

**Finance & Resources Committee Meeting**  
**Queen Emma School**  
**Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025, 5.30 p.m.**  
**Minutes**

Governors Present:

Sean Lang (CoG)  
 Sarah Jarman (EHT)  
 Richard Wilson  
 Richard Baldwin  
 Stanley Wilson  
 Harriet Phillips

Others Present:

Cath Stubbs  
 Anna Biard (Clerk)

	Item	Supporting Paperwork and further information	Notes	Actions
1	Apologies for absence (Clerk)	Nicole Wilson Nicky Pedder Julia Neal		
2	Declaration of Interest (Chair)		CoG declared that he runs a small theatre company, of which an Interest may arise at a future meeting.	
3	Agree Minutes of the last meeting (All)	Minutes 06.05.2025 for approval	The question was asked if the sound recording worked well at the previous meeting which the Clerk was unable to attend on 06/05/25. The Clerk confirmed that the recording was clear and audible.  The minutes were approved	
4	Matters Arising (All)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JN was seeking clarification from Sovereign re. shrinkage and lifting of the ground surface on their quote.</li> <li>SJ was seeking clarification from LA as to what will happen if QF does not implement annual Equality training.</li> </ul>	JN sent apologies for this meeting  EHT gave a brief overview of this action from the previous meeting re. the Bullying & Harassment Policy. It was to find out from the LA whether the annual Equality Training was statutory or just good practice? EPM confirmed that it's just good practice and is not compulsory.	

