

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a meeting of the FACILITIES & FINANCE COMMITTEE held in the School & via Teams at 7.45am on Wednesday 8th February 2023

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

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Steve Miles.

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 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

3. The minutes of the Facilities & Finance Committee meeting held on 16th November 2022 were approved as a true record.

ITEM 4 - MATTERS ARISING

4. Item 9, Para 18 – CCTV. The Business Manager confirmed that the School's CCTV recordings were only kept on-site on the School servers.

ITEM 5 – CHAIR'S ACTION

5. There was no Chair's Action to report, only routine financial approvals had been undertaken.

ITEM 6 – FINANCIAL UPDATE

6. The School's Financial Management Report for Month 2 (October 2022) was reviewed and its content noted. The meeting was advised that nothing of note had arisen by that stage in the financial year, most variances related to trip expenditure. The Business Manager apologised for the delay in the publication of the management accounts which was the result of recent staff changes. The new Finance Officer was settling in well and was expected to catch up on the remaining management accounts in the near future. It was confirmed that information on DfE funding for 23/24 was expected at the end of February 2023. The Chair noted that the biggest issue relating to forecasting was staff pay and the outcome of the teachers' strike action.

7. Governors queried the difference between budget and forecast figures and were advised that the budget figures reported against the budget agreed by the Full GB in July and the forecast was real-time figures and therefore gave a more realistic outcome for the end of the financial year. The amount of cash in deposit accounts was discussed, with £511,000 in a fixed term account and £213,000 in a 30-day notice account. The Business Manager advised that the cashflow does not go below £1.5million, with just over £700,000 in deposit accounts, the School therefore had good liquidity.

ACTION

ITEM 7 – CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT & SSEF PROJECT

ACTION

8. The Business Manager presented the CCHS Estate Strategy 2022-27 and advised that the document had come about following voluntary participation in the DfE's Capital Advisers Programme (CAP) when the DfE came and evaluated how well the School managed its estate and used its capital expenditure. They had been very complimentary about the number of successful CIF bids and the condition of the School estate. It had been noted that the estate was well run but had to contend with major issues relating to buildings built from 1950s to 1970s which contained asbestos, all of which is appropriately controlled. There was only one recommendation which related to some broken windows, these are now to be covered up by the Site Team in the next Half Term. It was noted that it was good practice to have an estate strategy to understand the state of the School site.

9. Estate Strategy comments related to the lack of green space within the School and small classrooms, neither of which could be changed. The Business Manager explained how the DfE undertook their calculations in relation to total pupil capacity and it was stated that the School would remain with a net capacity for entry of 180 students. The fragmentation of the Sixth Form was also mentioned and the benefit of having Sixth Form students integrated within the rest of the School was stressed. The energy issues of the School were noted and the Business Manager advised that energy efficiency would be the focus for the year. Governors queried what now needed to be done and were advised that: a better inventory of plant machinery was required; releasing reserves in the future for energy strategies for greater energy efficiency and having money in the budget for energy items. The major issues relating to the swimming pool were discussed. A new swimming pool was not financially possible and so replacement of the plant machinery would be followed by a general condition upgrade. The priority of the proposed School perimeter fencing was questioned and, in light of other issues, it was suggested that this would now be 2-3 years away because of funding. A forthcoming ICE security audit was likely to address this issue. It was stated that the aim of the Estate Strategy document was to inform the expenditure strategy for the Governors for the next 3-5 years.

10. **Decision.** The Business Manager **agreed** to produce a costed list of priorities for estate-related issues, to include an inventory of the plant and condition, for discussion at a future meeting.

M Mulgrew

11. The Business Manager advised that the final accounts for the SSEF project were due this week.

ITEM 8 – SITE TEAM REPORT

12. The Site Team Report for Winter 2022-23 was reviewed, and the Site Manager was thanked for a very clear and informative report which was considered a pleasure to read. Governors queried specific items in the report and the Business Manager gave some additional clarification. The amount of ongoing remedial work being undertaken by the Site Team was noted. The dedicated nature of the School's Site Team was praised by the Committee. The Headteacher highlighted internal projects undertaken by the Team which had improved workspaces and benefitted the wellbeing of School staff. The Chair noted a project, instigated by the Site Team Manager, to replace the furniture in the Sixth Form Common Room and thanked the PA for agreeing to fund the project.

ITEM 9 – IT & CYBER SECURITY UPDATE

13. An IT update dated January 2023 was received for information. The Business Manager advised that a software restriction policy had been rolled out for staff and would follow for students next week. It had recently been reported that one in four schools had been the victim of a cyber-attack. The School had up to 300 attacks each week, most of which were unauthorised network login attempts, but which were prevented by the School's multifactor authentication system. The benefit of the recent IT audit was noted. The Committee was impressed by the School's current IT position and the improvements which had occurred over the past five years, and the work of the IT Manager was commended.

ITEM 10 – HEALTH & SAFETY

ACTION

14. The minutes of the Health & Safety (H&S) Committee meetings held on 19th May 2022 and 10th January 2023 were reviewed. It was noted that all items discussed were of a minor nature.

ITEM 11 – RISK REGISTER

15. **Decision**. The Facilities & Finance Committee and SSEF sections of the CCHS Risk Register were received for termly review and **approved** as presented. The size and very comprehensive content of the Register was discussed in general.

ITEM 12 – GDPR UPDATE

16. The Business Manager advised that there were no GDPR issues to report and that there had been no recent Freedom of Information requests.

ITEM 13 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

17. No other items of business were raised for discussion.

ITEM 14 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

18. **Decision**. The date of the next meeting was **changed** to be 7.45am on Tuesday 25th April 2023 (from Wednesday 26th April 2023).

All

The meeting closed at 8.38am.

R Vass, Chair

25th April 202