

Colyton Grammar School

Minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee: Part One

Date of Meeting: Thursday 6 October 2016

Venue: Headteacher's Office

Present:

Governors	Dr Bastin, Lt Col T J Dyer, Mr M Goscomb, Mr T Harris (Headteacher), Mrs M Nickells and Mr R Scott
Staff	Mr S Cook, Mrs J Wainwright
Visitors	None
Secretary	Mrs A Robinson

Mrs Robinson took the Chair for Items 1 and 2. Mrs Nickells took the Chair thereafter.

1. Disclosure of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

2. Election of Chair

Mrs Robinson reported that she had received one nomination for the role of Chair, naming Mrs Nickells. Mrs Nickells was then invited to make a brief statement about her reasons for standing as Chair. She outlined her experience as a Chartered Accountant specialising in Academy Schools, including budgeting, monitoring performance, advising on compliance with the Academies' Financial Handbook and running training for academy accounts. Mrs Nickells then left the room.

The Committee unanimously voted to appoint Mrs Nickells as Chair for the academic year 2016/17. Mrs Nickells then took over chairing the meeting on her return to the room.

3. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Salter, Mr Davis and Mrs Burns-Price

4. Election of Vice Chair (Finance)

Mrs Robinson reported that no nominations had been received for either of the Vice Chair posts. Lt Col Dyer agreed to continue as Vice Chair, Finance. After Mr Goscomb's reminder that the recent Governance Review recommended a single Vice Chair role, Lt Col Dyer reminded the Committee of the benefits of Mr Salter's extensive experience and knowledge of the School' grounds and buildings. The Committee agreed that Mr Salter will be asked if he is willing to continue as Vice Chair, Grounds and Buildings, for an additional term, whilst the recommendations of the Governance Review can be fully discussed, agreed and implemented. The Committee agreed the importance of maintaining buildings and grounds experience as part of the Finance and Resources Committee.

Action:

Mr Cook to approach Mr Salter about standing as Vice Chair for an additional term

5. Election of Vice Chair (Grounds and Buildings)

This was dealt with under Item 4.

6. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 23 June 2016

These were approved and signed.

7. Matters Arising

(a) Item 4(c): Sports Centre and All-Weather Pitch Working Party update

Mr Cook reported that a draft agreement concerning the all-weather pitch has been sent to East Devon District Council and Leisure East Devon (LED). A document explaining the background and inviting comments, accompanied this agreement. In response to a query from Dr Bastin, Mr Cook reported that receipt of the agreement has been acknowledged, but other than knowing it has been passed to the senior executive officers, no timescale has been set for a response.

(b) Item 9: Lockdown Procedure

Mr Cook reported that detailed planning is ongoing and that he is hoping to report back at the November meeting.

Action:

Mr Cook to continue work on the Lockdown Procedure and report back at the November meeting.

8. Policies for Review

Proposed by Lt Col Dyer, seconded by Mr Scott and unanimously agreed that the following revised policies, that had been circulated prior to the meeting, should be approved, subject to the changes noted below.

(a) Remissions and Charges for School Activities

Mr Cook reminded the Committee that this policy was originally two separate policies that he had been asked to combine at the June meeting of the Committee. He confirmed that no further changes had been made whilst combining the two policies. In response to a query from Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook agreed to Hyperlink references to other policies such as the Bradbeer Fund and 16 – 19 Bursary Scheme.

(b) Budget Monitoring

Mr Cook reminded the Committee that this policy and Item 8c, Finance, are reviewed annually. He confirmed that only minor changes have been made i.e. change of 'Governor' to 'Trustee'. All substantive content has remained the same. In response to a request from Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook agreed to hyperlink references to handbooks and Responsible Officer.

(c) Finance

This was partially dealt with under 8b, Budget Monitoring.

In response to Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook confirmed that any virements as specified in the Table of Delegated Authority would be reported to the Finance and Resources Committee at their next meeting. Mr Goscomb queried why the 2 quotes required for the purchase of goods between £1000 and £2500 (shown in the table at the bottom on page 3), were 'oral' quotes, where written quotes may be better practice. Mr Cook agreed to change this wording and commented that most quotes do in fact, come by email.

