

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a meeting of the FACILITIES & FINANCE COMMITTEE held at the School at 7.45am on Wednesday 2nd May 2018

Present: Richard Vass Chair
Nicole Chapman Head
Richard Brown
Mark Rowell
Duncan Stevens

In Attendance: Susan Hoefling SLT – Business Manager
Wendy Newton Clerk to Governors

Apologies: Mary Argent, Peter Cook (Received post meeting)

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received from Mary Argent, and from Peter Cook after the meeting.

ITEM 2 - DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2. There were no declarations of interest further to those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2017 – 18.

ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

3. The minutes of the Facilities & Finance Committee meeting held on 14th March 2018 were approved and signed as a true record.

ITEM 4 - MATTERS ARISING

4. Item 4, Para 6 – Lettings Income. It was confirmed that the Chair had been sent a breakdown on the qualifying and non-qualifying lettings income in relation to the VAT threshold. The School was now very close to the VAT threshold and the situation was being closely monitored. The meeting discussed the VAT situation and the implications to the School if the threshold was breached. The Business Manager anticipated that the relevant income for AY 2018-19 would remain below the threshold. It was suggested that early contact needed to be made with any hirers that would be affected by the addition of VAT.

5. **Decision.** The Business Manager agreed to present a forecast of lettings income for AY 2018-19 at one of the meetings in the Autumn Term 2018. The Business Manager also agreed to contact the Business Manager at Great Baddow High School to discuss the VAT situation at their school.

6. Item 4, Para 27 – GDPR - Decision. The Business Manager summarised the actions already taken by the school and those planned in relation to GDPR. The problem of the School's historic staff and pupil records was discussed. Richard Brown agreed to make investigations into the GDPR and historic information.

7. Item 7, Para 17 – Cash Flow Check. The figures in the Cash Flow report presented at the last meeting had been checked and a query explained by a donation to the School.

8. Item 7, Para 20 – Sixth Form Entry Criteria. It was confirmed that SLT had reviewed the Sixth Form entry criteria but that the Admissions Policy could not be changed until the next review in Autumn 2018; this would be for entry in September 2020. The issue of not having the entry requirements was discussed and it was suggested that students in other schools may not be aware of the CCHS Sixth Form entry requirements when they select their GCSE subjects in Year 9.

ACTION

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9. Item 10, Para 29 – IT Services. The proposed use of the Cloud as opposed to internal servers was queried and it was confirmed that nothing was happening on this issue in the near future. It was also confirmed that a rolling replacement system for staff laptops was in place. Staff were encouraged to report issues to the IT Helpdesk.

10. Item 11, Para 31 – Campus Development. The Business Manager confirmed that glowing recommendations had been received from other schools in relation to PCH's project management skills. The recent CIF bid had been unsuccessful and very limited feedback had been received from the DfE. It was noted that all the successful CIF bids had been for small amounts and related to fabric maintenance or health & safety issues. The Head advised of the Government stance in relation to funding grammar schools. The meeting discussed additional methods of advertising the work already undertaken by the School in relation to under-privileged students. It was suggested that a smaller CIF bid may be more likely to be successful and the meeting debated the situation.

ITEM 5 – FINANCIAL REPORTS

11. Item 5.1 – Income and Expenditure Report. The 2017-18 year-to-date Income and Expenditure Report for Month 7 was received. The forecast end of year deficit had reduced very slightly to £(167,100) but it was hoped that further savings would be made. A contingency of £18,000 still remained. It was reported that lettings income had done very well and that a major new hirer had been found for next year. A detailed review of costs had now been undertaken for most areas. The Head advised of new staff joining in the Autumn Term and gave an update on some ongoing long term staff sicknesses. The adverse effect on staffing costs were noted. The Business Manager put forward a request to use the remaining £18,000 contingency for a replacement water heater for the swimming pool showers and for automated electronic gates at the Seymour House car park at a cost of £8,000 and £8-10,000 respectively. The Committee discussed the requests and queried the need for the electronic gates. The meeting debated the security gates issue and put forward other possible options, it was suggested that the problem was possibly a usage or administrative issue.

