



AUTUMN TERM (2) 2025 MEETING OF THE FINANCE, PREMISES, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Date Wednesday 26th November 2025
 Time 18.30
 Place Boardroom, HGSS

- PRESENT:** Steve Pilgrim (SP) (Chair) Jeremy Hunt (JH)
 Ed Hillyard (EH) (Headteacher) Tony Green (TG)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Sian Beswick (SB) Director of Finance
 Jenny Knight (JK) Governance Professional
 Sarah Lary (SL) Senior Deputy Headteacher
- APOLOGIES:** Paula Myburgh (PM)
- NOT PRESENT:** Roy Kamp (RK)

Action Support Challenge

NB. Governors’ questions are highlighted in *italics* throughout these minutes.

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
1	Welcome and Apologies for Absence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SP welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were accepted from Paula Myburgh. Roy Kamp was not present. 	
2	Notification of Any Other Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None 	
3	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest against items on this agenda.	
4	Minutes The minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2025 having been circulated, were approved. Actions and Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Audit contract is on a rolling one-year contract for both sides A new H&S audit has been completed and a number of new items added. See item 9.1. All other actions complete. 	

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
5.1	<p>Audit Review SB reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update management letter has not yet been sent. • Three control weaknesses were found (none are significant): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not depreciating the land and buildings for full 125 years of Bucks lease. Not always standard but makes sense; it won't affect our free cash reserves. Value on academy conversion is depreciated over 125 years. The land will no longer be ours after 125 years so it will have no value to HGSS. 2. Cost of Cat ladder replacement: Invoice wasn't raised until September – should have made an adjustment for accrued income – about good accounting practice. £20k value. Not of major concern. 3. Estate management internal scrutiny: Didn't have a premises management policy in place. This has been put in place since (June). Wording on document will be updated to reflect this. • The presentation from the auditors will take place on 10 December to the FPH&S Committee, who will recommend the accounts for approval by the FGB at their meeting on the same day. <p>Q – Were there any significant differences with the new audit company? A – It was felt to be more thorough, but that might have been the case with the old one too, as more is required of the auditors. Everything was done online.</p>	
5.2	<p>Risk Register The document had been circulated and EH highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page 11 Cyber Attack Risk: Rating should be 4 not 5 – EH will change this. • Cyber attack and deficit budgets are the highest risks. • Page 16 – complaints log: EH, Ali McKee and JK are doing Browne Jacobson training after the spate of complaints last academic year. The post-complaints log and policy will be updated as a result of the training. <p>Q – Why has the Sixth Form curriculum risk rating gone up? A – There is ongoing talk about removing BTECs from league tables. The name has been changed to VTQs and further changes are awaited.</p> <p>Q - Why has the risk rating for professional standards been increased? A - This is because of the new Ofsted framework now in place. We were comfortable with the old framework but now there are more unknowns. Over time this risk rating should reduce again.</p>	

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5.3	<p>Internal Scrutiny 24/25 Final Report</p> <p>The report had been circulated and SB highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a summary of the first three reports from 24-25. • In addition, section 6 is about the follow-up to the previous year's actions. • The people strategy was done at the last FGB, so this would now be resolved. 	
5.4	<p>Internal Scrutiny 25/26 Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal scrutiny items were previously agreed. • Priority 1 was website compliance, which is about to get underway with a meeting on Monday. The report is expected on 12 January and will be brought to FPH&S at the next meeting after that. 	
AUDIT		
6.1	<p>ATH 2025 – Schedule of Musts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The document had been circulated with the name and date added as requested in the last meeting. • There were no further comments on this. 	
6.2	<p>Digital and Technology Standards in Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The document had been circulated. • Responsibilities and target dates have been added. <p>Q – What is happening to those items with target dates that have passed?</p> <p>A – We are working on catching up with these. Subscriptions: EAC have put together a list of their data policies including reserving the right to pass on data. We are checking through what data we supply and the significance of this. This will take some time.</p> <p>This item will come back to each FPH&S meeting.</p>	
FINANCE		
7.1	<p>Income/Expenditure 2025-26 and Year End 2024-25</p> <p>Year End 2024-25</p> <p>SB reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant change to the last set of figures. • In-year surplus of £131k, reserves of £1,431k. No major change. • <p>Q – Page 2: Non-staff revenue costs: £6k increase in solar panel leasing expenditure: How did we not know about this?</p> <p>A – It wasn't put into the budget at the time. They only charged us two months of invoices, so there might be additional costs that come into this year.</p>	

