Signed

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE, PREMISES & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE OF ST LUKE'S CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL HELD ON MONDAY 5th FEBRUARY 2018 at 18:30pm IN THE SCHOOL

PRESENT: Ms Rebecca Abrahams (Headteacher), Mr Charles Achaw, Mr Hylton Bellinger, Dr Jackie Pitchforth, Fr Tom Pyke (Chair), Mr Michael Gleeson (Associate Governor and School Business Manager)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:
Mr Martin Golding (Financial Consultant)
Mr Angus Huck (Clerk)

The meeting commenced at 6.39pm, and was quorate.

Fr Pyke opened the meeting with a prayer.

1. **Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Declarations of pecuniary interest in any Agenda item**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests in any Agenda item.

3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2017 and Matters Arising**

Governors received the draft minutes of the FPP Committee meeting that took place on Monday, 13th November 2017, as circulated prior to the meeting.

It was **AGREED** that that draft minutes of that meeting be approved as a true and accurate record, and they were signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

Pages 3-4 – Solar panels

In response to the following questions from Governors, the following answers were given:

Will any payments for electricity generated by the solar panels be backdated?

No.

How long have the solar panels been in place?

Since 2013, when the new build was completed.

4. **Confidential minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2017 and Matters Arising**

Governors received the draft confidential minutes of the FPP Committee meeting that took place on Monday, 13th November 2017, as circulated prior to the meeting.

It was **AGREED** that the draft confidential minutes of that meeting to be approved as a true and accurate record, and they were signed by the Chair.

5. Budget Monitoring and Virement Report

Governors received the Budget Monitoring Report 2017-2018, 31st January 2018, as tabled at the meeting.

Mr Golding (Financial Consultant) highlighted the following points for particular attention:

- There was currently a forecast balance of £48,119. A further £62,500 in High Needs Funding was due to the school, but it was unclear if this would be received in the present or in the next financial year. £48,119 was the lowest possible figure that could be predicted for the end-of-year balance. It did not include school generated income because, although the school knew how much that would be, it could not be included until it was actually received, Mr Gleeson was currently chasing the outstanding High Needs Funding, and amounts owed by Newham as well;
- Towards the end of the year it was possible for a cash flow shortage to develop, but none was being predicted;
- Growth in Roll Funding had been received. That was additional funding to pay for a new class. One more tranche would come, but it would feature in two more budgets. EYFS Funding had gone up a little bit, while Pupil Premium Funding had gone down a little bit. It was very pleasing to get the whole of the Universal Infant Free School Meals Grant and Mayor's Meals Grant. The PE & Sports Grant had gone up, because the government had doubled it. Part would be received this year, part next year. At the start of the year the school had budgeted £9,950 for the PE & Sports Grant, and had now received an extra £4,828;

Dr Pitchforth entered the meeting at 6.58pm.

- The increase in the number of TAs was partly due to the need to support high needs children. In 2018-2019, all high needs costs would be shown in a separate part of the budget;
- Other major overspends were property, water rates and pupil meals costs, all of which were largely out of the school's control; and
- Overall, income and expenditure were within budget estimates. At the end of the year, a small carry forward was forecast.

In response to the following questions from Governors, the following answers were given:

Is the Growth in Roll Funding to pay for setting up a new classroom for the first time?

Yes. It is meant to cover the cost of setting up a classroom, the cost of a teacher for seven months, and maybe the cost of support staff if there is any left. That funding is received from September to March. In April, the budget will be calculated on the number of children in the school, including new children. Next year, the school will get that funding again, but it will run across two years.

Is the additional PE & Sports Grant money for the purchase of equipment?

It is for children's activities, largely. Much of the PE & Sports Grant is spent on the Schools Sports Partnership. There is also a swimming teacher whom the school employs. It is possible for the school to fundraise to purchase equipment.

It was **AGREED** that fundraising for sports equipment be an item on the Agenda of the next FPP meeting.

Action: Clerk

Has the swimming-pool been refurbished?

No. Money is continually being spent on it. The Premises Manager wants the pool completely relined, because he believes it is leaking. Spending on it is within budget.

How much is the school allowed to carry forward?

In theory, as much as it likes. Up to 8%, no questions will be asked. If it is more than 8%, it will be necessary to put in a Surplus Plan.

The school has massive energy bills, but also solar panels that are generating power. However, the school has not yet received a penny from those panels. Is that in the process of being rectified?

There was a problem with the accompanying forms which no-one knew how to complete. Someone is going to have to be paid to come in and do that, and that is likely to happen at the beginning of the new financial year.

6. **Budget 2018-2019**

It was noted that the draft Budget 2018-2019 would be presented to the FPP Committee at its meeting on Monday, 23rd April 2018.

7. **Schools' Financial Value Standard Self-Evaluation Form (SFVS SEF)**

Governors received the draft completed Schools Financial Value Standard Self-Evaluation Form (SFVS SEF), as circulated prior to the meeting.

