A governor asked if there was any possibility of this all coming back for a decision for the work to be done over the summer holidays?</p> <p>AD said that once they have the boiler rooms will need to be sealed off.</p> <p>A governor asked how this would then work with the procedure currently being that the boilers were being turned on manually therefore it is not feasible to seal them off otherwise how would the school keep the heating on?</p> <p>MB questioned why the discussions revolved around boiler rooms when there were also areas where children were in classrooms?</p> <p>NM explained the process of asbestos management so the company could say it was present but manageable.</p> <p>RT agreed they were dealing with the highest risk therefore it cannot be left for a year until the next summer holidays. He said his understanding was that incapsulation massively reduced the risk.</p> <p>A governor said it was for the school to have the detailed discussion about the process but they need to get the risk down.</p> <p>RT agreed that they would mitigate the day-to-day risk now and carry on with the other quotes. If they do not do the work in the science block before September they are exposing pupils and staff to risk.</p> <p>A governor asked that the governors were advised when this was done – ACTION.</p> <p>NM confirmed that the science block would take 2 weeks, because there had to be an airtight lock, so no matter what else is done, this should be done over the summer holidays.</p> <p>A governor pointed out that the work on Page 8 of the report is really important.</p> <p>A governor asked if the boiler room could be done in the October half term because it could be a sealed area during school time?</p> <p>AD said this was not feasible due to hot water for the main block and canteen.</p> <p>NM suggested that local companies may be suitable to do the work and would not be as pricey as the ones HSF use.</p>	<p>12.</p>
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	<p>AD agreed this might be possible however he questioned whether they would have time in 4 weeks to get the quotes in and the work agreed.</p>	
4.5	<p>Alarms – AD advised they had received quotes ranging from £100-200K. ADT had flagged up things the school had been unaware of. However, they have found a suitable alternative which will cost £14K plus installation by DTX totalling £30K. There will then be an annual licence fee of between £2-2.4K to cover maintenance and service.</p> <p>This would give site coverage very quickly, it is zonal, teachers can have alerts on their phones, different tones for different issues, a PA system.</p> <p>It is currently used by Carshalton Boys and the ARK academies, but the school has not seen it working on other sites, just been told about it.</p> <p>They are waiting on 2 other companies to do quotes but they are asking to see the school's Fire Risk Assessment (which they don't have). The FRA will cost c£1200.</p> <p>A governor said they must get this done immediately.</p> <p>Another governor said to get it done over the summer holidays.</p> <p>Decision – the governors authorised AD to get the Fire Risk Assessment done over the summer holidays.</p>	
4.6	<p>A governor asked if there were other areas which were being considered?</p> <p>AD said it really was down to what money we do have and what governors are willing to spend.</p>	
4.7	<p>A governor asked what the facilities team are planning to do themselves over the summer holidays in terms of the low level things e.g. painting the corridors?</p> <p>Another governor confirmed that Philippa had said she would do that. He added that they would not be doing much cleaning because there is nobody in the building, so it was a case of looking at who is in and when and setting a programme.</p>	
4.8	<p>He also said that the facilities/site staff should have a signing in and out recording system.</p> <p>AD said the cleaners did sign in by ipad, as do the facilities staff but it is more a case of it being monitored. One of the site staff has 2 weeks' leave and 1 has one week. Philippa could come in for 2 weeks.</p>	
4.9	<p>A governor commented that painting the corridors (quoted at £34K) would make a difference. He said that on Friday (5.7.24) they would know if they are getting the funding and then could look at having a different discussion. The priority was the health and safety and safeguarding of the pupils so the toilets, the asbestos and the alarm were the key areas.</p>	
4.10	<p>Toilets - A governor asked about the quotes for the toilets ranging between £21-60K.</p> <p>AD said the lower one was from an alumni contractor who is a quantity surveyor and this is an area of business he is getting into and AD imagines it was to get the business.</p> <p>RT said the diocese had said it would be around the £60K mark.</p> <p>A governor said that if there is a proper contract in place with warranties.</p>	

