



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE & OPERATIONS (F&O) COMMITTEE OF BROOKVALE GROBY LEARNING TRUST TUESDAY 20TH APRIL 2021, 5.30PM, VIA GOOGLE MEET

Present: Steve Goddard (Chair)
 Helen Brown
 Helen Stockill
 Helen Speechley
 Peter Leatherland (for agenda items 4 onwards – 5.42pm)

Also in attendance: Helen Smart (Business Director)
 Joanne Golding (Bursar)
 Will Teece (Headteacher)
 Elaine Freeman (Clerk)

AGENDA ITEM	<i>DENOTES GOVERNOR CHALLENGE</i> <i>DENOTES CAMPUS ACHIEVEMENT</i>	ACTION
	The Chair welcomed Helen Speechley to her first meeting of the F&O Committee, following her appointment as a Member Appointed Trustee as from 24 th February 2021. All present introduced themselves.	
1. Apologies for Absence:	There were no apologies for absence.	
2. Declarations of interest:	No declarations of interest were reported.	
3. 2021-22 Budget Monitoring – March:	<p>Helen Smart presented the Budget Monitoring information for March 2021, shared with the committee ahead of this meeting, and the following points were highlighted and discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supplementary grant of £9,900 having been received for free school meals - Reduced expected income for Lockers, due to the school not hiring out Lockers during this academic year - Lettings income amended – information to be provided later during this meeting - Bus income amended due to refunds to parents – information to be provided later during this meeting. • Expenditure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher Cost Centre – no change from February budget monitoring report - Support Staff Cost Centre – decrease to projected year end due to the 2% pay increment being taken out. • New Variations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overspend in IT Cost Centre due to Licences etc being more expensive since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. • In Year Balance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £44k - Total carry forward balance of £1,707,000. 	



	<p>A committee member pointed out that these figures showed a deficit of £58k from the predicted budget. The committee member asked if the transfer to capital figure of £144k, advised at a previous F&O Committee meeting, had been taken into account?</p> <p>Helen Smart confirmed that it had been taken into account, and highlighted this within the documentation as presented.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item and committee members noted this report.</p>	
<p>4. Monitoring of Catering, Lettings and Transport:</p>	<p>Joanne Golding presented documentation relating to Catering across the campus, shared with committee members ahead of this meeting. Joanne Golding advised that there had been few changes to this document since the last F&O Committee meeting.</p> <p>Joanne Golding confirmed that the predicted parental income of £15k for April was currently on target to be received, and advised that an end of year deficit of £29k was expected, due to the partial closure of the campus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>A committee member asked if, historically, the campus would usually break even with the catering income and expenditure?</p> <p>Joanne Golding advised that Catering would usually break even at the end of each year, occasionally with a profit being made.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion at this point.</p> <p>Joanne Golding went on to present information relating to Lettings across the campus, shared with committee members ahead of this meeting and confirmed that it was hoped that, just after the Easter break, some outside bookings would be able to re-commence – eg Football and Hockey. In light of this, £7k of income had been projected and Joanne Golding advised that this figure could change and indeed increase, should the Government allow inside activities to begin again.</p> <p><i>Peter Leatherland joined the meeting at this point.</i></p> <p>Joanne Golding advised that the £4k annual contribution from Lettings towards the synthetic pitch fund had not been taken out this year (this was shown in last month's figures) due to the reduced Lettings income. The usual amount which Lettings contributed towards the annual cost of energy had also not been taken out due to there being no inside Lettings this year, thus seeing a reduction in the energy useage. Using up the reserves of £8,647, Lettings would still see a deficit of £20k, although it was acknowledged that this could change if the situation improved.</p> <p>A committee member asked if the cost associated with the Lettings staff member, who had been re-deployed to a different area, could be transferred to a different Cost Centre?</p>	



This was discussed and although the staff member had been utilised in other areas, this had only been for a small percentage of time.

There were no further questions or discussion at this point.

Joanne Golding presented documentation relating to Transport and advised the committee that, unfortunately, the situation with transport was not good. COVID-19 had affected this greatly, with students not wanting to use the transport provided, preferring to make their own way to school. Joanne Golding stated that currently, there were 30 space places on the school buses, which equated to half a bus. Partial closure due to the pandemic had also impacted on the transport revenue, with a retainer being paid to the transport company throughout this period. Joanne Golding pointed out that there was currently a difference of over £36k between income and expenditure, with a large number of refunds being given. The school would usually expect to break even with transport.

Although the situation did look bleak, Helen Smart advised however that costs associated with the COVID pandemic had been reviewed, and taking into account the losses seen with catering, lettings and transport, along with the extra costs of sanitation/staffing etc, the overall cost to the campus was seen to be in the region of £70k. In a normal academic year, an amount similar to this would usually be expected as an excess to Lettings, and would be ploughed back into the campus. Therefore, taking into account the whole scenario, it was felt that the campus had not been affected quite as severely as was first feared.

A committee member asked if those savings on staffing had been taken into account whilst investigating the costs associated with COVID, ie not having to employ extra staff to undertake testing duties etc?

