

## THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE ELIOT BANK AND GORDONBROCK PRIMARY SCHOOLS FEDERATION

Minutes of a meeting of the Resources Committee held via Zoom on Monday, 1 November 2021 at 6.15 p.m.

### **PRESENT**

Mr P. Fidel	Chair for the meeting
Ms M. Gilmore	Executive Headteacher
Mr P. Jenkins	
Ms K. Knowles	

### **Also present**

Ms J. Bishop	Newly appointed governor, observer
Ms C. Carboo-Ofulue	Newly appointed governor, observer
Ms A. Carter	Senior Admin Officer, Gordonbrock
Mr G. Goode	Federation Premises Manager – for item 7
Ms S. McAllister	Federation Business Manager
Mrs K. Walsh	Head of School, Eliot Bank
Ms J. Wright	Head of School, Gordonbrock
Mrs J. Woods	Clerk

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Bremner. Ms Bishop and Ms Carboo-Ofulue, the two newly appointed co-opted governors, were both welcomed to the meeting. Those present introduced themselves to Ms Bishop and Ms Carboo-Ofulue during the meeting.

### **2. DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

Governors were reminded that they must declare conflicts and pecuniary interests before items were discussed, and must withdraw from the meeting while the item was under discussion.

### **3. ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR 2021/22**

The Clerk took the chair for this item and invited nominations and self-nominations for a governor to serve as Chair of the Committee for the 2021/22 academic year. Mr Bremner had indicated prior to the meeting that he was willing to continue as Chair, although he would be happy to step aside if any other governor wished to take on the role. No other nominations were received, and it was **RESOLVED** unanimously that Tom Bremner be elected as Chair of the Resources Committee for 2021/22.

Mr Fidel chaired the meeting in Mr Bremner's absence.

### **4. ANNUAL REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The terms of reference had been circulated with the agenda. Governors reviewed the document, and it was agreed that no changes were needed this year. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that the terms of reference be approved for 2021/22 and commended to the Governing Body for ratification.

### **5. TO AGREE THE BUSINESS FOR THE MEETING**

The order in which items were to be discussed and those items which would be considered as urgent business was agreed upon.

### **6. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 February 2021 be approved as a correct record.

In view of the ongoing pandemic, the Committee asked the Clerk to sign the minutes on behalf of the Chair.

There were no items arising which were not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

## **7. FINANCE STRATEGY GROUP**

The minutes of the meeting of the Strategy Group had been circulated to the governors who had attended the meeting. For the benefit of new governors, **Mr Fidel explained that the Strategy Group had been set up in response to the worsening financial situation, to enable governors to develop a strategic long term view of the budgets.** It had become clear that the budgets would become very challenging by year 3 of the budget plan, and rather than wait until then to address the situation, it had been agreed to set up a small group of governors to look at the budgets going forward from year 1 to identify any cost reductions that could be made, as well as ways of increasing income. Two meetings of the Strategy Group had taken place so far, and a number of ideas were being considered. ***Mr Fidel explained that, even though the schools were federated, the budgets must be kept separate and it was not possible to vire money from one school to the other.*** However, some staff were employed across the Federation, and their salary costs could be allocated a more positive way to help with difficulties in one school. The local authority had been approached for advice on ways of doing this without contravening any of the financial regulations.

The Strategy Group had also discussed other areas where money could be allocated across both schools, for example for shared resources, and would be looking at the Federation model in more detail as time went on.

***Ms Carboo-Ofulue suggested that it might be helpful for her to join the Strategy Group in view of her background as a strategic consultant.*** She said that her work involved creating cost efficiencies etc, and she worked across a number of public sector entities. It was agreed that she should join the Group, which would next be meeting on 11 November at midday.

## **5. 2021/22 BUDGETS AND THREE YEAR BUDGET PLANS**

Copies of the finance reports and budget plans had been circulated for both schools.

### **(a) Eliot Bank**

Ms McAllister shared her screen to show the different documents, and explained how the budget was presented.

#### **Document 1**

Ms McAllister explained the format of the document to new governors, and in particular that the projected outturn was based on the assumption that all areas of the budget were spent in full, which never happened in reality. She highlighted the changes to income since the last meeting so far in this academic year.

#### **I01 – Funds delegated by the LA**

The original budget included £769 for the teachers' pay grant, but £1,077 had been received, making a total of £1,846.

The teachers' pension grant had increased by £3,042 to £5,215.

