



DRINGHOUSES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting (virtual)

held on Wednesday 26th April 2023 at 9.00am, via Zoom

Present: Ben Sutton (Headteacher) staff
 Claire Neal (SBM) staff
 Matt Boxall (Committee Chair)
 Mike Hay
 Ros Roberts
 Natalie Wong
 Claire Scott-South staff
 Kara Byworth

In Attendance: Dawn Gledhill (Peripatetic Bursar)
 Lesley Irving (Clerk)
 Caroline Rigden (Shadow Clerk)

		Action									
1.	<p>Welcome, Apologies for Absence, Consents and Declarations of Interest</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. All Committee members were present.</p> <p>The Chair advised that he would need to leave the meeting at 10am.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>										
2.	<p>Minutes of the meeting held 18th January 2023, matters arising and action plan.</p> <p>Previously distributed.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the minutes of the last meeting were a true and accurate record, and they were duly approved.</p> <p>There were no matters arising from the minutes.</p> <p>Action Points (carried forward from the last meeting)</p> <table> <tr> <th>Action</th><th>Person(s) responsible</th><th>Status</th></tr> <tr> <td>1. Review staffing for Start Budget</td><td>CN / DG</td><td>Completed. On agenda.</td></tr> <tr> <td>2. Analysis of school meal take-up</td><td>CN</td><td>Completed. On agenda. The SBM advised that analysis had been conducted which showed an increased uptake since the introduction of in-house catering suppliers. A governor queried whether catering was costing the school money. The SBM</td></tr> </table>	Action	Person(s) responsible	Status	1. Review staffing for Start Budget	CN / DG	Completed. On agenda.	2. Analysis of school meal take-up	CN	Completed. On agenda. The SBM advised that analysis had been conducted which showed an increased uptake since the introduction of in-house catering suppliers. A governor queried whether catering was costing the school money. The SBM	
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				confirmed that she anticipated an overspend by the end of the year, partly due to catering staff pay costs.	
3.	<p>Finance</p> <p>3.1 Outturn 2022/23</p> <p>Previously distributed.</p> <p>Referring to her previously distributed report, the Bursar advised that the projected in-year deficit had increased. Although the forecasted deficit of £80k had not materialised, the budget showed a deficit of £40k. Whilst income had increased, the majority of the £40k improvement in the budget position were due to changes in expenditure.</p> <p><i>A governor queried the deficit amount, commenting that he thought there was a £60k deficit.</i> The School Business Manager confirmed that the revenue balance showed a deficit of £39,603.</p> <p>The Bursar advised that savings within expenditure had mainly been in respect of staffing; there hadn't needed to be quite as many additional staffing hours within the budget as originally anticipated.</p> <p>Referring to variances within the budget, the Bursar drew governors' attention to the costs of cleaning and caretaking, noting that there had been a large overspend, equating to around £13k in respect of cleaning and catering, due to the use of external providers.</p> <p>The Bursar explained that there had been a considerable overspend of £15k on energy, as it had been difficult to estimate the level of bills. At the time the revised budget had been set, they had only been in receipt of the April to July invoices.</p> <p>The amount allocated to learning resources looked high, however the Bursar confirmed that £25k of spending in relation to trips and visits was offset by income received. A review of some of the online resources had resulted in a slight saving. The budget had overstated the value originally and a reduced level had materialised.</p> <p>The variance of £11k for catering was in relation to consumables within catering, mainly food, which had been impacted by a significant increase in prices from January - which had been evident in invoices. The Bursar advised that this was something to monitor going forward, they would need to be mindful if income was sufficient without revising the cost of meals, given the increases in pay and rising food prices.</p> <p>There had been an overspend on agency supply teaching costs, as the school had been using external agencies as opposed to in-house or additional hours cover, however this had been offset by savings made within staffing.</p> <p>The Bursar summarised that there had been an overall in-year capital saving of £40k, noting that a grant had been received at the end of the year which had increased capital funds – something for governors to think about spending in future years.</p> <p><i>A governor commented that it appeared the budget was being well managed within the</i></p>				

school and if queried whether there were any concerns. The Bursar responded that there were no major concerns; everyone understood the challenges and faced up to them. She added that although she appreciated the school was in a better position than some other schools, they could not be complacent.

A governor stated that if the school were in a deficit position of between £40k to £80k each year, the school's reserves would eventually run out. The outcome of the pay dispute could have an impact, but this would depend upon whether the government matched the increase via funding. The Bursar responded that there was currently no provision specifically in relation to a settlement for the 2022/23 pay award. Inflationary increases had been included within the staffing figures however these did not equate to 5% or 10% increases in salary, which may be required. The hope was that the government would not agree a 10% pay award without sufficiently funding schools. Supplementary grants had been issued in the past; it was hoped this would happen again, but this was not known at this moment in time.