Mrs Nickells commented that, in her experience, for items purchased under £2000, comparative prices are often found on the internet, rather than obtaining formal written quotes.

(d) Security

Mr Cook drew the attention of the Committee to the changes within this policy, highlighting in particular:

- Changes made as a result of the Safeguarding Audit
- That ADT are no longer maintaining the CCTV system. This has been brought in house.

In response to a query from Lt Col Dyer, Mr Cook confirmed that the Security Policy will be updated once the Lockdown Procedure is finalised.

Action:

Mr Cook and Mrs Robinson to amend policies as agreed and republish

9. Mandate Changes – Written Resolution

Mr Cook reported that a Written Resolution had been circulated to add Mr Harris as a signatory on the main bank accounts with Lloyds, and to replace Mrs Wainwright with Mr Harris, as a signatory on the deposit accounts and investments held by the School. Mrs Robinson confirmed that the required number of signed resolutions had been received and the resolution had been approved on 18/08/16.

Mr Cook confirmed that he, Mr Harris and the SLT are signatories on the bank accounts and that 2 signatories are required. In response to a query from Dr Bastin he reported that three debit cards are in use. He clarified that the Finance Assistant has a card which is used most frequently. Mr Cook has a card which is largely used for the purchase of train tickets, and books and small equipment that can be found most cost effectively on the internet. Mr Harris has the third card. Mr Goscomb commented that it is good practice for security purposes, that the number of credit cards be limited and that the Head makes very limited use of his card. Mr Cook confirmed, in response to a query from Mrs Nickells, that all card users adhere to the correct authorisation processes and this is a specific area checked by the Responsible Officer.

10. Appointment of Auditors

Mr Cook reminded the Committee that it had been agreed, at the last AGM, that the provision of audit services for the financial year 2016/17, should be re-tendered. Mr Cook drew the attention of the Committee to the paper circulated prior to the meeting, which outlined three options for the tendering process, along with their advantages and disadvantages. He asked the Committee to consider which would be the best way forward.

Option 1: A national firm on the CPC framework

Option 2: A local / regional company

Option 3: A combination of options 1 and 2

Mr Cook reminded the Committee that, with the appointment of Mrs Nickells, Griffin Chartered Accountants cannot now be considered as an option. Mr Cook recommended option 3 and reported that thereafter a 'task and finish' group should be formed to evaluate the tender and make a recommendation.

Mrs Nickells pointed out that many of the national companies on the CPC framework do not take on Academy work as it is deemed too small. Also, that without a close regional office, the School is likely to be charged larger amounts for travel and accommodation of the audit team. In response to a query from Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook and Mrs Nickells confirmed that the nearest office of the listed national companies is likely to be in Bristol.

Mr Cook reported that one of the advantages of the CPC framework is that the school don't have to produce a full tender document, whereas local companies will require detailed documentation.

Mr Goscomb suggested that the Committee recommend option 3, looking at local companies compared with nationals, as a benchmark. This comparison will help to prove value for money.

The Committee unanimously agreed that Option 3 be adopted. Mrs Nickells and Mr Goscomb agreed to form the 'task and finish' group, with Mr Cook, with a view to appoint by April 2017.

Action:

Mr Cook to contact Mrs Nickells and Mr Goscomb to arrange the initial meeting.

11. Responsible Officer Arrangements

Mr Cook reminded the Committee that the EFA Academies Financial Handbook requires academies to have robust measures in place for internal scrutiny of its financial systems, controls, transactions and risks. This has been overseen by the Finance and Resources Committee and has been delivered by the appointment of a 'Responsible Officer'. Mrs Hopkins fulfilled this role, but with her resignation as a Trustee, new arrangements need to be put in place.