#### **I05 – Pupil Premium**

Additional funding had been received under the Pupil Premium Grant for a post looked after child who had joined the school. This brought the total to £84,045 so far for the financial year.

#### **I18 – Additional Grants for Schools**

Eliot Bank had received £18,000 under I18, which comprised £13,500 for the COVID Catch-Up Fund as well as free school meals voucher claims of £6,451 for the periods when vouchers were given for May half term, the summer holidays, and the October half term. The first instalment of the COVID Recovery Premium of £2,211 had been received.

There had also been savings in expenditure of £29,400, mostly from staffing changes from September. Ms McAllister explained that when the budget had been prepared in June, it had been done on the basis of like for like salary cost for teachers, but when teachers who had left were replaced in September, some were appointed at a lower level than those who had left. There had also been a saving in the cost of SEND staff who had been recruited in September to replace staff who had left in April.

In June's budget, £5,000 had been added for additional COVID resources. Ms McAllister said that the cleaning consumables budget was at the maximum, and it would be necessary to reallocate some expenditure from 'Cleaning & Domestic Supplies' to the additional COVID resources budget. This would mainly be swallowed up by the additional costs, and the school was out of pocket by £2,852. The school was currently paying for 12 hours extra cleaning per day, of which £4,693 had been refunded as COVID expenses in the last financial year, but the school would have to pay all additional cleaning expenses out of its own budget this year.

Overall, savings had been made, mainly in the salaries budget, as well as in the resources budget, because not all of the learning resources allocation had been used and there were savings of approximately £20,000. There was now predicted to be an overall in year deficit of £117,345, rather than the £194,240 which had originally been forecast, assuming that all of the budgets were spent in full. This would have an impact on the overall surplus, which would be higher than forecast in June. However, Ms McAllister stressed that the school was still not living within its means and was eating into the brought forward balance.

***Ms Bishop asked whether any fundraising income was included in the budget.*** Ms McAllister explained that the budget only included grants allocated through the local authority, as well as capital grants. Any fundraising was carried out by the PTA, which was quite active at Eliot Bank, and they had contributed a great deal over the years towards the cost of playground equipment, resources etc.

Ms McAllister then shared the cost code summary, and highlighted all significant variations to the different budget headings. It was noted that the budget was currently at the mid-year point, where 50% should have been spent.

1036 – SEN support staff – expenditure was currently underspend at 29.1% of the annual allocation due to the resignation of a member of staff who had not been replaced until September.

1071 – Meals supervisors – there was a slight underspend, and Ms McAllister said that the support staff budgets had been set to include the term time only staff percentage refund which had not yet been received, and also for an increase of 1.75% in salaries which had not yet been agreed.

1073 – Senior meals supervisors – there was a slight overspent of £75.62 because of overtime worked which had not been included in the agreed budget.

1085 – Recruitment advertising – the budget was almost fully spent, largely due to the transfer fee paid to an agency for a teacher who had been recruited.

1201 – Decoration – this budget was overspent, due to the additional cost of the coating which had been applied to the pipes during the summer.

1401 – Cleaning and domestic supplies – 97.98% of this budget had been spent, and some of this would be moved to COVID additional resources (as stated before) to reflect the additional expenditure on sanitary costs.

1936 – School trips / events – this budget appeared to be overspent at 75.62%, but Ms McAllister reminded the Committee that the school received contributions from parents which offset the costs.

2627 – Sick cover support staff – this budget was significantly overspent at 167% due to a high level of cover this year for sickness, including premises staff cover earlier in the year. Savings had been made in the support staff budget because of recruitment difficulties, and some of this would be vired to offset the overspent.

2812 – Governors' additional training – this budget was slightly overspent due to the safeguarding training which had been organised and subsequently postponed. This would be rearranged as soon as possible.

2813 – EHT performance review – The cost of the external adviser had been under estimated in the original budget.

3100-3 – Children's Centre – Ms McAllister explained that the Children's Centre was affiliated between Kelvin Grove Primary School and Eliot Bank. Kelvin Grove received the funding for the Centre, which was operated jointly by the schools, and Eliot Bank received reimbursement each year for the costs incurred. There had been an overspending in '3121 – CC Building R&M' for a new boiler, and she said that she was trying to get some of this funding back from Kelvin Grove and would be dependent on how much money was left at the end of the year.

### **Capital**

The Committee then considered the capital budget. It was noted that there had been an overspent of £5,690 and consideration would be given as to whether this would be taken from the brought forward balance.

