

Governors of Fairisle Junior School

Minutes of a Meeting of the Whole Governing Body Thursday 22 April 2021, 3.30pm

Governors present:

1. Nikki Webb (Vice-Chair)
2. Peter Howard (Headteacher)
3. Alison Powell
4. Katherine Minns
5. Brent Schwarz
6. Lloyd Viney
7. Mike Dant

Associate members present:

Bev Bessey

In attendance:

Maria Hughes (Business Manager)

Sophie Lee (Clerk)

This meeting was held entirely online.

1) Apologies

Steph Thurston (Chair), Phil Chapman.

2) Declarations of Interest

Declarations relating to today's agenda: under item 8.3 the Headteacher is a trustee at city catering as the Primary Headteacher representative nominated by Primary Heads' Conference. Changes to the register of business interests: AP's contract with Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group ended on 31 March.

3) Budget 2021-22

Maria Hughes explained the variances for 2020-21 and the 2021-22 budget plans. In salaries there was a £7727 overspend for admin and clerical due to back pay for a departed employee. A workload assistant was coded wrongly here and was moved mid-year to the right code.

Supervisory assistants was high with a £22k overspend. There were more lunchtime assistants due to more 1:1s in covid bubbles. Some money came back through EHCP funding for two 1:1s.

Training had an overspend of £5953 due to courses for Maria Hughes and Jess Planter-Dixon, with money for the latter course received back from the apprenticeship levy. The total underspend for salaries was £33k as some teachers left and their replacements were on lower spinal points.

Repairs and maintenance had an overspend of £7k. LED lights have been added to three rooms with blinds throughout school and new CCTV. We have budgeted £95k this year including tarmacking the grass area, playground markings and fencing. The £933 contract cleaning overspend was due to a deep clean in March. In grounds maintenance £649 includes a tree survey and tree works.

Question from AP: Do you expect a further quarterly gas bill as gas is slightly under?

Maria Hughes said yes. The first few gas and electric bills were received late. Schools finance are still processing closedown so there may be extra ones. We may be able to move them back to last year's figures and we will review it in October.

Question from AP: So there may be more adjustments in the coming weeks?

Maria Hughes confirmed there will be as the closedown is taking a long time.

For total transport there was an underspend of £1900. An overspend in health and safety equipment was due to purchase of masks, hand gel and two evacuation mats.

There was an overspend on food of £2634. Of that £3973 was for city catering meals for January 2021 but this item hit that line late and we will look to move it. The £3973 should be coded in the line underneath which shows an overspend of £16,403 as we paid for this year's service charge in last year.

Question from AP: Can you lean on schools finance to move that to the right year?

Maria Hughes stated we are also subsidising about £5600 for last year's losses.

There was an overspend on uniform as a significant amount was purchased. In photocopying £8548 included a new software package and many remote learning packs. We have kept this budget the same as there will probably be less printing (even if there is another lockdown) due to online work.

An overspend in educational supplies (stationery and materials) included a book vending machine and extra resources for children at home. A £900 overspend for telephone charges and equipment relates to new phone lines and equipment and higher use of mobiles when contacting pupils in lockdown.

Question from AP: Are the phones pay as you go? Why were charges more?

The Headteacher explained they are on contract but some numbers are not included in the cost, such as premium rate calls to Edenred, which many were made during the summer term last year, adding up to hours on the phone.

Question from BS: Is it possible to separate out costs related to covid to differentiate?

Maria Hughes reported she has asked for one code and schools finance is working on a coded line. Covid items are shown under health and safety equipment and she has a list of all purchases.

We are on our third covid claim from the DfE. We have claimed for cleaning, food parcels and staffing costs but items like phone calls are not covered. Our food parcels were much better than Chartwells' but many parents said they wanted to choose the food they buy for their children, so we went back to vouchers.

When claiming for food parcels we only received £3.50 per parcel. Parcels cost £24 each so the school pays £20.50 towards each one. However, the government paid the full cost of vouchers.

In computing (purchase of hardware) there was an overspend of £6300 on chromebooks and we now have enough for every child in class. We also bought charging lockers and licences.

Question from AP: Were all chromebooks delivered before 31 March?

Maria Hughes confirmed they were.

The Headteacher explained we now have 318 chromebooks in school, of which we bought 131 originally, 100 were delivered before Easter and 140 from the DfE (95 allocated to children but 22 already returned), plus 47 laptops converted to chromebooks. The DfE advise not to pressure children to return chromebooks in case another lockdown is needed.

In corporate memberships and subscriptions the overspend of £1k was due to online learning and CPD. We do not anticipate an overspend like this again. Under bought in professional services (curriculum) there was an overspend of £20k due to more money for Showcase Music throughout school and Superstar Sports.