	<p>AD said it was also about a contractor who could do the work over the summer because they cannot afford this headache in September.</p> <p>A governor asked about last year's idea of closing the 6th form toilets.</p> <p>RT confirmed that they could have a programme of closing them one at a time.</p> <p>A governor said the toilets was a safeguarding issue therefore high priority and has to be done.</p> <p>A governor asked about the spec being for gender neutral cubicles.</p> <p>AD confirmed it was and for floor to ceiling doors.</p> <p>A governor asked about the ratio of toilets.</p> <p>RT confirmed it was 20 pupils per toilet.</p> <p>A governor commented he would like to see a disabled toilet included.</p>	
4.11	Blinds – a governor commented these were a necessity and must be done.	
4.12	<p>Sports hall heating – a governor commented that this would have to be addressed if they were going to be able to rent the space out in September.</p> <p>AD replied that the heaters were there, but did not work.</p>	
4.13	6th form shutter – this was also referenced as a requirement.	
4.14	<p>MB queried where the governors felt the money was going to come from for these projects?</p> <p>A governor said it was the governors' funds.</p> <p>RT outlined that there is £200K and this will increase once the gift aid is claimed. There is the DfE capital money of £50K.</p> <p>MB clarified that the capital had not been correctly reported last year therefore the £127 deficit was in fact £147 because of the capital imbalance. It was a brought forward deficit.</p> <p>A governor asked if there was therefore anything sitting in capital to spend?</p> <p>MB said they did not have capital. £50K was on the CFR for capital income but there was £80K in expenditure, so it had been understated. There is £200K in the governors' fund from the monthly donations and gift aid, but once that is spent on the things AD has presented there will be no more. They will have to go to the diocese for the toilets.</p> <p>AD said there is £195K in private funds which has been accruing and it is a case of establishing how much they are willing to spend. He proposed the alarm, toilets and asbestos in that order.</p>	
4.15	<p>A governor said that they should have a rolling programme to improve the building.</p> <p>AD agreed that one of the objectives they had set was to enhance the programme but historically there had been zero budget.</p> <p>MB challenged this comment and said that a lot of money had been spent on different areas.</p>	

4.16	<p>The Chair of Governors said there is no such thing as 'private funds'. It is the governors' fund for anything which is not part of their LA or DfE funding. It does not matter where it comes from and therefore it is the responsibility of the governors and what it is called should not muddy the waters.</p> <p>A governor proposed that they need a programme of works which is colour-coded with costs – ACTION.</p> <p>MB confirmed there is £200K + £70K in separate accounts, the latter earmarked funds to abide by the wishes of the donor. If they got the asbestos work done, they would not have the money for all the other things, so he suggested they take a year's view on the priorities for the school. If the toilets and the asbestos work is done, it is all gone.</p> <p>AD said that he accepted the money constraint, but the IT at school is 10 years old (the wifi, the servers etc) and there has been nothing specifically allocated over that time. 70 staff laptops are out of warranty, there is not a smartboard in every classroom, the 600 laptops around the school were donated and are starting to fail. He had asked IT to propose a rolling programme.</p> <p>A governor confirmed there were 18 classrooms without smartboards.</p> <p>AD suggested they could look at TV screens as a more reasonably priced alternative, which were not as good. The switches were also crucial.</p> <p>The governors thanked AD for his report (<i>AD left the meeting 6.30pm</i>).</p>	13.
5.	<p>Deficit Recovery Plan (<i>report presented by MB</i>)</p> <p>5.1 MB outlined that he had factored in the forecast in pupil increase. This year is based on 6th form numbers of Oct 23 – 223 students. This is forecasted to rise to 265 which will represent a lot more money.</p> <p>The in year deficit for 24/25 is £128K. When the school went to the LA it was proposing it would be £80K which is now reset with an accumulated deficit of £765.</p> <p>There is no leeway in the budget for IT or maintenance, it is very tight.</p> <p>5.2 A governor queried the energy at £270 not £250 and supply at £125 not £100.</p> <p>MB said he felt rather than moving everything down, governors should go the other way. To demonstrate this he said he would present the month 2 numbers and show where funds were spent. He added that the energy number was due to the fact that last year had been understated because bills were coming in this year for last, this was unfortunate. The general direction of travel will be the other way.</p> <p>A governor commented that the £25 difference over 5 years would make a difference.</p> <p>Another governor added that the school was hoping to make other changes too which would impact positively.</p> <p>MB said he could change it if they wanted that.</p> <p>Another governor said she agreed with his method and he was absolutely right because in the past the governors had been keen to cut to the line and then been disappointed, so now</p>	

