

MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY – FOUNDRY LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

TUESDAY 9th JUNE 2020

ZOOM MEETING - 18.00 - 19.00

Governors present:	Sean Taylor [ST]	Cathy Baggott [CB]
	Michael Curphey [MC]	Sid Watson-Rose [SWR]
	Kristin Jones [KJ]	David Higlett [DH] [Chair]
	Liz Smith [LS]	Robbie Turkington [RT]
	Jack Davis [JD]	Rachel Rose [RR]

Associate Governors: Helen Aldred [HA]

Other: Kathryn Lugg

Clerk: Elisabeth Ruggles

01. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Ben Penfold and Stephanie Crispin. Sid and Robbie arrived late to the meeting (waiting to be admitted)

All governors were welcomed to the on-line meeting.

02. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

03. AGREEMENT OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

These were agreed as being a true and accurate record of the meeting and will be signed off in due course by the Chair.

04. BUDGET [Kathryn Lugg]

The last full Governing Body meeting looked at the draft budget. KL has now distributed new information, including an analysis of last year's budget.

The budget has been examined and amended in order to decrease the in-year deficit from £25,000 to £18,000. Trying to look at the budget in these circumstances is hard. Although staff costs are relatively easy to predict at the moment, school trips and school meals are not. It is not known when all children will be back in school and if/when trips will take place again.

The budget has been based on a 'normal' September, but no one is sure what this will actually look like. Staffing costs have increased. No one has resigned this year, which is unusual, so costs are more expensive. Normally the school might employ a NQT. One HLTA has left and has not been replaced. The school has bought in professional services (Dan Martin - a coach for youth). This is at a cost of £20,000, which is £5,000 more than the HLTA, but is for two coaches.

Supply (under 1030) was a high cost last year (£70,000). It includes paying an agency for twenty weeks, as the school wanted a particular LSA. However, these costs will decrease this year. The school is not planning to take on any more LSAs this year and is hoping there will not be big blocks of staff illness.

Signed

Chair of Governors

Dated

Most of the premises costs have been kept static. KL has received an email from KJ. As NP remains away, there is no schedule for repairs. KJ told the meeting that this has been discussed at a Resources Committee meeting. It involves relatively small things, but nevertheless, it would be good to get these things fixed. She was not sure what the situation on the playgroup roof is. There is money available to get this done in the capital budget - the initial quote was £5,000 from the LA.

Cleaning is also under review, with the school considering the best approach moving forward including contract cleaning. There are staffing issues around cleaners - one might not be coming back to school. If this is the case, it might be an opportunity to consider contract cleaning and undertake an analysis of this versus paid cleaners through the school. The school has not been able to recruit a new cleaner for 15 hrs/wk.

Income - SEN funding is £10,000 less than last year. However, the new YrR cohort appears to have significant levels of need. There is scope to apply for additional funding, but this takes time to come through (on average 26 weeks).

Additionally, Tiger Club is not running and will not have run for a term. There is no income from this apart from childcare vouchers. This means that the money available in 'D' budget will not look as healthy as it normally does. The money in this budget tends to be used for nice-to-have things. In May Tiger Club was offered free to the children of key workers, but the staff were still being paid.

KL has set up a separate tracker to list extra costs associated with the current position. There is the additional SEN funding that might be available, a LA grant (up to £3,000) for COVID-19 expenses and a government grant which is offering funding if schools cannot access money elsewhere. This last might be an option for Tiger Club staff payment.

The main additional costs have been extra cleaning supplies, contract cleaners, safety signage, walkie-talkies (so there is less walking around the site) and the holiday club.

The spend on the curriculum has been tightened up a lot. Teachers have to submit curriculum bids, so that the school can be confident that money spent is reflected in the Teaching & Learning targets.

DH pointed out that the LA has allocated £10,000 towards DSG this year, but future years have £0 against them. This is devolved funding and the LA decides how this is distributed. It is unlikely to be £0 in the future. Teachers' payments and pension grant is not likely to increase year on year.

KL pointed out that staffing costs increase each year and the new leadership structure has also had an effect on costs. Although there is an £18,000 overspend this year, if this is balanced by in-year funding, then next year will look healthier. The mid-year budget should give a better picture of the state of affairs.

ST pointed out that the PE grant might go next year. With the pandemic financial arrangements, the government probably does not know what money it will have to allocate. KL also pointed out that more schools in the city will be setting a deficit budget this year than last.