Mr Cook drew the attention of the Committee to the paper circulated prior to the meeting highlighting the suggested options:

1. Internal audit service
2. External auditor
3. Responsible Officer
4. Peer Review
5. Combination of 2 or more of the above

Mr Cook pointed out the details, advantages and disadvantages of each option and confirmed that the cost for purchasing an external audit service (option 2), will be in the region of £800 - £1000. He added that he has explored option 4 by contacting some other academies, but, without financial inducement, no other Business Manager, or equivalently qualified person, has, to date, expressed interest in a direct swap of duties.

In response to a query from Lt Col Dyer, Dr Bastin reported that, even though Mrs Hopkins is independent of the school, due to personal circumstances she is unlikely to be able to continue as the Responsible Officer.

The Committee discussed the role considering the following:

- Whether this requires a person with experience of academy finances, or whether experience with Financial Governance and the ability to adhere to written processes, with an excellent eye for detail, is more important
- The importance of having someone who can add value, develop the role, identify weaknesses and assist if fraudulent practices come to light.
- The potential difference in the strengths of Mr Cook and his successor and how these might impact upon the skills required
- Confirmation that a Trustee could take on the role of Responsible Officer, but cannot be part of the Finance and Resources Committee
- Suggestions of specific external auditors
- The importance of this role being filled promptly as a termly check is due
- The importance of having expert, thorough, independent help
- How potential candidates in other schools can be identified through school accounts, where the auditor's name must be published

Action:

After discussion it was agreed that Mr Cook will approach the South West Audit Partnership and a number of other external providers for quotes, and continue to pursue potential candidates in other schools.

12. Financial Statements – August 2016

Mr Cook extended his apologies that the August Financial Statements are not yet available as there are still a significant volume of end of year transactions to be processed. He confirmed that the statements will be ready within the next two weeks and will be circulated to the Committee.

In response to Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook explained that the significant underspend on water and sewage, evident in the July statement, is largely due to the difficulty in obtaining an accurate bill from South West Water. He confirmed that this is being monitored through monthly meter readings. Mr Cook added that there may be a small underspend overall as the School has dealt with a number of leaks.

Action:

Mr Cook to circulate August Financial Statements by Friday 21 October 2016

13. School Development Plan

Mr Harris drew the attention of the Committee to the School Improvement Plan circulated prior to the meeting. He explained that one Trustee has already contacted him with suggested improvements to the 'Expected Outcomes and Impact' section, which he will review.

Mr Harris reported that the aim of the plan is that everyone clearly knows the School's aims, how these are met and monitored and who is accountable. A traffic light system will be used to indicate progress with each priority.

The addition of pictures to the plan is intended to reflect the experiences of the students and to mirror wider practices. Mr Cook confirmed that the majority of costs associated with the plan are in the budget.

Mr Harris expressed his view that the plan will form a good basis and guidance to the Trustees as recommendations from the governance review are implemented.

Action:

Mr Harris to review the School Improvement Plan in light of suggestions from a Trustee

14. EFA Academies Financial Handbook Update

Mr Cook drew the attention of the Committee to the papers circulated prior to the meeting. He pointed out the key changes to the handbook and explained how these related to School practices. In particular Mr Cook focused on:

- The recommendation that Trustee attendance records be published on the school website. He explained that these are already published as part of the Annual Financial Statements and asked the Committee to consider whether they should be published separately. Mr Goscomb confirmed that this was a recommendation of the Governance Review
- The requirement that Trusts must use Edubase to inform the DfE details of Members, Trustees, Chairs and Financial Officers. Mr Cook confirmed that the majority of the required information is already entered, but Trustees should expect to be asked their country of birth as this is a new requirement. Mrs Robinson confirmed that she will collate this data.
- The requirement that the Board and Finance and Resources Committee ensure sufficient rigour and scrutiny in the budget management process and understand and address variances between the budget that has been set and actual income and expenditure. Mr Cook confirmed that he will ensure the monthly budget statements meet the need of the Board and Committee. Evidence of rigorous scrutiny will be detailed in Committee meeting minutes
- Mr Cook confirmed that the other requirements for Financial Control are noted and in place. He reminded the Committee of their decision to opt into the RPA scheme.

