

THE GOVERNING BODY OF ST. MARGARETS C of E JUNIOR SCHOOL

DRAFT MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON TUESDAY 24 MAY 2016 AT 7.00pm

PRESENT: Julia Clarke (Chair), Joe Ennis, Chrissy Hornby, Anna Pattenden (HT), Laura Probert, Tanjore Venkataraman (Vice Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE: Klare Gregory (Clerk), Denise Roche (Finance Officer)

Item	Main discussions and agreed actions	Action by
1	<p>Opening Prayer The Chair opened the meeting with a prayer.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for Absence (accepted/not accepted) Apologies were received and accepted from Sally Pettiford. Apologies were not received from Libby Sanderson.</p> <p>The meeting was quorate.</p>	
3	<p>Declaration of Governor's Interests Julia Clarke declared that she is a member of the MAST Board.</p>	
4	<p>Receive the Closedown of the Budget - Since Conversion, to 31st March Governors reviewed the March Finance Report and were advised that this was not a typical year as at the point of conversion the school began working with a Sept-Aug Academy budget, with the LA freezing the school account. The LA year end has now been reached, so the LA budget has been finalised and any monies due have been forwarded to the school.</p> <p>Governors noted that 7/12^{ths} of the financial year have passed so would expect around 58% of the allocated finances to have been spent, and questioned why the commentary states that only 44% of the maintenance budget has been used so far. The Finance Officer advised there were lots of planned jobs such as smoke detectors, windows, etc. to be completed so this will increase the spend to date.</p> <p>IT equipment was not budgeted for previously, so has been recorded now and shows as an increase on the report. This was due to an improvement on aligning the nominal codes between 2 different budgets; the LA and the Academy.</p> <p>Governors questioned whether absenteeism is linked to the £12k variance increase recorded for Other Staffing Costs and were advised that Support Staff have had sickness which needed to be covered, while they are still being paid for their absence and this has resulted in the negative variance.</p> <p>Governors questioned what the 'Health & Safety' cost relates to. The Finance Officer advised this is the SLA with Medway Council.</p> <p>Conversion costs of £12k were recorded and highlighted as Governors recognised that the school had a £25k conversion budget to use. PS Financials system and legal costs have been the noted expenditure so far and the Finance Officer was advised there would be further legal costs yet to be paid due to the Shared User Agreement.</p> <p>The Teaching Staff underspend was recognised as being due to the interim cost of the HT post and the resignation of 2 staff members.</p>	

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	<p>Governors questioned why 'Other Staff' costs are currently recorded as 93% of the budget being used to date and were advised that this relates to an alignment of coding so would be negated by the underspend where staff have been removed from. The 'Agency Staff' spend relates to the overtime for some of the SLT members and the 2 Trust HTs to cover the interim HT post.</p> <p>The cost of Staff Development was queried and recognised as including the HT recruitment fees and staff training course costs. Governors were concerned at the little amount left to provide the new HT with adequate training in her new post and were advised that towards the end of term there was a much reduced need for any more staff training so the remaining budget was felt to be an adequate amount.</p> <p>The governors discussed the mounting cost of CRB checks, with the £14 administration fee for volunteer checks, as well as the legal DfE requirement that does not call for 3 yearly checks, only one. It was agreed that this matter would be referred to the MAST Board.</p>	JC
5	<p>Approval of Balanced Budget from 1st Sept 2016 for Recommendation to the Board</p> <p>Governors questioned how the Income has increased each year of the 5-year forecast budget as this had not been available on forecast budgets the other Trust schools. The Finance Officer advised that the HCSS system calculates this automatically.</p> <p>The Finance Officer was asked whether the budget had been drafted as a worst case scenario, or whether accurately verified figures had been used, and confirmed that this was a more accurate and verified budget than a worst case scenario.</p> <p>Governors questioned the deficit on future years and were advised there was no concern with this as the rollover will leave a cumulative surplus, not deficit.</p> <p>Governors questioned the energy use bill, and were advised that a new contract began in October 2015 so this cost is expected to be cheaper than £35k in future years. Professional Services (Educational) cost of £50k includes music tutors, counselling, educational psychologists, etc. however a further saving is expected with the reduction in music teaching.</p> <p>Governors noted the decrease in the Rates bill and recognised that this was due to a saving made with an Academy discount being applied.</p> <p>Governors suggested that a benchmarking card would be a useful tool to review, to better understand the school's financial position compared to other similar schools and requested it for the next finance committee meeting.</p> <p>A Capital Expenditure of £7926 has been used on furniture. This figure remained constant through future years and governors questioned whether this had been earmarked for use, to be advised that it was kept as a contingency.</p> <p>Governors unanimously agreed the budget, for recommendation to the Trust Board.</p>	DR
6	<p>Fire Risk Assessment</p> <p>Governors reviewed the document, and noted an amendment to the wording – Year 15/16, Year 5 corridor double glazing and smoke detectors, Year 3 corridor fire doors.</p>	

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	<p>A governor questioned whether the double glazing should be recorded as work for Health & Safety and was advised that the rolling programme of works ensures all areas of the school are compliant with all regulatory safety measures. Governors noted the work will be carried out in phases.</p> <p>Governors questioned the priority and statutory compliance of replacing the double glazing, before the smoke detectors, and referred this matter to the Site Manager for clarification. It was confirmed that the smoke detectors are not legally required until the double glazing is fitted, as the fitting would create a sealed 'unit' that will then require smoke detection.</p> <p>Governors sought reassurance that as the works programme goes underway that the school would be legally compliant for Health & Safety. The Site Manager and the HT provided reassurance of this.</p>	
7	<p>Any Received Urgent Correspondence No urgent correspondence has been received.</p>	
8	<p>Any Matters of an Urgent Nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated Headship Time – governors recognised that dedicated Headship Time had always been historically agreed and provided for the previous HT as a necessary tool for leadership. Governors supported and agreed the continuation of the dedicated Headship Time for the new HT to use the equivalent of 0.5 days per week for professional development. • Governor Training Session – a training session is being arranged by St. Johns LGB, open to all Trust Governors for 'Effective Monitoring Visits'. This will take place at Gun Wharf, on Tuesday 4th October 2016 at 7pm-9pm. 	
9	<p>Confidentiality Governors agreed that no items require exclusion from published minutes.</p>	
10	<p>Date of Next Meeting The next meeting for the LGB is Thursday 14th July 2016, at 1.30pm. Meeting closed at 8.15pm</p>	

ACTION POINTS

Julia Clarke	5	Refer to the MAST Board; the Medway 3 year DBS checks compared to the DfE requirement.
Denise Roche	5	Provide Benchmarking Review for the next Finance committee meeting.