

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF  
THE FINANCE AND STAFFING COMMITTEE  
OF LOSTOCK HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2024  
5.00p.m.  
Venue: School**

<b>GOVERNORS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Ben Sleeman (BSL)	Parent Governor
	Dave Morgan (DM)	
	Clare Heyes (CH)	Co-opted Governor
	Graham Hamilton (GH)	Headteacher
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Mike Duzinkewycz (MD)	Chair of Governors
<b>OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	Tina Carruthers (TC)	TTLP Finance Controller <i>(Left at 6:05pm)</i>
	Rachael Palmer (RP)	SBM
	Laura Furness (LF)	Clerk
	Boo Edleston (BE)	Clerk

**MINUTES – PART ONE**

The meeting commenced at 5:03pm.

ITEM		ACTION
1.	<p><b>APOLOGIES AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>Governors received and accepted the apologies of Mike Duzinkewycz (MD).</p> <p>There were no other items of business to consider.</p>	
2.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>The following declarations were made by governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GH's wife works for Connex Education who provide tutoring and supply services to the school.</li> </ul> <p>There were no anticipated conflicts of interest with the business of the meeting raised by governors.</p>	
3.	<p><b>APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR</b></p> <p>Due to MD being absent, governors agreed to defer the appointment of Chair until the next meeting but stated that MD has expressed a willingness to</p>	

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	<p>continue in the role. It was agreed that BS would chair this meeting in the absence of MD.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Clerk to add the appointment of Chair to Spring Term Finance and Staffing committee Agenda</b></p>	CLERK
4.	<p><b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b></p> <p>Terms of reference for the Finance and Staffing committee had been circulated to governors prior to the meeting via Governor Hub. Governors recommended the approval of the Terms of Reference for 2024-2025 for ratification at the local Governing Board meeting on 25/03/25.</p>	
5.	<p><b>PART ONE MINUTES AND ACTION LOG AND MATTERS ARISING.</b></p> <p>a) The part one minutes from the previous meeting on 17.06.24 were confirmed as a true and accurate record of proceedings. Governors <b>approved</b> the minutes.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Clerk to upload an electronically signed copy of the minutes to Governor Hub following the meeting.</b></p> <p>b) The Action log from the previous meeting was discussed and the following items were noted:</p> <p><b>Item 3: ‘Obtain quotes for Chrome Books and consider the options for rental’</b> – A quote was obtained in July 2024.</p> <p><b>Q: What is the plan now going forward for the replacement of iPads- Can this be done through Capital Investment or through the TTLP?</b> A: Funding and best next steps regarding purchasing has not been confirmed. The TTLP have advised the school that iPads are not as secure or cost effective as Chromebooks.</p> <p>TC stated that as part of the trust IT strategy unsupported Windows 10 equipment is to be replaced. Lostock did not fall under this category.</p> <p><b>Q: Could Marcus Heath, TTLP Director of ICT and Network operations, present at the spring Finance and Staffing committee meeting?</b> A: Yes, this would help and will be added as an action. There is a need to move away from reliance on PTA for funding and explore further possibilities of trust funding for larger scale purchases of this type.</p> <p><b>ACTION: To invite MH, TTLP Director of ICT and Network operations to present at the spring Finance and Staffing committee.</b></p>	CLERK



	<p><b>Q: What support does school currently have from Cheshire East Council?</b></p> <p>A: The school buyback a IT support package from CE. The school receives fortnightly support and CE maintain all licences and IT updates.</p> <p>It was noted that the school require the expertise of the trust when purchasing future equipment. Consideration was also made to seeking trust support for the school network.</p> <p>Governors agreed that RP would look into where this responsibility lies and present finding at the spring LGB meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025.</p> <p>The committee agreed that it is important to understand who is responsible for the day-to-day IT issues within school.</p> <p><b>ACTION: To understand who is responsible for the network, physical equipment and day to day IT issues</b></p> <p><b>Item 8 ‘Put a call out to volunteers for classroom painting’-</b> The committee agreed that the school continue to welcome volunteer support but coordinating the logistics of support is problematic. It was noted that there may be some capacity for AW, Site Manager to undertake this. Consideration has been made to dividing up all rooms in the school and appointing an external company for the works. This could cost between £1.2k and £2k per classroom.</p>	RP
6.	<p><b>FINANCIAL MATTERS</b></p> <p>a) TC presented the latest set of management Accounts and Forecasts from the Trust.</p> <p>Documents had been uploaded to Governor Hub and circulated prior to the meeting. Governors noted that the school finished in a positive financial position with a surplus. The budget is regularly adjusted over the course of the year to account for additional grant income received and then a final budget was set to reflect the position with additional income in the summer. The carry forward was more than was expected at £46,000, this reflected a 3.5% carry forward which is beyond the standard 3% expected by the Trust.</p> <p>GH and Governors expressed thanks particularly to RP and TC for all their hard work and determination to bring about this positive financial outcome.</p> <p>GH added that monies had been spent on the refurbishment of two blocks and the replacement of one block of toilets, however, this had been limited due to</p>	



finances in previous years and the ability to fit all required works into the six-week summer break.

