

**An Extra-ordinary Meeting of the Governing Body of the Quantock Federation of Schools was held on 22 October 2009 Danesfield Church of England School**

**Present:** Mr Ian Bradbury (Executive Head) Mr Paul Meagher  
Mrs Netta Hunt Mr Chris Sampson  
Mr Bernard Maynard-Smith Mr Dave White  
Mrs Cerys Randell Mr Dean Parfrey  
Mr James Peate (Head) Mr Kevin Francis  
Mrs Paula Smythe  
Mr Peter Rowe (Chair)

**In Attendance:** Mrs Helen Hatfield (Clerk to the Governors),  
Mrs Angela Morley (Business Manager)  
Mr Tony Newman (newly elected governor)

**1) OPENING PRAYER**

Mr Chris Sampson opened the meeting with a prayer.

**2) APOLOGIES & DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS**

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew, Miss Nicky Darby, Mr John Bryant (who had family commitments), Mrs Judy Carslake (who was unwell) and Rev Richard Ninis (who was on holiday).

The Clerk asked governors to declare any pecuniary interest they may have relating to any item on the agenda. No governors had a pecuniary interest.

**3) MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF 5 OCTOBER AND 15 OCTOBER 2009**

**and**

**4) CONSIDER THE DANESFIELD DEFICIT BUDGET FOLLOWING A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BUSINESS COMMITTEE HELD ON 5<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2009**

The Chair Peter Rowe noted that this was an extra-ordinary meeting of the governing body held to endorse the Business Committee meetings of 5 and 15 October 2009. He welcomed Angela Morley, the Business Manager, who explained that it was the governors' responsibility to monitor the deficit budget at Danesfield. She explained that she is working in partnership with the Local Authority on a Recovery Plan (outlined in the Recovery Plan 09/10 paper attached).

*(James Peate arrived 6.10 pm)*

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Business Committee held on 5 October 2009** (attached). These minutes had been previously circulated.

Paula Smythe (Chair of the Business Committee) explained that following a recent visit the FMSIS Auditor had been concerned that there was lack of evidence that a Recovery Plan was in place. The Business Committee had met on 5 October to focus on the deficit budget at Danesfield and any actions that needed to be taken to put the Recovery Plan in place. The LA will assist in the preparation of a 5 year budget forecast, to be based upon certain assumptions and pupil number predictions. This process will commence with a meeting due to take place, with a LA Finance representative, on the 4<sup>th</sup> November. The Recovery Plan will be approved by the

next full governors meeting (27 January 2010). At the meeting on 5 October it was reported that written reports were received from the auditor for the three schools in the federation. A summary of these was circulated and discussed at the Business Committee meeting on 15/10/09.

Angela reported that the auditor was only able to offer partial assurance that Danesfield School is likely to receive the kite mark unless changes were put in place to meet the standard. Paula Smythe noted that Education Finance had offered to attend a future Business Committee meeting to present the 5 year plan. Governors were appreciative of this offer and agreed to extend an invitation at an appropriate stage in the preparations.

The proposed benchmarking meeting has now taken place (see Ian Bradbury's report attached to be discussed at Item 5)

At the Business Committee meeting on 5 October the following measures were proposed in order to achieve a balanced "in year" budget for 09 - 10:

1. Comprehensive Admin Team review
2. Review of Technician staff
3. No expenditure over and above that in the original budget plan to be authorised without the prior approval of the Business Committee
4. Staff grading/changes to be considered by the Executive Head, The Chair of Governors, and The Chair of the Business committee and the Business Manager in advance of any decision
5. Need to make on going savings
6. Review and re-cost leadership team with regard to 4 leaders
7. Review salaries with a view to recruitment and retention
8. Review division of leaderships and management costs across the federation (costs divided between the federation)
9. Staffing model cross phase federation
10. Consider 2010 extra costs e.g. Performing Arts
11. Additional £20k SEN funding secured following representations (removing current year deficit)
12. Principles established to prevent deficit rising
13. Education Finance representative to attend next meeting (date to be arranged)
14. Outline Recovery Plan to be prepared in consultation with the LA as soon as practically feasible

The Business Committee was concerned that the first school budgets remain intact as the surplus has been allocated to future projects. They requested that assurances be sought to ensure that the deficit position at Danesfield be internally addressed. Concern was expressed in respect of the way in which Leadership costs are to be divided across the Federation and it was requested that this be given careful and fair consideration.

A discussion took place about the deficit budget.

Angela Morley reported that the £46,040 deficit was addressed at the meeting of the Business Committee on 5 October. The Chair noted that the £4,000

intervention funding from the LA has not yet been confirmed but the deficit balance had been reduced by £5,000 due to staffing amendments from 1 September 2009.

Governors asked the Executive Head, Ian Bradbury to ensure that Danesfield School does not spend more money than necessary and amended Action 5 to read "...*additional need to make on going savings*".

