

THE JOHN OF GAUNT SCHOOL
Minutes of the Resources and Audit Committee Meeting
Monday 22 November 2021

Time: 6 pm
Place: The Hub and via Zoom
Present: **In person**
Toby Corden (Chair) (TC), Pete Gear (PG), Amanda McClean (AM), Jo Trigg (JT),
Eleanor Shergold (Clerk) (ES)
Via Zoom
Liz Summerson (LS), David Whewell (DW), Ben Saghiri (BS)
Advisers: **In person**
Paul Skipp (PSK), Nigel Reeves (NRE), Matt Doughty (MDO)
Apologies: Glyn Coy (GC), Ellie Green (EGR)

Agenda Item	Actions Agreed	Who
19/22 a)	Equality Objectives – revised document to be sent to S&C for further discussion	NRE/DW
19/22 b)	Commission an accessibility visit and report from the Wiltshire Service Users Network	NRE/JT
19/22 d)	ABM to be invited to a R&A meeting	NRE
20/22 a)	To share fire risk assessment when report is received	MDO
22/22 c)	Additional column to be added to risk register to date when changes are made	NRE
22/22 e)	One West report recommendations to be converted into an action plan	NRE
25/22	Send Governor Postcards to identified staff	TC
26/22	To discuss options for blended meetings with IT	NRE

17/22 Apologies

Apologies were agreed and accepted.

18/22 Declaration of Business Interests

Governors were reminded to declare business interests as necessary.

19/22 Minutes and Matters Arising

- a) 69/21 - Refer the R&A Equality Objectives back to the SLT for review/revision – this has been done. PSK is looking at combining the 3 policies & procedures and statements related to equality and diversity. The draft has been sent to DW today and will then be sent on to S&C for further discussion before going to board
- b) 71/21 - Commission an accessibility visit and report from the Wiltshire Service Users Network – it was agreed to carry this action forward to the next meeting.
- c) 08/22 - Review how the canteen will be staffed long term and report back to R&A – the school has recruited a couple of 6th formers. ABM are struggling a little with staff recruitment for the canteen. Currently everything is running apart from the 6th form outlet. They have been very understanding. Recruitment will continue. NRE reported that on a positive note sales are up 25-30%. Far more students are using the canteen and staff have a positive attitude.
- d) 08/22 - Add Food Choices to the Agenda Plan - ABM have offered to chat with governors and will be invited to a R&A meeting

- e) 09/22 – Confirm if the fuel price cap applies to schools – it does not apply to schools or businesses
- f) 10/22 – Covid related risks for pregnant members of staff have been reviewed on the Covid risk assessment

The minutes of 4th October were agreed and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.

20/22 Site

a) Site Update

MDO gave an update on work carried out during the October holidays

- Paint has been refreshed in the refurbished toilets
- Graffiti on the side of the Sports Hall has been painted over
- There have been several annual inspections carried out – including Wingfield seating and the boilers have been serviced
- New fencing has been added to the Sports Hall entrance to direct foot traffic
- Fire alarm upgrade works are ongoing
- A really detailed fire risk assessment has taken place – and will form part of the supporting documents for the CIF bid – MDO will share the report with governors when he has received it

Work coming up

- Wingfield ladies toilets – the walls will need to be pointed before they can be painted. MDO is waiting on quotes for the work
- Sports Hall fencing – further work to be completed
- Netball Courts – there have been a few complaints from staff about the surface becoming slippery. This needs to be redone. Quotes will also be sourced for lighting as this would make the courts suitable for letting.
- New Gym/Fitness studio – currently MDO is looking at the best location for this, the implications for any subsequent building works and equipment needed. PSK said that this will tick a number of boxes around fitness and wellbeing. Is a subject that is regularly brought up by 6th form. Fitness is also part of the PE curriculum. Will also be good for staff wellbeing. It is important that the work is carried out to a high standard and that it has the capacity for a class of 30 students. Potential options for location discussed. MDO is carrying out a feasibility study.
- A detailed condition survey of the whole site will take place in December. The report will be received around 5 months later
- **Governors asked about the school gates.** MDO explained that there is currently an electrical problem and outlined the ongoing challenges
- **Governors asked about the upkeep of the AstroTurf.** This was rejuvenated during the Easter holidays which will help with longevity. There are continued issues with people accessing the site, which was discussed at the meeting. **It was suggested that a couple of local organisations could be approached to ask about detached youth work**

