CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a meeting of the FACILITIES & FINANCE COMMITTEE held in the School & via Microsoft Teams at 7.45am on Wednesday 5th October 2022

Present:	Richard Vass	Chair
	Stephen Lawlor	Headteacher
	Richard Brown	(via Microsoft Teams)
	Chris Lamberti	
	Stephen Miles	
	Mary Argent	Associate Member (via Microsoft Teams)
In Attendance:	Melissa Mulgrew	Business Manager
	Wendy Newton	Clerk to Governors

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE **ACTION**

1. There were no apologies for absence, all Committee members were present.

ITEM 2 - DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2. There were no declarations of business interest further to those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2022-23, or conflicts of interest or receipts of gifts or hospitality.

ITEM 3 – ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR

3. Nominations were sought for the role of Vice Chair of the Committee for AY 2022-23. Richard Brown volunteered to continue in the role and there were no other nominations.

4. **Decision**. Richard Brown was unanimously elected as Vice Chair of the Facilities & Finance Committee for AY 2022-23.

ITEM 4 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

5. The minutes of the Facilities & Finance Committee meeting held on 22nd June 2022 were approved as a true record.

ITEM 5 - MATTERS ARISING

6. Item 13, Para 21 – Policies. The First Aid Policy had been reviewed and it was confirmed that it included guidance relating to staff taking students directly to hospital if deemed necessary.

ITEM 6 – CHAIR'S ACTION

7. There was no Chair's action since the last meeting to report. The Chair advised that he would be reviewing the 2021-22 company accounts before they were sent to the School's external auditors.

ITEM 7 – TERMS OF REFERENCE

8. **Decision**. The unamended terms of reference for the Facilities & Finance Committee were received for annual review and approved as presented.

ITEM 8 – FINANCIAL UPDATE

9. The School's Financial Management Report for Month 10 (June 2022) was reviewed and its content noted. The Business Manager advised that the current 2021-22 year-end balance was now estimated to be around £30,000, slightly lower than the figure reported in June. This was due to additional expenditure on the CCTV upgrade project in order to ensure full campus coverage. The Committee were advised of the higher-than-expected Government cost of living pay increases for

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support staff from April 2022 (ranging from 4% to 10.5%) and teaching staff from September 2022 (ranging from 5% to 8.9%). This would have an approximate £200,000 impact on the 2022-23 budget and was forecast to give the School an end of year deficit of around £100,000 but this included a £40,000 contingency. The School had budgeted on a staff salary increase of 4% for teachers and support staff and 3% for leadership posts. It was hoped that with some in-year revision the School would be able to return to a break even point by the end of the year. The meeting was advised that staff pay made up 80% of School costs and that there was to be no additional Government assistance for schools towards the extra expenditure.

ACTION

10. The Committee queried the increased energy costs and were advised that only the recent SSEF energy contract would receive Government energy relief estimated to be in the range of £5-6000. All the other energy contracts were fortunately on fixed price contracts which gave the School a buffer until the 2023-24 academic year. The Business Manager confirmed that utility expenditure had been significantly incremented in this year's budget to allow for any unforeseen problems. The Committee noted the need for all Governors to be aware of the change in financial situation.

11. **Decision.** The Business Manager **agreed** to prepare a revised School Budget for 2022-23 for presentation at the Full GB meeting on 20th October 2022. **M Mulgrew**

ITEM 9 – SSEF PROJECT

12. The Business Manager advised that the final accounts for the SSEF project were still awaited from the project managers, PCH. All defects had now been closed and the final accounts would hopefully be agreed before the next Full GB meeting.

ITEM 10 – CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

13. The Business Manager advised that the School roofing project, due to finish by the October Half Term, had been delayed and was now due to finish at Christmas. This was partly due to a re-scoping of the project, the renewal of Dining Hall lights was replaced with additional investigatory work at the front of the School to find the cause of roof water leaks which continued to affect classrooms and equipment in the Main Building, the latter was deemed to be more important for the School. The Committee discussed the leakage problem and Business Manager advised that she had good faith in the new roofing company. A Site Team Report dated Autumn 2022, written by the Site Manager, was received for information and the good work of the Site Team was noted.