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	<p>Income/Expenditure 2025-26 SB reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsuccessful with the Wolfson grant application due to oversubscription. No feedback given but another application can be put in, in the spring. • Condition survey results should be back for the spring meeting when priorities will be established. Then we can decide whether to go into the next round of the Wolfson application or whether we want to commit the money elsewhere. • This will save us some money as we won't have to make a contribution. • £104k current year deficit, but we are considering CIF bids too and will need to make a contribution if we win them. <p>Q – Is it worth submitting a science lab CIF bid? A – No, CIF is for high-risk items that threaten to close a school down, e.g. fire doors, leaking roofs etc.</p> <p>Q – Regarding the mast, the contract register says £9,500 but that doesn't add up to the 7.1 forecast other income (£12,400) A – SB to check this and add headings on following pages.</p> <p>Q – Will increases in living wages have an effect on cleaning costs? A – Cleaning contract has an assumption in it from 1 April. SB to check whether this is enough to cover what was in the Budget today.</p>	<p>SB</p> <p>SB</p>
7.2	<p>16-19 Student Support Fund Payments The report had been circulated. SB highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sixth Form bursary is being applied according to the DfE guidance. Provision is made for specific items that meet requirements. • Two more students have been approved since this report. One further student to be confirmed. They have to submit receipts for the money. They put in a bid for what they think they need (itemised). They will only be given money for specific items. Ideally they check with us and we might be able to get items for a better price (e.g. books). <p>Q – Are bus passes paid for by the LA for families that are in need of support? A – Not for over 16s.</p>	
7.3	Approval of Virements	

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	No virements for approval.	
7.4	<p>SRMA SB had shared a list of actions from this process with priorities. This document will be brought to each FPH&S meeting.</p> <p>Q – You have some high priorities but no target dates. This should be part of the review to track against. A – SB will add in a date column.</p> <p>Q – If we were audited and there were high priorities, e.g. no.10 that we hadn't done anything about, would there be a problem? A – No, as we asked for this audit are not bound by anything. We do want to be mindful of it, but it is not as high a priority as the Health & Safety audit, for example. If we were in a different financial situation, this would become a much higher priority.</p>	SB
7.5	<p>Contract Register The document had been circulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headings to be pulled across to following pages. • £12k will change to £3k for My New Term recruitment package. A cost benefit analysis of this will need to be done at some point. School will also have to monitor how many applications are received/how effective it is. <p>Q – SASSE cleaning contract will end shortly, what is happening there? A – We are moving to Ridge Crest for cleaning.</p>	SB
7.6	<p>CIF Bids 2026 A summary paper of details and approval requests had been circulated. SB highlighted:</p> <p>Boilers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The technology pipes are currently blocked. A section has had to be bypassed to keep the heating running. • Adjustments have had to be made to the boiler to keep running just minimal heat in this area. • The age of the heating has to be considered: 1960s Tech, Science 1960s, Tower Block 1970s, SLT and LRC 1960s, MFL 2007. • School has had a couple of near misses. The heating pipes are the same age as the cold water pipes. The hot water pipes have rusted through so it is highly likely that the heating pipes will rust through soon and there is some sign of this already. • Some of the pipes have been blocked in tech already. If the heating 	

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	<p>were to fail in the winter months we would potentially have to close the school because we wouldn't be able to use the classrooms in tech, science, music, tower block and LRC.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They cannot be flushed through because this would cause more damage where there are blockages because of the age. <p>Q – Are the pipes exposed? Could bits be cut out and replaced?</p> <p>A – They are in different states in different places Some are exposed and some are in the walls. Some are copper because you get orange water coming out to start with.</p> <p>Q – Would they change to plastic pipes?</p> <p>A – The pipes that burst have been replaced with copper pipes and they have been lagged.</p> <p>Q – Are they now in the ceiling rather than the floor?</p> <p>A – Yes.</p> <p>Q – What is the value of the CIF bid?</p> <p>A – The estimate is £720k but the tender results are not yet back. The table circulated shows the potential contributions we could make and the points each would give.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly if the pipes went in winter, we would have to close the school and there would be additional damage from water e.g. running down the tower block. • A 25% would mean £180k but there is no guarantee that we will be successful with the bid. • As we have had some pipes burst already, others are likely to go. • We are logging all the things that are going wrong, with the amount spent on each. <p>Q – Have you got a finance document showing the effect of spending £180k?</p> <p>A – We are no longer spending on the science lab due to the unsuccessful Wolfson grant. It wouldn't all get done this year.</p> <p>Q – If we don't get it, is there a plan?</p> <p>A – As a minimum we would have to do something about the Technology boiler and pipework as we wouldn't want to risk it going next year. Rough estimate on this alone is £70k minimum.</p> <p>Q – Are we allowed to replace a boiler, with the move to heat pumps etc? Government is trying to phase out boilers.</p> <p>A – I don't know. A heat pump would be more expensive.</p>	