			<p>Matters/updates from EHT:</p> <p><b>QED mobile classrooms</b> – Plans are in place to re felt the roof over the summer holidays.</p> <p><b>QEM Ground Source Heat Pump</b> – EHT has been contacting the LA about this since January who advised that a procurement process needs to take place in order to appoint a contractor; we were looking ahead this point terms of starting and completing this work over the Summer Holidays. It has since transpired that there is in fact a 10-12 week lead time once a contractor has been appointed. EHT added that the LA talked some enabling works which can start over the holidays even if the GSHP replacement doesn't happen. By the end of this week the LA should have confirmed with the School that a contractor has been appointed.</p> <p>The Governor consensus was of frustration for the following reasons; we do not know what is happening, we have not received a specification of works; not detail of the design; we haven't been informed about what is actually happening at all.</p> <p><b>KS1 Train at QED</b> – This has gone to tender due to the size of the contract. LA suggested we contact the DFE. The DFE confirmed they don't deal with for play equipment. ESPO, however do deal with these. They will then recommend companies to use for the KS1 train replacement. The boat within the same play area of KS1 playground also needs replacing due to an inspection from REJB who say this needs removing as it is at the end of its life</p>	
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5	<p>Federation Business Manager's Report. (to include site/health and safety, finance, update, budget monitoring, capital spend, contract reviews, site issues for each school, HR update for support staff, business proposal for Queen Edith residential)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H&amp;S site visit report QEM</li> <li>• H&amp;S site visit report QED</li> <li>• QED business proposal 2026 Year 6 Residential</li> </ul>	<p>The Federation Business Manager sent apologies, EHT presented key points from the FBM's report:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) There was an anomaly on the approved budget return to LA, it was a typo and has since been corrected.</li> <li>2) Teachers pay award of 4% has been announced. LA to fund 3% and schools to fund the remainder by making efficiencies within the existing budget</li> <li>3) Sport premium continues for 25/26.</li> <li>4) FSM- new entitlement for all children in households in receipt of Universal Credit from Sept 2026.</li> <li>5) Support Staff pay award- still in consultation with NJC although inflation factor is already attached to NJC staff. Pay point 2 will be removed from the pay spine (April 2026) this will impacting cleaning and midday supervision costs</li> <li>6) Budgets for both schools were submitted to the LA and will be re forecast in Sept &amp; Dec, specifically to track to provide narrative on budget balances and out turns. Snapshots of both schools are detailed</li> <li>7) SMER submitted at the end of each month for both schools. Metrics- show the thresholds which should be reached monthly, they are going in the right direction. Teacher costs are lower getting lower. Leadership remains too high. Curriculum and non-curriculum costs are where they should be QEM SMER – revenue carried forward has reduced the deficit</li> </ol> <p>SBS reports – these were sent through ahead of the meeting, however the Clerk did not invite questions from governors in time.</p> <p>Governor challenge: Why is there a variation on E19 and trip costs? Answer: EHT explained that for LA purposes, these have been shown on the E19 curriculum line.</p> <p>Everyone agreed that having split both schools, everything is much clearer than 12 months ago, very positive feedback as we can see the full picture of both schools.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8) Capital spends consisting of IT switches at QED and a PE shed at QEM</li> </ol>	
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			<p>9) Contract Reviews/General Finance Updates.  ASPENS – another member of staff has resigned which is fortunate timing. Won't be on LGPS pension scheme, further reducing the Federations' LGPS liabilities. Aspens will not appoint until the Autumn term and will cover internally until then.</p> <p><b>QED – A proposal seeking approval</b> was included to stick with Grafham Water for the Y6 residential. Similar to QEM, sticking with the same for 2026.</p> <p>Governor Challenge: How do you choose a residential trip? Why is it the same destination each year? Answer: The staff present answered this; a few years ago, Grafham Water couldn't accommodate QEM, so they relocated the trip, loved it so much and therefore wanted to stay with Caythorpe Court. QED are considering this for 2027 after such positive feedback from QEM.</p> <p>Governor Challenge: Do you know anything about the other place/quote which is much cheaper? Answer: Because they would be sleeping in a tent.</p> <p><b>DECISION – Grafham Water, QED 2026 approved by chair of FR committee</b></p> <p>10) <u>H&amp;S QED</u>  Kitchen blocked pipe is blocked even further.  Governor Challenge: Are we paying for this? Answer: Yes.</p> <p>Bin Store - Decision made to move a staff cycle shed to install a bin store opposite the kitchen doors for easy refuse truck access. Cost to be taken from capital.</p> <p>PE/Play Equipment – NP met with PE Lead and Site Manager to review priorities.  KS1 equipment; this has been tendered, we'll be replacing in the Autumn.  Nursery Trim Trail; issues have been flagged as this was only installed in November 20236, FBM is to contact the supplier to share findings  Large Hall; Wall bars and rope are unfit and need to be removed. To source</p>	
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			<p>costs for this Gym/PE equipment – many items need replacing. PE Lead and Site Manager to review, create inventory, dispose of unused, and prioritise replacements.</p> <p>QED Site Walk Internal Doors – £4k quote received; exploring alternative foyer-style solution to improve safeguarding at main entrance. Gutters – need clearing. Community Room – NP &amp; SJ to meet CKC to discuss housekeeping and safe storage. Governor Challenge: Would these funded from the capital budget? Answer: Yes</p> <p>Estates Management Plan PCM support requested to develop a long-term site plan covering: Toilets, decorating, outdoor play equipment maintenance, swimming pool/courtyard.</p> <p>QED Caretaker Property – re. OT referral planning permission. This has been closed by the LA due to no RSVP from the client. Governor Challenge- when the case was closed, did they tell the caretaker? Answer - We believe so</p> <p>11) <u>H&amp;S QEM</u> Heating System: PCM confirmed work is scheduled for the school holidays. Awaiting method statement and timeframe. Site closure likely due to no water/toilets—awaiting clarification from John Clayton. Anna (Community Lettings Administrator and Clerk to GB) and I have planned to relocate all summer bookings, including the holiday club and Nursery, to QED—this is feasible. Awaiting further info on staff site access. INSET day remains scheduled to support start-of-term prep.</p> <p>Trees: 2 complaints re overhanging trees, awaiting response from LA</p> <p>Solar panels: A quote was sent to PCM a year ago. NP has now asked Jonstarst directly for an updated quote to repair the panels and resume</p>	
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			<p>annual servicing.</p> <p>Trim trail - £800 bolt, PSFA met the costs.</p> <p>Nursery Intercom- Continues to glitch, Absolute have been contacted twice about this.</p> <p>A Governor commented that how unhelpful inspections are, we receive a fail or not fail. With no helpful recommendations or feedback.</p> <p>Rubber crumb used to fill has been a success.</p> <p>12) <u>H&amp;S QEM</u>          Blinds in Library; cords require shortening and replacement clips. Urgent          Reception Play Zone; advice sought from H&amp;S re surface          Wooden Benches on rear playground; require attention          Stairwells; decoration is a priority          Car parking; staff to park at the back, leaving drop off area free for parents          Dutch School Storage; too many Dutch School resources stored on site. To make contact via out Lettings Administrator          Archiving storage; cost efficient solutions being looked at.</p>	
6	Staff pay date consultation		<p>We carried out a consultation with all staff, currently pay day is on the last working day of the month, an option was put forward with EPM to change pay day to 15<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup> of month. We didn't get enough of a response, to repeat consultation in a year's time.</p>	
7	Feedback from FIG meeting (HP)		<p>Chair of the F&amp;R committee gave her reflections on the meeting:          There was a striking change in tone of meeting, positive.          Alison Cramer was more open and helpful.          There was no talk of when it will stop, we presume it will just continue.          The warning letter 'Notice of Concern' we received contained inaccuracies, (it was a list of things which we have already carried out). Governor consensus was that this was perhaps a standard letter?          Recovery plan was submitted with the deficit licence.          It was questioned by all Governors whether they thought Tom Kelly and Alison Cramer were conversing? As the feeling was that perhaps they weren't.          We aren't sure which of the Recovery Plans submitted are being talked about by the</p>	