3.2 Start budget 2023/24

Previously distributed.

The Bursar advised that pupil numbers were around 306, reducing slightly from 310 in the 2022/23 academic year, however due to a slight increase in the funding amount per pupil there had been a small increase in the revenue position. Costs had increased and were looking similar to 2022/23, principally due to the small amount of extra funding the Government had provided.

Referring to the school's income streams, the Bursar explained that Pupil Premium funding equated to around £60k, however this was not a confirmed amount; she had estimated figures using the October census. The 2022/23 academic year had started with what looked like a higher value for Pupil Premium, but these levels had materialised. The Bursar added that the number of Looked After Children (LAC) had increased.

The Bursar advised that supply teacher claims related to the North Yorkshire County Council staff absence scheme and that the school could claim funding for teacher absence exceeding 16 days. She also explained that two members of staff were due to go on maternity leave which should bring in around £10k.

Referring to expenditure, the Bursar advised that staffing was one of the key areas within the budget for which they needed to be careful regarding budget spend. There was the potential for some teaching hours to be provided in an alternative way; with Teaching Assistant (TA) 4 hours covering some of the provision, which had been built into the budget as a plan. She explained that they reviewed staffing movements when these occurred to consider strategically if changes were needed or could be made. The budget showed a saving with regards to teaching hours however an increase in TA hours, and named staff supply teachers had been removed as it was felt this was no longer applicable.

In terms of premises staff, the Bursar noted that the savings made had offset the increased charges for external cleaning costs, the pay award and incremental increases. Administration and catering costs had increased due to the pay award and incremental changes and there had been an impact on costs due to an increase in salary for a member of staff on a term time contract in the school office.

The catering staff expenditure was offset by income, however if the pay award impacted

on catering they may need to review the fees and charges. Any increases in income had not been accounted for.

Regarding non staffing items, the Bursar advised that she had reduced the proactive building and maintenance budget. This would need to be monitored; any items which may impact the budget would need to be flagged at the time.

The Bursar confirmed that there had been a large increase in cleaning and catering costs, impacted by the use of external suppliers, which was offset in part by their core staff budget cleaning team.

Referring to energy costs, the Bursar advised that the budget had more than doubled, and that she did not know if this would be sufficient to cover increasing bills.

The learning resources budget had increased but included £40k for trips and visits, which had equated to around £9-£10k last year. The Bursar said that this may be an overstated amount for the year, but that this was unknown at the moment. It was an area which would need monitoring.

The amount allocated within the budget for IT learning resources was slightly lower than last year; mainly due to a review of the online provision in school and not renewing subscriptions the schools were not using.

There was a small reduction in catering supplies compared to last year's budget. Although food prices had increased, the school had introduced advanced booking of meals, and were reviewing menus to establish how to get the best value without affecting quality. They were reviewing food costs first, before they started to consider increasing fees and charges.

A governor commented that being in a deficit position year on year was not sustainable and asked what the two year plan was and whether they were allowed to submit a deficit budget. The Bursar responded that the Local Authority asked schools to balance their budgets over a three year budget plan, which they had done. Beyond that; in years four and five, there could be a problem. The inflationary increase in income wasn't enough to offset the increase in costs. This was a nationwide problem, which the Government would need to recognise. The Bursar said that she did not have answers beyond the three year point at this stage but that a potential change in Government may have an impact.

A governor stated that they agreed they did not know what would happen in the future, but that they could not just hope that something would change. The Bursar reiterated that the school had a three year plan and that, if needed, they would need to radically think about what they did in school and how they did it. She pointed out that the main part of the budget was in relation to staffing, however the school needed staff.

A governor queried when they would have conversations about what radical changes may be needed, commenting that it would not be sensible to wait three years. The Bursar replied that the budget would be reviewed again in six months and at the same time next year. If they had any further update in the meantime, which would impact future budgets, they would advise governors.