It was noted that the Teacher's pay award had been confirmed at 5.5%, with 3.5% built into the budget. The pay award for both teachers and support staff will be part funded through a new Core School Budget Grant. This additional central government has improved the forecast position by £20k.

**Q: What was the support staff pay award?**

A: Support staff have had a £1,290 pay award on all NJC pay points which was effective from April 1st, 2024. Backpay will be received by support staff on 15.11.24

**Q: What was the original budget for staffing set by The Trust?**

A: As a deficit budget cannot be set a staffing efficiency target has been built in for 25/26 and 26/27.

GH highlighted a slight fall in numbers of pupils on roll and budgetary implications. TC highlighted predicted numbers over the next three years and the impact on the budget which have both been modelled.

The committee noted that a anticipated intake of 30 is an unrealistic figure.

**Q: Are other schools in Poynton also noting this change?**

A: Yes, the intake for both Disley and Hague Bar has been lower.

**Q: Is there any indication as to reception pupil numbers for September 2025?**

A: The HT has shown a number of prospective families during the autumn term. The HT can access a CE portal, and will be able to get a more accurate impression in January 2025, when parents begin to make their first and second choices.

**Q: Is the school getting any in-year pupil admissions?**

A: On average, one or two a year.

**Q: Due to the likely financial changes within the private sector, has Lostock received any enquiries from such families?**

A: No enquiries as yet.

**Q: If pupil numbers continue to drop annually, what action does the school need to take to secure its financial position?**

A: It is important that consideration is made to raising the profile of the school. The school needs to reiterate to prospective parents that Lostock Hall is a feeder school to PHS.



<p>The committee understood their need to consider models for reducing the number of classes from seven to six. GH highlighted that the drop-in birth rates is a national issue that will undoubtedly impact all schools.</p> <p><b>Q: Do we need to have a contingency plan to reflect lower pupil numbers?</b> A: There are possible scenarios that the Trust can build into financial models to help inform future plans. Should a change in class structure be needed, the HT was conscious that any change needs to be outlined carefully to parents, in order to dispel any myths.</p> <p>It was noted that a move to a six-class structure would impact the current curriculum and changes would have to be made.</p> <p>It was stressed that any class restructure will support the future proofing of the school and at this point different models were only for consideration and may not need to be actioned. The HT acknowledged that many other schools are also under pressure with pupil numbers. The HT wanted governors to be confident in any decisions that they may need to make.</p> <p>The committee discussed potential changes to PPA cover; with PPA being covered by HLTAs rather than a qualified teacher. The HT noted his reservation to this compromise as his preference has always been to ensure the highest quality of teaching.</p> <p>It was noted that a potential retirement would provide the platform for a significant saving. An outgoing teacher on UPS3 could be replaced with an ECT.</p> <p>The committee acknowledged that the potential changes discussed could be actioned in the first instance, before more significant changes.</p>	
<p><b>ACTION: To add 'Class structure scenario models' to the autumn LGB AOB</b></p>	CLERK
<p><b>ACTION: To consider how to raise the profile of the school</b></p>	ALL
<p>b) Contracts register – The school confirmed that all contracts are under renewal and RP works to ensure that prior to contract renewals, quotes are obtained. Governors were reassured that RP works to ensure savings are achieved where possible. The 23/24 class cover document was shared with the committee and the HT noted the variance in supply costs and how the school cover staff absence.</p> <p>c) Asset Register- This is checked on a termly basis by A* and the school. IT equipment formulates a large proportion of this register. The school are conscious that new equipment should hold longevity and trust input would be useful. Depreciation should be considered with all purchasing.</p>	



- d) School Risk Register- The Risk Register, reviewed on 30.10.24 had been circulated prior to the meeting. The HT noted that there could be more added to the register.
- e) The School's Critical Incident Plan- The plan was reviewed in the last academic year. Governors noted that names have been updated within the plan. There were no further changes.
- f) Income Generation Sources -Wraparound care provision (BASC) and lettings including in discussion.
  - i) BASC Report

**Q: Since BASC prices were increased, how have the numbers in wraparound care been impacted?**

A: No drop in numbers has been reported and there has been no negative commentary shared on parent online social platforms.

**Q: Has the number of children buying school lunches being impacted by the price increase?**

A: Numbers of school lunches are low and there is significantly less uptake in upper key stage two. The school is working with Chartwells to consider different menu options and to offer a snack option as a possible way to increase uptake.

