

# Minutes of KEVICC Operations Committee Meeting Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021, 5.45pm



*The meeting was held remotely, due to Coronavirus restrictions and Government advice*

**Present:** Michael Young (MY) (Chair), Gillian Healey (GH), Jim Lodge (JL), Alan Salt (AS – arrived 6pm), Jon Rae (JR), Andrew Waterman (AW) and Jo Cooke (JCK).

**In attendance:** Yvette Elliott, Clerk (YE) and Stephen Corline, Business & Finance Director (SC)

Ref.	<b>FOCUS OF MEETING</b> <b>Overseeing the financial performance of the school and ensuring its money is well spent</b>	Actions
1	<b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apologies, sanctioned by the Committee: Karen Sewell (KS) and Julian Carnell (JC)</li> <li>• Absent without apology: None</li> <li>• Declarations of interest: None.</li> </ul>	
2	<b>Minutes of Previous Meetings (2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 30<sup>th</sup> March 2021)</b> All Part 1 & 2 Minutes were approved by Governors and will be signed by MY as soon as possible.	MY
3	<b>Matters Arising</b> SC to share a list of items for online reporting – Done. This includes listing any salaries over £100,000, detailing the Covid catch-up premium spending, links to financial benchmarking and recording of any related-party transactions as applicable. SC confirmed that the school website has been updated with these items.	
4	<b>Finance update – 2020/21 financial year</b> SC reported that the projected deficit for the year had been £134k and the final figure was £131k, with a carry-forward of £350k. A change to the Governor reporting format was discussed and this will be based on Cost Centres (where there are clear budget holders) rather than CFR Codes, along with a summary document. <i>JL asked if the new reporting format will improve accountability?</i> SC confirmed that it will and also that Governors who are less familiar with school accounting will find it easier to cross-reference to the budgeted cost centres when analysing figures. <i>GH asked when the catering changes take effect?</i> SC confirmed that as of 1 <sup>st</sup> April, catering is being run by KEVICC. <i>GH asked why the cost of buildings maintenance is so much higher this year?</i> SC stated that there have been additional costs related to Covid, but also the state of the premises and number of buildings require ongoing spending. <i>JCK asked why cleaning costs have been so high in a year when the school was closed for an entire term and had reduced occupancy at other times?</i> SC stated that the cleaning contract had to be paid throughout the year, even during lockdown, and there has been extra cleaning since September 2020.	

5	<p><b>Draft Budget 2021-22</b></p> <p>MY reminded Governors that the Budget was scrutinised at the last Committee meeting and there are minimal changes to the final version. SC outline these changes, including a 2% increase to projected income following Babcock information on the likely future figures, although this is still conservative. As in previous years, the school surplus is seen to reduce over time until it becomes a deficit. SC was clear that this is a conscious decision in order to demonstrate that there is an ongoing annual need to make savings.</p> <p>Pupil numbers are assumed to remain as they are and as patterns have historically been – this is considered a relatively pessimistic assumption and 6<sup>th</sup> Form numbers may increase slightly.</p> <p><i>JR asked if the Government is forcing a movement towards academies through its school funding strategies?</i> SC stated that school funding has actually increased over time, but this has been matched with pay increases, so future savings will be tricky and are likely to have to be via cuts. AS added that MATs are under the same pressure as maintained schools as base funding is the same for all. There is no long term settlement in public sector funding though, so we should plan for the worst-case.</p> <p><i>GH asked what number of pupils is best for our finances?</i> SC stated that any multiple of 30 is best for enabling cost-effective class size management.</p> <p><i>GH asked if there is space in the school for more than 150 pupils per year group?</i> It was confirmed that there is physical capacity. AS added that from September 2021 each year group, excepting Year 8, will be full. If applications for places rise, a decision can be made to open another year group class. However, stability in terms of pupil movement is low at KEVICC, so AS reminded Governors of the need for caution in ensuring growth is sustainable.</p> <p><i>JCK asked if the school strategy is to increase pupils numbers (#TheschoolforTotnes)?</i> AS stated that our vision is hugely important, but it could take time to increase numbers as a result of positive work and there is a big risk to the school if we are over-optimistic, so extreme caution is the best approach. MY endorsed this approach.</p> <p><i>MY asked which members of staff are covered in the ‘Support Staff’ cost centre and if they are all eligible for the 2% pay increase?</i> SC confirmed that this covers Admin, Finance, LSAs and anyone earning under £24,000 full-time equivalent will be eligible for the pay rise.</p> <p><i>JCK asked why bought-in professional services have been so much higher this year?</i> SC confirmed that this is partially due to a change in accounting, but there have also been increased costs due to Covid and also some Foundation Governor funded services (for this year only) that are recorded in this cost centre.</p> <p>SC stated that of the Budget Proposals discussed by Governors in Autumn 2020, the larger savings are all included in the new Budget so there are minimal additional savings still to be found this year, but we’re in a good position.</p> <p><b><i>Governors voted to recommend the Budget to FGB for approval</i></b></p>	FGB agenda
6	<p><b>School Financial Value Standards (SFVS) Return</b></p> <p>This return is an annual assurance, to be completed by Governors, to ensure sustainable financial practice and benchmarking for school comparison, to identify any risk areas.</p> <p><u>Areas identified as requiring further work:</u></p> <p>Q3: Governor monitoring needs to be undertaken monthly, and as discussed in Item 4 above, a new format has now been agreed for this to commence.</p>	

