



Alderman Jacobs School (Academy Trust)

Finance Committee Meeting

Wednesday 8 November 2017

MINUTES

Key:

Governor Questions

School Improvements

Governors Present: Cathy Carlisle (Head), Eamonn Dorling, Kevin Blencowe, Laura Holland, Nicky Baker, Jenny Johnson, Abi Shepherd, Andrew Pattison

In attendance: Deborah Sutton (School Business Manager), Jocelyn Sumner (Clerk), Joel Combes, Trevor Goakes

Meeting commenced at 6.35pm.

1	Welcome and Apologies Kevin Blencowe (KB) welcomed all to the meeting. Joel Combes (JC) and Trevor Goakes (TG) were in attendance as new governors. Apologies were received and accepted from Abi Shepherd (AS) and Laura Hemmaway (LHe).	All to note
2	Minutes of the Previous Meeting (24 May 201&) Agreed as a true record. Proposed by KB and seconded by Eamonn Dorling (ED).	All to note
3	Agreed Actions Update The mail shot to Free School Meal eligible parents is undertaken regularly.	All to note
4	Declaration of Pecuniary Interests Deborah Sutton's (DS) daughter (Alexa Loy Photography) has taken photographs for walls and promotional material and son (Max Sutton Heating) installed boiler at 65 Drybread Road. Eamonn Dorling is an Independent Financial Advisor. Jenny Johnson runs an after school Art and Craft club in school and is Company secretary for her father's business.	All to note
5	Terms of Reference Governors agreed and adopted the Terms of Reference for the Finance Committee for 2017 - 2018. Proposed by Laura Holland (LH) and Jenny Johnson (JJ).	All to note

<p>6</p>	<p>Budget to date Governors received the report prior to the meeting which shows that the budget is in line with planned expenditure and as it is early in the year there are no issues to highlight. Governors challenged the high expenditure of the staff development budget to date. Staff have already undertaken a number of training sessions this year and the cost of PLP and consultancy fees has been taken from the budget. Governors asked if more should be added to the £75,000 currently invested in a deposit account. ED agreed to research options for investment to be considered after the audited accounts are finalised and after the Trust meeting on 4 December 2017. Governors noted and appreciated the success of the Straw Bears after school club. Cathy Carlisle (CC) informed the meeting that consideration is being given to staff costs and child: adult ratios in deciding whether to employ another member of staff. The club was set up to run at a 'low cost' but there is room to increase the cost a little if required to help fund another member of staff. Governors urged school to consider ensure the cost reflects the local community. CC confirmed to Governors that the afterschool club is covered by school insurance. Governors asked if use is likely to be seasonal. CC explained that the club is used by working parents and therefore use is expected to be constant. Governors requested information on how the changes following the Energy Efficiency upgrades will be monitored. CC explained that the project is still to start, the monitoring will be part of the package and children will also be involved as a learning experience.</p>	<p>All to note</p> <p>Action: Eamonn Dorling</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Deposit Account This item was discussed in agenda item 6.</p>	<p>All to note</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Finance Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Statement - Agreed and adopted, proposed by LH and seconded by JJ. CC confirmed that the altered limit to £10,000 and over for 3 quotes has improved the procurement process. • Value for Money - Agreed and adopted, proposed by JJ and seconded by ED. DS explained that comparisons are made using a benchmarking report put together by Rawlinsons. CC highlighted the updates to the section which lists items that the Governing body intends to do. Governors agreed that an Annual development plan meeting should consider a 3 year plan and should be externally facilitated (i.e. Patrick Shevlin). CC and DS agreed to investigate a suitable date so that Jocelyn Sumner can then organise the meeting. • Financial Responsibilities - Agreed and adopted, proposed by LH 	<p>All to note</p> <p>Action: Cathy Carlisle, Deborah Sutton, Jocelyn Sumner</p>



	<p>and seconded by Andrew Pattison (AP).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Financial Procedures - Agreed and adopted, proposed by KB and seconded by ED. <i>Governors requested clarification that the Responsible Officer includes Finance policy documents in the audits.</i> DS confirmed that they do and are included in the RAG report. DS explained that there is clear segregation of duties between the Auditors and the Responsible Officer. 	
9	<p>Responsible Officer Reports (June 2017 and September 2017) In response to 3. Payroll Amber Risk in the report dated June 2017, it was agreed that Personnel file checklists will now include letters to ensure that salary payments are made in line with pay scales and with staff agreement <i>Governors challenged school's approach to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).</i> CC and DS have both attended separate briefings, are considering outsourcing an auditor and will manage recommendations 'in-house'. DS will attend a Local Authority briefing at the School Business Managers Annual Conference at the end of November 2017 and will provide feedback from this session.</p> <p>ED left the meeting at 7.15pm</p>	<p>Action: Jocelyn Sumner</p> <p>Action: Cathy Carlisle, Deb Sutton</p>
10	<p>Annual letters to trust's accounting officers from ESFA's accounting officer JS explained to the meeting that the letter, according to the Academies Financial Handbook 2017, must be shared with Trustees to be discussed and action to be taken where appropriate to strengthen the trust's financial systems and controls. CC and DS confirmed that the returns are being made to deadlines which tend to consume a lot of time due to external systems.</p>	<p>All to note</p>
11	<p>Lettings Governors agreed to let the main hall to a local fitness business on a temporary rate of £50 for 2 hours to be reviewed at the end of January 2018 to monitor the number of attendees. The school retains the right to terminate the letting agreement at any point and to increase the cost of rent to reflect the Lettings Policy following the review. The equipment will be stored in school at a cost of £20 per term. <i>Governors requested reassurance that it would not pose a security risk and expressed an interest in the building being available for the community to help improve school/community relationships with lettings generating only a small amount of revenue.</i> CC agreed to investigate SHSCC letting charges.</p>	<p>Action: Cathy Carlisle</p>

12	Governor Training Governors did not have anything to report.	All to note
13	Summary of meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Governors shared knowledge of GDPR and discussed school's approach</i> • <i>Policies were agreed and adopted</i> • <i>Governors discussed content and timing of an Annual Development Plan meeting</i> • <i>Governors agreed stance on Lettings</i> • <i>Governors reviewed Responsible Officers reports</i> 	All to note
14	Any Other Business There was no other business.	All to note

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm

Signed as a true record: Date:

Kevin Blencowe (Chair)