Because of new governors in attendance, Ms McAllister took governors through the CFR report. She explained the consistent financial reporting (CFR) document was a DfE requirement, and the codes used were all set by the DfE. Once the report had been completed at the end of the year, it would be uploaded to the DfE, who could then use it to benchmark against other schools.

Ms McAllister offered to go through the budgets separately in more detail with the new governors if they would find this helpful.

Ms McAllister highlighted the surplus for the current financial year, and the in-year deficit. It had been predicted that there would be a deficit in year 2, but the position had now improved so that there would be a surplus at the end of year 2. However, there was still predicted to be a deficit of £288,235 in year 3 if all of the budget was spent in full. She explained the impact of the loss of the bulge classes, which had resulted in a loss of income of £190,000, as well as funding pressures as a result of government funding.

Ms Gilmore explained that the budget situation had not suddenly come to light, and everyone had been working closely as a Federation for several years and had made a number of savings. The Finance Strategy Group had been set up because the Federation had some real expert governors who wanted to look at the bigger picture of what could be done to address the financial challenges facing the school. Both schools were incredibly well staffed in terms of support staff, particularly Gordonbrock, and there were some very obvious budget cuts which could be made. However, governors had always been extremely committed to retaining what was needed for the schools and to maintain a high quality education for the children. The Working Party had been discussing redistributing some of the costs of staff working across the Federation, as well as cost savings. For example, one of the nursery nurses at Eliot Bank had already been made redundant and the post of Family Support Worker had already been deleted following the resignation of the

post holder. There had also been discussion about the inclusion teams at both schools, which other schools may not necessarily have. Although it would be possible to make immediate savings if changes were made to the inclusion teams, Ms Gilmore stressed that this would be at the expense of the children. ***Mr Fidel acknowledged that it could be seen as a luxury to have family support workers, but they played an increasingly necessary role within the schools with cuts in other services.***

Ms Gilmore reminded governors that it had been agreed in a previous meeting that making any cuts would not be an easy decision for leaders and governors, and would have implications for staff as well as the quality of education. In making savings to the budgets, she stressed the importance of looking at making the maximum impact for savings with the minimum impact on the children.

***Ms Carboo-Ofulue asked whether there were any good examples of other schools which had made transformative changes to their structures.*** Ms Gilmore said that many local schools had made wide scale redundancies, but these had been extremely difficult decisions, and had not been transformative. The schools worked with their peer review group, which included Kelvin Grove, Dalmain, and Horniman Primary Schools, and at the next meeting, the schools would be looking at how they would work as a group to share ideas.

**(b) Gordonbrock**

Ms Carter then presented the Gordonbrock budget. She explained that Gordonbrock was in a much better financial position than Eliot Bank, and the recovery plan therefore did not need to be as severe. However, consideration was still being given to making budget savings.

*Income*

I01 – Funds delegated by the LA

An additional £246 had been received for the teachers' pay grant, and £1,609 for the Teachers' Pension Grant.

I05 – Pupil Premium

An additional £27,570 had been received from the Pupil Premium Grant. Ms Carter explained that when she prepared the budget, she always underestimated the amount of Pupil Premium income, and the school usually received more than the original budget.

I07 – Other grants and payments

£30,218 had been received in total. A refund of £28,196 had been received from Chartwells for the spring and summer terms. This had been unexpected, and Ms Carter had checked with Fiona Gavin, who was in charge of the catering contract, and related to money that the school had been charged incorrectly during the COVID period.

In addition, £2,000 had been received from the Green School Support Grant for remote learning.

I08 – Facilities and services

The school had received £28,814 from Chartwells for contributions to the cost of utility bills for the kitchen under the old contract.

I18 0 Additional school grants

£3,842 had been received for the COVID Recovery Premium for the autumn term, and £8,248.50 reimbursement for the free school meals vouchers which had been provided for the summer term.

In addition, £10,277 had been received from the PTA for extra playground equipment, which had been included in the capital budget.

***Ms Bishop asked about the incentives and disincentives for running a surplus or deficit, for example, if there was an incentive for schools not to spend their surpluses.*** Ms Carter said that the surplus could not be spent in case it was needed for emergencies. If schools went into deficit, this showed that they were not managing their budget well, or were not forward thinking, and Lewisham monitored schools' budgets very carefully. Schools must try to run a balanced budget and if there was a large deficit, the local authority would step in. ***Mr Fidel explained the rules around budget surpluses and said that until a few years ago, schools could only carry forward 8% of their budgets, but it had been recognised that schools would be facing financial difficulties, and this restriction had been removed, so schools were no longer penalised for having a large budget surplus.***

The Committee then considered the cost centre summary, and Ms Carter highlighted areas where there were significant variations.

