MINUTES of the Meeting of the Finance, Personnel and Strategic Committee of Thorngumbald Primary School held on Thursday 16 May 2024 at 5.00pm.

P R E S E N T:-

Mrs C Roberts (in the Chair)

Mrs L Devine, Miss S Norton, Mr G Sainty, Mr P Tansey and Mr G Uney.

Also in attendance: Mrs L Wilson (School Business Manager).

Clerk to the Governing Board – Ms S Trulio.

45 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Mr T Cook.

46 **CONSENT FOR ABSENCE**

RESOLVED: that consent be given to Mr Cook for his absence from this meeting.

47 **CONFIRMATION OF ITEMS TO BE RAISED UNDER ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

RESOLVED: that Asthma Friendly Schools be raised under any other urgent business.

48 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

RESOLVED: that no declarations of interest were received on any item on the agenda.

49 **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 February 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

50 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Minute 30 – Matters Arising from the Minutes (Previously Minute 9)

A governor requested an update on the progress of the Enhanced Resource Provision (ERP). The Headteacher advised that all providers had been chosen and the school were now just waiting for timescales. The ERP was on track to be up and running by September 2024. The school had undertaken nine consults for the provision and had so far agreed two. The intention was to only have up to four pupils in the ERP from September 2024 as there was a need to ensure that a specific cohort was in place. **A governor enquired as to the needs of the two pupils the school had already accepted.** It was advised that they had speech, language and communication needs and were also being assessed for autism. **A governor questioned what acceptance criteria the school were using.** The Headteacher explained that the school built up a picture by speaking to the families and the external professionals. **A governor queried whether families could appeal if the**

school chose not to accept them. This was confirmed however, no families had appealed thus far. The families who had not been a good fit had been in agreement and would ultimately prefer a special school. **A governor asked what age group the pupils in the ERP would be.** It was confirmed that they would be Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This contributed to increasing the school's pupil numbers as 24 pupils would be joining EYFS in the main school from September 2024. With the additional two pupils in the ERP, the school would almost be at their Published Admissions Number (PAN).

The Headteacher explained that this was fluid and could change. The school had a three-pronged approach to reintegration which included the ERP, the nurture provision and the main school. Some pupils may only be in the ERP temporarily until they were offered a special school place. **A governor enquired whether all funding had been agreed by the Local Authority.** This was confirmed and in addition to this, the Key Stage One (KS1) toilets would be replaced. The second disabled toilet would be capped off so it could be used for storage if necessary and the Local Authority also had a new plan in terms or replacing more than half of the lighting in school and would be funding this. **A governor questioned whether the lighting works would be completed by September 2024.** It was hoped that this would be the case.

Minute 33 – Budget Update

A governor enquired whether there had been any update on the flood alleviation work. The Headteacher advised that she had attended a meeting on 27 February 2024 however, there has been no further update.

Minute 36 – Capital Funding and IT Update

The IT audit had been completed and the school had been allocated their preferred IT technician. There had been a few teething problems however, generally it was working very well. All staff now had a staff laptop, pupil devices were all up and running and the Wi-Fi had been fixed and no longer needed to be replaced. The school also now had a Teams page for IT which all staff could access and this allowed the IT technician to action any issues quickly.

NOTE: Mr Sainty joined the meeting at this point.

51 **GOVERNOR ACTIONS**

Minute 31 – Governor Actions (Previously Minute 9)

The Headteacher and Mrs Devine had discussed the website. An audit had been completed a while ago however, the website was not currently serving its purpose. The website provider would revamp and relaunch the website ready for September 2024. A new administrative assistant in the school office was working on the website and looking at what the school needed and how to make it more user friendly. The school had also looked at making communication with parents more streamlined and it was working well.

The Headteacher would share calendar dates with governors to advise which events they could attend at school during the current term. The school planned to streamline theme/dress up days in the next academic year and focus more on what was right for and impacted the school. This would also take the pressure off parents.

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A governor queried whether the school could ask parents to donate costumes pupils had grown out of. The Chair advised that they could be donated to the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and they could attempt to sell them on a stall.

RESOLVED: a) that the Headteacher would liaise with the website provider regarding the development of the school website;

b) that the Headteacher would share the calendar of school events with governors.

52 **SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023/2024**

The current School Development Plan was coming to an end however, it was on track to be completed by the end of the academic year.

Spelling would remain a priority as the school had picked up the Little Wandle spelling scheme for Year 2 and planned to take up the Year 3 and 4 programmes once they had been released. Training for midday supervisors had been paused due to staffing changes. Behaviour Policy monitoring had not yet been carried out as the school were still finalising the policy. The policy would hopefully be brought to the full governing board in June 2024 with a view to rolling it out in September 2024 and including it within the new School Development Plan. Eco School would be carried forward to the next plan as there had not been enough time for it this year. Pupil voice would be carried out and would involve the school council and governors. RE actions would also be carried forward. The school now had links with the church however, they needed to branch out and create links with other faiths. Mrs Lucy Jordan, Local Authority School Improvement Adviser, was assisting with this. Subject leaders had not yet visited EYFS as there had not been time and other priorities had taken precedent however, there had been a staff meeting and staff had received a curriculum document. EYFS would remain on the plan as there was always room for development and the school wanted to get it right.

Reading would be a priority in the next year. The school had been in touch with the Literacy Hub and they would do another year of Phonics and had also put the school forward for a reading for pleasure project. The school may also get involved with a Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) project through the Literacy Hub.