	<p>this was looking at a different way and being realistic and then hopefully would be pleasantly surprised.</p> <p>MB said he doubted if they would be pleasantly surprised.</p>	
5.3	<p>A governor asked about the sports hall being let out for income, how would this be possible if there was an issue with the heating and floor.</p> <p>A governor said this was the intention from September and there should be a warranty for the work previously done.</p> <p>MB confirmed this had been checked and they will not fix it.</p> <p>A governor said this was another example of things being done on a goodwill basis with localised agreements, so could not be held to account.</p>	
5.4	<p><i>Section in Part B.</i></p> <p>A governor asked when the next funding tranche comes?</p> <p>MB confirmed they get funding monthly.</p> <p>RT asked about whether there was front-loading on the energy costs?</p> <p>MB said this was due to last year's energy bills still coming in this year.</p> <p>A governor asked why the premises staff was at 43% rather than the anticipated 16% at this point in the year?</p> <p>MB said this would have to be investigated.</p> <p>A governor asked about the staffing costs, the RE breakdown and asked if there was a need for a TLR when there was already a Head of Department? She also asked about the cover supervisor being advertised and whether DfE could be covered by one of the PE staff rather than with a TLR?</p> <p>Another governor queried whether DfE as still being actively done at the school?</p> <p>RT confirmed there were 90 boys participating. He gave a breakdown of the RE provision but said that there was a general unwillingness to do things unless they are paid.</p>	
5.5	<p>A governor asked about the Behaviour Support role?</p> <p>RT explained this was a replacement linked to the Aspire roles and the inclusion centre. They need 2 people, to run the inclusion centre and do the follow up work, daily reports. This was key in the pastoral support.</p>	
5.6	<p>The governor suggested this therefore needed to be called Inclusion Manager for clarity.</p> <p>A governor queried about the admin supplies at 80% spent.</p> <p>RT said much of this relates to trips which then the funds come back in on an income line.</p> <p>MB outlined that this was a £56K lump sum in there – he gave a list of the sort of items going into it.</p>	

5.7	<p>A governor queried about the E27/28 line for bought in services and what this related to?</p> <p>MB gave a list of examples, but largely it accounted for IT technical systems support, licences and PP payments for tutors.</p> <p>A governor commented that her initial reaction was they were not making any dent in the deficit.</p> <p>Another governor responded that they had been but now things like the asbestos were knocking them for six.</p>	
5.8	<p><i>Section in Part B minutes.</i></p> <p>RT said the model was by year group to increase the average class size but this was a slow benefit.</p> <p>A governor said this year it was asbestos but what would it be next year? They were always fire-fighting and there is nowhere if they are hit that there is a contingency.</p> <p>A governor said that they could not take the school forward if there is a negative impact on teaching and learning. They have started to get the staff cost down to 80% of their government funding which is the norm. 2 years ago it was in excess of 85% so they cannot cut that even further. The issue is the SLT is not as effective as they need them to be therefore there needs to be a restructure of that area. They have got to be realistic about the school's reputation because unless there are improvements it will not happen. There is no magic bullet.</p> <p>A governor said that if it has got to a point of being in line, what is there left we can do? They had addressed the critical things but this had been going on for years, so where was there to go now?</p> <p>The Chair of Governors commented that as far as the LA was concerned, that is how long the process will be and improving teaching and learning will allow us to expand the 6th form and they will have to wait to be paid back. However, we are going to have to become an academy and not just because that is the national agenda but because the Archbishop said by 2025.</p>	
5.9	<p>A governor commented that the school buildings look dreadful and it is about recruiting, retaining and removing the right staff. There has been poor maintenance and now they must be held to account. It is also for the policies and contracts to be in place. HR will come and look at all the policies and we will restructure those where we can. The key to change is the SLT.</p>	
5.10	<p><i>Discussion in Part B minutes.</i></p>	
5.11	<p>MB commented that one thing to effect change is the Finance Manual and having controls in place. Everyone has an eye on the governors' funds and wanting to spend it. If we are going to be successful it is how we use the governors' funds which is key.</p> <p>RT said the manual will make clear what is ring-fenced.</p> <p><i>End of discussion in Part B minutes.</i></p>	
6.	<p>HR Update</p>	

