



Governing Board of the Winchcombe School

Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting

21st April 2026 at 5.14pm

Present: Harry James (HJ) co-opted governor (Chair of Finance Committee); Liam Anderson (LA) (Chair of Governors) co-opted governor; Laurence Andrews (L Andrews) co-opted governor
Apologies: Matt Percy (MP) (Head teacher) and Georgina Furr (Parent Governor)
In attendance: H Skinner outgoing Clerk (HS), C Pummell incoming Clerk, Elode Scarlett (ES) Deputy head teacher, Clair Lloyd-Butler (CLB) SBM

Key:	Strategic direction/Challenge or Question/Answer/Action/Extract	Action
1.Apologies Welcome new Clerk. Apologies accepted for MP and GF <i>The meeting was quorate</i>		
2.Declaration of any other business (i) LA– staffing changes update		
3. Declaration of interests (i) None.		
4. Minutes of the meeting of 15th December 2025 The minutes were approved and signed as a true record subject to the amendment in section 6 of “fund” .		Clerk
5. Matters arising The actions following the meeting of 15 th December 2025 1. Upload minutes 20/10/2025 – completed 2. Register of Authorising Officers - completed 3. Circulate SMRA report, P9 budget monitoring – SBM said she had received the report, and needed to respond to some questions. SBM to share with ES and discuss. 4. Statement of completion to be return to WBC internal audit 5. Complete SFVS – SBM confirmed this had been submitted. 6. Benchmarking report – this was to be tabled at a FGB meeting and there was no feedback on it.		CLB ES
6. 2025-26 budget outturn The SBM had circulated her report and reported a slight change to the carry forward/balance. Fund 01 had just been updated with Period 13, showing a £5,477 surplus. The variance was due to banking interest, additional National Insurance grant		

and clawed-back EY funding, which the SBM said had not been expected.
HJ asked whether this would be carried forward. The SBM confirmed that it would and that a minor budget adjustment would be made. No significant variances from the previous budget were noted. The PE budget showed an £81 deficit. The SBM confirmed the school did not need to be in surplus by 31 July and that further funding was expected before then.
The SBM confirmed that Fund 13 was the only fund in deficit; all other funds were in surplus for year-end 2026. She also noted that, based on forward projections, most budgets were expected to move into deficit by 2028/29, requiring careful planning. LA noted the more positive position compared to the previous year and thanked the SBM and HS for their work. He highlighted that the surplus included £23,000 not spent on fire doors, as these would be covered through capital maintenance (per WB), releasing those funds.
LA asked whether electrical works were included in that year's spend. The SBM confirmed these were included in the new budget, supporting a positive start to 2026/27.

7. Draft budget plan report 2026-27 and forecast
The SBM introduced the report, focusing on 2026/27 and the longer-term position. She noted that 2026/27 was a crucial year and that a number of variables could significantly affect the budget. While projections for 2027–2030 were less certain, the report aimed to show how the budget had been constructed and what changes might be required. A surplus position over five years was considered achievable, but would require careful management.
HJ asked whether the 2026/27 budget was based on planning for a successful school or reacting to financial constraints. The SBM confirmed it was a combination of both. Assumptions included 417 pupils based on census data and staffing estimates, including a teacher budgeted at M3 level. She noted uncertainties around recruitment decisions and whether to prioritise experience or cost. Other factors included fixed-term contracts ending and the timing of pastoral (ELSA) support.
HJ queried whether SEND provision was being planned strategically and then costed. The SBM confirmed that an intervention room had been included from September 2027, alongside plans to expand nursery provision, with staffing implications from October 2027.
HJ asked about nursery expansion. The SBM confirmed an increase from 20 to 30 places was being considered. ES explained that increasing intake and stabilising numbers year-round would improve staffing consistency and income, but viability depended on demand. The SBM was awaiting confirmation from the local authority on sufficiency of places.
HJ challenged whether projected places would be filled. ES highlighted the importance of marketing and promoting provision, including seamless transition from nursery to FS2. LA asked how well this was currently done and whether more could be done to promote the school. The SBM acknowledged there was room for improvement, including website content and marketing activity such as open mornings.
Discussion covered marketing approaches, timing of admissions, and whether to operate one or three intake points. HJ noted the need for a clear business case and confidence in assumptions. ES suggested growing pupil numbers internally from nursery would support longer-term outcomes.
L Andrews asked about funding arrangements (private vs funded hours). The SBM confirmed funding was based on an hourly rate, varying by age and hours. Fees were currently £6.40 per hour, and there was discussion about whether this could be