Question from AP: How much of that was planned? Spending was at £70k but the original budget was £50k, so should next year's budget be uplifted as well?

The Headteacher stated it should be. Showcase are doing music with all year groups so

it is £20k more. He will up the budget to £70k and we can review in October.

Bought in professional services (other) was £1760 overspent. We have a new SBS budget tool that can merge payroll and the budget. Funds were also spent on playground markings.

Educational visits was underspent. Bank charges for the card machine show a £1.24 overspend. We have now budgeted for £250 of charges at 0.5% of the transactions per month and will review in October.

Under legal services the £200 overspend is because we upgraded from silver to gold service to help with GDPR questions.

Under income we are still waiting for some items from last year. Pupil premium is based on the October census (150 children) with six PLACS (post-looked after). Contribution from other bodies is lower due to covid and includes PHC delegate money.

Parental contributions for school trips are lower due to covid with more trips hopefully running from May. Other grants (£2870) are from the Universities of Winchester and Southampton. The additional grant for schools is £34,134 and includes PE/sports premium and FSM supplementary grant. It will probably be slightly lower next year.

LA allocation includes teachers' pay and pensions grants now, the catch-up premium and the first covid claim and is lower this coming year as some items come under different lines and we may not receive items such as the catch-up premium.

There is a slight increase in our budget share. We are waiting for the SEND top-up funding spring payment. The autumn payment was incorrect but has been corrected.

Question from AP: Can you lean on the LA to put SEND money in the old financial year?

The Headteacher confirmed they are leaning on the SEN team to correct the money for children with EHC Plans. The head delegates spoke to Derek Wiles about schools receiving incorrect sums across the city and Tammy Marks (Service Manager, SEND) told Heads we should write to Kalvinder Garewal (SEND Team Manager) and copy her into our emails (we have done this).

Catering and vending machine income was lower but we have kept the original figure for the coming year as we should start getting more income.

Question from AP: What is the bottom line?

Maria Hughes reported we have a surplus this year of £65,163.

Question from AP: Is that still dependent on transfers?

Maria Hughes said yes. She is not sure if the LA will correct those as they are quite far behind but she will keep trying. As it stands we have an in-year £65k surplus.

We are planning quite a large carry forward and have plans to spend on the playground and tech in classes and will review more in October.

Maria Hughes has discussed the budget with schools finance who stated our budget is healthy. We have an in-year underspend and when this is added to our previous carry forward we have in excess of £400k to carry forward. However this figures comes down to £351,780 at the end of 2021-22.

UPDATE NOTE: We have found out that Schools' Finance did not transfer the £49,000 into our Capital Budget during last year. We have contacted them immediately and this

has now been done.

For repairs and maintenance we budgeted £41k and spent £26,970 but we paid for the playground out of capital and the LA contributed £20k. This year we have budgeted £95k. Three quotes for enlarging the tarmac area at the side of the extension were £47k, £49k and £58k, from companies the LA put us in touch with.

The budget report shown to governors only includes one year of figures with no forecast for future years. This is because the LA SBS system has not been updated properly so we have produced the budget spreadsheet by hand. A three-year budget will be brought to governors but it is not currently up-to-date and even the salaries are not kept up-to-date by the LA.

Question from AP: Are there any more salaries still to come in the 2020/21 outturn?

The Headteacher said no. We went through the salaries outturns from Strictly Education.

Governors asked the Headteacher to make representations to the headteacher's committee that the quality of service from the LA software is not fit for purpose. The Head noted it is not updated in a timely way and should update automatically.

AP noted she is happy with the budget subject to the late entries and the request to lean on the LA. Governors thanked Maria Hughes for her work.

Governors approved the 2021-22 budget. *(Maria Hughes left the meeting.)*

4) Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes from 9 March were agreed. The Chair will be asked to sign them off via email.

5) Matters Arising, Including Action Points

Question from NW: Has the ceiling and lighting work been done?

The Headteacher reported they have done two of three classes with the third to be done in May half-term. Economic Insulations did not come until Tuesday of the second week in Easter holiday.

All actions from 9 March are complete except those listed below. Subject leaders have asked governors to contact them directly and BB sent out their email addresses. All governors are invited to a Zoom subject leader meeting on Wednesday 12 May.

Action A: Attend subject leader meeting on 12 May (about 3.50pm).

All govs

Governors can join Zoom assemblies. BS completed a health and safety report and spoke to Y3 and Y6 pupils. He found pupils well-rehearsed in the covid protocols and found no significant issues. He thanked the Head and staff.

