

THE JOHN OF GAUNT SCHOOL
Minutes of the Resources and Audit Committee Meeting
Monday 9 May 2022

Time: 6 pm
Place: The Hub and via Zoom
Present: **In person**
 Jo Trigg (JT), Amanda McClean (AM), Sarah Marsh (SM), Gemma Pugh (GP),
 Eleanor Shergold (Clerk) (ES)
Via Zoom
 David Whewell (DW), Pete Gear (PG), Sophia Oleszynski (SO)
Advisers: **In person**
 Nigel Reeves (NRE), Ellie Green (EGR), Matt Doughty (MDO)
Apologies: Toby Corden (TC) (chair), Glyn Coy (GC), Paul Skipp (PSK)

Agenda Item	Actions Agreed	Who
50/22 e)	To follow up with members re fixing a date to select auditors for 21/22	DW
51/22 a)	To follow up at S&C on the incident of far right graffiti	JT
51/22 b)	Potential new build to be an agenda item for the next board meeting	DW/ES
56/22	To send Governor Postcards to identified staff/email to Ten Tors volunteers	JT
57/22	To check half term and summer arrangements for FSM payments	JT

48/22 Apologies

Apologies were agreed and accepted. It was agreed that JT would chair the meeting in the absence of the chair and vice chair.

49/22 Declaration of Business Interests

Governors were reminded to declare business interests as necessary.

50/22 Minutes and Matters Arising

- a) 39/22 – Helen Merrick (ABM) will be invited back to R&A next year
- b) 41/22 – PG did some research on the best colour for line painting around the school – in conclusion white is fine
- c) 41/22 – Action plan from accessibility report shared in advance of the meeting
- d) 41/22 – Fire Risk Assessment action plan also shared in advance of the meeting. **Governors asked about the implications if the CIF bid is unsuccessful.** This will be reviewed when the outcome is known. Fire safety is a priority area so the school is hopeful
- e) 43/22 – selection of auditors – NRE is waiting on confirmation from members re availability – DW will follow this up

The minutes and confidential minutes of 14 March were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

51/22 Site

a) Site Update

Site visit – a site visit took place in advance of the meeting. The visit included the area for the proposed new build, potential use of space when the old buildings are removed and the kitchen area. A previous H&S audit had picked up on food preparation in terms of allergies. Everything is now stored, labelled

and kept separate. A separate cooking facility is being considered.

MDO gave an update on work completed since the last meeting

- Sliding gate – there have been some problems with this potentially compromising site security, this has been resolved
- Fire extinguisher inspection – this has been carried out
- The team are continuing with replacing fluorescent light tubes with LED. Lighting has been updated in one of the science labs with another to be completed during half term. Wingfield light fitting replacement is being carried out on a rolling programme
- Sports kit – the annual inspection has taken place with over £10k in repairs recommended, including a set of replacement goals on the AstroTurf and gym mats. It was thought that cheaper quotes can be sourced for the work
- White lines have been refreshed around the school
- The science office has been rearranged and the desks have been replaced
- Toilets – every holiday the paintwork is refreshed to cover graffiti. **Governors asked whether there are other options to help manage this.** After a time of discussion, it was agreed to trial anti-graffiti paint. **Governors asked about a recent incident of far right symbols being graffitied.** MDO had passed the relevant information on at the time. Issues around Prevent discussed.

Action – to pick up on how the school dealt with this at S&C

JT

- AstroTurf – is still in good condition but the goals and dugout area are getting destroyed. There are ongoing issues with trespassing which the police are unable to address. MDO is sourcing quotes for anti-climbing fencing, work on the dugouts and a secure lock to the AstroTurf. **Governors asked if it is possible to add CCTV.** MDO – there are places where cameras could be added.

b) Capital Bids Update (CIF)

Usually the outcome is known just before Easter. The school is yet to hear. This delay will cause more of a challenge to getting the work done during the summer holidays.