Angela Morley highlighted the point that Danesfield may incur unexpected costs.

**Governors unanimously endorsed the proposed actions arising from the Business Committee meeting of 5 October (listed above) but recognised that there may be unforeseen emergencies and likewise unforeseen savings.**

**Governors were keen to work in partnership with the LA to prepare a robust and realistic Recovery Plan.**

**Proposed: Kevin Francis**

**Seconded: David White**

**Minutes of the Business Committee meeting held on 15 October 2009**  
(attached).

These minutes had been previously circulated. Paula Smythe reported that a further paper on Staff Costs would be discussed at the Business Committee meeting on 8 December.

A report concerning the IT Equipment at Old Cleeve School was circulated (attached). The report detailed the quotes received for replacing the IT equipment at Old Cleeve School. Angela Morley explained that the quotes came in at under £10,000. Angela Morley recommended using ICT CATS who are known to the school.

**Governors agreed to accept the quotation of £9,915.00 from ICT CATs to replace the IT equipment at Old Cleeve School (as outlined in the School Success Plan).**

Governors had sight of the authorised bank signatories for Danesfield: Ian Bradbury, Angela Morley and Jerry Weedon; copies of these will be retained in the Danesfield safe as a confidential document.

Paula Smythe noted

Signatories at Old Cleeve : Nicola Darby, Mary Coles, Karen Thompson

Signatories at St Peter's: James Peate, Christine Gannon, Carol Prentice

These are also kept in the safe at Danesfield in accordance with the Finance Policy.

*Kevin Francis left (6.40 pm)*

The Chair reported that an in-house training session on FMSIS (for all governors) has been arranged for 28 January 2010, at Danesfield, details to be confirmed. He encouraged governors to attend.

Angela Morley offered to run a training session for new governors after half term; she will circulate the details by email. (ADM)

Paula Smythe noted that Ian Bradbury has 4 key areas to investigate following the Business Committees' examination of the Month 6 Old Cleeve and St Peter's budgets:

- Reprographics
- Gifted & Talented
- Curriculum Budgets
- Extended Schools Budgets

Angela Morley reported that she will produce a paper detailing options for shared federation staffing costs and potential savings, for the next Business Committee meeting (08/12/09) as requested. (ADM)

Angela Morley explained that she has contacted the LA with regard to the fact that they intimated that they may proportionally reduce their contribution from £100,000 to £70,000 as the quote for the Performing Arts Studio came in under tender. She has written to request that the £12,000 previously raised by the school is withdrawn from the pot. Angela informed the meeting that she will provide a list of required equipment and create a model letter asking for funding for the project, for governors' use. (ADM)

Paula Smythe reported that the monitoring focus of the Business Committee for 09/10 would be the Curriculum Spend. Ian Bradbury had agreed to compile a report for their next meeting detailing the spend on all core subjects. (IJB)

**Governors accepted the revised Freedom of Information Policy (previously circulated).**

**Governors endorsed the minutes of the Business Committee meeting of 15 October 2009.**

The Chair Peter Rowe thanked Angela Morley and Paula Smythe for all their hard work.

## **5) BENCHMARKING**

Executive Head Ian Bradbury had previously circulated a paper to the governors. He noted that although the Admin Team figures looked high at Danesfield they included the West Somerset Initiative Co-ordinator's salary in error. This should now be moved to a medium cost.

He explained that the figure for Educational Support Staff is high as there are a high percentage of SEN pupils at Danesfield in comparison to the other schools however supply costs are low due to the fact that Cover Supervisors are employed to cover lessons.

The working party had met to compare data on the benchmarking website which had been a very useful exercise. This will be reported annually to the governing body, the first report will be presented in January 2010 then in future at the July meetings.

IJB

These minutes are agreed by those present as being a true record.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

(Chair)

**ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM EXTRA-ORDINARY FULL GOVERNORS MEETING HELD  
ON 22 OCTOBER 2009**

Minute no	Action	Timescale	By
4	Attend the FMSIS training course at Danesfield	28 Jan 2010	All
4	Organise an in-house finance training session for governors	Nov 09	ADM
4	Produce a paper on staffing costs for the next Business committee meeting	8 Dec 09	ADM
4	Produce a report detailing curriculum spend for the next Business committee meeting	8 Dec 09	IJB
4	Performing Arts Centre - circulate an equipment list and create a model letter asking for funding for the project, for governors' use.	Nov 09	ADM
5	Benchmarking - report annually to the governing body.	Jan 2010	IJB

**Dates & Venues for Governors Meetings for 2009/2010**

**Full Governors**

All full governors meetings will be held at 6.30 pm unless otherwise stated

25 November 2009 - Danesfield

27 January 2010 - St Peter's

30 March 2010 - Old Cleeve

18 May 2010 - Danesfield

7 July 2010 - St Peter's