Action – to share fire risk assessment when report is received

MDO

MDO left the meeting

b) Capital Bids Update (CIF)

Nothing further to report.

c) Capital bids Contribution

NRE highlighted the likelihood of the school being advised to contribute 15% of the overall cost of the CIF bids as per last year. Sample letter circulated for governor information. Bids are to be submitted earlier this year. The cost of the fire doors is yet to be established and the overall cost of the Sports Hall roofing will be around £220,000. **Governors agreed to the cost as this is a means of potentially**

securing additional funding. The amount is below £50k so is a decision that can be made by R&A. NRE said that in practice it would not impact this year's accounts because of when the work would be carried out.

21/22 Business and Finance

Documents were circulated in advance of the meeting

a) 2020/21 Draft Final Accounts

There are some real positives with the accounts - no changes have been required to any of the school produced figures. Monahans will add the value of the 160 laptops received from the government's 'Get help with technology' scheme. NRE advised allocating £300 per laptop. Depreciation will subsequently be included in the accounts to value the laptops at £32,000 at year end. James Gare will attend full board on 6 December and answer any questions that governors may have.

Governors asked about the pension liability – over £1m increase on the previous year. NRE - the year end pension valuation from Wiltshire Council shows liability has increased from £2,130,000 to £3,388,000. The good news being that should the school ever be forced to close the liability would be underwritten by the DfE. **Governors asked about variations in contribution levels.** Valuation is due to take place in March next year – it is possible that the contribution level will change as a result.

Movement in Funds as at 31.08.21 – the figures reconcile with the financial reports for August 2021 shared with governors previously. NRE gave a brief summary of the headline figures including fixed assets, pension liability and catch up grant funding. The balance sheet gives a snapshot of the overall position at the end of the year.

NRE will instruct Monahan's to produce a final set of accounts for full board on the 6th December.

b) 2021/22 Month 2 Financial Reports and Cashflow

The summary reports give a snapshot of the financial position of the school as at 1 Nov and the estimated balance sheet position as at 31 August 2022. The reports include an explanation of variances. Projected Revenue Balance at year end remains the same at £1,100,000.

A question was asked about supply staff costs. NRE – this is continuing at quite a steady pace. Sickness and absence levels are particularly high at present, which is largely Covid related. It is still possible to get agency staff cover and JOG also has cover supervisors. This figure will continue to increase, which currently is being managed from savings elsewhere.

Revenue balance – it is possible that some of this will be need to be utilised to cover supply costs. **Governors agreed. It was suggested that provision might come retrospectively.** NRE – any additional funding is more likely to come via catch up funding.

Governors asked if lettings were back on track as per pre Covid bookings. NRE confirmed that the school is back to full bookings.

Gym – for the last couple of years the school has received teachers' pay and teachers' pension grant funding. This equates to an additional £30k for the 6th form element (allocation per student). NRE proposed that this extra funding is used to cover the cost of the gym, in effect a budget of £30k. This would include any costs associated with reconfiguring the rooms allocated and go towards the cost of equipment. **Governors agreed to NRE's proposal and that all of the £30k grant funding can be utilised. This would be an incredibly positive for the school to have in place.**

Governors asked about the range of equipment and who the facility would be for. PSK responded that it will be for the use of both staff and students. Student use will be supervised with further consideration being given to the possibility of P16 unsupervised use. **A question about yoga can be followed up with Active Trowbridge as this does not require gym facilities.**

c) Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Valuation Reports

As above.

d) Change to Business Card Arrangements

FBO is leaving this week and is currently one of 2 nominated business card holders. Two members of the faculty assistant team will cover this post and will need their own business cards – each with a limit of £3,000 and a single transaction limit of £2,500. The overall monthly restriction for the school is £10k.

e) ICT Updates – PCs and Laptops

New laptops have been ordered for IT teachers. Older pcs will be utilised elsewhere where possible. The school has been invited to apply for another 71 laptops from the government ‘get help with technology’ scheme. **Governors asked about recycling of old laptops and pcs.** NRE responded. Consideration will need to be given to a rolling investment programme soon.

f) Energy Contracts Update

The school’s current contract runs until April 2023, which is good news.