Mr Gleeson (School Business Manager) went through the various amendments, as follows:

- Question 10. "OFSTED's Inspection Data Summary Report (IDSR)" had been substituted for "RAISE Online";

- Question 16. The government did not like schools maintaining large balances. The government believed that money should be spent on educating children. It was for that reason that the school was forecasting a 2.7% carry forward;
- Question 17. This was about maintaining the standard of repair of the premises. A lot of work had been done in this regard, some of it financed by the Diocese. The text had been updated to reflect this;
- Question 18. This was about collaborative working. The text had been updated to include the Headteacher attending termly meetings of headteachers of local schools, and Mr Gleeson's participation in the Tower Hamlets School Business Managers' Forum;
- Question 19. This was about improving the use of resources. The school continued to let part of the premises to a theatre group for one evening per week during term time, which generated £200 per week. The school also let parts of the premises to a holiday club provider and to an after-school club provider. Hopefully, in 2018-2019 it would be possible to give Governors a more detailed breakdown of money coming in from these sources;
- There was a further set of six questions about financial accountability. In 2016, the school underwent a Financial Audit. All action points arising out of that Audit had been addressed. Ms Abrahams and Mr Gleeson monitored those points and revisited them regularly; and
- Question 25 asked specifically about disaster recovery. The answer had been updated to state that the school did have a Critical Incident Plan Policy and that the Asset Inventory was up-to-date.

The Headteacher stated the following:

- The SFVS SEF was not just about the school being better, it was about looking at the efficient use of resources. There was information available from the DfE about how much schools spent on different kinds of staff. It should be possible to use this resource to compare different two-form entry schools. It was about drawing comparisons, to inform future decision making. It was about trying to spend as efficiently as possible.

Mr Golding (Financial Consultant) stated the following:

- The government maintained a value for money website. The outturns for all schools were published on it. The problem was selecting the comparators. There was such a wide variation in schools. For instance, the shape of the playground could determine the number of midday supervisors.

In response to the following questions from Governors, the following answers were given:

Does St Luke's engage with this government website at the moment?

There are two online resources. One is historic, while the other is very useful, but at a very high level. The difficulty is the ability to compare oneself against a genuine comparator school. The alternative site is still in its infancy. The school has not really engaged with it yet. The site will select schools on the basis of the criteria that the user sets. These schools will be spending their money in different ways, but the system does

not really enable the user to find out why. At present, it is much better to get together with more local schools.

The cost of school meals has gone up. Is there a choice of food provider?

Mr Gleeson has been talking to Ms Clare Delaney, an alternative catering provider. The problem with catering is paying more for food than one actually receives. That is not a problem when the take-up is low. However, the school has been experiencing an increasing take-up. When St Luke's goes to a new catering provider, the take-up will probably increase, so the cost of meals will become critical. The school's underlying principle is that it wants as many pupils to have a meal as want it and of the highest possible standard.

Would existing staff be TUPEd over?

Yes. They will be kept informed. The likely implementation date is 1st September 2018.

It was **AGREED** that the draft completed SFVS SEF be approved and adopted, signed by the Chair of Governors and returned to Tower Hamlets.

8. **Premises update**

Mr Gleeson (School Business Manager) reported as follows:

- There were still fundamental, underlying serious problems with the heating and hot water in the old build, and there were also problems in the new build as well. Since the previous meeting, there had been one or two days with no heating. The Diocese was well aware of all this. No firm plans had been drawn up yet. The Diocese was encouraging the school to 'limp along' to the end of the financial year, after which money would be made available to put things right. A lot of things did need to be done. All the piping under the lower floor had no lagging, resulting in massive heat loss. That would cost £30,000 alone to put right. The hot water system in both boilers would have to be isolated from the existing central heating system to enable the works to take place. The whole system needs to be flushed and no doubt piping will need to be replaced to enable this to happen. Whatever the LDBS and school end up being able to do, the work would be best done during the summer holidays so long as we can 'limp through' until then.

The Headteacher stated the following:

- The school had plans for money that had not been entirely spent on works that had not quite been finished, and also future moneys, to smarten up and improve the use of the external part of the site. Every time it rained, a lake appeared on the football pitch that got ever larger. That meant that the pitch was not fit for purpose sometimes, and it looks shocking. The front playground, which adjoins a public thoroughfare, is currently wasted space because the condition of the surface renders it unfit for most sports. Something needs to be done to improve it, because the school's unique selling point is its amount of space.

It was suggested that painting white lines on the playground would have an immediate positive effect.

Urgent premises issue

Dr Pitchforth (Safeguarding Link Governor) reported as follows:

- She came into the school to review the First Aid Policy with Ms Hudson, and was shown the First Aid Room. She had raised some concerns over the accessibility of the First Aid room and its contents – e.g. the fridge where some medication is kept and the disposal bins. She noted that the corridor outside the First Aid Room was used by children of all ages;
- She wondered if members of staff could be provided with FOBs so that they, but not children, could have immediate access to the First Aid Room;
- Fortunately, there were no controlled drugs in the First Aid Room at the time of her visit; and
- Her concerns had been drawn to the attention of the school and were under review.

Governors thanked Dr Pitchforth for her vigilance in bringing this Safeguarding issue to the school's attention.