The plan for curriculum development was to make this more relevant and bespoke to the school. A community history event had been planned for 26 June 2024 and governors were invited to attend. It was hoped that this would cultivate relationships with parents and pupils and generate resources for the history curriculum. The aim was to make the curriculum relevant to the school and the local community. **A governor asked how the event was being advertised.** It was advised that it had been promoted using social media, flyer drops, the school website, parish council, gazette and the school had contacted archivists and history enthusiasts.

It had been identified that standards in KS1 maths were lower than desired, particularly in problem solving and reasoning. The school had been accepted onto a mastery scheme through the Maths Hub and this would include resources and Continuous Professional Development (CPD). The school would also be looking at the maths scheme they currently used and how to make it more practical and hands on. The school would be part of a Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) project this year and were working hard to develop science at the school.

This would be included within the School Development Plan next year to develop the subject further.

The Headteacher shared that she had attended some training on how to create a curriculum for SEND pupils for use in the ERP. Further staff training on this would be provided. The school were also looking at relational practice in terms of the new Behaviour Policy with a focus on connections not corrections. A joint monitoring visit with Mrs Jo Harrison, Local Authority School Improvement Adviser, was scheduled and would have a SEND focus. The Headteacher felt that SEND at the school was in a really good place. The school was one of six other schools in the Local Authority chosen to participate in a neurodiversity project from September 2024 and this would come with additional training.

Improving communication would also be built into the next School development Plan and this would include further development of the school website and increasing both parent and pupil voice.

Governors noted that there would be a lot included in the next plan. The Headteacher advised that it all linked together well and that much of the plan was a continuation of this year's plan. It was agreed that governors needed to come into school and see the plan in action. It was suggested that governor link roles be revised in the autumn 2024 term and that some roles be linked directly to the School Development Plan.

Governors discussed the format for this committee and what meetings should include moving forward. The Chair and Mrs Devine would look at this and propose something moving forward which would be presented at the next meeting of the full governing board.

RESOLVED: a) that the School Development Plan 2023/2024 be received;

b) that the Behaviour Policy be presented for approval at the next meeting of the full governing board;

c) that governor link roles be revised in the autumn 2024 term and linked directly to the School Development Plan;

d) that the Chair and Mrs Devine review the format of the committee meetings and present proposals at the next meeting of the full governing board.

53 **BUDGET UPDATE**

The Headteacher and School Business Manager had met with Mr Mark Buckton from the Local Authority Schools Finance Team to review the budget. This year, the school were predicting an £87,000 carry forward which was extremely positive. Individual budget lines had been increased/reduced as required and the funding for the ERP had been included. This year, the school were forecasting an in-year deficit of -£69,000 however, the carry forward would give a positive end of year balance of approximately £18,200. The predicted in-year deficit next year would be approximately -£120,000 however, the school should have been in a deficit of approximately -£160,00 this year and had clawed this back which they were proud of. It was highlighted that the finance officer had implied that this was likely to be

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short lived and both the Headteacher and School Business Manager had felt quite deflated following the meeting.

A governor enquired what assumptions had been included within the budget forecast. Teachers pay and support staff pay increases had been included moving forward. High needs funding and Pupil Premium had decreased due to pupils leaving the school. There had also been mobility this year with pupil numbers decreasing from 207 to 170 which had decreased per pupil funding. Pupil numbers were positive for this year though with 26 predicted to join in September 2024 compared to the original prediction of only 17. It seemed that the school's falling numbers might only be a blip and the Headteacher would speak with Mr Ali Kemp, Principal Accountant at the Local Authority, regarding more potential funding. Governors suggested writing to their local MP regarding funding. This was agreed.

A governor asked where the donation of £5,000 had come from. It was explained that some was from the school fund, some from the PTA and some from fundraising, this would be put towards purchasing iPads.

RESOLVED: a) that the budget update be received;

b) that governors would write to the local MP regarding funding.

54 **FIVE YEAR BUDGET PLAN**

RESOLVED: that the five year budget plan be approved.

55 **CAPITAL FUNDING AND IT UPDATE**

A governor queried how much capital budget the school were allocated each year. It was confirmed that the school had been allocated £6,295 this year based on pupil numbers. The school were required to spend this money within three years and it did roll over, therefore, the current balance was approximately £16,000. No capital money had been spent as yet this year however, the school did have plans for it. Replacing the interactive whiteboards had been paused due to the previous IT audit however, they were now being replaced. The school were also looking to install a smaller server with a view of moving to a more cloud-based system and the cost for this could be anywhere between £3,000 and £5,000. **A governor questioned whether any of the capital money would be spent on the lighting.** It was hoped that the Local Authority would pay for this however, the school would look to complete some decorating throughout and would also address any other IT needs.

RESOLVED: that the capital funding and IT update be received.

56 **ASTHMA FRIENDLY SCHOOLS**

Asthma Friendly Schools was a scheme which helped schools to support pupils with asthma and their families. There were currently only 17 schools locally with this accreditation. It was highlighted that there would not be a lot of work to put in with regards to gaining the accreditation as the school already had much of it in place. The Headteacher noted that there were a few pupils at the school who had quite severe asthma and that this would likely be beneficial for the school. It was agreed that Mr Sainty would work with the Headteacher to assist with achieving the accreditation.

57 **REVIEW OF ACTIONS**

RESOLVED: that the Review of Actions be confirmed and circulated to governors following the meeting.

58 **FUTURE MEETINGS**

RESOLVED: that future meeting dates be agreed at the next meeting of the full governing board.

Chair's Signature and Date.