

MINUTES

Recreation Road Infant School

Full Governing Body Virtual Meeting

22nd April 2020 at 7.00pm

Recreation Road, Norwich, NR2 3AP

GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS					
Marion Flaxman (MF) Chair of Governors	LA	Present	Gary McGuiness (GMc)	Co-opted	Present
Michael Bunting (MB)	HT	Present	Kathryn Savva (KS)	Co-opted	Present
Jan Jinkerson (JJ)	Co-opted	Absent	Ulrike Theuerkauf (UT)	Co-opted	Present
Florence Harrison (FH)	Co-opted	Present	Sheree Brock	Staff	Present
Matthew Hartley (MH) Vice Chair of Governors	Co-opted	Present	Adrian Ramsay (AR)	Parent	Present
Clemmie Williams (CW)	Parent	Present	Vacancy	Co-opted	
Jen Carlin (JC)	Associate Governor	Present			

Clerk: **Sheila Lewis-Smith**

Action Points			
Item	Details	By Whom	When

No.	Item
1.	<p>Apologies</p> <p><i>To receive and agree apologies / ensuring meeting is quorate.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apologies were received and accepted Jan Jinkerson, as she had technical difficulties accessing the meeting. The meeting was quorate.
2.	<p>Virtual Meetings</p> <p><i>Discuss and vote to confirm the governing board are in agreement with this and future meetings being undertaken virtually as circumstances dictate. This includes discussions being voted on.</i></p>

	Governors voted and were in agreement that this and future meetings would be held virtually as long as circumstances dictate.
3.	<p>Declaration of Business Interests / Conflict of Interest</p> <p><i>To give governors the opportunity to declare any new business interest or potential conflict of interest arising from the agenda for the meeting.</i></p>
	None declared.
4.	<p>Approval of the budget for 2020 – 2021</p> <p>Governors recorded their thanks to MB and JC for working on the budget in difficult circumstances. MF pointed out the difficulty of setting the budget when the issues around grants for things such as the Teachers' Pay Grant were not clear for this year or subsequent years.</p> <p>MB said that Line I01 featured both teacher pension and teacher salary uplifts; the pension grant will continue for 3 years but the Teachers' Pay Grant does not. It was thought the Pay Grant would be provided by a formula added to the school's budget share.</p> <p>Governors raised concerns around SEN funding, as the allocation was unlikely to meet actual need. MB said it would be difficult to say without understanding the full needs of the Reception cohort, starting in September.</p> <p>Q: Does the budget support the current staffing structure?</p> <p>A: Yes. It includes less teaching commitment for SB in order to fulfil more leadership and SEND functions.</p> <p>Q: Is there sufficient SENCO time allocated?</p> <p>A: Staff will liaise but it is likely that SB will need more time allocated to SENCO work. The anticipated intake in September has been analysed and there is enough staffing cover, given that some pupils with SEN will leave Year 2.</p> <p>Q: Line E019 – Learning Resources (Not ICT). There is an increase in this budget. Is this a response to the benchmarking exercise where RRIS spend was lower than comparable schools?</p> <p>A: No, it is part of the Sports Funding, which is ring-fenced. (£10,000). The actual expenditure has not really increased and the school does not feel underfunded. Possible difference in the benchmarking exercise could be that RRIS is an Infant School and direct comparisons with primary schools are misleading. Subject Leaders are creating resources needs requests for the forthcoming year.</p> <p>MB observed that there had been a £11,600 pension liability but that it wasn't clear which financial year this would affect and so had erred on the side of caution.</p> <p>Budgets for Years 2 and 3 do not show SEND top-up funding for children currently in school with Education Health and Care Plans but the government are saying that there will be higher funding in future years.</p> <p>Q: Were there any surprises at Month 13?</p> <p>A: No. The £11,600 for the pension liability had been taken. There was a slightly higher surplus than predicted but this was within the 8% allowed.</p> <p>Q: What is the potential financial impact of no lettings for a term?</p> <p>A: Around £12,000. Summer holiday lettings raise £120 per day, so the overall amount by the end of the summer holidays is £15,000 to £16,000.</p> <p>Q: Can the pool maintenance be cut back or moth-balled?</p>

A: To some extent the pool has been moth-balled but there are still monthly water tests and twice weekly physical checks of the pool. It would probably take a week to bring it up to speed again.

Q: Is there a possibility of some compensation being discussed?

A: MB will contact Sue Dale, our Local Authority cluster liaison for Covid-19 related issues.

Q: Will the loss of income be offset by lower costs in other areas?

A: There is not a huge cost over the summer as cleaning and utility bills are lower, so the savings are small.

Q: Is the school running similar cleaning and maintenance programmes as before?

A: No, this is down to 5 hours a day as many areas are shut. Given the nature of the contracts, there are no savings being made.

Q: There seems to be a significant reduction in Education Support Staff and Indirect Staff costs from the previous 2019-2020 budget. Why is this?

A: This is as a result of redundancy and restructuring carried out last year and now reflects the new staffing levels. The issue appears across two financial years as the financial and academic years do not coincide.

Q: Where is the money for ICT/technology improvements?

A: £5,000 per year has been built in across the next 3 years: the total cost is £24,000 to £25,000 needed. The extra funds needed could either come from surpluses or from Capital budget. Other spends for the Capital budget include the plans to create 'breakout' spaces as discussed at Resources

Q: Where were the toilet refurbishments paid from?