22/22 Audit

Documents were circulated in advance of the meeting.

a) 2020/21 Internal Audit Scrutiny Report

This report from Wiltshire Council brings together the 3 reports from the year and is submitted to the ESFA with the accounts at the end of December. NRE is working on the responses from the school (page 7 of the report). These are all low risk areas related to fine tuning processes. NRE is happy to receive governor feedback. The report has also been shared with the external auditors.

b) 2021/22 Financial Controls Assurance Reports

R&A committee to decide on the next 3 areas they would like to be considered in this financial year. **Governors requested external income generation, data & IT and procurement.** The website is already being covered by an external review of governance.

c) Risk Register

There is no change to this live document for this meeting. **Governors asked for a column to be added to the right of the spreadsheet indicating the date that changes are made.**

Action – additional column to be added to register to date when changes are made

NRE

d) Covid Risk Assessment November 2021

The latest update on this live document is highlighted in yellow. MDO has started to action the use of CO2 monitors. To be completed by the end of November with a rating for every room in the school. So far all is well. **Governors asked questions to clarify.**

Governors asked about reinstating social distancing and wearing masks and how this is going. This is going okay. PSK has had a conference call with PHE to go through the risk assessments. There is nothing new that the school needs to be doing at this time. These extra precautions will be in place till the end of November and will be reviewed then. There is no obvious pattern of transmission with any particular group in the school.

e) GDPR Report July 2021

There are action points in this compliance report that will need to be considered and implemented to enhance school processes. There are often FOI requests made.

Governors asked about DCO’s post. PSK explained how this has been filled. NRE has oversight of the team.

Governors asked for the action points to be converted into an action plan with timescales. NRE confirmed that all points raised will be covered.

Action – One West report recommendations to be converted into an action plan

NRE

Admissions update received today. 277 – 1st choice. 110 – 2nd choice. This is against a falling primary roll. The school budget is set against 220 for next year. Currently this would be an additional 57 students not including late applications. This is really positive news for the school. Funding will be lagged, but is good news. A feasibility study will need to be carried out soon. In comparison 168 Y11 students will be leaving at the end of this school year. **Governors asked questions to clarify. It was noted that an appeals panel may be required if the school has to turn students down.**

Section 106 funding discussed. Rebuild money will be clarified in May.

LS left the meeting

23/22 Human Resources (HR) Report

In EGR's absence NRE informed governors that the non teaching staff pay award going back to April 1st has still not been agreed. The unions have decided that they will petition their members to take action. It is likely to be another month till this national pay offer is clarified.

R&A pay panel has met – arrears will be paid in the December payroll.

24/22 Policies

- a) Governor Code of Conduct
- b) Pay Policy 2021/22
- c) Trips

All 3 policies were proposed by PG and seconded by JT and will go to December board.

25/22 Governor Postcards

FBO and JGR – the finance team – due to excellence of work. FBO leaves JOG this month.

Action - Send a Governor Postcard to identified staff

TC

26/22 AOB

Annual report – it would be good to capture the great financial work done in the background – reflected in the accuracy of the accounts. A combination of good work across the school.

Company Secretary – Eleanor Shergold has replaced Anita Harrington.

Finance Team – the faculty admin team will be backfilled with an additional post.

The challenges of blended governor meetings were discussed - NRE will follow this up with IT.

Action – to discuss options for blended meeting with IT

NRE

The meeting closed at 8 pm. Date of next Resources & Audit meeting - Monday 10th January 2022.

Signed: _____

Date: _____