Section 106 Funding – around 12 months ago NRE asked the Diocese to look into the possibility of getting rid of 7 of the mobile classrooms due to the poor condition that they are in. At the time the cost came back at £4.5-5m, which is likely to be nearer £6m now due to price increases. In May NRE received an email from The McAvoy Group who have been helpful. It was noted that reports shared in advance of the meeting do not reflect any commitment from the school, the due process for tendering would need to be followed. Proposals for the removal of the mobile classrooms and replacement with a new block included comments and costings for a few different options giving an idea of the kind of thing the school could do. The potential cost for these options is around £1.5m, including the necessary groundwork. More work would be required in order for the Council to release the section 106 funds and the school would need to commit £0.5m from reserves. NRE shared this as a starting point for discussion, the school could also look at a different option.

Governors were supportive of the proposal. Preferred options were discussed. The guaranteed 50 year lifespan was considered to be worth the money. Further questions were asked to clarify potential issues around H&S, the procurement process and sustainability. Governors also observed that none of the proposals included toilets. NRE – the current mobiles don't include toilets so this wouldn't be taking anything away. The need is for additional classroom space. **Governors asked if the Section 106 money from the council is attached to the need to provide additional classrooms.** NRE confirmed that it is.

All of the proposed options allow for additional classrooms to be added on to the end. All of the rooms would be directly accessible via external doors to each classroom.

JT asked what the school needed from governors. NRE – to take this to full board to get the okay to

look into this further and to start the procurement process. Also, to make a decision re committing a further £0.5m from school reserves. And for the school to have further discussion with Wiltshire Council.

Action – potential new build to be an agenda item for the next board meeting

DW/ES

Governors asked where an extension to the canteen would go and whether other potential works might progress, opening up further opportunities. After a time of discussion, it was concluded that there was nothing stopping the proposed new classrooms from going ahead, rather a need to keep the additional works in mind.

A question was asked about how long the procurement process takes. NRE will look at government resources for this. The process is likely to take about a year. Planning permission will be required. It was suggested that the school might want to put an application in for further works at the same time.

c) Link Governor Report

Circulated for governor information.

SM met with MDO last week to discuss H&S. They plan to meet regularly to discuss H&S issues. SM is attending link governor training this month.

MDO left the meeting.

52/22 Business and Finance

Documents were circulated in advance of the meeting.

a) 2021/22 Months 7 and 8 Financial Reports and Cashflow

The summary reports give a snapshot of the financial position of the school as at 7 April and 4 May and the estimated balance sheet position as at 31 August 2022. Projected Revenue Balance at year end remains the same at £1,050,000

NRE outlined variances in his emails to R&A committee at the time that the information was circulated.

Month 8 is very much on target to retain £1,050,000 as reserves and contingencies. There are some variances that include ongoing repairs and investment in the site as agreed at the March meeting. The fitness suite is now up and running and available for student and staff use.

The school's position is really strong moving forward.

b) Updated Draft 5 Year Budget Plan

The budget plan reflects the summary position as at the 14th April.

Governors asked if there are cost increases that NRE is concerned about. NRE – the budget has been planned carefully to factor additional costs in. Energy costs are fixed for another year and the increase is factored in for subsequent years. It looks like the school might get a government grant of £75k covering NI and energy cost increases from 1st April to August 2022.

Governors asked about the upcoming change in salary levels for teaching staff. NRE confirmed that the projected salaries for teaching staff from September and the uplift to the lower end of the scale are also covered in the budget and additional grant funding is expected next year.

Years 2 & 3 are where non-staffing costs increase reflecting where the energy costs are factored in.

2022/23 – projected income of £7.5m and an in-year surplus of £104,000, this is a good position for the school to be in. The school is currently finalising staffing for September.

2023/24 – the income increases by £500,000 to reflect lagged funding re student numbers from 22/23. The infrastructure is already in place for this September.

As the figures increase over the next 2-3 years the school could potentially invest in the new buildings and retain a position similar to today.