Helen Smart confirmed that these costs had not been taken into account, and indeed these would have had an even more positive effect on the overall figure.

A committee member asked if, moving forwards, the campus could act to reduce the number of spare places on the buses?

Helen Smart advised that this situation was being closely monitored, and would continue to be so when the new Year 7 cohort joined the campus at the beginning of next academic year.

The Headteacher stated that the transport situation could improve slightly in line with the national relaxation of restrictions, with parents who were currently furloughed moving back into the workplace. The Headteacher reiterated the savings which the campus had been able to achieve during the partial closure period.



	<p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item and the Chair thanked Joanne Golding for her presentation.</p>	
5. 3 Year Forecast:	<p>Helen Smart presented documentation relating to this agenda item, shared with the committee ahead of this meeting, and advised that the school was in a healthy in year reserve position, with £80k Post 16 income received, which was greater than originally expected.</p> <p>Helen Smart confirmed that the in year balance for the next 2 years looked positive, becoming a little more problematic moving onwards. Helen Smart drew the committee's attention to the 3 Year Forecast and highlighted the following differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post 16 numbers showing a reduction due to funding lag• HBEP funds no longer sitting with the campus• 3% teacher pay uplift taken out• Increase on Premises cost due to payment of 5 year electrical check being imminent• Costs associated with COVID-19. <p>A committee member asked if the campus had been able to glean a clearer picture of the future Post 16 numbers?</p> <p>Helen Smart and the Headteacher advised that this situation would become clearer once exam results had been released, and advised that work was on-going with the Post 16 team in order to clarify this situation further.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item and the Chair thanked Helen Smart for her presentation.</p>	
6. Number on Roll – September 2021:	<p>Helen Smart presented documentation relating to this agenda item, shared with the committee ahead of this meeting, and advised that a confirmed number of 241 students would be coming into the Year 7 cohort at the beginning of next academic year, comprising of 168 from catchment areas and 73 from outside of catchment.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item.</p>	
7. Reserves Plan:	<p>Helen Smart presented documentation relating to this agenda item, shared with the committee ahead of this meeting, detailing the spending plan for the school's reserves, with the following areas being highlighted and discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Payments covering maternity leaves• Post 16 subsidy• Increase to staffing costs – 3% teachers, 2% support staff, plus £250 payment to those staff earning less than £24k included in the 2021/22 budget• Emergency expenditure <p>Helen Smart went on to detail those areas where governor approval was required for spend:</p>	



- **Security Fencing:**

To respond to safeguarding concerns, which had been raised by Ofsted in the past, Helen Smart advised that a spend of £60k would make the campus completely secure. This would involve the erection of a rolling gate, with secure Green fencing either side, which would in turn ensure the school driveway is completely secure and inaccessible from the outside. The security fencing would continue along the perimeter of the campus grounds, creating a completely secure environment. Gates would allow access to the field areas for PE and grounds maintenance. Helen Smart advised that 3 separate quotes had been obtained for this entire work, and approval was being sought for the particular quote which included the rolling gate, equipped with a motor, which would be sufficient to cope with the high volume of traffic passing through the campus.

An in-depth discussion followed with questions being directed both to Helen Smart and the Headteacher, to ascertain the best possible way forward for the spend within this area, with work beginning as soon as was reasonably possible.

Following this in-depth discussion, committee members agreed to this spend on this particular quote in principle, with Helen Smart requested to email a map to all committee members showing the position of the security fencing around the campus grounds. Committee members were requested to email any questions to Helen Smart and the Headteacher as required.

- **LED Lighting:**

Helen Smart presented documentation with relation to this agenda item, shared ahead of this meeting, and highlighted the reasons why governor approval was being sought for this particular spend.

Helen Smart presented a government document which had recently been received, showing two top areas for investigation within the school, one of which was utilities. This particular government website provided information on interest free loans available to schools, which Helen Smart had investigated. 2 quotes had been sourced from suppliers recommended on this site, and 1 had come from a local known company. Unfortunately, during this investigation, Helen Smart had discovered that the interest free loan option period had now closed.

Helen Smart advised in detail the advantages and savings which would be achieved by replacing the existing fluorescent lighting with LED lighting, as well as helping to reduce the school's carbon footprint. It was hoped that this work could be carried out during the summer holiday closure period.

Helen Smart



Following discussion, the committee gave their approval to this spend, and were pleased to note that this lighting would tie in with the campus working to achieve an Eco Award.

There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item and committee members gave their approval to this spend for this particular area.

- **GL Assessments:**

The Headteacher provided information on the above, which had been discussed with Trustees in the past, and reminded the committee that the school had already bought into various software programs associated with this. The Headteacher advised that the school now wished to move forwards, to take advantage of the full suite of programs on offer, which included access to progress tests in English, Maths and Science for the whole of the KS3 cohort, with important indicators being enabled for future GCSE predictions. The Headteacher advised that this had been discussed with relevant Faculty Leaders, who were in favour of accessing these additional programs.