BB spoke to the infant school about children using FJS toilets. They said they would speak to staff and we have not had further issues.

Action B: Meet your linked subject leader.

All govs

Action C: Invite governors to the subject leader Zoom staff meetings.

BB

Action D: Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance.

All govs

Action E: Write a health and safety report once a term.

BS

Action F: Invite governors to Zoom elements of leadership cycle.

BB

6) Reports From Governor Visits and Questions to Follow-Up

No questions arose from BS's health and safety visit on 18 March. The new reviewed fire risk assessment will be sent to him when available.

AP sent written questions to science leaders Stacey Woods and Anne-Marie Errouam. She asked if there are any learning gaps due to lockdown and found staff have completed a deep dive in science.

Question from AP: Has a deep dive been done for all subjects?

The Deputy Head reported everyone was given a questionnaire on their subjects. She and Holly have looked at these and subject leaders will discuss them on 12 May.

AP received the deep dive report which seems to be well-covered. She asked how IT has been used for remote teaching and staff reported using online videos and Google apps. Children are more IT literate because of the use of IT over lockdown.

AP asked how covid hygiene regulations have affected teaching and experiments and whether there was suitable video equipment; there is because video sharing is available in every classroom.

Governors should follow this up to ensure the backlog is caught up. The science objectives and deep dive are on Google Drive. AP thanked staff.

Action G: Follow up with science leaders to see if learning gaps are filled.

AP

7) Safeguarding and Headteacher's Report

Some children have moved down from child protection to child in need and a few are down from child in need to early help or team around the family. LA children's services will be inspected shortly.

Holiday activities were held over four days in the first week of Easter holidays. This was offered free to FSM children, paid for by the covid local support scheme. The school fully reopened on 8 March and the risk assessment was updated and reviewed this week. From 8 March to 1 April we had one positive case (Y5) and sent home one class.

Attendance is 95.2%. It is a bit lower in the upper school with lowest attendance in Y6. When pupils are X coded as off school due to covid (eg: self-isolating, a positive case at home) this does not affect the attendance figures.

Question from AP: How does attendance compare to our normal figures?

The Headteacher explained it is slightly lower, with 96% to 97% normally. A very small number of parents have said they will not send children back until covid is over. We have tried to allay fears. We have sent the EWO and police to one or two homes and formally referred a very small number of children.

Question from AP: Are these persistently absent pupils offered home learning?

The Headteacher said no. He would be complicit in them not coming to school and it is important they come. If they isolate or are X coded they are offered work from home.

Staff have used the council zero waste list for vaccines and all staff have been offered their first dose. All newsletters are now emailed and we would welcome any feedback about this from parents. We also tweet the newsletter.

Question from LV: Are newsletters also on the website?

The Headteacher confirmed they are.

The book vending machine gave out 271 books in the last week of term. The Children's Commissioner has asked pupils to complete a questionnaire about hopes and aspirations and FJS children will do so.

Under school improvement we need to support pupils with key skills and learning gaps. All teachers have been asked for up to six teaching skills-based targets and SLT will check on these. In teaching and learning there are four areas of work – curriculum, learning (skills, motivation, learning behaviours), year leaders and teachers looking at where children are and where they need to get to.

Focus weeks have been changed slightly. Next week and the week after lesson observations will take place followed by differentiation of skills and accountability. Year leaders are doing learning walks and will look at skills targets.

The covid risk assessment will be reviewed in weeks four and six. A governor SCR check will occur in weeks two and six. Jess Planter-Dixon is taking the NPQ for middle leaders. Holly Cleveley is applying for a master of arts in education leadership for two years from September. Both courses are fully-funded through the apprenticeship levy.

Question from AP: Will they be absent from school while doing sessions?

The Headteacher noted there will be some absence as part of both courses is work about teaching and leadership, but it will not be too much time.

The Deputy Head reported Jess has only had three days not at school and is nearing the end of the course. Holly's is a new course so we do not know.

There are 72 children on our Y3 list for September which is a smaller year group than usual (with a smaller group in the infant school now).

Question from AP: Will holiday club run in May half-term and the summer holiday?

The Headteacher stated it will run for two weeks in summer and a week at Christmas.

Question from LV: Will the club only offer sport?

The Headteacher explained the LA is looking to extend the activities. Simon Woods ran the activities but it was not all sport, art and creative activities were offered too.

Question from LV: Will any staff be requested to attend or volunteer?

The Headteacher explained he would not ask as staff need their holiday.

