

**THE JOHN OF GAUNT SCHOOL**  
**Minutes of the Resources and Audit Committee Meeting**  
**Monday 27 June 2022**

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

Agenda Item	Actions Agreed	Who
61/22 a)	H&S audit to be circulated for governor information	MDO
62/22	SAT to MAT form to be circulated	PSK
63/22 a)	To follow up with ABM about FSM provision and to update R&A	NRE
64/22 c)	To explore the possibility of a 'test' phishing email with Oakford	NRE
65/22	To share feedback from staff voice	PSK
67/22	To send Governor Postcards to identified staff	TC
68/22	To ask MDO to come up with 2 or 3 solutions for drinking water in humanities	NRE/MDO

**58/22 Apologies**

Apologies were agreed and accepted.

**59/22 Declaration of Business Interests**

Governors were reminded to declare business interests as necessary. PSK will be CEO of EQUA from September.

**60/22 Minutes and Matters Arising**

- a) 50/22 – selection of auditors for 21/22 was discussed at 23 May board meeting
- b) 51/22 – the incident re far-right graffiti was followed up at S&C and had been followed up with the student

The minutes of 9 May were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

**61/22 Site**

**a) Site Update**

MDO gave an update on work completed during May half term

- W33 flat roof was replaced
- Legionnaires testing – the water tanks will be cleaned in the summer
- Kitchen gas and electrics testing
- Chiltern toilets were redecorated

- Various repairs were carried out around the school

The Health and Safety audit (Wiltshire Council) is due to take place this week. They will go through the process and identify actions to follow up. MDO will share the report with governors.

**Action – H&S audit to be circulated for governor information**

**MDO**

MDO gave a summary of work due to take place over the summer holidays, which included

- Painting and decorating, including Dunston corridor
- Sports Hall roof repairs & new doors
- Several annual inspections

**b) Capital Investment**

Following discussion at last R&A and May board PSK and NRE met with the Head of School Place Commissioning, School Buildings & Places Team from Wiltshire Council to talk through the plans for the proposed new build. In principle she could see what the school was aiming towards and section 106 funding would probably be released towards the cost.

A confidential item was discussed.

**Governors asked about plans for the Sports Hall roof as the CIF bid was unsuccessful.** MDO said that there are a couple of options which included replacing the sky lights. The work would take a couple of weeks or longer, and along with the cost of scaffolding won't be cheap. There are a number of things to think about with summer school and summer bookings.

**Governors asked about graffiti.** MDO said that this is still happening. He is going to try to come up with a solution – e.g. a different wall covering.

**c) Equality Objectives**

*To further improve accessibility across the school for students, staff and visitors with disabilities, including access to specialist teaching areas.*

With a site of this age this will always be on the agenda. Accessibility needs will be factored in when improvements to the site are made – e.g. when reception was updated a couple of years ago. Any new builds will have to be DDA compliant.

The accessibility report that took place earlier in the year has been shared with R&A. Recommendations from the report are things that would be factored in and can be used as evidence for CIF bids.

**Governors said that the school needs to also capture some of the actions from the report that have already been carried out – e.g. refreshing white line painting.**

MDO left the meeting.

**62/22 EQUA**

PSK – it is prudent to have a new line in next year's budget to create a pot that can be used for anything to do with EQUA – e.g. legal fees, consultation, backfilling of staff, etc. JOG has entered a process ready for conversion and it is not known at this stage whether there are going to be any financial implications.

SAT to MAT form – the host MAT fills this in and sends it to the Regional Schools Commissioner. It is then discussed by the advisory board. The advice is to send this form now for a slot in October/November. The form is a very general document serving to book a place for that conversation to take place. JOG and the MAT will then be allocated a project worker. The form asks for structures of the MAT to see if they have capacity for another school. PSK is keeping Matthew Woodville informed and has shared the document with DW. He will also circulate it for R&A information and update all governors at the July board meeting.

**Action – SAT to MAT form to be circulated**

**PSK**

**DW discussed the MAT with Matthew last week and flagged the need for him to be giving thought to the move to EQUA now and to be advising governors.**

**Governors asked about the scope of the project officer.** PSK – to work with the school and EQUA to make sure that the legal structures are followed through and timescales followed along with any points that are generated from the RSC board. It is not an advisory role.

## **63/22 Business and Finance**

Documents were circulated in advance of the meeting.

### **a) 2021/22 Month 9 Financial Reports and Cashflow**

The summary reports give a snapshot of the financial position of the school as at 6 June 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 email to the R&A committee at the time that the information was circulated. All remains entirely positive.