1037 – Care assistants – this budget was higher than the predicted profile because of the need to employ additional staff as a result of the decision to keep the children attending the breakfast club in separate year groups due to COVID. Although the government had said that schools could suspend the requirement to group children in bubbles, an internal decision had been taken to retain some restrictions until Christmas, with a review in January depending on the level of COVID at that time.

1070 – Meals supervisors – this was higher than had been expected, but was due to the need to employ additional midday supervisors because of the decision to keep year groups separate at lunchtime. Ms Gilmore said that the schools were maintaining very broad year group bubbles, and keeping other sensible measures in place which did not impact on the children's education.

1085 – Advertising recruitment – this budget was almost entirely spent because it had been necessary to recruit staff through agencies as a result of some last minute resignations.

1200 – Repairs and maintenance – expenditure was higher than would be expected for this point in the year, but it had been necessary to carry out some unexpected work in the holidays to remove and replace rotten joists in the server hall and to lay new flooring.

1201 – Decoration – since placing the order for the decoration work, costs had increased from the £8,000 in the budget.

2026 – School trips / events – the expenditure of £25,000 looked very high, but Ms Carter pointed out that the school had just paid for two residential journeys. This had been paid from the ISB school fund so that the VAT could be reclaimed. The contributions received from the parents would be paid into the school funds account, which would be used to reimburse this budget heading.

2032 – Uniform - £5,363 had been spent on uniform supplies, and income of just over £4,600 had been received. The school now had a stock to the value of about £2,000, which would be sold gradually over the coming months. Ms Carter said that the school usually made a modest profit from the sale of uniform.

Supply budgets – some of the supply budgets were overspent because it had been necessary to use agency learning-support assistants to support children with SEND, while EHCPs were awaited for some children. There had also been some unexpected resignations, and it had been agreed that supply learning support assistants would be used on a temporary basis.

As already noted, the Finance Strategy Group were looking at ways of reducing costs. At present, every class at Gordonbrock had a teaching assistant all day, which most schools did not have. Ms Carter said that one option to make savings would be to reduce the number of teaching assistants to two in each year group, and this would put the budget back into surplus in year 3. It may be that the use of supply staff would continue, but governors were reminded that they were a more expensive option in the short term, but if reductions were made, the use of supply staff would avoid redundancy costs.

It was noted that some of the SLA budgets had been spent in full, whereas others did not appear to have been used, because they were charged for at different times of the year.

***Ms Carboo-Ofulue asked whether it was typical for schools to use agencies and whether they were used because it was necessary to source higher qualified candidates.*** Ms Carter said that recent advertisements in the TES had not generated as many applications as had been hoped, and if the school used agencies, it was possible to vet CVs and target the most suitable candidates. There was also a tendency to get better quality applicants through agencies. It had now been possible to negotiate a much better percentage rate for fees across the Federation. Ms Gilmore said that the situation was not ideal, but teachers were increasingly seeking work through agencies rather than making their own direct applications. Agencies were targeting NQTs, and giving them incentives to sign up with them at the point where they finished their training. Ms Wright added that one of the effects of the pandemic was that it had not been possible to have prospective teachers coming into school to look round prior to interview, which was a very good way of learning about the candidates.

***Mr Fidel added that agencies were giving inducements to NQTs and it was difficult to compete with this.***

***Ms Carboo-Ofulue said that some organisations were now moving towards using intelligence and insight tools to search the market when recruiting, and there may be cheaper tools which could be used instead of going through agencies. She offered to carry out more research, which could be discussed at the Finance Strategy meeting.***

The Committee then considered the three year budget plan. This showed a surplus to be carried forward of £1,150,785 carried forward from 2020/21, with a predicted in year surplus of £374,128, leaving a surplus at the end of the current financial year of £761,657 to be carried forward to next year.

The year 2 budget took into account known staffing updates, and the proposal to only have two teaching assistants in each year group, and would leave an overall surplus of £437,737 to be carried forward to 2022/23, with an overall surplus in the final year of £69,422. Ms Carter said that she thought it was unlikely that Lewisham would ask the school to prepare a deficit recovery plan based on these figures. She reminded governors that the figures included in the budget plan showed the position if every budget was spent in full, and emphasised that this was never the case. Ms Carter thought it as likely that the overall surplus likely to be higher than £761,000 at the end of the current financial year.