Mr Goscomb drew the attention of the Committee to the statement at the end of the paper which pointed to the definitions of Member, Trustee, Director and Governor on pages 6 and 7 of the Educational Financial Handbook. He also reminded the Committee of the letter circulated earlier in the day from the Education Funding Agency which clarified the role of the Headteacher as Accounting Officer and the key financial responsibilities of the Board.

In response to a query from Mrs Nickells, Mr Cook confirmed that an Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy is in place.

Action:

Mr Cook and Mrs Robinson to arrange for Trustee attendance records to be published on the School website separately from the Annual Financial Statements

Mrs Robinson to collate information on Trustees' country of birth and add to Edubase

15. Capital Projects

(a) Feoffees' CIF Project

Mr Cook circulated a paper to the Committee and confirmed the work completed on the Feoffees' Roof, Windows and Doors over the summer break. He reported that the electrical work and roofing were done to a high standard, within budget

and timescale, and their staff had been a pleasure to have on site. However, the company working on the windows had caused significant concern with poor quality workmanship, timescales and damage. Mr Cook reported that the remaining remedial work is planned for half term and the School is withholding the final 10% of payment.

Dr Bastin reminded the Committee that this is not the first time that the school has experienced problems with contractors and also that the cheapest contractor is not always the school's choice. He queried whether any steps could be taken to minimise this risk in the future. The Committee discussed some of the reasons behind the problems with contractors including:

- Frequent changes to the on-site foreman and the importance of a good foreman
- The concentration of school building work over holiday periods
- A shortage of skilled labour due to large local projects i.e. Cranbrook
- Reliance on the architect for recommendations
- Inconsistency in the quality of work

Mr Cook suggested the reintroduction of visiting work previously completed by the companies on the tender list, for larger projects. The Committee agreed to this proposal and to monitor future issues. In response to queries from Mr Goscomb and Lt Col Dyer, Mr Cook confirmed that both good and bad experience of contractors is shared with the Business Managers of other local educational establishments, but not with communities outside of education.

In response to a query from Mrs Nickells, Mr Cook confirmed that while the overall project has come in under budget, the full CIF grant has been spent. He confirmed that although some of the building work had been extremely frustrating and has resulted in additional work for the school's ground staff, overall it has come in under budget, allowing for the replacement of the boiler in the Feoffees' Building. In response to a query from Dr Bastin, Mr Cook reported that it is too early to judge how much income has been lost by the temporary removal of the photovoltaic panels while work was carried out on the roof.

(b) Science Lab and Staff House Working Party update

Mr Cook reported that this working party will be meeting on Monday 10 October and will continue to work closely with the architect. He confirmed that the key issue is the need for an additional Science Laboratory, and expressed the view that it will be better to look at the Science Laboratory as a standalone project, not combined with Staff House. He also reminded the Committee of the funding available from the Wolfson Trust and raised by the PA. In addition, consideration is being given to a cut back Staff House project focusing on dealing with condition issues in the existing building, rather than expansion.

(c) Five Forms of Entry – CIF bid update

Mr Cook reminded the Committee of the images considered at the previous meeting. He confirmed that he is still working with the architect on this CIF bid to be submitted in December and will report further at the November meeting.

In response to a query from Mrs Nickells, Mr Harris reported that it is unclear whether the £50 million the government has said is available to grammar schools will benefit Colyton, as the finer detail has not yet been clarified.

Action:

Mr Cook to reintroduce the practice of visiting work previously completed by contractors when considering the award of larger contracts

Mr Cook to report on the progress on capital working party meeting and the Five Forms of Entry CIF bid at the November meeting

16. Health and Safety Report

Mr Cook drew the attention of the Committee to the paper circulated prior to the meeting and expressed his pleasure at the 98% score achieved during the Health and Safety audit. Mr Cook explained the two recommendations made for improvement.

1. When work experience students are hosted by Colyton a specific Risk Assessment must be raised for their activities during their visit.