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	<p>Q – If we are not going down the heat pump recommended route, are we less likely to get the money?</p> <p>A – The company helping us with the bid are experts and would know if that was going to a problem. It is a hybrid – heat pump and boiler. This would take the £70k estimate higher. We have to hope that we get through the rest of this winter with it in a fragile, barely-working state...</p> <p>Q – For this winter, does the reference to 16 degrees lead us into problems with staff and students? Is it worse this year than last?</p> <p>A – It is worse in Tech. The system is barely working there so we are giving out portable heaters which don't do a lot.</p> <p>Governors were happy to approve the 25% contribution.</p> <p>Tower Block roof</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the last of the flat roofs in the school from 1960s. There are signs of vegetation up there which will lead to leaks which will interrupt Teaching & Learning in potentially nine classes – especially three on the top floor. There will be more disruption if it happens in term time. <p>Q – Have we had any expert advice on the state of the roof?</p> <p>A – Yes. They came in and took a sample and will submit the report as part of the CIF bid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5% contribution has been suggested at a cost of £17,500. • Governors approved this contribution. <p>Q – Regarding the company writing the report, are they on a retainer?</p> <p>A – No. They don't get anything for writing the bid. If it is successful, they project manage it and take a fee for that. This is a standard way of operation for these firms.</p>	
7.7	<p>Teacher Performance Related Pay Progression</p> <p>The document had been circulated. EH reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows the % of staff in comparison with previous year. • Upper pay scale – 3 points, Main pay scale – 6 points. Unqualified – 5 points • Probationary period is 3 months, sometimes extended to 6 or 9 months. • ECTs – on probation for 3 months. If they pass that, they move onto M1. • Those that haven't progressed: Mostly this is because they are at the top of their scale. • There is an end of year and mid-year cycle of performance review. 	

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PREMISES, HEALTH & SAFETY		
8	<p>Premises Report</p> <p>The report had been circulated. SB highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H&S audit: Summary of audit actions. Amend ‘tower’ to ‘technology’ block. <p>Q – Heating pipes replacement and air conditioning: This was approved in September but the contract wasn’t signed until mid-November. Why was it brought with urgency in September?</p> <p>A – There was high urgency for the pipes. We resubmitted the air conditioning with answers to your questions. We were hoping that Art would be done in time for the heating aspect of the air con to be done for this winter. There was a meeting yesterday with the air con company. On 15 December they are going to do the boardroom and the offices without impacting T&L. Art and MFL will be prioritised for February half term – which is their next available date. Over Easter, Humanities will be done.</p> <p>Q – Premises update: Budget – water spend was 12% more than budgeted. Why was this?</p> <p>A – Budgets are done prior to full year costs. If actuals were higher in the prior year I will adjust the budget to reflect the reality.</p>	
9 Health & Safety		
9.1	<p>H&S Audit Update</p> <p>The document had been circulated. SB reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very thorough audit was done. • Risk assessments and training were highest priority. • TG to do some H&S online training as Link and Chair. Deadline for training is 14 January. • High priority actions are being worked through, but the list is quite long. <p>Q – What are the deadlines for each priority?</p> <p>A – High priority 14 January, medium priority 14 April: These are dates given by the assessor.</p>	
9.2	<p>Fire Risk Assessment</p> <p>This was completed in August and had been circulated. SB reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing in the high risk column. • All either medium or low and these are being worked through. <p>Q – Who chose the date for the audit to be in the holidays?</p> <p>A – It makes sense to do it in the holidays as non-disruptive, but also not</p>	

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	reflective of normal operations. The flooring being replaced at the time was an issue.	
10	Other Matters	
10.1	<p>ICT Strategy SB reported that producing this was a useful process of considering priorities and costs for the next few years.</p> <p>Q – Onsite staff levels have been reduced, why? A – This was due to budgets when staffing was looked at. There hasn't been any significant impact from this reduction. The new person is very responsive.</p> <p>Q – Page 4 an IT risk review was completed but there is no identification of the risk review? A – We have two internet lines onto the site. We have tested these both when no staff here, on an inset day and in December we are going to test this on a normal working day. This is to see if the system switches to one line if the other goes down.</p> <p>Q – On page 8, roadmap and milestones: Some have costs and some are process related. Costs on page 9 – everything is category 1. A – They are all things that have to be done. The format is based on the main premises management plan.</p> <p>Q – In the previous page, there are no priorities, objectives or costs listed. When are they planning to do each item? A – If there is no cost in there, EAC have not attributed any cost to them. Further detail to be requested from EAC about dates and plans.</p> <p>Q – Re the exam laptops, are these just used for word processing? Could old laptops be used? A – They have to be able to connect to the Wi-Fi to be able to print from the sports hall. We had 12 old ones that we have kept. Staff ones that we are replacing will soon become obsolete because of Windows 11. Memory sticks are not allowed as a replacement as the data about the paper could be held. JCQ regulations are being followed and this includes having to print out everything immediately. We do want to look at other options as the number of students using laptops will increase – for example, whether students could use their own device. At some point, all exams will be done online. iGCSEs are already done like this. All exams are now being done in the sports hall which is less disruptive for learning. The second week of mocks is finishing and it seems to have worked well.</p> <p>Q – Is there no due date for SIMs Cloud? A – We are using all available software components including seating</p>	

Item	Discussions and Decisions Made	Actions
	The policy had been circulated. There were no comments and the policy was approved.	
13	Any Other Business None	
14	Date and Time of Next Meeting Wednesday 4 March 2026 at 6.30pm	
15	Evaluation of Meeting Governors confirmed that the meeting was conducted in an open manner and that all governors were invited to participate and contribute to discussions. The meeting closed at 20.30	

Signed Date

CHAIR