**Q: Is there any impact on pre-school numbers due to price increases?**

A: No, pre-school numbers have remained steady and reflect the annual pattern of numbers in the autumn term that then rise in the spring and summer terms as the children get ready to begin school. The pre-school is not oversubscribed but remains in a comfortable position. The HT noted that the business case for the pre-school remains strong and ratifies the decision to increase the fee.

- g) Use of the Sports Grant and the impact on pupils- The school confirmed that Sports Grant funding had been fully utilised. The HT reported in full at the Curriculum committee meeting. Governors noted that the school had now ended its use of Little Sports Coaching (LSC) provision. The school confirmed that Sports Premium funding was supporting the delivery of the Forest School outdoor provision. This provision has been very well received by pupils and staff.
- h) Use of the Pupil Premium and Recovery Premium and the impact on disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the funding- GH presented a report on the pupil premium allocation for this year. Monies primarily were used to pay for teaching but also to fund specific after school activities. Funding was used to purchase the 'Maths No Problem' scheme of work. The HT noted very positive impact on all children. GH highlighted that 2023/24 was the final year for COVID recovery funding.



	<p>i) To review Voluntary School Funds- It was noted that the Voluntary School Funds account is audited within the Trust's academy accounts. There is no mandate for a separate audit. It was agreed that moving forwards, this item does not need to feature on the Finance and Staffing sub-committee agenda.</p> <p><b>ACTION: To remove item 6i 'To review Voluntary School Funds' from the Finance and Staffing agenda</b></p> <p>j) To review the admissions over-subscription criteria- This item did not need to be reviewed.</p> <p>k) To review the pre-school session cost- This item was discussed in an earlier part of the meeting.</p>	CLERK
7.	<p><b>GDPR</b> There have been no data breaches or Subject Access Requests (SARS) requested since the last meeting.</p>	
<b>7:06 – TC left Meeting</b>		
8.	<p><b>PREMISES</b></p> <p>a) Health and Safety update RP attended an online mock trial course on 12.11.24 and is updating all school Risk Assessments. RP is to attend a risk assessment writing course week commencing 18.11.24. It was noted that there were no major actions from the TTLP H&amp;S audit or the CE H&amp;S audit in 2023/24. Any actions were included within the 2024/25 SDP.</p> <p>b) Review of Estate Management Plan It was noted that the Estate Management Plan was encompassed within the H&amp;S update. The Plan was reviewed by RP and delegated to Site Manager, AW.</p> <p>c) Review of SCA bids from 2024 The HT confirmed that a small amount of funding had been received through applications to the SCA bids process. These funds had been used to upgrade two toilet blocks and the complete replacement of the toilet blocks in the Key Stage 2 boys' area.</p> <p>d) Priorities for 2025 SCA bid application Bid applications were discussed and the HT advised that it is a requirement that the current fire alarm system be replaced by one that includes visual warning lights. As this is on the school's accessibility plan, the HT proposed that this should be the central request for an SCA bid this academic year 2024/25.</p>	



	<p>It was noted that two quotes have been obtained to replace the artificial surface underneath the outdoor play equipment. The HT has submitted an SCA bid for this project.</p> <p>It was highlighted that the current roller shutter in the kitchen needs completely replacing as it is no longer compliant. A risk assessment has been completed and the risk has been mitigated to ensure that it can be operated safely.</p> <p><b>Q: How is the risk mitigated?</b> A: The HT has sought advice, and to ensure safe use there is a procedure where two staff must always close and open it. All staff who use it have been trained on this safety procedure.</p>	
<p><b>9.</b></p>	<p><b>STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <p>The HT reported that a wide range of training is being undertaken by staff including whole staff training in safeguarding, groups attending the Maths Hub training and specific subject leader training. In addition, the HT highlighted one member of staff is working on their National Professional Qualification in Middle Leadership (NPQML). The HT noted the positive impact all training has had. Staff were keen to come back and share outcomes with colleagues, and new learning and idea have been shared across the school. This coaching model was a very positive part of staff development. The HT noted that all staff completed a staff meeting Science training session on 12.11.23</p>	
<p><b>10.</b></p>	<p><b>SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE:</b></p> <p>Governors noted the information provided within the headteacher's report on the school development plan. As highlighted in item 5 ICT upgrades and hardware replacements are a priority.</p> <p>The school has purchased the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A set of Walkie Talkies</li> <li>• Visualisers for each classroom</li> </ul> <p>The HT spoke of the desire to equip every class with a stylus pen so that staff can be freer in their movement around the classroom during input and not have to remain by the whiteboard throughout. He reported on how this can make a big difference to staff ability to engage pupils, manage behaviour and improve outcomes.</p> <p>The HT also raised the governor's awareness of the need to replace the school's current phone system as analogue phone systems are being phased out and more advanced digital systems are needed.</p> <p>The sound field quotation is still ready, but such purchase needs to be considered alongside other key IT spending.</p> <p>An update was given on the long-term plans to resurface the school driveway that has some potholes and surface damage which is getting worse. The HT reported this could be including this within STA bid but is also included on the SDP to keep focus of the requirement.</p> <p>It was noted that classroom decoration is still needed – as highlighted in item 5. Consideration was made to the possibility of utilising parent body to do this. It</p>	