Ms Gilmore said that on paper, reducing the number of teaching assistants was the obvious step to take. She said that governors had historically been extremely supportive of the school during difficult conversations, and she was mindful that some hard decisions would need to be made.

It was **RESOLVED** that the updated budget plans be approved, and commended to the Governing Body for ratification at the meeting on 2 December.

**Pupil Premium / PE funding**

Ms Gilmore informed governors that the DfE had introduced a new template which all schools must use, and the deadline for ensuring that the Pupil Premium Strategy Statement was on the school website was 31 December. The Deputy Heads for Inclusion had worked very hard to prepare this, and would like to give a presentation to the Governing Body at the meeting on 2 December, at which time the Governing Body would be scrutinising the use and impact of the Pupil Premium Grant. The PE Grant impact report was on the website, and the strategy for 2021/22 was currently being finalised.

## 9. STAFFING ISSUES

### (a) Eliot Bank

Ms Walsh informed the Committee that a resignation had been received from a teaching assistant in the summer holidays, and although the post had been advertised twice, there had been no suitable candidates. There was still a vacancy for a Year 2 teaching assistant, which was being covered by one of the inclusion TAs.

Two part time teachers had resigned with effect from 31 December. One was leaving due to relocation, and the other was leaving for personal reasons. **A governor asked if they were job sharing together.** Ms Gilmore said that although the ideal solution would have been to recruit one full time teacher, one of the teachers was leaving Year 2 and the other was in Year 5, so it would be difficult to do this.

### (b) Gordonbrock

Ms Wright informed governors that one of the phase leaders would be returning from maternity leave just before the Christmas holidays. A resignation had been received from a part time teacher who was due to return from maternity leave in January.

There were currently some vacancies for teaching assistants. One of the inclusion TAs had been moved to a class position, but permanent staff were not being recruited at present, and Ms Wright said that different plans were under consideration in terms of the budget.

**Ms Bishop pointed out that many mothers worked in schools on a part time basis, but she had not seen any adverts for teaching assistant posts at Gordonbrock on any of the mums' networks that she was a member of, and suggested that these networks may have more of a role to play in recruitment.** Ms Gilmore said that the schools did not generally advertise on forums such as those Ms Bishop was referring to, and used more formal platforms. She said that the teaching assistant role had become increasingly more professional, and usually attracted highly qualified people, who were often changing careers. The issue was normally around retention rather than recruitment and staff often moved on to do teacher training or to return to their previous profession. In some cases, staff were recruited in the knowledge that they may not stay for more than a couple of years.

**Ms Bishop asked whether the schools had many parents working as support staff.**

Ms Gilmore said that several parents were currently employed at the schools, and the last two teaching assistants who had been recruited to Eliot Bank were parents. **Mr Fidel asked if vacancies were advertised in the newsletters or on the website;** Ms Gilmore said that all vacancies were advertised on the school websites. She added that the schools had benefitted from a number of volunteers before the pandemic, and she would like to build this up again. Ms Gilmore pointed out that there was not much career progression for teaching assistants and the jobs were not well paid. However, staff had huge responsibility for some of the most challenging pupils and if they found that the job was not quite what they were expecting moved on to either different careers or further training, so it could be hard to retain them.

## **10. PREMISES AND HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES**

Mr Goode was welcomed to the meeting for this item, and his detailed report on health and safety and premises issues had been circulated to governors. He highlighted several items for discussion and invited questions.

### **Federation issues**

Federation condition surveys had been carried out at Gordonbrock and Eliot Bank. At the time of the Gordonbrock survey on 10 August, there had been an issue with rotted floor timbers to the servery floor, and it had been necessary to carry out major work to rectify this. Mr Goode explained that Lewisham employed external companies to come in to carry out surveys of the fabric of school buildings which fed into the five year maintenance plan. The timing of the survey at Gordonbrock had coincided with the work to the servery floor, so the engineer had been able to see this. A few other issues had been noted during the survey, but the report had still not been received. There had been some internal damage caused by a gutter issue which was being rectified.

The survey at Eliot Bank had been carried out on 26 October, and the report was awaited before the five year forecast for the works required for both schools. A number of major items had been completed across the Federation but in general the school buildings had been well maintained but there were several smaller items to be addressed.

Mr Goode confirmed that approximately 20 CO2 monitors had been delivered to Gordonbrock and had been put on display in various areas such as the staff room and areas where there is a lot of movement, including classrooms facing the front and back of the site. These were issued by the government, to test the air quality on the site. He said that he had not yet been informed that the monitors had been received at Eliot Bank. Mr Goode said that the monitors were battery operated and did not stay on continuously; they had to be reset by staff when they turned off.

