

Rainow School Finance Committee Minutes

9th February 2021 9.15am Part 1 (Via Teams)

Present: Joe Austin (FMSO), Sue Berzins, Jonathan Norris, Julien Rye, Rick Stockwell

(Peter Grogan arrived @ 9.55 and left @ 10.58)

Declaration of Interests:

There were no declarations of interest.

Pupil Numbers

Pupil numbers for October 2021 are anticipated to be 188. There are currently 42 children on the admissions lists for 2021 who have selected Rainow School as their first choice, and JN indicated that 28 children may be accepted for September. One additional child is now in receipt of FSM, bringing the total to 11.

Minimum per Pupil Funding

This has been adjusted to £10,825 for 21-22 and £9,841 for 22-23.

EHCP Top up Funding

JN queried the top up funding for a Year 6 child, which was showing on the budget papers as 30 hours. The paperwork from the SEN team has only allocated 18 hrs.

JA to check.

Covid Catch-up Funding

The school's allocation for 20-21 is £14,400. Currently one T/A is working 6.25 hours which are being funded by this scheme, and another T/A was employed for two mornings per week during the majority of the autumn term. It is anticipated that an additional T/A will also be employed after Easter. JN reminded governors that a Covid Catch-Up plan had been drafted in the autumn term, but would likely need to be amended due to the January lockdown. The governors were also reminded that a report would also need to be produced at some point to evidence the impact of this additional funding.

New Broadband Provider

The current contract with Cheshire Shared Services expires in the summer. JN has obtained a new quote from them, which was over £7,000 per year, compared to approx. £4000 from other providers. There would be additional installation costs in the first year should we choose a new provider, thought to be approx. £1000. We would still be able to employ the services of a Cheshire Shared Services IT technician to look after the school's IT systems.

Carry Forward

There were several lines on the budget where the anticipated spend to year end was reduced or removed entirely and this has resulted in a revised and improved projected carry forward of £26,917 for 20-21 (£7,035 pre-meeting), £38,887 for 21-22 (£24,214 pre-meeting) and £5,273 for 22-23 (-£17,117 pre meeting).

Processing Vat on Amazon Purchases

SB explained that the school was increasingly using Amazon as the 'go to provider' for materials and equipment, and these items are purchased using the school's credit cards. Due to the technicalities around re-claiming the VAT on these transactions, SB queried with JA the procedure for recovering VAT on these transactions.

JA to seek clarification.

Out of Schools

SB explained that 4 staff members had been fully furloughed and 2 had been flexi-furloughed. JA was asked when the school could expect to receive the HMRC contribution, but was unclear as to when this would be, or how it would be coded within the school's budget. The anticipated deficit at the end of this financial year (taking into account the furlough scheme) was adjusted from £7,786 to an approximately £1,200.

JA to carry out further furlough analysis, and update the post-meeting papers accordingly.

DFC

The DFC allocation for 21-22 has not yet been confirmed. SB queried the rules regarding 'projects' and the de minimus which is currently set at £2,000 for each 'project'.

JA to provide clarification on the de minimus, and other criteria around permitted DFC spending.

Sports Funding

The current balance is over £8k and the grant is set to continue, with the school receiving an additional £7380 for the 5/12 allocation from April to September 21. JA was confident that under the current circumstances, schools would not be expected to spend their full balances by the end of August 21.

Best4Business

The financial module of the new Best4Business system (Unit4 ERP) which is replacing the existing Oracle software, was scheduled to go live on Monday 8th February. SB has undertaken an online training course on how to use this system (only 1 delegate per school of our size was given access to training).

The meeting closed at 12.40.