<p>6.1</p>	<p>Sickness update – a governor commented that maternity is not sickness.</p> <p>RT said this was recorded because it was maternity-related sickness.</p> <p>A governor asked about the number of absences in September.</p> <p>RT said there was a discrepancy because cover is not recorded the same as sickness.</p> <p>The same governor said this needs to be broken down differently for clarity.</p> <p>RT added that absence increases in the summer term because where people have left their lessons are covered by other people.</p> <p>A governor said that with 25% of the students gone after exams why was this the case?</p> <p>RT said the unions had raised concerns about use of gain time and a request from a senior leader for people to volunteer for cover.</p> <p>A governor suggested they consider indicating they would have to ban trips because they cannot find cover?</p> <p>RT replied that if staff are doing a trip then it is covered internally. Up to now it has not been logged who has done the cover but will be from next year to make sure it is fair to all.</p> <p>A governor asked if this information did not have to be published?</p> <p>RT said it was daily but not accumulatively.</p> <p>A governor said that in other schools they use the leadership team to cover, some she goes to are no doing overseas trips because of the cost, insurance and issues which arise. They are not allowing CPD if it requires cover costs and if there is a cost to CPD. Many are having to scale back to the minimum.</p> <p>A governor said they need to put quantitative figures on these sorts of thing.</p> <p>RT said that the main cost will be reducing staff but will then get supply.</p> <p>A governor commented that with agency staff there are no on costs therefore we are able to use them the absolute minimum required.</p> <p>RT said that some are also on fixed term contracts.</p> <p>A governor said the budget allowed for those but that the school needs to follow up on the trigger points where pay is reduced.</p> <p>RT said they had held informal meetings with staff but he is waiting to announce the full suite of policies for 24/25.</p> <p>A governor said the Sickness Absence Policy relates to the Burgundy Book but support staff relate to the Green Book.</p> <p>RT said he had taken the support staff numbers and dropped those into the policy.</p> <p>A governor asked if he would send out the policy prior to 9.7.24 meeting.</p>	
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7.	AOB	
7.1	<p>RT proposed a two-day school review to make an objective report on assessment, leadership and outcomes.</p> <p>A governor asked if he planned to tell the staff beforehand?</p> <p>RT said that he did.</p> <p>A governor said it would cost between £3600 and £5000.</p> <p>RT said it was for the future of the school, if people stop coming here. There are many vulnerabilities for schools, lots of external factors and risks out there.</p> <p>A governor asked if 2 days was sufficient?</p> <p>Another governor said she felt it was.</p> <p>A governor asked if RT wanted governors to be involved?</p> <p>Another governors said this was not a good idea, it must be wholly independent of the governors and they must say very little prior to it so as not to prejudice the outcome.</p> <p>Decision – the governors agreed that RT should engage the 2 day visit and report.</p> <p>A governor asked when RT is not in school (either off sick or not on site) who is in charge of the school?</p>	
7.2	<p>RT said that historically this had alternated between the AHTs, but now was different, but a question from September again.</p> <p>The governor said that as the only Catholic by default it had to be that person. It should be made clear to the SLT and to staff that David Mawer is that person.</p> <p>RT said he had been doing that before Stephen came.</p>	
8.	Confidential matters (MB left the meeting) See Part B minutes.	
9.	Next meeting dates:- DLR and working party – 15 th July 2024	

The meeting closed at 7.55pm

Actions list:-

	Action	For	Date	Comments	Status
Meeting of 14.11.23					
6	E16 to report Gas and Electricity costs separately.	RT			Closed

7	RT to provide information on what costs are included in E18 Other Occupation costs.	RT			Closed
8	RT to clarify the coding for insurance costs and what these are.	RT			Closed
9	Supply costs breakdown to be reviewed at the April meeting.	RT			Closed
10	RT to provide a breakdown of what is included in E27 and E28.	RT			Closed
11	Governors to review the prioritised list of capital works at a future meeting.	Governors		Agenda item 3.7.24	Closed
Meeting of 3rd July 2024					
12	AD & RT to update governors with regard to the initial asbestos incapsulation is completed.	AD / RT		Autumn term	Open
13	Colour-coded programme of works with costs	AD / RT		Autumn term	Open