			<p>LA</p> <p>Dates for the FIGs for year ahead haven't been set. And the school has been advised that these will be provided for the year ahead by Alison Cramer.</p> <p>Alison Cramer has been tasked with looking at the future demographics of the area. One form entry decision for Queen Emma is pending the demography figures for the area, being sourced by Alison Cramer.</p> <p>Chair of F&amp;R asked the group; what should we progress before the next meeting in 2 weeks' time? The answer was to wait until the FGB, demographics forecast may be done by then as well as waiting for a call from Tom Kelly with the EHT. To table for FGB</p>	Clerk to table for FGB
8	Policies for Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Critical Incidents Policy &amp; Procedures</li> <li>CCC Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy 2022. Anna Caroe at Governor Services recommends adoption LA version</li> </ul>	<p>Minor amendments, lots of contact details have been changed. Personalised to our school albeit a LA template.</p> <p>Policy to be adopted (no need to personalise)</p> <p>Governor Challenge: Will this be ok? Answer by EHT: Yes it supports all our existing policies.</p>	
9	Safeguarding		EHT – completing the safeguarding audit this week, annual safeguarding report and safeguarding checklist. And a Deputy Headteacher to carry out Governor safeguarding training on 20/10/25, all governors to attend.	
10	What is the impact of decisions made during the previous upon the standards and improvement of the Federation?		<p>Trim trail replacement is in process.</p> <p>Residential trips finalised and approved for 2026</p> <p>Metrics – improving and taking steps in the right direction. May's SMER shows that we very much need to continue.</p> <p>Continuing full scrutiny required by Governing Body in order to improve metrics month on month, year on year.</p>	
11	Correspondence Circulated	Policy and Application for Time Off for Training or Study - QEM	<p><u>Application for Forest School training by QEM teacher:</u></p> <p>All Governors read through the application.</p> <p>Governor Challenge: Is there anything in the budget for this? Answer: It would be from the training budget, and no there isn't. It is over the budget we have for all training of all members of staff</p> <p>Implications discussed of cover requirements for this member of staff.</p> <p>Implications of setting a precedent for other members of staff; we won't also have</p>	

			<p>the budget at any point in the near future to approve such training, certainly not whilst we are in FIG.</p> <p>It was discussed that Continuing Professional Development training is done by staff, typically in a more cost effective way.</p> <p>Decision: Not Approved with regret due to budget constraints (items 6.3b &amp; 6.3c on the policy) EHT to draft letter to member of staff and invitation to apply again when our financial situation has improved.</p>	EHT to draft letter to staff member
12	Items to be reported to parents		None	
13	Any other business		<p><u>Staffing updates from EHT:</u></p> <p>QED - 2 teachers leaving at end of summer term, KM relocating to a school nearer to her home. ET moving to school in Bury. And KD a, long standing TA at QED.</p> <p>QEM – SE- job in another school, MR - Retirement, RA –leaving, GH a TA retiring, FC taking maternity. SH- taking Maternity. Level 3 nursery assistant post, final interviews this week.</p> <p>Governor Challenge: Do you have any expectations to make any savings given the above? Answer: EHT, 2 high up the scale teachers are going on maternity, cover will be more affordable at lower scale. Other scenarios of DH's at QEM teaching. Losing a retiring teacher is a big saving.</p> <p>Governor Challenge: When will that flow into the budget? Answer: September.</p> <p>Nursery can be difficult to replace due to staff ratios and qualifications.</p>	
14	Date of next meeting:	Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2025, 5.30pm		

Signature: .....



Dated: 6<sup>th</sup> October 2025