

**Tutshill C of E School**  
**Minutes of the G5 Governors' meeting**  
**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

Chair of Governors: Mr Riordan  
Clerk to Governors: Ms Linden

**Present:**

Miss Lane (Headteacher), Mr Riordan (Chair), Mrs Cooper, Dr Evans, Ms Henderson, Mrs Clarke, Mrs Gilchrist, Mrs Dursley.

Mrs Davies (School Business Manager) and Mrs Williamson (Administrator) were also present for the financial items on the agenda.

**1. Opening Prayer – Mr Riordan.**

**2. Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received and accepted from Revd Treharne, Mrs Watson and Mrs Fryer.

**3. To agree items of Any Other Business (previously notified)**

No items were notified.

**4. Approve minutes of last meeting**

The following amendments / corrections were notified

Item 14 – change “chairs” to “chair’s”

Item 15 – change “vice chair” to “chair”

Item 19 – change DBC to DBS

The minutes were then approved, proposed by the Headteacher and seconded by the Chair.

**5. Matters arising from minutes (not covered by the agenda)**

The Chair reported that Sarah-Jane Gilchrist would be standing down from her governor role at the end of term. The FGB expressed their thanks to Sarah-Jane for her hard work and commitment over the years and Sarah-Jane also thanked the FGB for their support.

**6. Proposed CFR**

The School Business Manager (SBM) presented the CFR summarising all the transactions from last year's budget. These had already been presented monthly via the Finance and Resources Committee as part of the process of self audit required as part of the Schools Financial Value Statement. A governor queried the final balance and it was confirmed that the school was in credit not debit by the final figures reported. The FGB approved the report and it was signed by the Chair.

**Action** – The SBM to forward to GCC.

**7. Best Value**

The SBM presented the Best Value Statement, also a requirement of the SVFS. This had already been approved by the Finance and Resources Committee. The FGB approved the final report and it was signed by the Chair.

**Action** – The SBM to forward to GCC.

**8. Governors' Budget Plan**

The SBM presented the Governors' Budget Plan along with accompanying notes which were largely self-explanatory. However, the SBM pointed out that the level of expenditure within the 16/17 budget is not sustainable. The contingency is less than the desirable 5% although it is likely that figure will increase throughout the year. This year the lettings income budget has been set higher so there will be less surplus from lettings which have previously been used to fund long term ICT projects. No budget has been set for that eventuality and the focus has changed to long term school development projects from now on and a wish list of projects has been created. The cost of supply insurance has increased dramatically this year and the level of reimbursement will be considerably reduced as the new provider is not as generous as the GCC Supply Mutual fund.

The SBM also drew attention to the significant increase in teaching salaries as a result of increased NI contributions, staff increments and staffing contingencies. The Headteacher pointed out that staffing costs are now at 84% of the total budget and recommended aiming to reduce that ratio to 82/83% in future. It was hoped that the staffing contingency would not be as expensive as costed but suggested that annual increments for teaching staff were no longer affordable. Most schools use a two year incremental cycle and when advertising teacher positions, the roles are capped at a specific scale point depending on the level of responsibility attached to the role. A governor highlighted that in other areas of the public sector, organisations had received an uplift in their budget allocations to cover the additional NI costs and asked whether this would also apply to the school budget. It was agreed that the Headteacher should consult with other Headteachers and the Chair contact both the local authority and governors associations for further advice. The FGB approved the Governors Budget Plan and it was signed by the Chair.

The FGB also expressed their thanks to the SBM for her hard work and commitment to the school in light of her retirement at the end of the year.

**Action** – The Headteacher to consult with other Headteachers, the Chair to consult with GCC and / or governor associations on the potential to secure a budget “uplift”.

The SBM and Administrator left after Item 8.

## **9. SAT update**

The Headteacher gave an update on the recent SAT tests which had now been completed. The scales were due to be published in July with the full results available in October. The Headteacher and the teaching staff felt the tests were harder this year but that the children had worked hard and wanted to do their best, showing what they were capable of achieving. A governor had visited yr 6 during the week and felt that the children coped well, feeling challenged but wanting to demonstrate what they had learnt. The Headteacher and teachers felt that they had successfully embedded the school ethos in supporting the children to do their best. Four families had withdrawn their children from school handing in a letter, drafted from a charity boycotting the tests. The Headteacher had informed GCC of the reasons for the absences.

## **10. Academy Status**

The recent government announcement that not all schools needed to convert to academy status meant that it was no longer applicable to Tutshill School. No further discussion was needed at this stage.

## **11. Pay Policy**

The Headteacher raised the issue of the significant increase in teaching salaries as a result of increased NI contributions, staff increments and staffing contingencies which had been discussed earlier within Item 8. It was recommended that a review of the school's Pay Policy be undertaken with the following issues up for specific discussion,

- Auditing and capping any future vacancies
- Introducing biennial increments for teachers currently on the main pay scale.

The FGB agreed unanimously to recommend the review, with full consultation with the staff to avoid any future need for redundancies.

**Action** – The Headteacher and Personnel Committee to conduct the review and contact HR for advice.

## **12. Parent Questionnaire**

Due to time constraints, the Chair suggested that Items 12, 13 and 14 should be taken forward between himself and the Headteacher, with updates being emailed to the FGB. A fuller discussion would be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

## **13. Communication Committee**

See above, Item 12

## **14. Revised Communication Policy**

See above, Item 12

## **15. Safeguarding**

The Headteacher reported that she had held one Child Protection Conference and one Core Meeting regarding the same child in school. A previous case had also now been closed.

## **16. Parents views / communication**

The Headteacher reported that a letter had been received expressing concern over the sickness absence of one teacher. Consistent cover had been provided but the absence was still ongoing and the situation under review.

## **17. Chairs comments and correspondence**

One item of confidential correspondence had been received by the Chair.

## **18. Committee reports**

### Finance and Resources Committee

The SBM had presented the main reports earlier in the meeting. The Chair of the FRC reported back on the findings of the recent Premises Audit Report. One issue that was outstanding was that the wild garden had become too overgrown with nettles and was no longer safe for the children. A parent volunteer had agreed to come and weed and tidy the garden.

### Personnel Committee

The Chair of the Personnel Committee reported back that several policies were being reviewed and that the draft exclusion policy had been ratified. The Pay and Performance Management Review was due. Interviews for the School Business Manager vacancy were taking place that week and it was expected that the school would shortly be advertising for an Administrator role.

Admissions update – a governor reported back on a successful meeting held with GCC to discuss the proposal to ring fence the parish when allocating school places. It was agreed to send a follow up letter requesting a look at the impact of the new housing development in particular on admissions.

**Action** – governors to send follow up correspondence to GCC.

**19. Confidential – further parent communication, independent review and discussions with Gloucestershire LEA.**

**20. Any other business**

No other items were reported under any other business.

**21. Date and Time of next meeting, Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2016 from 6 to 8pm.**