

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a meeting of the FACILITIES & FINANCE COMMITTEE **held at the School at 7.45am on Wednesday 14th March 2018**

Present:	Richard Vass Peter Cook Nicole Chapman Mark Rowell Duncan Stevens	Chair Vice Chair Head
In Attendance:	Susan Hoefling Wendy Newton	SLT – Business Manager Clerk to Governors
Apologies:	Mary Argent, Richard Brown	

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming Mark Rowell to the Committee.

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mary Argent and Richard Brown.

ITEM 2 - DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2. There were no declarations of interest further to those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2016 – 17.

ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

3. The minutes of the Facilities & Finance Committee meeting held on 15th November 2017 were approved and signed as a true record.

ITEM 4 - MATTERS ARISING

4. Item 5 – Para 12 – VAT Rate. The VAT recovery rate is to be reviewed in April 2018.
5. Item 5 – Para 13 – Lettings Income. The types of letting income had been reviewed in relation to VAT since the last meeting and it was believed that all income was being classified correctly. The background to the issue was summarised by the Business Manager and discussed.
6. **Decision.** The Business Manager agreed to send the Chair a breakdown on the qualifying and non-qualifying lettings income with reference to the VAT threshold.
7. Item 8 – Para 23 – GDPR. Direct feedback had not been received on the School's proposed GDPR documentation from Richard Brown but the issue had been superseded by discussions at the recent Full GB meeting. The proposed GDPR documents had been agreed as acceptable.
8. Item 10 – Para 25 – Campus Development. It was confirmed that the outcome of the current capital development bid would not be known until the end of March or early April. It was suggested that as no planning applications had yet been made it would be prudent to wait for the outcome of the bid rather than spend £20,000 unnecessarily.
9. Item 11 – Para 28 – Car Parking. The idea of raising additional income by renting car parking spaces by Seymour House had now been shelved as the VAT implications made it unviable and the access route may be required for the future building projects.
10. Item 12 – Para 29 – Payroll. The transfer to a new payroll provider was currently progressing well and the system would go live with effect from April 2018.

ACTION

S Hoefling

ITEM 5 – FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

11. Following feedback from a recent audit, a minor administrative amendment was put forward for the School's Financial Regulations and the Business Manager explained the amendment.
12. **Decision**. The amendment to the School's Financial Regulations was approved as presented.

ITEM 6 – EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF MUSIC PERIPATETIC STAFF

13. The Business Manager summarised the HMRC situation concerning the use of self-employed peripatetic music teachers and advised that the School currently had three such staff. In light of a recent HR issue it was suggested that the School had no option but to put self-employed staff onto contract. The meeting discussed the situation and noted the benefits of being under contract.
14. **Decision**. It was agreed that from 1st September 2018 all School peripatetic music teachers were to be employed on a contract basis. The Business Manager agreed to inform the self-employed peripatetic music teachers of this decision and offer them contracted employment.

ITEM 7 – FINANCIAL REPORTS

15. **Item 7.1 – Income and Expenditure Report**. The 2017-18 year-to-date Income and Expenditure Report for Month 6 was received. The forecast end of year deficit had reduced slightly to £(168,461) but it was hoped that further savings could still be made. This year was to be the first to have a significant deficit. It was noted that a £18,000 contingency still remained.

16. **Item 7.2 – Cash Flow Forecast Report**. The Cashflow Forecast Report for March to August 2018 was reviewed and the cashflow situation was described as healthy. A query was raised on the projected cash comparison figure to the previous year as greater deterioration had been expected.

17. **Decision**. The Business Manager agreed to check the figures shown in the report.

18. **Item 7.3 – School Fund**. A year to date income and expenditure report was received for the unrestricted School Fund and a list of expenditure items was reviewed. It was suggested that there was still confusion amongst parents between the Enrichment, Better Buildings and PA Funds.

19. **Item 7.4 – Three Year Forecast**. An updated 3-year budget forecast was received and discussed. The document had previously been reviewed at a recent Full GB meeting and the Business Manager summarised the assumptions on which the figures had been based. It was reported that the restricted GAG income for AY2018-19 was now confirmed and that unrestricted income was based on previous years. It was noted that the 2018-19 staffing costs figure may change due to staff changes the end of the academic year. Income had worked on the assumption of 135 students in Year 12 and it was suggested that this figure could be raised to 160 without needing additional teaching groups dependent on subject choices. The Sixth Form entry criteria were discussed in relation to increasing student numbers.

20. **Decision**. It was agreed that SLT would review the current Sixth Form entry criteria.

21. The Chair stressed that it was the duty of the Committee to look at the forecast budget figures and investigate the options for what the School could do to address the deficits ahead. It was noted that the in-year deficit figure increased by 2021-22, although acknowledged that future income was not yet known. The Head suggested that the only option available to address large deficits was to increase student numbers and this was not possible without capital development. If expansion was not possible, a reduction in staffing and/or subjects would be required. The Committee agreed that the overall financial aim was to get back to a balanced budget and, with the benefit of the current reserves, the School had the advantage of a little extra time in which to address this issue.

22. The possible negative effects of changes to the teaching load were noted, and it was reported that all schools were in a similar situation. The Committee acknowledged that the School had already done a lot to produce major savings but stated that a new list of future cost-cutting options

ACTION

S Hoefling

S Hoefling

Head

with timeframes was required for GB consideration. The Business Manager advised the meeting that the School was required to send a 3-year budget forecast to the ESFA for the first time this year. The difficulty of not knowing future Government income information was noted.

