**Finance Officer Report for Leadership & Resources Committee**

Date of meeting: 17 June 2019

**Financial Information**

* Five year budget planning 2019/20 – 2023/24

Following feedback from the previous L&R meeting; new information regarding pupil numbers likely in September 2019 and some staff contract changes, further scenarios have been drafted and Scenario E and Scenario F are attached for L&R discussion. Brief explanatory notes are provided, more detailed notes are available upon request.

Please can L&R decide which Scenario they would like to recommend to the FGB on 26 June for formal approval and submittal to the LA by 28 June.

As I’ve done in previous years, I will be offering ‘Budget Clinics’ for any governors that would like to informally discuss and gain better/deeper understanding of the budget scenarios prior to the L&R and FGB meetings in June.

* Teachers Pay Grant

This was introduced last year and the LA have confirmed that this will continue in 2019/20, and I have been advised by the LA to assume it will be received across all five years of the budget. We are funded for a minimum of 100 pupils at £30.48 per pupil.

* Teachers Pension Grant

We have received updated guidance from the LA regarding the increase in employer pension contributions for the Teachers Pension Scheme. The contribution rate increases from 16.48% to 23.68% from 1 September 2019 until 31 March 2023. Schools will receive a grant from the DfE/LA to cover the increase from the existing 16.48% rate. This is all included in the budget scenarios mentioned above. We are funded for a minimum of 100 pupils at £77.50 per pupil for 2019/20 and £132.85 per pupil for 2020/21 onwards.

* PE & Sports Premium 2019/20 Academic Year

I have had discussions with Grant Davis from the LA. Using the Sports Grant money for revenue expenditure such as playground maintenance/repairs/refurbishment is acceptable. Any capital purchase will need to be recorded as such and we can only use the Sports Grant rollover from 2017/18 year (£7,221) for this (new equipment for example).

The LA do not know at this stage if the Sports Grant will continue beyond the 2019/20 academic year.

* Bank accounts and credit card

The school bank account balance on 31 May was £102, 536.48

The balance of the school fund account on 31 May 2019 was £1,373.43

The balance on the school credit card as at 22 May 2019 was £627.40

Our Lloyds Bank relationship manager can’t help with advice regarding school deposit accounts, I need to contact Head Office which I will do soon.

* Average number of UIFSM and paid/FSM meals being taken daily

UIFSM – There are currently 29 children in KS1, 26 of which are eligible for UIFSM. In Term 5, an average of 24 UIFSM were served per day.

FSM – There are still six children eligible for FSM and they usually all claim their free meal daily.

Paid meals – An average of 20 x KS2 paid pupil meals were served daily last term (out of 60 KS2 children).

An average of 49 meals per day were served last term. The catering contract subsidy is based on 51 meals per day.

* Fraud

I attended a Lloyds Bank presentation about Fraud in schools recently. The presentation explained the levels of sophisticated fraud that are becoming more prevalent, such as Cyber enabled fraud (malware, phishing, ransomware, vishing); CEO fraud (fraudster purporting to be senior management of the business), Email interception fraud (for example changing bank details on an invoice without sender or recipient realising), etc. Good examples of ‘real life’ school fraud were shared to demonstrate how easy it is for school staff to fall into a fraudster’s trap.

When our Financial Procedures manual is updated in the autumn, I will include a section on fraud prevention and what to do in the event of it happening. In the meantime, staff (particularly Head, Admin & Finance) and governors need to be vigilant. I suspect it is only a matter of time before we are targeted, and Richard has very recent experience of this happening at Lacock.

* LA Internal Audit

The LA auditors last visited us back in 2011, so I wouldn’t be surprised if we were due another one soon. I have just heard that SSQ are being audited this month. The auditors will scrutinise the L&R and FGB minutes and Scheme of Delegation to make sure financial decisions and procedures are correctly followed and clearly recorded.

Can the Scheme of Delegation be double checked to ensure that all the relevant financial limits, etc. are included and correct please, and also can the minutes include specific cost and length of contract information agreed at the meetings.

**Staffing**

* Teaching Assistant hours

We currently have 76.75 TA contracted hours (excluding overtime and agency TA hours).

An advertisement is being placed in the LA Vacancy Bulletin next week for a Teaching Assistant for intervention work from September 2019 for one academic year for 16 hours/ week. The estimated cost of this is £8,949.

