



**Governing Board of the Winchcombe School
Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting
Wednesday 12th June 2024 at 4.30pm**

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

Apologies: None

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

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 25.3.24

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

It was agreed to await further direction on the provision of nursery/childcare/SEN from WBC/DfE. In the meantime, governors hoped for a rent increase when Happy Kids lease is up for renewal October 2025 as current rent is well below commercial market rate. **RB to approach WBC about rent review – Autumn term**

6. Staffing/Finance update

SP explained that salary reports for period 1 & 2 have been delayed due to the implementation of a new payroll/HR system. Therefore, there were no budget monitoring reports to consider. However, SP estimated a £50k overspend by the end of 2024/25 financial year because of recruitment of 2 additional Teaching Assistants (TAs). **RB asked if this was because of high needs pupils and MP counselled that this was the minimum level of staff needed to operate safely and SP pointed out that the funding for the 2 year 7 and 8 children was £16k less than expected in the original budget plan.** There were no significant staff changes to report, the main concern being support for high needs pupils, especially in nursery and foundation stage. **LA asked if the level of high needs children is a trend experienced by other schools.**

MP and ES explained that it is a national issue, caused by Covid lockdowns. RB concurred that WBC are concerned about the increase in high needs across West Berkshire.

RB suggested that MP consider alternative models for high needs – such as a dedicated SEN class within the main school session. RB and MP to arrange visit to observe SEN setting – Autumn term 2024-25.

LA wanted to know if it was possible to make savings in other areas. SP pointed out that a cleaner and a member of the kitchen team who have left have not been replaced and the effects of this are apparent. Resources have been cut as far as possible.

RB conceded that the FC accept the £50k estimated deficit and spend what is necessary to maintain standards. KB concurred that safety/children’s welfare should be prioritised over balancing the books.

Lastly, the FC requested budget monitoring reports when they are available, i.e., without waiting for next meeting. SP to arrange when payroll have resolved reporting issues.

7. Phoenix Club (out of hours provision)

MP advised that the club has been reviewed and fees are increasing by £1.00 per session from September 2024 (first increase in 7 years). The provision will be enhanced: more activities, improved snack.

KB felt strongly that the after- school snack could be better and that the children should be encouraged to have breakfast. Governors understood that the club will cap numbers to keep children safe (with operation of waiting list) and reserve the right to withdraw children for poor behaviour.

8. Inventory

SP explained that school are required to keep an inventory of all portable items over the value of £100.00 (smartboards, laptops, chrome books etc.) SP and HS have audited and updated 2023-24 Inventory. KB and RB volunteered to spot check – by end of summer term.

9. Date & time of next meeting

FBG: Monday 15th July at 5.00pm

Finance Committee:

TBA

The meeting closed at 5.30pm

	Supporting documents	Agenda item
1.	Agenda for this meeting	1.
2.	Minutes of the meeting of 25.3.24	4, 5.
3.	Phoenix Club Guide	7.
4.	Inventory 2023-24	8.