The Headteacher was asked to address holiday clubs in a staff meeting and state the school stance on staff providing activities in holidays and he confirmed he will. The Deputy Head noted that as soon as they heard about the clubs the first thing they talked about was work-life balance and we have tried to put it into SLT meetings.

We have used external providers for extra-curricular activities but in the future the "catch-up" we have to provide may need to be more educational. The Southampton Holiday Activities Fund website lists recipes and educational home activities.

8) AOB

8.1 BB will email governors the cycle of events.

8.2 Terms of office for the chair and vice-chair end on 30 September. Governors noted the need to consider succession planning now in case one or both do not stand for re-election.

8.3 The Headteacher declared his interest in this item as a city catering trustee. A letter from city catering Southampton is on the Drive. City catering is a charity and lost £325k (at cost loss) due to lost meal volume. They are asking for contributions from schools and our portion is £5536.

Question from AP: Was that cost accommodated in our outturn figures?

The Headteacher said it was. We have put £85k in for contract catering including the

service charge to cover kitchen upkeep. There are 46 member schools who all pay this service charge. Last year we had a new fridge and two years ago a new oven.

Question from AP: How many other schools are likely to contribute?

The Headteacher explained he did not know but would probably find out as a trustee.

Question from AP: What is the likely consequence if schools do not pay?

The Headteacher explained it is bankruptcy. City catering took out an interest-free loan for £325k which they have not used yet but may have to. There are peaks and troughs in the year. Employees are paid over 12 months but there is no income in August. The only other possibility would be for schools to go to a for-profit commercial provider.

Question from BB: Has this happened before?

The Headteacher said no.

Question from MD: Is this financial ineptitude?

The Headteacher stated it is not, it is purely due to covid. They had about £750k in the bank. In part it is due to the furlough scheme which originally did not allow part-time use. Meals still had to be provided and they centralised production and delivered meals to serveries. They used LA internal mail to deliver food from 20 March to the summer holiday. They have used their reserves and a large VAT bill will need paying eventually.

Question from MD: If they go bust could they become a phoenix organisation?

The Headteacher said he did not know, they are a charity not a limited company.

Question from MD: Will there be any effect on those operating it if they go bankrupt?

The Headteacher stated they would lose their jobs. Trustees are responsible for about £10 but workers are not responsible.

Question from MD: Could another charity run the same service as a phoenix?

The Headteacher reported there are no other charities out there. It took 18 months for this one to be set up.

Question from AP: Could we get £5.5k from the covid fund?

The Headteacher said he would guess not but will try.

We put £85k into our school meals budget in April 2020 but only spent £61.5k including the service charge for 2021-22. We have saved about £40k due to covid. The service charge is about £18k.

Question from MD: If no other school pays will it go bust anyway?

The Headteacher said schools will pay. Our element is high as our FSM percentage is high.

Question from MD: Could you explore setting up a new charity?

The Headteacher noted he did not have time.

(BS left the meeting at this point. The Headteacher withdrew from the meeting.)
Governors agreed to pay the £5.5k contribution to city catering. *(The Headteacher returned to the meeting.)*

8.4 Two successful fire evacuations were held since 9 March. One on 31 March was planned and one yesterday was due to a visitor accidentally setting off the alarm.

8.5 A letter on symptom-free testing was emailed to parents and is on the Drive.

8.6 The trip to Little Canada is booked for 14-18 June. Hampshire Outdoors

support it going ahead, as do LA insurance services and Derek Wiles. Y6 will go on 14 June as long as the national covid roadmap is on track.

8.7 Glenda Lane is retiring from LA governor services and NW will email her.

9) Time and Date of Next Meeting

The next whole governing body meeting is on Tuesday 18 May at 3.30pm.

The meeting closed at 5.30pm.

	ACTION POINTS FROM 22 APRIL 2021		
	Action to be completed	By whom	By when
A	Attend subject leader meeting on 12 May (about 3.50pm).	All govs	12 May
B	Meet your linked subject leader.	All govs	12 May
C	Invite governors to the subject leader Zoom staff meetings.	BB	Ongoing
D	Attend assemblies to talk about the role of governors and give termly updates on governance.	All govs	TBC
E	Write a health and safety report once a term.	BS	End summer term
F	Invite governors to Zoom elements of leadership cycle.	BB	Ongoing
G	Follow up with science leaders to see if learning gaps are filled.	AP	June
	Questions to follow up from governor visits	By whom	By when
	Agenda Items for Future Meetings		Date
	Performance against SIP targets	All govs	Ongoing
	Agree newsletter updates on the budget, decisions made and governor roles	All govs	Once a term
	Safeguarding (standing item, to include CPOMS reports, safeguarding meeting summaries and accident reports)	PH	Ongoing