KJ felt that it was reasonably balanced, although the school and governors cannot be complacent. One additional grant can make all the difference, but then so can one additional

Signed  
Chair of Governors  
Dated

expense. DH pointed out that the school does have a surplus this year. ST said that the budget was balanced with the new staffing structure.

In YrR next year, Foundry Lane will be full. This is an unusual scenario in the city. In Shirley only Foundry Lane and Banister Park are full. There are 262 more YrR places than children in the city. The YrR cohort is very interesting, so that will present a different challenge. Eighteen are on the SPN register and there are eleven with a diagnosis of autism. There are two children with EHCPs and possibly two more. There is no capacity in the budget to keep supporting these children, so the school will have to look at how staff is allocated.

KL pointed out that Debbie Wyatt's help had been invaluable in drawing up the budget. DH thanked both her and KL for the huge amount of work they had done on it.

The budget has to be submitted to SCC by the end of the month.

Following this, KJ proposed that the budget with a total income for the year 2020-21 of £2,913,405, with total expenditure being £2,931,519, with an in year deficit of £18,114 and with a balance brought forward of £146,538 was accepted. She was seconded by JD. There was unanimous agreement.

*[KL left the meeting 18.25]*

#### 05. Report on re-opening and next steps

So far, YrR and Yr1 have been successfully integrated back into school. There has been positive parental feedback (examples of which emailed to governors). It takes over 45 minutes to get the children on and off the site and the school is now starting to look a bit full.

The behaviour is interesting - on the first day it was exemplary, but people have started to change to make the rules suit them. As a result a letter has been sent out to parents (09.06) to ask for their continued support in order to avoid conflict.

The government's announcement (also 09.06) has given a bit of clarity. Organisationally, the school has stuck as close as possible to the government guidelines - admitting YrR, Yr1 and then Yr6 at a later date. This is great for the year groups currently in school, but not so good for the others. ST has discussed a date with the SLT for the Yr6 children to come back. Once they are in, the school is at capacity until the end of July.

Very clear, small groups have been maintained. If necessary, 'track and trace' would then be a straightforward matter. The government does not want to have to shut whole schools, so this is important. The school has tried to group children with their friends as much as possible. Some parents have questioned the groupings and teachers have tried to explain why decisions have been taken. Groups cannot be mixed in order to maintain their integrity.

With regard to numbers of children in school, these have reflected the parental survey. In YrR and Yr1 around sixty children are on the register and attending regularly at some point (normally 50 each day). Of the key worker group, there are also between 50 and 60 children on the register. So on average there are 150 children on site each day. There is a booking system to find out who will be in each day.

Maximum capacity equates to the equivalent of twenty teachers and twenty classrooms. One classroom has been left as an isolation room. With the current groups, the school has five classrooms left in which to accommodate children. The number on each register has been

Signed

Chair of Governors

Dated

increased to 18 per register, but only 15 of those are allowed to come in. MC asked what would happen if all 18 children on a register wanted to attend. In that case one teacher would have to work with the overspill. At the moment no child is being turned away. MC also asked why some children, who seem to have made the decision to attend are actually not coming to school. The school is looking at attendance daily and following up some non-attendance. The Education Welfare Officers are now back at work and two meetings have been arranged to follow these instances up. If they are successful in bringing children in, capacity will have been reached. MC felt it was not fair if they were on the register and then did not turn up as the provision could not then be offered to other children. KJ felt that one reason for this was that parents are not being penalised if their child does not attend school. Attendance is on a voluntary basis.

RR asked what the situation is if parents change their mind and now want to send their child to school. 45% of the cohort is full capacity. In this instance a place cannot be offered to them. JD mentioned that at another school, parents of children who are not attending are phoned by the school. They are told that the child's place will be taken by another child, meaning that they cannot come back to school until September.

With regard to health and safety, many checks have not taken place as the site was closed for a long time. All routine checks are now up and running. The LA fire risk assessment had expired pre lockdown. Although the school had other arrangements in place a whole assessment for the whole building is being put in place now.

Vulnerable Children and Safeguarding: There are 11 vulnerable children as identified by the LA as well as a few others being monitored by Foundry Lane. The school would really like to see these children attending. However, getting them into school has been the responsibility of social workers, who have not always been following this up, which means the children remain at home.

Today, 09.06., three more vulnerable children have been in school, so now four of the eleven are attending regularly. This is something the EWAs can look at. The LA gets an attendance list each week, but it has not been highlighting them as a priority. The school has carried out home visits if a social worker has not been in touch with the family. This means that each child has been seen.