ITEM 11 – POLICIES

14. **Decisions**. The following polices were reviewed and **approved** as presented with the review periods shown below.

a. Item 11.1 – CCHS Financial Regulations & Scheme of Delegation 2022-23 – Approved as presented with an annual review and recommended for presentation for Full GB approval on 20th October 2022.

b. Item 11.2 – Health & Safety Policy 2022-23 - Approved as presented with an annual review.

c. Item 11.3 – Asbestos Management Plan - Approved as presented with an annual review. The Business Manager advised that the H&S Executive now undertook asbestos audits on schools and that a new whole school asbestos survey was possible this academic year although very good records of asbestos were kept by the School.

d. Item 11.4 – Security Policy - Approved as presented with a 2-year review. The Committee were advised that two external Juniper audits, Financial Internal Controls and Site Security, were to take place during academic year 2022-23. The site security audit was considered prudent following a couple of site security breaches during the summer holiday, details of which were summarised for the Committee.

e. Item 11.5 – Lone Working Policy - Approved as presented with a 2-year review.

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ITEM 12 – HEALTH & SAFETY **ACTION**

15. The Health & Safety (H&S) Review for 2021-22 was received and discussed. Governors questioned the reason for the significant rise in the number of minor incidents from 18 in 2020-21 to 130 in 2021-22. The Committee were advised that a change in the staff member had lowered the threshold of reporting and that very minor incidents were now being recorded. It was stated that 2-3 minor sports injuries could be expected each day. The Headteacher advised that following Covid there was now a heightened awareness of illness amongst the students and that they were now more likely to report themselves as being sick. Governors queried the data format in relation to serious injuries. The Business Manager advised that there had been no RIDDOR reportable incidents during the period of the report. Reporting was necessary if a person had been taken directly from the school to a hospital for an injury that could have, or should have, been prevented. Details the RIDDOR reporting system were explained to the Committee. The Business Manager confirmed that the School had a H&S Committee which reconvened in the Summer Term for the first time since Covid and that there was nothing material to report.

ITEM 13 – GDPR UPDATE

16. The Committee were advised that there was nothing significant to report on GDPR issues. There had been a couple of Freedom of Information requests relating to exams and admissions which had been directed at acquiring data such as the number of applicants and the entrance test cut-off mark. One complaint had been made to the Office of the School Adjudicator, most of which had not been upheld, and details of the complaint were summarised and discussed. GDPR issues had been very quiet recently with no incidents to report.

ITEM 14 – IT & CYBER SECURITY UPDATE

17. An IT update dated October 2022 was received for information. The Committee noted a very sizeable donation from 'Every Child Online', a charity which re-purposes IT equipment donated from general industry, of £60,000-worth of IT equipment. This had allowed a new full computer room to be set up in the School. Details of the scheme were summarised, and the Business Manager advised that the donation would permit the School to reduce its IT replacement budget this year. Following long delays in China, WiFi access point equipment due in March 2022 had just been received and would be fitted very shortly. The Committee noted the IT Manager's long-term plan to update the School's network cabling to CAT 6 standard and commended the intention. A new IT Technician had recently been appointed and would return the IT Team back to three staff members once again.

ITEM 15 – RISK REGISTER

18. **Decision**. The Facilities & Finance Committee and SSEF sections of the CCHS Risk Register were received for termly review. A new cyber security risk (E14) had been added and the Committee discussed the new risk and the proposed risk values, and the new entry was approved as presented. The Clerk **agreed** to move Risk E14 to a more relevant position in the Register. **Clerk**

ITEM 16 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19. Decarbonisation Fund. The Business Manager advised that the School had commissioned an energy audit to address future decarbonisation plans and the audit report had just been received. Further information was to be presented at the Full GB meeting as applications to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund closed in November. The audit recommendations needed investigation, but it was noted that some items would not benefit the School financially. The Committee discussed the general issue and noted the current energy-related problems of the School including the old heating systems and the swimming pool boiler. It was reported that the swimming pool consumes 29% of the School's energy costs and the Main Building 54% due to the age of the building. It was confirmed that the School was not currently required to do anything in relation to this issue.

20. **Decision**. The Business Manager **agreed** to prepare a summary of the energy audit and her recommendations for receipt at the next Full GB meeting. **M Mulgrew**

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ITEM 17 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING | **ACTION**

21. **Decision**. It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at 7.45am on Wednesday 16th November 2022. | **All**

The meeting closed at 8.45am.

R Vass, Chair 16th November 2022

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