	<p>was proposed that this could be trialled with one classroom to gauge quality and feasibility.</p> <p>The HT highlighted that internal doors need to be replaced as some are in a poor state of repair.</p> <p>It was noted that the TTLP are to fund a cycle shelter. It is due to be delivered before the Christmas break.</p> <p>It was noted that the HT has attended a Headteacher’s conference and spoke positively about the new Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence (RISE) model that the DFE are implementing. The HT outlined how these models are made up of groups of regional advisors who will be trained to support and raise standards in their areas. The HT stated, with the range of strong OFSTED graded good schools within the TTLP, that the Trust could look at the potential of becoming a RISE ‘partner’ and work across the trust schools. The RISE teams in time will play a constructive part in informing OFSTED and ensuring better targeted support for schools that need it.</p> <p>It was noted that the HT wanted the upgrade of the fire alarm system to remain in the 2024-2027 SDP. The TTLP strategic development plan includes action items regarding procurement that needs to be addressed such as the door maintenance contract.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p><b>ADMISSIONS / PUPIL NUMBERS</b> Pupil Numbers were discussed in Item 6. It was noted that there are currently 181 pupils in Reception to Year 6, and 204 when including the pre-school children.</p>	
<p>12.</p>	<p><b>GOVERNOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) It was confirmed that Governors had completed all annual statutory training.</li> <li>b) There were no governor monitoring reports to receive.</li> </ul>	
<p>13.</p>	<p><b>DIRECTOR’S REPORT</b> The clerk highlighted relevant items from the Director’s report relating to this term’s key educational priorities and news and updates from the local authority relevant to the Governing Body as included below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1.2 CE Staffing update:</b> Governors noted that the new interim Director of Children’s Services in Theresa Levy</li> <li>• <b>1.3 KCSIE (2004):</b> Governors were reminded to read part one of KCSIE (2024) and to note the changes around attendance</li> <li>• <b>2.1 £6M music pilot launched for disadvantaged children:</b> The clerk explained a new music pilot scheme launching with joint funding from the DFE and Young Sounds UK of £6m. Governors were encouraged to reassure themselves that their setting is complying with the national expectation for music tuition.</li> </ul>	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2.3 Subscribing to the Education Library Service:</b> The clerk signposted governors to the information about subscribing to the Education Library service and a link for further information and benefits of the service.</li> <li>• <b>3.2 Changes to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA):</b> Governors noted that the ESFA is set to close. It was noted that the SFSO teams will move to Regions Group from 01.10.24 and will support the launch of Regional Improvement Teams by January 2025.</li> <li>• As a further internal financial audit by CE is expected, governors were reminded to ensure that the MIFP has been updated and reviewed.</li> </ul>	
14.	<p><b>POLICIES:</b> To receive and review the following TTLP policy: It was noted that the following polices were not available to review and approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TTLP Pay Policy</li> <li>• TTLP Teacher Appraisal Policy</li> </ul> <p>Do you want to approve these at the LGB meeting?</p>	
15.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b> There were no items of other business tabled for discussion at this meeting.</p>	
16.	<p><b>POINTS TO HIGHLIGHT/COMMUNICATE TO THE LGB AND TTLP</b></p> <p>To raise the profile of the school by reiterating the link between Lostock Hall as a feeder school for PHS.</p>	
17.	<p><b>IMPACT OF THE MEETING</b> Governors helped to move the school forward in the following ways during this meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors reviewed the financial performance of the school noting the surplus position and the work undertaken by the staff and trust working together to ensure the prudent and effective use of available funds.</li> <li>• Governors offered challenge to consider ways forward to ensure the financial viability of the school in a time when nationally pupil numbers are declining. Governors demonstrated they are open to and willing to accept help from their Trust board and financial leaders from within the Trust board to assist them in modelling a range of scenarios to be considered for the future to ensure they are acting in a responsible and proactive manner.</li> <li>• Governors questioned the effectiveness of the spending of key grants for specific areas of the curriculum and on the needs of specific pupils to ensure government funds are being utilised to bring about the best outcomes for all pupils.</li> </ul>	
18.	<p><b>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS:</b></p>	



	<p>The dates of the next Finance and Staffing committee meetings are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tuesday 4th March 2025</li><li>• Tuesday 10th June 2025</li></ul>	
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**Meeting Closed at 6.26pm.**