Mr Cook clarified this recommendation, explaining that although, for example, a Risk Assessment is available for use of a piece of machinery, the audit recommends that a Risk Assessment is undertaken specifically for a work experience student to use the machinery.

2. Where staff or volunteers drive as part of their work activities, particularly if they transport students, reasonable checks should be undertaken to ensure that the correct documentation such as licence, insurance and MOT testing is in place and up to date.

Mr Cook explained that the staff have to complete an annual declaration which covers these issues. Also, adding this detail to the travel expenses claim form is under consideration. In response to a query from Lt Col Dyer, Mr Cook confirmed that staff and volunteers using their own vehicles are covered under the school's occasional business use insurance, but that they are advised to check with their own insurer that they do not prohibit this arrangement.

In response to a query from Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook clarified that the provision of a Crossing Patrol Officer is covered from existing resources and confirmed that proper insurance cover is in place for this through the local authority. He explained that this has been instigated due to concerns for students arriving on the school bus being able to cross the road safely, as traffic on the A3052 has significantly increased. Devon County Council were unable to recruit staff at existing pay rates, so the School provide crossing patrol officers from within existing school staff who are trained and supervised by the local authority.

17. Site Management Report

With reference to the Site Management Report circulated prior to the meeting, Mr Cook reported that there are continuing problems with the Cottrill Hall roof and site workshop doors. In response to a query from Dr Bastin, he confirmed that the School is still withholding part payment. Mr Cook also drew the Committee's attention to the installation of Sharepoint by the IT team, and explained that the Learning Gateway

system is now hosted in-house rather than externally, leading to improved access and more flexible use.

18. Risk Register

Mr Cook reported that the presentation of the Risk Register has now been refined and drew the Committee's attention to the three papers circulated prior to the meeting:

1. A paper explaining the Risk Register and suggesting key review questions
2. The Risk Register, filtered to only show risks pertinent to the Finance and Resources Committee and colour coded as previously agreed
3. A Review Report showing the elements that have changed on the Risk Register since the last review.

Mr Cook explained that he has changed the score boundaries between red and amber, to bring them in line with the School's standard risk assessments and asked the Committee whether the changes are satisfactory.

The Committee agreed that the reports are improved, although it was felt that Trustees do need further training to assess the Register properly and contribute in a meaningful way.

In response to a query from Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook confirmed that in future the SLT will regularly review the Register.

Mr Cook highlighted the changes to the Risk Register focusing on:

1. The new risk that the delay in the implementation of the National Funding Formula (NFF) to 2017 will result in a shortfall in funding.
2. The risk that the budget will be in deficit – an additional control relating to expansion to five forms of entry

Mr Cook reminded the Committee that the School's budget had been based on certain agreed assumptions, including that the NFF would be implemented in September 2017. He reported that Devon Local Authority have just circulated a consultation document on funding for next year (see AOB) and when the results and implications of this are clear he will report back to the Committee.

3. The risk that the impact of lagged increases to funding, relating to expansion to five forms of entry, will lead to insufficient funds for revenue costs of expansion.

Mr Cook explained that this lag in funding will result in additional costs being incurred before the added income from the expansion. However, on the basis of latest modelling this budget deficit should clear by year 4, with breakeven in year 5. The Committee clarified the nature of this risk and Mr Harris reminded the Committee that there is no guarantee that funding will increase.

In response to a query from Mrs Nickells, Mr Cook reported that access to the growth fund is unlikely as the local authority are focused on urban areas that have experienced a large increase in numbers.

4. The risk that legislative requirements are not known or complied with

5. The risk of false invoice payment

Mr Cook cited a recent case where a false building project invoice was sent to another Devon school requesting payment to a different bank account. In response to a query from Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook confirmed that all orders are placed electronically with order numbers. Mr Goscomb expressed his concern that, with the departure of the current Responsible Officer, checks are not currently being made in accordance with requirements. Mr Cook agreed to ask Mrs Hopkins if she could act as the Responsible Officer for an additional term.