In response to the following questions from Governors, the following answers were given:

Does the school maintain a proper register of hazardous chemicals?

Tower Hamlets is the cleaner for the school. Tower Hamlets' materials are up-to-date and fit for purpose. When the school recruits a new Premises Assistant it will want to do these things internally. The school would rather have full ownership of cleaning.

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will be coming into force in May 2018. Every school has to have a Data Protection Officer (DPO). Is there a plan for that?

The Headteacher and Mr Gleeson will be going on GDPR training. The Deanery could well collaborate over the provision of a DPO. It is unlikely that a full-time DPO is required for a school of this size. The GDPR is a massive tightening up of data rules. Most businesses pay little attention to data protection. By contrast, schools, as part of the public sector, have historically treated information correctly, respected it and disposed of it correctly. The GDPR is nowhere near as onerous for schools as it is for the private sector. There will have to be a full audit of everything. The school can expect a lot of FOI requests.

9. HR Update (including bringing the SENCO role in-house)

The Headteacher reported as follows:

- She had not had time to draft a CV yet;

- Ever since she had been Headteacher at St Luke's there had been a SLA with Tower Hamlets to provide a SENCO two days per week. The cost was routinely in the region of £30,000 per annum. However, the school had had to ask for more SENCO this term because of the growth in need, and this had raised the annual spend to around £35,000-£36,000. If the school brought the role in house it would cost a main-scale teacher's salary + a TLR payment in the region of £3k meaning an annual cost of between £45,000 and £55,000 per annum but for that the school would have a full-time SENCO in the school who knew the children and families; and
- By September 2018, the school would have doubled in size to a two-form entry school. It was therefore the right time to appreciate that 2 days a week was no longer enough. to discontinue the SLA and bring the SENCO post into the staffing structure.

In response to the following question from a Governor, the following answer was given:

How is an in-house SENCO going to pick up skills? Presumably, Tower Hamlets will be running SENCO training courses?

Tower Hamlets runs the SENCO Forum and holds SENCO conferences. There would be many opportunities for an in-house SENCO to network. SENCOs have to complete the National Award for SEND by the end of the third year in post. That is an MA level qualification, with the modules spread across three years. The next recruitment round is for January 2019. The school is therefore thinking of recruiting from the existing teaching staff to start in September 2018. If the school follows that route, it will be necessary to continue with the SLA until the end of the school year so that the appointed teacher completes the year with their class. The school will have to advertise initially to see if anyone is interested.

It was **AGREED** that the school would create a full-time SENCO post starting from September 2018, and would attempt to recruit to that post now from within the existing teaching staff. If successful, the SLA with Tower Hamlets would be cancelled from the end of the present school year.

Recruitment of Class Teachers

Mr Bellinger and Dr Pitchforth undertook to assist in the process of shortlisting and interviewing candidates for class teacher posts to start in September 2018.

Action: Mr Bellinger and Dr Pitchforth

10. Policies

Governors received the following draft Policies, as circulated prior to the meeting:

Charging, Remissions and Recoupment

Mr Gleeson stated that the one change was that a clear distinction was now being made between education visits made during the day and other schools trips that could include trips abroad. He stressed that other school trips were always voluntary.

It was **AGREED** that the draft Charging, Remissions and Recoupment Policy be approved and adopted, and it was signed by the Chair of Governors.

Health and Safety

Mr Gleeson stated that a section on First Aid had been added. He noted that a total of 13 members of staff had been trained in First Aid, including a number of TAs, and that between 12 and 13 Midday Supervisors had been trained in Emergency Paediatric First Aid.

It was **AGREED** that the draft Health and Safety Policy be approved and adopted, and it was signed by the Chair of Governors.

Data Protection

It was **AGREED** that determination of the draft Data Protection Policy be deferred until the next meeting.

Action: Clerk

11. Date of the next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the FPP Committee would take place on Monday, 23rd April 2018, at 6.30pm.

12. Any other urgent business

St Luke's PTA

Dr Pitchforth expressed concern about the way in which the St Luke's PTA was raising and spending money. She noted that the PTA used the school's name and organised public events, but it appeared not to be accountable financially to the school.

It was **AGREED** that Mr Gleeson would investigate Dr Pitchforth's concerns.

Action: Mr Gleeson

13. Items for the next meeting

The following items were suggested:

- Employee Assistance Scheme (EAS)
- Early Years Funding Update
- Fundraising for Sports Equipment
- Update on the PTA

Fr Pyke ended the meeting with the Grace

The meeting ended at 8.28pm.

Action List

- Fundraising for sports equipment be an item on the Agenda of the next FPP meeting – **Clerk**.
- Assist in the process of shortlisting and interviewing candidates for class teacher posts to start in September 2018 – **Mr Bellinger and Dr Pitchforth**.
- The draft Data Protection Policy to be an item on the Agenda of the next FPP meeting – **Clerk**.
- Investigate Dr Pitchforth's concerns about the PTA – **Mr Gleeson**.

Chair's signature: _____ **Date:** 23/04/2018