Some points to note

- An additional £79,658 has been allocated to the school as a Supplementary Grant for the period 1 April – 31 August 2022. This funding is to offset against higher National Insurance and Energy costs in particular for the same period but with no other restrictions. This is good news as this is largely covered in the budget already. NRE expressed concern about the reserves increasing further as this could lead to questions from the ESFA. Additional students will start to put pressure on some of the spaces around school. Both C42 and C44 have 18 pcs. To upgrade to 30 in each would mean that there would be another 2 bookable IT classrooms. The plan was to replace Computing and Business pcs next year. This can be brought forward to the summer and pcs recycled to C42 and 44. This will cost £20-£25k.
- A recent initiative undertaken by the school is to invite bids from different curriculum areas to enhance their resources. PSK and NRE are currently working through the bids.
- JOG will be running a summer school again this year, working together with Active Trowbridge. This is all completely free of charge and includes lunch.

**Governors asked if it is possible to invest in catering.** PSK – the size of the catering area is the issue. NRE – the different outlets around the school are running well. It just needs a huge sum of money to make any significant improvements.

PSK – staff voice has raised a question about FSM and what is included in comparison to what happens at another local school. NRE said that there is a meal deal that could be better advertised. After a time of discussion, it was agreed to look at what the school can do for FSM students and how to work with ABM in this. To commit a certain amount of funds to enhance the quantity of food available to FSM students.

**Action – to follow up with ABM about FSM provision and to update R&A**

**NRE**

**Governors asked about C42 and 44 and whether other curricular areas use these rooms.** NRE – there is an internal booking system. There was a time of discussion around potential future IT requirements.

The CIF bids were unsuccessful, adding another £10k back into the budget. It was agreed to continue investing in the school, to just get on and do what is possible. **Governors asked about whether the contingency needs to remain at £1,050,000.** PSK – what hasn't been factored in at this stage is any improvements to the portacabins.

**A question was raised about the AstroTurf, whether there are any significant costs coming up.** NRE – the pitch is fine. It's the out of hours visitors that cause issues. MDO is working with a company to see

what can be done to replace the dugouts and some of the fencing to enhance the facility but the actual surface is good.

**Governors asked about staffing – whether this is too tight considering how busy everyone is.** PSK – the timetable has been completed. The tightest area is science and the school currently has a post advertised. There is flexibility in the main subject areas. There is not a massive amount of slack but it is doable. Associate staff – there is enough capacity and is considered to be right for now. Sickness cover discussed.

NRE updated governors on a challenge caused by the household support fund. Wiltshire Council will be passing £7.5k on to the school. NRE is more than happy to distribute the funds but how to determine non-FSM households who qualify is an impossible task. After a time of discussion, it was agreed to ask parents to let the school know if they are eligible and to take it from there.

The school is giving out an increasing amount of foodbank vouchers. This is dealt with by the pastoral care team.

#### **b) Updated Draft 5 Year Budget Plan**

The budget plan reflects the summary position as at the 27 June.

GC, link governor, visited earlier in the year and looked at the detail behind the figures. Apart from staff changes and the £50k flagged for potential MAT expenses the figures are broadly the same as they were at that time. NRE is always happy for governors to visit to look at the figures in more detail.

2022/23 is the most significant year. Estimated income – £7.5m. Planned expenditure – £7.5m. Contingency funds remains the same at £1,050,000.

2023/24 – the estimated income increases to £8,098,553 due to lagged funding.

Years 3 and 4 continue to project a slight increase in income and then it is expected to stabilise in year 5 as student numbers work through the school. This year's intake of 270 reducing to 225 in subsequent years on the basis of historical intake and declining numbers in primary schools in the Trowbridge area.

Expenditure – the timetable has now been completed so staffing is up to date including the science teacher post advertised. Increased NI costs are included as well as the government's response to pay for teaching staff from 1<sup>st</sup> September. ECT's potentially to receive an 8.9% pay rise, and % increases gradually reducing through the upper pay scales. This will be clarified in July and could have an impact on the final budget. Non-teaching staff increments and a pay rise have been included from 1st April this year but the actual pay rise has not yet been finalised.

Non-staff costs – currently the school is in a contract for energy costs. This figure has been nearly doubled from year 2 onwards.

NRE has built in as much as possible given the information known at this time. Everything could look very different if the school joins EQUA in April 23. The 5 year plan is massively positive and proactive and gives a lot of scope for Matthew to implement any new ideas he might have.

This proposed budget needs to be agreed at full board on the 4<sup>th</sup> July and submitted to the DfE by the end of term.