The Committee then discussed a new risk suggested by Mr Cook, relating to the possibility of one or more new selective schools being opened locally in response to the new government policy on the expansion of selective schools. Mr Harris indicated that while the new policy is still subject to parliamentary approval, there is a strong likelihood that the proposals will go ahead. The closest "Opportunity Area" flagged for additional selective schools is in West Somerset. Mr Harris explained that under current arrangements, an annex of an existing grammar schools must be a mirror of the existing school and in close proximity. A development in Kent has been rejected on the grounds of distance. Mr Harris pointed out that if too many selective schools are created they cease to become selective. Mr Harris indicated that while another grammar school in Exeter would be a significant risk, the new policy also presented the opportunity for the school to expand.

Action:

Mr Cook to report on the outcome of the Devon Local Authority consultation document (discussed under AOB) and the impact this will have on School funding.

Mr Cook to ask Mrs Hopkins to remain as Responsible Officer for another term, whilst a replacement is sourced

Mr Cook to add new risks, identified above, into the Risk Register

19. Succession Planning

Mr Goscomb reminded the Committee that the Governance Review recommended that each Committee should set aside time, once a year, to reflect on what has been achieved, any specific developments, changes to terms of reference and thoughts on ambitions and training needs. He suggested that this reflection take place during the summer Committee meetings and the outcome reported back at the final Board meeting of the academic year. Mr Goscomb cited the identification of Risk Register training, discussed under Item 18, as a positive example and explained that this will be evidence for Ofsted of a proactive approach to self-improvement.

Mr Cook reminded the Committee that previously a statement had been formulated during the autumn Committee meetings, in preparation of a report to the Board in November, of skills shortages and suggestions of how Chair and Vice Chair positions will be filled in the event of a vacancy.

Dr Bastin reminded the Committee that there are now five Trustee vacancies and these should be filled, as soon as possible, with new Trustees that have particular skills that have been identified as a requirement. Mr Goscomb suggested that a short document be formulated to facilitate Committee discussions on succession planning. This document

will bullet point key areas for reflection and issues that need discussion, such as training, skills, terms of reference etc.

In response to a query from Lt Col Dyer, the Committee discussed the importance of skill specific, new recruitment, rather than filling places on the Finance and Resources Committee with Trustees from other Committees.

The Committee discussed potential routes to attract new Trustees including:

- Re-approaching the parent community with a specific shopping list of skills
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Links with work experience companies
- Previous students of Colyton, through the Development Officer

Mr Goscomb reminded the Committee of the importance of maintaining a balance between Parent Trustees, Trustees that happen to be parents and others. Dr Bastin added that consideration should also be given to achieving a balance of working Trustees and those that are retired.

Three skill sets were identified; Health and Safety and Buildings, specifically for the Finance and Resources Committee and, more generally, Marketing.

Dr Bastin reported that an expression of interest has been received from a gentleman who has recently moved into the area and this applicant's skills set will be identified before further discussions.

Action:

Dr Bastin and Mrs Robinson agreed to further consider skills and recruitment before the next meeting.

20. Municipal Mutual Insurance

Mr Cook confirmed that no further call has been made by Municipal Mutual Insurance since the last report.

21. Bursary Panel and Bradbeer Fund

Mr Cook reported that the Bursary Panel had met earlier in the day to discuss the allocation of the 16-19 Bursary Fund. He clarified the specifications for receipt of an award from the fund; students in receipt of free school meals, families with an income under £25,000 per annum, students classed as vulnerable and students with specific needs. Mr Cook explained the difficulties in allocating this fund and reported that, despite advertising to parents and students, including speaking to them at parents' evenings, very few applications had been received. This has resulted in £19,000 being carried forward from last year and only £6,000 being awarded during the course of today's meeting. Mr Harris confirmed that this was a problem in other schools and commented that some families are reluctant to apply in case an award interferes with other income support. He added, that previous research suggested that this is not the case.

Mr Cook reported that the Bursary Panel had discussed increasing the limit on family income, or banding family income to award different amounts. He confirmed that, as a result, he is reviewing the 16-19 Bursary policy ready for November's meeting.