Governors asked questions to clarify projected student numbers for subsequent years and the costs around creating additional classroom space if student numbers are expected to decrease to reflect the population of Trowbridge. Section 106 funding comes with the stipulation of creating more teaching space and the condition of some of the mobile classrooms is really poor. There is a need to invest the finances in giving students and staff a better experience.

c) Link Governor Report

Circulated in advance of the meeting. GC has met with NRE to spend time discussing the budget.

53/22 Audit

Documents were circulated in advance of the meeting.

a) GDPR Updates

An online audit has recently been completed with One West. The report for this has only just been received. On the 14th July One West will visit the school to do an on site audit. One West will also be asked to do a training session for staff. There have been further subject access requests.

b) FCAR Reports

The next internal audit will be carried out in the summer reflecting areas of focus agreed in the autumn term. The report will be shared with R&A.

c) Risk Register November 2021

There are no further changes to this version circulated for governor information. As always this is a live document.

d) Risk Assessment March 2022

There are no further changes to this version circulated for governor information. This is also a live document. The most recent change was signed off at the March board meeting to reflect the latest government guidance. This is where it will sit unless something changes.

54/22 Human Resources (HR) Report

Since last R&A much time has been taken up with Headteacher Recruitment.

There have been a couple of resignations. It is coming up to the critical time of year with 31 May being the last date that teaching staff can resign. Currently the trickiest area in terms of lack of applicants is maternity cover. The English faculty have a number of posts where this is the case so the school has been creative with internal cover. One of the Assistant Headteachers will take on the role of Director of Learning for the next year. Sociology/psychology has also been challenging but a teacher has now been appointed for a September start. One of the pastoral team left last week. Interviews for a replacement will take place this week. Current challenges for the pastoral team were discussed.

Cover continues to be challenging. Staff absence has been immense over the last 6 months, more so than the previous 18 months. It is now coming up to trip season. The school cannot get supply staff as there are none available. **Governors commented on the impact on students' education, that cover is not the same as having their usual teacher with their expertise.** EGR – everyone is really good at providing cover. What the school no longer has is external capacity. **Governors asked if the view in the market is that this is likely to improve.** EGR said that it is not. **Governors asked about apprenticeships.** Challenges around capacity to support apprentice teaching staff discussed. **Governors asked how closely JOG works with other schools in terms of peer support.** The school takes part in shared CPD. Resilience and sustainability discussed.

Governors asked if it is just teaching jobs that are proving challenging to fill. EGR – it is mainly teaching jobs that are being advertised.

Governors asked for an update on the new Headteacher. He is going to be doing some primary school visits with PSK. DW is meeting with Matthew next week, which will include discussion around his induction.

55/22 Policies

Spreadsheet – governors asked questions to clarify a couple of points.

Staff Code of Conduct – minor amendment made to clarify the timeframe for reporting an offence committed outside of work. This has been changed from ‘immediately’ to within 48 hours of the incident occurring. It was concluded that this minor update did not require union consultation.

Equality and Diversity – this was approved.

There were no content changes to the following policies so no need for union consultation

- Ill Health Retirement Non-Teachers
- Ill Health Retirement Teachers
- Safer Recruitment

All policies were approved, including the amendment to the Staff Code of Conduct.

Apprenticeships – EGR advised that this policy should be discontinued. Apprentices are appointed through CSL, who are the employer. **Governors asked questions to clarify.** It was agreed to discontinue the policy.

56/22 Governor Postcards

This was discussed and agreed, as well as sending an email to SGR to forward to the volunteers who helped with Ten Tors.

Action – Send Governor Postcards to identified staff/email to Ten Tors volunteers

JT

57/22 AOB

NRE asked if there is a schools’ forum coming up soon as he was looking to clarify the situation re free school meal holiday payments. It was agreed that JT would check plans for half term and the summer holidays.

Action – to check arrangements for FSM holiday payments

JT

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm. Date of next Resources & Audit meeting – Monday 27th June 2022

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____