To clarify, the Headteacher advised the prime drivers for the purchase of this full suite of programs as below:

- Robust measure in place for showing progress made moving forwards – essential to meet the new Ofsted Framework
- Maximising student progress
- Addressing gaps
- Pupil attitude surveys
- Mental health screening and support.

The Headteacher advised that should committee members wish to receive further information relative to this spend, then this could be shared.

A committee member asked if this spend would be a one-off cost, or an annual spend?

The Headteacher stated that this would be an ongoing cost.

There were no further questions or discussion related to this, and committee members gave their approval to the spend for this particular area.

Helen Smart advised the committee of a current CIF bid which was pending for the replacement of windows and removal of asbestos, which if approved, would see the school contributing £46.5k towards this. Helen Smart stated that she was seeking committee approval, should this bid not be successful, to use this £46.5k to replace the current windows and doors within the Groby building. Helen Smart stated that this building was extremely cold in the winter, particularly in the top areas, near to the wood, where the sun did not reach. It was hoped that this work could be completed during the summer holidays using an external contractor.



	<p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this item and committee members gave their approval to this spend for this particular area, should the CIF bid not be successful.</p>	
8. Risk Register:	<p>The Headteacher presented the Risk Register, shared with the committee ahead of this meeting, and advised the updates which had been made to Section 7.0 with relation to the partial closure due to the COVID pandemic.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item and the committee noted the alterations made to this section of the Risk Register.</p> <p>Following a question from a committee member regarding the 'Everyone's Invited' campaign, the Headteacher verbally shared the school's current response to this.</p>	
9. Staffing Update:	<p>Helen Smart and the Headteacher presented documentation with relation to this agenda item, shared with the committee ahead of this meeting.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item and the committee noted the report relative to campus staffing.</p>	
10. Site and Health & Safety Report:	<p>Helen Smart presented the report with relation to this agenda item, shared with the committee ahead of this meeting, and the committee extended their thanks to the Premises team for their work around the campus.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item.</p>	
11. IT Report:	<p>The IT report had been shared with the committee ahead of this meeting, and the contents were noted and discussed.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item.</p>	
12. Future Visits:	<p>The Headteacher presented the guidance specifically relating to school trips and visits, shared with the committee ahead of this meeting, and advised that school staff were eager to begin planning trips (including overseas visits) following government advice and guidelines. The Headteacher did state however, that caution should be exercised with this, to ensure that financial loss in the event of any further partial closure due to the pandemic should be minimised, and the committee noted that further guidance specific to this area was due to be released very soon.</p> <p>A committee member was in favour of continuing to plan visits and trips, in line with relevant guidance, for the benefit of the students and the reputation of the school within the local community, but agreed that caution should be observed.</p>	



	<p>Following discussion, the committee gave their approval to the organisation of trips and visits (including overseas) following the guidance, with each trip and visit being assessed individually by Trustees, once further guidance had been released. It was unanimously felt that trips and visits were an essential part of the school curriculum. The Headteacher agreed to circulate the updated guidance to committee members on its release.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item.</p>	Headteacher
<p>13. Responsibility for the signing of substantial cheques as from next academic year:</p>	<p>The committee discussed the signing of substantial cheques, once the committee member with responsibility for this currently, moved to be a Member at the beginning of next academic year.</p> <p>Following discussion, the committee felt that this responsibility should be delegated to two separate Trustees, and Helen Stockill and Helen Speechley volunteered for this. Committee members were in agreement with this.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion related to this agenda item.</p>	
<p>14. Confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting held on 23rd February 2021:</p>	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2021 were reviewed.</p> <p>A committee member asked for alterations to be made to these minutes as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda item 6: 3 Year Forecast: Text altered to read 'At least 130 students in Post 16'. • Agenda item 7/8: Number on roll/admissions: Text inserted to read 'Following discussion, the Headteacher advised that consideration of the planned admission number would be ongoing, and would be discussed further, as required, at a future meeting.' Action point included for Headteacher. <p>Committee members were in agreement with these alterations, and the Clerk was asked to alter accordingly.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion relating to this agenda item.</p>	Clerk
<p>15. Matters arising from the minutes:</p>	<p>The actions from the meeting held on 23rd February were reviewed and confirmed as being either completed or in progress.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion relating to this agenda item.</p>	
<p>16: Any other business:</p>	<p>No items of other business had been previously notified to the Chair.</p> <p>There were no further questions or discussion relating to this agenda item.</p>	



The meeting closed at 7.11pm

Signed by Chair:

Date: 22nd June 2021

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:

NAME	ACTION
Helen Smart	Map to be shared with all committee members showing the position of the security fencing around the campus grounds.
Committee members	Questions re security fencing to be emailed to Helen Smart. ACTION COMPLETE. <i>Agenda item 7:</i>
Headteacher	Circulate the updated guidance re trips and visits to committee members on its release. ACTION COMPLETE. <i>Agenda item 12.</i>
Clerk	Alterations to the draft minutes of the F&O Committee Meeting held on 23 rd February 2021 as requested. ACTION COMPLETE. <i>Agenda item 14.</i>