increased. Staffing ratios and qualifications were also considered. Governors agreed that increasing nursery provision could positively impact the five-year budget, subject to achieving target numbers. LA asked about birth rate projections; these were expected to decline slightly but not significantly. ES noted risks around phased intake, where low initial numbers could create short-term deficits despite fixed staffing costs. HJ asked whether underutilised nursery staff could be deployed elsewhere in school. The SBM and ES confirmed this would depend on ratio requirements and pupil needs. LA asked whether reducing intake to a single September entry point would disadvantage the school. ES noted this required further exploration, including legal considerations. The SBM confirmed this was being investigated. HJ asked about admissions criteria. It was noted that while school admissions followed local authority criteria, nursery admissions could be set by the school. HJ thanked the SBM for the clarity of the five-year plan and asked what would drive future deficits. The SBM explained that funding increases (c.1%) were outpaced by rising costs, including salaries (c.3%) and other expenditure (5–10%). Advice from the local authority had informed these assumptions. Lawrence queried whether pay assumptions included increments; the SBM confirmed they did. HJ asked whether staff profile and potential retirements had been considered. The SBM confirmed the staffing profile was relatively young and this was not currently a significant factor. HJ emphasised the need to monitor key assumptions and variances year-on-year. The SBM agreed and noted that years 2–5 would need regular review, with a monitoring framework to track changes and inform future budgets. HJ asked about the process for setting budget direction and incorporating school priorities. The SBM explained this was led by SLT, using data to identify priorities and cost implications, though acknowledged this could be more robust. LA noted that School Improvement Plan (SIP) priorities were not always clearly costed or aligned to the budget. The SBM agreed that stronger links between SIP, SDP, and budget planning were needed. Discussion included the balance between reactive and strategic budgeting. The SBM noted that current budgeting had been largely reactive, with limited scope for investment-led planning, although some capital investment (e.g. IT, curriculum) had been included. ES outlined a longer-term vision of developing the school as a centre of excellence. HJ suggested this vision should be developed further at Full Governing Board level. There were no further questions. The Committee agreed to recommend the budget for approval by the FGB. LA confirmed the budget would be approved at the next meeting. The SBM would complete the licensed deficit application, update figures for carry forward, and submit required documentation to the local authority. She noted the budget was considered achievable. An additional meeting was scheduled (Teams, 28th) for budget approval prior to submission. The SBM had requested an extension and would submit following approval. If not approved immediately, further adjustments might be required. HJ thanked the SBM for her work.	CLW
9 Aob (i) Staffing changes update ES outlined short-term staffing changes over the next four weeks, including a temporary deputy role for Kate, backfilling inclusion support, and use of supply staff (two days per week). Additional pastoral capacity was being considered through	

earlier deployment of ELSA support. Lunchtime supervision was also under review, with potential recruitment of 3–4 supervisors already budgeted. LA requested a summary of associated costs (supply, pastoral, lunchtime). The SBM noted costs were being assessed and that some may be recoverable through insurance. ES confirmed efforts had been made to minimise costs. ES raised TA deployment and potential early implementation of hub provision; this was not being progressed at this stage. HJ confirmed these were operational decisions for leadership.	
8. Review of Charging and Remissions Policy No significant comments were raised. HJ noted the policy was straightforward. The SBM confirmed only minor updates had been made. The policy was approved, subject to regular review. LA asked about the Finance Officer role; it was confirmed this would be re-advertised alongside the Operations Manager role and other vacancies to reduce costs.	
10. Date & time of next meeting Finance Committee: Monday 15th June at 5:00pm FGB: Tuesday (TBC) at 5:00pm (Teams) Harriett would remain in post until 30th.	
<i>The meeting closed at 6:26pm</i>	

ACTIONS

	Action	By whom	By when	Completed
1	Upload minutes of the FC meeting of 20/10/25	HS	ASAP	YES 17/12/25
2	Register of Authorising Officers to be sent to WBC accounting and appended to the Financial Management Policy	HS	ASAP	YES 17/12/25
3	Circulate SRMA report, P9 budget monitoring reports	MP/HS/SBM	19.1.26	
4	Statement of Completion to be returned to WBC internal audit	HS	ASAP	
4	Complete SFVS	HJ & HS	19.1.26	
5	Benchmarking report	LA, HJ, L Andrews	31.1.26	
6	Amendment to minutes in section 6 of "fund".	HS		Completed
7	SBM said she had received the report, and needed to respond to some questions. SBM to share with ES and discuss.	ES & CLB	Update at next meeting	
8	The SBM would complete the licensed deficit application, update figures for carry forward, and submit required documentation to the local authority	CLB	Next meeting	