The compliance reviews had been carried out by Thracia Perrett from Lewisham on 6 September at Eliot Bank and 9 September at Gordonbrock, but the reports had not yet been received. Ms Gilmore expressed her disappointment at the very long delay in the reports being produced, particularly because the schools were pressured to make arrangements for the reviews to be carried out. Once the reports had been received, Ms Gilmore said that she would give feedback on the process.

### **Eliot Bank**

Leaks had been detected in the art/music block from the guttering system above the music room door.

When the compliance review had been carried out, water ingress had been noticed to the boiler room from the work that had been carried out two years ago, from the pipe that had been drilled through the bottom of the tarmac into the boiler room floor, which had allowed rain to enter. This had caused some electrical damage which had been rectified and was now being monitored.

### **Gordonbrock**

Work was due to be carried out to the biomass boiler the following day. Although the boiler was working, it was empty of pellets and there were still issues around water ingress. Mr Goode reminded governors that the school had invested a great deal of money in this additional energy source, but consideration was being given to installing an additional boiler as back up, but this would be costly and involve a great deal of additional work.

The issue with the rotten servery floor had first been identified after the refurbishment, and had been ongoing for nearly nine years. However Mr Goode had taken the decision to replace the flooring immediately once the vinyl flooring had been lifted and the extent of the damage could be seen. He had asked Lewisham to assist with the cost of the repair, but this had been turned down. This was caused by an issue with the guttering that had been overlooked when the roof had been replaced, and none of the premises team was able to maintain the gutters in this particular area of

the roof. The work had now been completed, and the situation would be monitored, but it was agreed that it was unfair for the school to be expected to meet the additional cost of this work.

Additional charges of £360 had been incurred for the annual schedule of checks to the sprinkler system, as a result of the reviews carried out in the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire. It was noted that Eliot Bank did not have a sprinkler system.

***Ms Bishop said that she was very interested to hear that the school had a biomass boiler, and she assumed that schools would eventually be given some support to having a net zero plan. She also pointed out the need to monitor the air quality at some point in the future as the biomass boiler was burning wood pellets, and the concerns around asthma.*** Ms Gilmore said that the idea of the biomass boiler had been wonderful, but it had not worked well in practice. There had been huge issues around maintaining the integrity of the pellets, and the school had been on the verge of decommissioning the boiler on a number of occasions. It had taken up a great deal of premises team time, and Gordonbrock was now one of the last schools to have retained a biomass boiler.

Mr Goode was thanked for his report.

#### **11. SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD (SFVS)**

The Committee were reminded that the SFVS documentation must be submitted to Lewisham Finance by 14 February 2022, and Ms McAllister asked for governors to come in to review the documents for both schools for 2021/22. She explained that SFVS was a self-evaluation exercise which was carried out annually, and a full audit was also carried out by Lewisham Internal Audit every three years. This was overdue at both schools and would now take place in March 2022.

Ms McAllister said that link governors would need to go through the budget plans in detail with herself and Ms Carter, as well as to review the questions on a range of areas such as governance. The report must now be signed off by the Governing Body, and Lewisham had set a deadline of 14 February for the return of the form, which was six weeks before the DfE deadline, to give time to review the submissions before they were submitted to the government.

Ms McAllister said that she would prepopulate the SFVS questionnaire, ready for discussion, and she anticipated that the review process would take between, 1.5-2 hours for each school. She said that it would be preferable for the reviews to take place during school hours, although she could be flexible if necessary. It was **RESOLVED** that Ms Bishop would carry out the review for Eliot Bank and Ms Carboo-Ofulue would review Gordonbrock, and either Mr Bremner or Mr Fidel would discuss this with them beforehand.

Ms McAllister agreed to send possible dates to Ms Bishop and Ms Carboo-Ofulue.

#### **12. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Ms McAllister said that there would be no changes to the Financial Management Policy, and she would arrange to submit the Policy to the Governing Body for readoption at the next meeting.

#### **13. URGENT BUSINESS**

No items of urgent business were raised.

#### **14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Governors were reminded that the next meeting has been scheduled for Monday, 21 February 2022 at 6.00 p.m.

These minutes were approved at the virtual meeting of the Committee held on 21 February 2022. In view of the ongoing pandemic, the Clerk was asked to sign the minutes on behalf of the Chair.



Jackie Woods, Clerk to the Governing Body

Signed on behalf of Tom Bremner, Chair 21 February 2022