A governor said that they were confused by the statement that there was a deficit of £40k, however the budget was balanced. The Bursar confirmed that the school had reserves -

	<p>the budget was balanced due to erosion of the reserve amount.</p> <p><i>A governor commented that this did not seem to be a stable situation and questioned whether they needed to consider a contingency plan.</i> The Headteacher responded that he had discussed the points raised with the Bursar and School Business Manager already and that they had ideas. They'd had very early stage conversations about what this could look like in five years' time. He added that this was on the agenda at the Heads meetings he attends. He explained that some schools were in far worse situations and that the biggest change would be restructuring. He did not feel they were at a point they would need to have those conversations.</p> <p>The Headteacher stated that he didn't know what outcomes would be, even for next year's budget, but he could be positive around staffing. Their current recruitment for maternity leave cover had been potentially placed at a lower banding and the school were considering taking on early career teachers; a cheaper option however a greater amount of cover was needed as these started with 20% non-contact time. He went on to say that they were also looking to amalgamate some part time positions, which would equate to potentially three full time roles. In addition, they were reviewing staff who had given notice to consider if staffing levels could be reduced, which could provide a saving to the staffing budget.</p> <p><i>A governor commented that if the pay award, when settled, had large implications for the salary bill, this would need to be reviewed by the Committee promptly.</i></p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the Committee had delegated authority to approve the budget.</p> <p>Governors approved the start budget.</p> <p>3.3 School Fund review Previously distributed.</p> <p>There were no comments or questions regarding the school fund accounts.</p>	
4.	<p>Premises and Capital Plan update Previously distributed.</p> <p>The School Business Manager explained that the previously distributed report detailed planned repairs and maintenance, noting that these had been reduced slightly. She explained that the biggest concern was in relation to the replacement(?) of windows in the Early Years units. Extra grants had been received for use on eco projects – it was hoped they could use some of this to fund the windows. City Of York Council had been conducting sustainability research and were scheduled to meet with the School Business Manager in the next few weeks to discuss this matter.</p> <p>The School Business Manager confirmed that the scheme of redecoration would continue in school.</p>	
5.	<p>Catering update Previously distributed.</p> <p>The School Business Manager advised that the school had received a very good score on the latest school meals monitoring report.</p>	

	<p>Referring to the kitchen income and expenditure analysis for the 2021/22 academic year, the School Business Manager highlighted the following:</p> <p>Staff salaries, inflationary costs on food and long term absence had all negatively impacted the budget.</p> <p>In September, the team would train another member of staff to be Assistant Cook in Charge, for continuity of staffing.</p> <p>Regarding inflation of food costs, for the summer term menu costed production costs had been produced which would be monitored throughout the term. Pre ordering had also been introduced, to reduce waste.</p> <p>They would review the price point of meals; the current price point had been set based on the cost to produce each plate of food, however this cost had increased. There was a very good uptake on meals and the school did not want to outprice themselves so that parents opted to send their child with a packed lunch. Additionally, with the cost of living and pressures already on families, they were reluctant to increase the cost of school meals unless necessary.</p> <p>The funded amount received in relation for universal and free school meals was £2.41. The school would have to bridge the gap between the funded amount and the actual cost of providing the meals.</p> <p><i>A governor noted that the kitchen expenditure had exceeded the income received by £16.5k this year and queried whether this would likely be a similar amount for 2022/23. The School Business Manager responded that it could potentially be similar, adding that they had already started to put actions into place.</i></p> <p><i>A governor noted that there had been an increased uptake of school meals, however this was costing the school more money and that this would need to be reviewed carefully. He suggested a school meal survey may be useful.</i></p> <p>A discussion followed about the portion sizes offered, the amount of waste and the price point of the school's meals in comparison to other schools.</p> <p>Governors agreed that gaining parent insight would be helpful and that the context should be included when distributing this to parents.</p> <p>Action: Headteacher to distribute a school meal survey to parents.</p> <p><i>A governor queried whether the £16k within the budget for kitchen costs was projected deficit and therefore would increase the overall budget deficit to £55-60k next year. The School Business Manager and Bursar confirmed this was correct.</i></p>	HT
6.	<p>Staffing update Previously distributed.</p> <p>Staffing had been discussed earlier in the meeting. The Headteacher advised that the staffing position was an evolving picture; staff could give notice up to 30th May 2023. He confirmed that there were two members of staff due to go on maternity leave and that he had received notice from one full time teacher. He was also expecting a part time teacher</p>	

	to hand in their notice. Four interviews were scheduled to place next week and the Headteacher advised he would need a governor to attend an interview on 5 th May. He would contact governors about this.	
7.	Any Other Business The Committee Chair thanked the Headteacher and his colleagues for their efforts in enabling the school to remain open on the following day; when further strike action was scheduled.	
8.	Determination of Confidential Items There were no items recorded as a confidential item.	
9.	Dates and time of next meeting: Wednesday 5 th July 2023 at 9am.	

The meeting closed at 10.02am.

These minutes were approved at the Resources Committee on 5th July 2023.

DRINGHOUSES PRIMARY SCHOOL
Action Plan following the Meeting of the Resources Committee
held on Wednesday 26th April 2023

Action		Item	Person(s) responsible	Timescale
1.	Headteacher to distribute a school meal survey to parents.	5	Headteacher	10 th May 2023

Items for next FGB / other Committees:

None raised