#### **c) Benchmarking**

NRE circulated a couple of documents for reference and for governor information. These are now a year out of date but shows JOG in a positive light and gives a general overview of the education sector. Every school is different and needs to do what is right for them.

#### **d) Lettings Conditions and Forms**

Proposed documents circulated to take effect from September this year. The proposed price increase is a little more than usual due to the increased cost of energy. This was agreed.

#### e) Agenda Plan

Proposed plan for next year circulated in advance of the meeting. This was agreed but could look vastly different by the end of March depending on when the school joins EQUA. The plan gives a broad structure as to how the year will be expected to run but is subject to change.

#### 64/22 Audit

Documents were circulated in advance of the meeting.

##### a) 2021/22 Annual Audit

It was agreed at May board and by the members to continue with Monahans. They are due to start on the 12<sup>th</sup> September and follow their usual process.

##### b) GDPR Updates

One West is due to carry out an audit later this term. There have been a couple of minor incidents and PSK is currently dealing with a FOI request.

**Governors noted that with a school this size it would be surprising to not have a few little issues and asked if it is logged when incidents occur.** PSK confirmed that it is and that NRE looks into it. **Governors asked if there is evidence of training needs identified.** PSK confirmed that there is or it is recorded as an accident.

##### c) FCAR Reports

The next Financial Controls Assurance visit is due on 7 July and will go through the 3 areas selected by governors in the autumn.

NRE shared a letter from the budget support team to say that they will no longer be able to offer this service after the end of this academic year.

**Governors asked a question about phishing emails, whether the school is proactive in this, sending out a link which can then be reported back on. This is something that large companies do.** After a time of discussion, it was agreed to look into this further.

**Action – to explore the possibility of a ‘test’ phishing email with Oakford**

**NRE**

##### d) Risk Register November 2021

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

#### 65/22 Human Resources (HR) Report

NRE gave a brief update in EGR’s absence. Staffing is in place for September. As discussed previously – there is a science teacher post currently being advertised.

EHCPs – there are 3 ECHP students leaving and 10 due to start in September. Budget wise this is fine for Teaching Assistants.

**Governors asked for an update on September’s intake and the number of appeals.** PSK gave an update. There are 2 more days of appeals planned. There are 35 students on the waiting list but not all have appealed.

##### Equality Objective

*Ensure that the appointment of staff is in line with equal opportunities legislation*

In terms of recruitment this is done as a matter of course. **Governors asked about trends and gender pay gaps.** As the school is an organisation with less than 250 staff this does not need to be reported but will

when it joins EQUA.

**Governors asked if a staff survey has been carried out recently.** PSK – student and parent survey feedback will come to July board. Staff voice is captured at termly meetings.

**Action – to share feedback from staff voice**

**PSK**

## **66/22 Policies**

There were no changes to the following policies apart from formatting and refreshing the dates.

- Charging for School Activities
- Accounting
- Anti-Fraud & Corruption
- Investment
- Staff Expenses
- Gifts, Hospitality & Anti-Bribery
- Health & Safety
- Governors Allowances
- Employer Discretions & Explanation of Each Discretion

**It was noted that Employer Discretions refers to the Finance and Personnel Committee, rather than the current Resources and Audit Committee.** NRE – the policy is filed with the pension fund and is the same committee with a different name. The policy will also become defunct when the school joins EQUA.

DW proposed acceptance of the policies. JT seconded the proposal.

## **67/22 Governor Postcards**

This was discussed and agreed.

## **68/22 AOB**

**Update** – PSK informed governors of an accident that had occurred this term. MDO has completed the relevant forms. PSK has commissioned an independent investigation and gave an overview of action taken. **Governors asked questions to clarify.**

**Photocopier Contract** – NRE circulated the 2 best bids in advance of the meeting. This was for governor feedback and as it is above PSK and NRE's spending limits. Both companies are reputable and transparent, offering slightly higher spec and the machines would be slightly quicker than the current ones. Both quotes offer the option to lease or buy and are comparable in terms of what they are offering.

After a time of discussion, it was agreed to support the local company which is also slightly cheaper and to lease rather than buy given the lifespan of the copiers. **Governors checked that the company has school experience.** NRE confirmed that it does that he and Oakford have experience of working with them.

DW proposed that the school go with the local firm. JT seconded the proposal.

**Drinking water in humanities** – this was an action passed on from CLES.

**Action – to ask MDO to come up with 2 or 3 solutions**

**NRE/MDO**

The meeting closed at 8 pm. Date of next Resources & Audit meeting – Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2022.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_