ACTION

23. **Decision.** It was agreed that:

- a. The Committee would receive and debate progress report on cost-cutting initiatives at each meeting.
- b. SLT would produce a prioritised list of cost-cutting options with their financial and operational impacts, and the time scales of how long they would take to be effective. A list of initial ideas would be presented at the next Facilities & Finance meeting in May.

S Hoefling

Head

Head

9.05am – Mark Rowell left the meeting to teach.

ITEM 8 – HEALTH & SAFETY

24. **Item 8.1 – Audit Report on Science Department.** A Health & Safety (H&S) report for a spot audit undertaken on the Science Department in February 2018 was reviewed, they had received a score of 100%. Governors queried one comment in the report and the Business Manager confirmed it was a minor issue which had since been addressed.

25. **Item 8.2 – Audit Report on Art Department.** An H&S report for a spot audit undertaken on the Art Department in March 2018 was reviewed, they had received a score of 90% overall. The report had only just been received and the issues raised were still to be addressed by the Department. It was noted that both the Art and Science Departments had been required to increase their KS3 classes from 24 to 30 students and change their working practices; both departments were working well within the constraints of their new circumstances.

26. **Item 8.3 – Health & Safety Committee Minutes.** The minutes of the H&S Committee meetings held on 19th October 2017 and 22nd February 2018 were received and noted. A query was raised on the issue of school bags in corridors. The operational reality behind the situation was explained; whilst unsightly, it was not deemed to be a major safety issue. There had been a suggestion that minor incident report forms were not being completed which could explain the large reduction in incidents, it was stated that staff are constantly reminded of the need to complete accident forms.

ITEM 9 – GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION

27. The Business Manager summarised the actions taken to date in relation to the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) coming into force on 25th May 2018. The proposed Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices for parents, pupils and staff were received for information and comment. The School was now proposing to use the ECC Data Protection Officer Service at a cost of £1500 per year; this sum had reduced from an initial quote of £7000 by using the ASHE group. The scope of the ECC service was summarised and general issues relating to the School and GDPR were discussed by the meeting. A lot of administrative work had to be done by the School but it was underway and the essential elements were deemed to be on track for 25th May.

28. **Decision.** The use of the ECC Data Protection Officer Service at a cost of £1500 per year was approved.

S Hoefling

ITEM 10 – REVIEW OF IT PROJECTS

29. An IT Update dated March 2018 was received for information and the issue of server renewal raised for discussion. The benefits of adding further data to the Cloud were as yet unproven but investigations were underway for backing up to the Cloud using Microsoft Azure. This had the additional advantage of providing a more flexible solution for business continuity purposes. The School servers had been budgeted for possible replacement this year but this was now on hold until the Cloud situation had been investigated, further. The replacement of some desktop computers was to be brought forward from next year in order to smooth out budgeted expenditure. A recommendation on the server situation would be received in due course.

ITEM 11 – CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

30. Governors had received a full update on School campus development at the GB meeting the previous week. Concern was voiced over the project management ability of the current design company for a £4million project and the Business Manager was to make enquiries with other schools who had used the company. The outcome of the CIF bid was due in April and if successful the School would have to act quickly to get the project underway. The meeting discussed the immediate actions required and the assistance needed from specific School staff. It was noted that the School would be required to go out to tender for the building project.

31. **Decision**. The Business Manager agreed to:

- a. Get references from other schools on PCH's project management work, and
- b. If successful with the funding bid, get three quotes for project management of the new build.

32. Initial budget estimates were received for the Technology and Sixth Form Kitchen remodelling work due to be undertaken in the Summer. The Committee was asked for agreement in principle at this initial cost before the School went out for more definite quotes. It was proposed that the cost of the refurbishment would come from CCHS Cap Dev Ltd. The Business Manager advised that Chartwells Catering had been approached to assist with the cost of the new Sixth Form kitchen.

33. **Decision**. The Committee agreed in principle to the Technology and Sixth Form Kitchen remodelling scheme. The Business Manager agreed to obtain tenders for the remodelling work and to take the final financial proposal to CCHS Cap Dev Ltd in May 2018.

ITEM 12 – REVIEW OF PREMISES PROJECTS

34. The Committee received a report of in house projects undertaken by the Site Team since November 2017. The Committee praised the excellent, pro-active work of the Site Team within the School and particularly thanked them for their hard work during the recent period of snow. The meeting was also informed of a change to the staffing structure of the Site Team due to come into effect in April.

ITEM 13 – RISK REGISTER

35. The Facilities & Finance Committee related section of the CCHS Risk Register was presented for termly review. In addition to checking the current risks, the Chair stressed the need for Committee members to also consider if any risks were missing from the document.

36. **Decision**. The Clerk agreed to increase the probability of Finance Risk F8 to five.

ITEM 14 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

37. **Long Term Staff Absences**. The Head informed the meeting of two long term staff absences. The meeting were advised of the terms of sickness pay which are part of the Teacher' Pay and Conditions Document and noted the detrimental effect on staffing costs.

ITEM 15 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

38. **Decision**. The date of the next meeting was changed to be 7.45am on Wednesday 2nd May 2018 (from 25th April).

The meeting closed at 10.00am.

Agreed as a true record.

R Vass, Chair

2nd May 2018

ACTION

S Hoefling

S Hoefling

Clerk

All