



**Governing Board of the Winchcombe School
Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting
Monday 25th March 2024 at 5.00pm**

Present: Richard Blofeld (RB) (Chair of Governors) co-opted governor; Liam Anderson (LA) (Vice Chair) co-opted governor; Kathryn Bowers (KB) parent governor; Matt Percy (MP) (Head teacher)

Apologies:

Absent:

In attendance: Sheilagh Peacock (SP), School Business Manager (SBM); Harriet Skinner (HS), Clerk, Elode Scarlett (ES) Deputy Head teacher

Key: Strategic direction/Challenge or Question/Answer/Action/Extract

The clerk chaired the meeting for items 1 & 2

1. Apologies

None

The meeting was quorate

2. Declaration of any other business

(i) None

3. Declaration of interests

(i) None

4. Minutes of the meeting of 29.1.24

It was agreed that the minutes were a true record of the meeting and were signed by LA.

Clerk to upload minutes to the school website: ASAP

5. Matters arising

(i) Happy Kids lease/Acorns Nursery Class

Copy of the lease has been received from WBC following intervention from RB. Governors learnt that the current lease expires in October 2025. **SP to confirm square footage of the building, RB to investigate commercial rent: by next FC meeting 17.6.24.**

Competition with local nursery providers continues to be a concern; ongoing.

6. 2024/25 draft budget plan and forecast to 2026/24

SP cautioned that the reports tabled were a DRAFT budget plan and final figures subject to change following receipt of Periods 12 and 13 from WBC. **SP to highlight differences in final budget plan report: by next FGB mtg 22.4.24.**

Fund 01 Main School Budget (MSB)

LA noted carry forward for 2023/24 and modest carry forward at year end 2024/25 **but raised a concern about years 2025/26 and 2026/27.** LA asked SP about the areas at most risk of **overspends.** SP informed the FC that **80% of budget is staffing and therefore most likely to be overspent.** MP cautioned that staffing was already decreased to the minimum for the school to operate and went onto explain about the challenges of high needs pupils;

Education, health and care plans (EHCPs) funding barely covers a third of the cost of employing a 1:1 teaching assistant; this gap in funding for SEN/high needs children is a national problem. A concern was raised about unfunded pay increases for teaching and support staff and LA asked if there was a contingency in place. SP confirmed that a 3% cost of living increase was included in the budget plan as advised by WBC School Accountancy.

Premises: the FC concurred with SP's recommendation to keep cleaning in house, but replace leavers with contractor's staff. Governors were pleased to learn energy costs have gone down for 2024/25. RB queried if savings could be made in planned preventative maintenance (PPM), SP conceded that PPM costs have been high for the last 2 years but was hopeful that up-keep of the building was now at a stable level.

LA had some questions about some of the Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) codes (E27 and E28) bought in professional services (curriculum and other) and buy back of services from WBC was discussed. Governors acknowledged that buying back of some services such as school improvement and education MIS was the right decision due to economies of scale and the purchasing power of the Local Authority.

LA thanked SP for her reports and RB congratulated SP on another year in credit.

The committee considered the remaining funds:

Fund 08 Pupil Premium Grant (PPG)

The FC noted increase in pupils eligible for PPG (62 up from 53) and encouraged continuing publicity.

Fund 13 Sports Fund

The committee understood that continuation of sports funding post August 2025 was uncertain.

Fund 50 Speech and Language Resource (SAL)

SP advised that assumptions made in planning the SAL budget were conservative as high needs top up funding was not yet confirmed.

Fund 55 Language and Literacy Resource (LAL)

Governors understood that the LAL budget was ring fenced, however there is an allowance to the school for management and premises costs.

Fund 76 Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)

There was a brief discussion about how IT equipment is sourced: via our IT provider which includes installation. No further questions.

Fund 99 Phoenix Club (PC) out of hours club

SP cautioned that a playworker who has resigned has yet to be replaced. MP explained that he was looking to relaunch the club possibly with staggered after school sessions, parental contracts and penalties for late payment of fees. KB commented that as a parent, she appreciated the flexibility and support the club offered. The number of high needs children using the club was highlighted. Relaunch of PC club – Sept 2024, MP, SP, Finance Officer and PC manager.

RB offered support of the committee and asked for an update at the next meeting. 17.6.24.

Lastly, it was agreed to approve the draft budget plan, final budget plan to be tabled at the FGB meeting of 22.4.24.

7. Write off of dinner arrears

The clerk advised that dinner money arrears of £130.00 had been written off for a family where the parent had been on long term sick leave but did not qualify for free school meals. The family is now paying for meals on time. RB confirmed helping families in need was the right approach and supported this decision.

The FC agreed to allow HT discretion to write off dinner arrears up to £150.00 in an academic year as a last resort: after all interventions have been exhausted.

9. Date & time of next meeting**FBG:** Monday 22nd April at 5.00pm**Finance Committee:**

Monday 17 June at 5.00pm

The meeting closed at 6.00pm

	Supporting documents	Agenda item
1.	Agenda for this meeting	1.
2.	Minutes of the meeting of 29.1.24	4, 5.
3.	Budget Build 2024 report Budget checklist 2024-25 Budget Planner 2024-25 Main School Budget (MSB) Fund 01 draft budget Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) Fund 08 draft budget Primary School Sports Fund 13 draft budget Speech and Language Resource (SAL) Fund 50 draft budget Language and Literacy Resource (LAL) Fund 55 draft budget Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) Fund 76 draft budget Out of hours (OoH) club Fund 99 draft budget	6.
4.	Briefing paper – dinner money write-offs	7.