It is also proposed that one of the current TA’s hours is increased from 19.5 hours/week, to 26.25 hours/week in order to provide ‘full time’ TA hours in Hercules from September. This increase in hours will cost approximately £4,000 per annum.

These changes equate to a 30% increase in contracted TA hours for the 2019/20 academic year.

* SENCO

The teacher responsible for this does not wish to continue from September. Richard is investigating the options and is able to recommend the SENCO that Lacock employ for one half day/week. The cost of this will be approximately £6,000 per annum.

**Premises**

* Higher playground gates/fencing – The LA have been out to take a look at the wooden gates/fencing near the gazebo and have agreed to add it to their capital *plans* for the 2020/21 financial year.
* I have met with Rob Elkins about redesigning the foyer entrance. Rob is a very local architect whose father designed the school extension including Cherry Hall in 2003, and Rob is an ex-pupil of Langley Fitzurse. I explained that we have two objectives:

1) to improve the security of the front entrance so that a determined child could not let themselves out unless in an emergency such as fire, and

 2) to have a double entry system so that visitors do not have immediate access to classrooms as soon as they enter the front door (i.e. some kind of ‘holding area’).

Rob suggests a ball park figure of £20 - £25K to reconfigure current Admin Office / Foyer area, or at least £30K for an extra simple structure built at the front of the school. However, we could meet objective 1) by installing an updated door access system (for example exit by staff ID badge/card only) and new front door – we’d have to seek our own quotes for this.

Rob said that if we decide to go down the route of a reconfiguration, he will draw the plans free of charge for us.

* I met with Euan and Simon on 23 May and the Premises Action Plan was discussed and reviewed (copy to follow).
* The EYFS teacher has requested the removal of the fireman’s pole from the Adventure Kingdom as constant staff supervision is needed to help children slide down safely which she doesn’t feel is good use of teacher/TA time. I have sought quotes to replace it with a slide.

**Health & Safety**

* The official report of the LA Health & Safety Monitoring Visit has been received and is very positive. The recommended action points are in hand.
* As per the First Aid Risk Assessment, the numbers of accidents/incidents involving pupils and adults will now be reported to L&R on a regular basis. I can therefore report that since my previous report in May, 37 first aid accidents/incidents involving pupils, 4 of which were head related, and none involving staff.

New accident/incident reporting books have been purchased which will improve the recording and analysing of accidents and incidents in future.

* The Health & Safety policy needs reviewing by L&R at this meeting and a copy of a draft version is attached. I have checked it against the LA’s latest model policy and our policy includes a few minor tweaks as shown.

**Provision of swimming lessons from September 2019**

* Historically the school has provided swimming lessons for pupils in Years 2 – 6 every term (each child gets to swim three terms out of six). In 2018/19 we have provided swimming lessons for four terms instead of six by commencing them in January 2019 instead of September 2018.

The school pays for the swimming teachers, lifeguards, and any additional school staffing costs (totalling approx. £900 for 2018/19 financial year) and asks parents for a voluntary contribution to cover the cost of transport and pool admission fees (approx. £3,000 for 2018/19 financial year). There is inevitably a shortfall in the amount of parental contributions received and the cost of the transport and admission fees. For example, in 2018/19 financial year the shortfall was approximately £600. Had we swam for six terms it would have been higher than this.

The shortfall in parental contributions for Term 5 swimming was £275 and as at today the shortfall for Term 6 is £588. As parental contributions are voluntary, we are not supposed to chase parents to pay. Whilst some of the non-contributing families are PPG, many are not. Some reasons cited are that their children have swimming lessons outside school anyway. From memory I think we collated figures last year on how many children have swim lessons other than at school.

Richard thinks that now is an appropriate time to decide if we should have a different approach to swimming from next academic year. I estimate that it will cost the school approximately £2,000 to provide the lessons if we continue the same arrangements we have now for four terms not six. However, it is *not* all about cost, there are other considerations too.

Other schools do not take their children from such a young age and as often as us and have different views on how they meet the National Curriculum outcomes for school swimming, which Richard can explain in more detail.

We can only use our Sports Grant towards school swimming under certain criteria over and above the basic swimming we provide (although we can and do use it to fund the annual Swimming Gala and other swimming competitions). The website below explains:

<https://www.swimming.org/schools/swimming-national-curriculum/>

As always, I welcome your feedback on the items in this report.

Lizzy Moor

Finance Officer

13 June 2019