12. Decision. It was agreed that £8,000 of the contingency could be used for the replacement water heater. The Business Manager agreed to re-assess the gate options at Seymour House.

13. Item 5.2 – Cash Flow Forecast Report. The Cashflow Forecast Report for April to August 2018 was reviewed and noted.

ITEM 6 – DEFICIT REDUCTION MEASURES

14. A paper entitled Deficit Reduction Strategies had been prepared by SLT and was tabled for discussion by the Business Manager. It was stressed that the concepts put forward were only outline ideas for initial discussion and would need additional work in order to be able to assess their feasibility and the associated financial savings. The paper included both cost reduction and potential income generation ideas. The Head explained each of the suggestions in more depth as well as their potential impact on the education of the students, staff workload and threat to Sixth Form recruitment, and answered questions put forward by the Governors. The Committee noted that it was a good list of options and thanked the SLT for their work. It was agreed that figures now needed to be obtained for the proposals along with some prioritisation. The meeting was informed that the Head had accepted a request to undertake consultancy work in China during the Summer Half Term and received details of the work and possible related opportunities.

9.10am – 9.15am – Mark Rowell left the meeting briefly to start a lesson.

15. Decision. The meeting was reminded that the Committee was required to formulate possible wording for the new School Strategic Plan. Committee members were requested to consider wording for the financial objective in the Strategic Plan and bring their ideas for discussion at the next Facilities & Finance Committee meeting where it would be an agenda item.

ITEM 7 – CHARGES & REMISSIONS POLICY

16. The Charges and Remissions Policy was presented for review; only references to the IB had

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been removed from the examination section.

ACTION

17. **Decision.** The Charges and Remissions Policy was approved with a one-year review.

ITEM 8 – LETTING POLICY & RATES 2018-19

18. The Lettings Policy and Conditions of Hire was received for approval. There had been minor amendments relating to School closure dates and one additional sentence relating to the requirement for third party liability insurance by hirers. Revised lettings rates for academic year 2018-19 were also presented for approval, a 2% increase in hourly rates had been proposed for the swimming pool and artificial pitch.

19. **Decision.** The Lettings Policy & Conditions of Hire and the Lettings Rates for AY 2018-19 were approved as presented with an annual review.

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ITEM 9 – CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

20. The Business Manager advised that a meeting with PCH was scheduled for later that day and this would review the next steps for the unsuccessful CIF bid. The School had the option of appealing the decision. The remaining plans for work to be undertaken in the School during the Summer holiday were summarised and included: converting T2 into two classrooms, T3 into a lecture-style room and the installation of a kitchen and servery in the new Sixth Form Common Room. The budgetary estimate for all three projects was in the region of £130,000 and it was planned to finance the projects through CCHS Capital Development Ltd. Chartwells had been asked to assist with the financing of the Sixth Form kitchen project and it had been suggested this could be considered in conjunction with a possible new contract. An initial proposal had been received with three options including 5 or 7 year contract terms and varying amounts of capital investment plus annual payback. Governors debated the general concept and stated that a fully costed proposal on the contract change was required. It was stressed that the decision for capital expenditure for the building projects lay with CCHS Cap Dev Ltd and the decision to accept a change of contract with Chartwells was the remit of the Facilities & Finance Committee.

21. **Decision.** The Business Manager agreed to obtain additional figures from Chartwells and present a full proposal at the next meeting.

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ITEM 10 – RISK REGISTER

22. The Facilities & Finance Committee related section of the CCHS Risk Register was presented for termly review.

23. **Decision.** The Facilities & Finance Committee related section of the CCHS Risk Register was approved as presented without amendment.

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ITEM 11 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

24. There were no other items of relevant business to record.

ITEM 12 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

25. **Decision.** The date of the next meeting was agreed as 7.45am on Wednesday 20th June 2018.

All

The meeting closed at 9.30am.

Agreed as a true record.

R Vass, Chair

20th June 2018