Forward Planning: The announcement from the government today, 09.06. has not made things much clearer. There is a caveat that schools are not to open more widely, but head teachers are to be given more flexibility. ST felt more detail was needed. At the moment the planned starting date for Yr6 is 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

The issue will be lunch-times. In order to maintain small groups, the school does not have enough spaces (20 if all lunch together, 10 if staggered). This means a certain amount of creativity is required. The proposal is that Yr6 will come in at 8.30 and leave to go home at 1.

The school has also started to think about the future. It is hoped that September can start as normal. The transition timings are being looked at. The new YrR induction process is being planned, Groups of 6 children will be invited to come on a teddy bear picnic on the school field to meet their new teacher. In September families will be invited in for a tour of the school.

Signed  
Chair of Governors  
Dated

For other year groups SLT is making plans for the last week of term. The plan will be to open the school so that during the week every child has an opportunity to come in and meet their new teacher. This does mean though that YrR, Yr1 and Yr6 children could not be in at the same time. Neither could the children of key workers. KJ wondered if there would still be smaller groups and social distancing. Each class would come in as a group of 15, so the teacher would meet their new class as two groups.

All in all, ST is very pleased with the way things have gone. The past two weeks have been very positive.

DH asked about Yr6 – if less children come in, could the school make different arrangements for them. In the parental survey, there were more ‘undecided’ answers than a definite ‘yes’ or ‘no’. This might have to be reviewed, but the school is planning for a worst case scenario. Two of the vulnerable children are in Yr6 and their response was initially ‘no’, but the school has been speaking to them and now both children are going to come in.

MC said that in his experience of speaking to parents there is a mixed opinion, with many parents wondering if it is worth it – ST is trying to implement a plan that accommodates the most need. LS asked whether the plan has been clarified to parents, so that they know that certain year groups will not be coming back until September. ST will make sure this message goes out to parents.

JD asked if any news had been received from the secondary schools about the transition for the Yr6 children. CB has spoken to the SENCOs in those schools and some of the teachers have spoken to teachers at the new schools. For vulnerable children a transition of sorts is going on. Again, secondary schools are trying to be creative and offering videos or zoom sessions. MC said there had been no contact from Regents Park and some children felt a bit abandoned. CB has made contact with the SENCO, but perhaps it has been a bit slow for the other children. ML has met with the Yr7 teachers, so a start is being made. MC thought it might be a good idea to group children going to the same school together when Yr6 comes in.

LS told the meeting that there is a generic letter on how to prepare for next year on the Facebook page of Regents Park. There might also be more information on the school’s website. KJ checked and confirmed that there was information available. There is a letter to the children on activities they could start thinking about. KJ will share the link. ST will speak to Sam Barnes at Regents Park and ML will speak to the other schools. DH pointed out that there are a few weeks left, but they will go quickly.

[Robbie Turkington joined meeting: 18.50]

SWR raised a point about parents who are not currently bringing their children to school, but who may now change their mind. The initial survey did say that parents would be able to. This point might now need to be clarified. The positive feedback might be having an effect on this change of heart. There is more communication going out to parents by the end of the week and the situation will be made very clear. A phone call from the school telling parents that if their child does not come in, it will mean they will lose their place, will need to happen before Yr6 return. This ensures firm numbers for YrR and Yr1, so the school can prepare for the arrival of Yr6. SWR also asked for clarification that home schooling packs will remain in place for the other year groups – these will continue to be prepared and made available. He also asked if measures are in place for families or children who are clinically vulnerable. They are for the summer term, but ST was not sure what would happen in September and

Signed

Chair of Governors

Dated

hoped there would be guidance available if it became apparent that some was needed. He will liaise with SCC. DH pointed out that guidance has only been issued up to the end of this term.

Governors asked whether the Safeguarding Policy needed to be reviewed. This policy and the Fire Risk policy have reverted back to their original policy. The addendum remains in place for children not in school. The Behaviour Policy has been reviewed. JD asked if any other policies needed to be looked at. HA will check the position of the other policies.

DH asked ST if the school needed anything else from governors. ST said everything was under control at the moment. All governors felt it would be a good idea to have another meeting before the end of term to take stock of this summer term and look forward to what might be happening in September. This will be on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 18.00-19.00. KJ sent her apologies as she won't be able to attend.

SWR proposed a letter of thanks to go to all staff. DH will talk with ST about an appropriate communication to staff.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 19.12.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 18.00

Signed  
Chair of Governors  
Dated