A: BMP and there was no additional cost to the school.

Q: Given that various percentage increases are built in to the budget, what were the actuals?

A: Educator Solutions was a competitive uplift – HR has gone down, water, gas and refuse all 3%.

Q: It sounds as if the LA are not being aggressive and allowing more options for Capital spends?

A: There were issues of not knowing when the LA were taking certain payments. Monies have been kept as revenue rather than converting to capital. Whilst £148K is above the 8% threshold, it is below when lettings and underspends on Pupil Premium and Sports Premium are taken into account.

Flo had asked Jen for a supply teacher insurance cost-benefit analysis and was satisfied that the school had benefited considerably from the current package during this financial year.

The Chair thanked the school and staff again for preparing the budget. MB said that the hard work of the last two years were finally bringing financial benefits to the school.

The budget was proposed by GMc and seconded by MH. All governors in agreement to approve the budget for 2020-21.

5. Headteacher's Update

To allow governors to monitor the school's response to continue to provide care, particularly in relation to:

- *Safeguarding including vulnerable pupils and families, those with EHCPs and Social Worker input.*
- *Free School Meals*
- *Attendance - Pupil numbers and issues*

- **Cluster Working**
- **Health and Safety – strategies being taken to limit spread of Covid -19**
- **Staff Well Being and Workload**
- **Continuing Education / Supporting parents/carers with home learning**
- **Transition and the future.**

The Chair thanked MB and the staff for all they had done during this difficult time. It was noted that the school had remained open and staffed over the Easter holiday, thanks to the commitment of staff.

Between 5 and 10 children had attended over the Easter holidays. The school forecasts are for 10 to 15 children to attend (2-4%), which is much lower than the government estimates of 20%.

Q: What is the split of key worker's children and vulnerable children?

A: Two of the children are vulnerable and the school is working with their social workers. Others are critical workers, one with an EHCP child. SB has been contacting parents of other vulnerable children who are not taking up their places. The 4 Designated Safeguarding Lead staff are calling parents on a cyclical basis and regularly updating the "cloud" information. They are continually considering whether certain other vulnerable children would be better off in a school setting.

Q: Is it the same families as are going into Avenue Junior School?

A: Yes. The guidance is that schools should take their own children into their setting. It would not be appropriate for either junior or infant children to move to the other setting without adjustments. It is better to remain independent unless either school is unable to staff the provision.

Q: What information is there on Free School Meals vouchers and what meals are being provided?

A: It was a challenging process but parents now have 4 weeks' worth of vouchers. During Easter a packed lunch was offered. Hot meals are now being provided from Parkside, as Norse has pooled its resources. Parents have a Google form to complete to book their places at school and also to book meals in advance.

Attendance – The LA are keen to keep track of vulnerable pupils. The school is well aware of the families and is liaising with social workers over the provision for Looked After children.

Cluster - A WhatsApp group has been set up for Headteachers with Debbie Dismore from Avenue Junior School as lead.

Health and Safety – Young children do not understand social distancing. There is plenty of space for the children as well as outdoor areas. Staff are promoting handwashing. Toys are being washed or left for 72 hours between use. Parents have been very good at informing the school of any issues and have been considerate towards the staff.

Staff – A few have concerns but a WhatsApp group has been set up for mutual support. All staff are loyal and committed. Two colleagues are suffering from Covid-19 and one colleague is under the 12 week exclusion period.

Continuing Education – SB is leading this. Work was planned to go out Friday but there was a technical problem. The school is providing approximately 1 hour a day of work, covering maths, writing, P.E. and will soon include phonics. The school may link to the newly announced DfE Oak Academy and BBC Bitesize in the future. A few parents had contacted the school to clarify matters.

Transition and the future – SB had done some transition work prior to lockdown for the high needs and vulnerable pupils. The new intake are harder but SB will contact the parents of SEND children.

Q: Are all the places for September full?

	<p>A: There are 110 placed from 190 applications. There is a waiting list, so MB is not sure why the intake numbers are not full.</p> <p>As a number of pressures, such as assessments, have been taken off the school, it would be possible to focus on transition later in the term.</p> <p>AR commented that from a parents' perspective, he had found the learning material valuable and the efforts made by the school to keep in touch – video, Rec Road Radio – have all helped families and children.</p>
6.	<p>Arrangements for future Committee and FGB meetings</p> <p><i>To agree the frequency and arrangements for future meetings during the lockdown.</i></p>
	<p>It was agreed to hold the committee meetings on different days for the remainder of the Summer term.</p> <p>The dates for future meetings until the end of the Summer Term were confirmed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FGB Meeting – Wednesday 13th May at 7 p.m. A global catch-up focus • Resources Committee - Wednesday 26th June at 7pm. Focus on policies • T & L Committee – Wednesday 1st July at 7pm. Focus on policies • FGB Meeting – Wednesday 8th July at 7 p.m.
7.	<p>Urgent Business / Matters Arising</p> <p><i>To consider any urgent matters not addressed elsewhere in this agenda</i></p> <p>7.1 Approval of the appointment of Deborah Ilott as a Co-opted governor.</p>
	<p>Governors unanimously approved the appointment of Deborah Ilott as a Co-Opted governor.</p>
8	<p>Updates from the Local Authority</p>
	<p>Covid-19 updates are regularly being uploaded to Governor Hub for information.</p>
9.	<p>Dates of next meetings</p>
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Signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting:		Date:	
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