The Committee discussed and queried ways in which allocation of the bursary funding could be improved:

In response to a query from Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook confirmed that the legislation relating to these bursaries restricts their use, so that the school cannot use funds directly to support specific areas of educational expenditure, the bursary must be paid directly into the student's own bank account. Mr Harris confirmed that the Bradbeer Fund provided a more flexible approach to funding individual needs.

In response to queries from Mrs Nickells and Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook and Mrs Wainwright confirmed that the awards are paid directly to the student and can be used as they wish for a variety of things, for example, for travel to visit a university and accommodation whilst visiting, or an iPad to support their learning. Mrs Wainwright suggested that these benefits will be useful when marketing and expanding the sixth form. In response to a query from Mr Goscomb, Mr Cook confirmed that funding could be used by the student to pay for transport after late evening activities and cited an example of a student preparing for Cambridge STEP papers.

Mr Harris confirmed that if a student has free school meals, and does not apply for an award, Mr Cook does approach them.

Mr Cook reported that £12,000 is still available for awards from the Bradbeer Trust and then read out a letter of appreciation from a Colyton student who had used an award from the Bradbeer Trust to fund a useful course.

Action:

Mr Cook to review the Bursary Policy.

22. Any Other Business

Mr Cook drew the attention of the Committee to a Devon Funding Consultation paper that had been circulated at the start of the meeting. He explained that this consultation had just been issued and a response is required by the middle of next week. Five of the questions in the consultation relate to academies. Mr Cook then detailed each of the proposals:

1. Proposal that Devon transfers funds, up to £4.5 million from the Schools' Block to fund any shortfall in High Needs for 2017/18.

The Committee discussed how this would have a negative impact on funding for Colyton. It was agreed that Colyton would not oppose this proposal and that Mr Cook should respond by expressing concern that the diverted budget is spent correctly.

2. Proposal that the top-slice of the Growth Fund is increased from £1.5m up to £4m in 2018/19.

Mrs Wainwright queried how this money will be accessed and commented that expansion will have to come from somewhere, as numbers in primary schools have increased. Mr Harris pointed out that Colyton is expanding both the Sixth Form and

Year 7 and the Committee, but does not have access to this funding. It was agreed the committee did not agree with this proposal.

3. This consisted of two queries relating to the Emotional, Psychological and Social Wellbeing Service, a new service aimed at providing support for children as an integral part of Devon's Early Help Strategy. The Committee were asked to consider whether schools should continue to be asked to make a contribution of £60,000 to fund this service, or whether the money should be delegated back to schools to make their own arrangements for support.

After discussion it was agreed that Colyton would benefit from keeping their contribution to this fund and "buying back" appropriate services.

4. The Committee were asked to consider two options for the future funding of DAPH, DASH, DAG and SHAD which are the organisations representing the different school phases and governors; either, that the current arrangement of £270,000 being held centrally to fund these associations be maintained, or, that the money should be delegated to schools, which will be invoiced directly by the associations. These associations will only represent member schools.

Mrs Wainwright reported that the DASH meetings she has attended have been worthwhile, but that funding does not appear to be consistently spent wisely. The Committee agreed that it would be better to keep the money in School to ensure it directly benefits the students and to "buy back" support as appropriate.

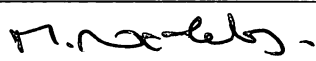
5. Mr Cook reported that the Admissions Service is under review in preparation for 'a more autonomous school system'. The Committee were asked to consider two options. Firstly that a central Admissions Team is maintained and continue to centrally retain this funding. Or, that there is a reduced focus, limited to a coordinator providing statutory support for schools on admissions matters.

Mrs Wainwright reported that the Admissions Service that is currently in place, is extremely good and goes out of its way to be helpful. The Committee agreed that the current service should be maintained.

Action:

Mr Cook to respond to the Devon Funding Consultation as agreed.

23. Next Meeting: Wednesday 30 November 2016 at 6.30pm

Signed:		(Chairman of Committee)
Date:	30/11/16.	