	<p>Q6: The Budget is considered to be flexible, but is arguably not sustainable as a deficit is forecast. However, this is a conscious decision to enable ongoing savings to be made.  <i>MY asked for elaboration on the Recovery Plan process.</i> SC stated that as we are not budgeting a cumulative budget deficit (it is only in-year) there is no formal process required at present. Governors are well aware of the financial projections and Budget decisions were started in Autumn 2020, which is good practice. <b>SC will liaise with DCC over the ongoing process.</b></p> <p>Q9: This covers the same issues as above, regarding deficit elimination.  Q19: A Contract Register is still in development and should be complete by the next Operations Committee meeting.</p> <p>Governors were confident that they recognised the items highlighted for further work as they have been discussed at meetings and noted their confidence in the standard of school finance management.</p> <p>Regarding the SFVS Dashboard, KEVICC spending is as expected for all items except for showing an in-year deficit and a high teacher contact ratio (30% of teacher time is spent away from pupils). SC stated that this figure does not match Ruth Long’s own calculations, which show us being in-line with expected figures. MY noted that this item has been high in previous years too, so it is important to address. <b>SC to unpick this further.</b></p> <p><i>JR asked about our Progress 8 score.</i> AS explained that this is a Key Performance Indicator for GCSE, showing average grade movement across 8 subjects from entry-level to GCSE score. We are ‘average.’  <i>JCK requested data for the ‘average class size’ as <b>this field has not been populated.</b></i> AS confirmed that the median is 22.6 across the 7 year groups. JL noted that this is high, but the outcomes of pupils are testament to the quality of teaching.</p> <p><b>Governors requested that timescales are included by SC for the completion of outstanding tasks.</b></p> <p><b><i>Governors voted to recommend the SFVS Return to FGB for approval, following the agreed updates.</i></b></p>	<p>SC</p> <p>SC</p> <p>SC</p> <p>SC</p> <p>FGB agenda</p>
7	<p><b>Marketing Update</b>  A meeting took place on 28<sup>th</sup> April and another is scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> May, with both focussing on the website and pupil recruitment as priorities.  <b>JCK will write a piece for the Summer Courier on behalf of Governors.</b></p>	JCK
8	<p><b>Policies for review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Time Off Policy – <i>ratified</i></li> </ul> <p><b>YE to update, save and file ratified policies</b></p>	YE
9	<p><b>Meeting closed at 6.50pm.</b>  The next scheduled meeting will take place on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021, 5.45pm</p>	

Signed.....

Date:.....

**Michael Young, Chair of Operations Committee**