

Exminster Community Primary School Full Governing Board Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: 23 April 2020

Time: 18:00

Venue: Virtual (due to Covid-19 restrictions)

Present					
Name	Initial	Position	Name	Initial	Position
Sarah Whalley	SW	Headteacher	Paul Frazer	PF	Governor (Co-opted)
Talitha Kerrigan	TK	Governor (Co-opted)	Ian Rogers	IR	Governor (Co-opted)
Stephen McDonald	SM	Governor (Par)	Frankie Hyde	FH	Governor (Staff)
John Collins	JC	Governor (Co-opted)	Liam Hatton	LH	Governor (Co-opted)
Kate Beale	KB	Governor (Co-opted)	Becky Dupre	BD	Governor (Par)
Helen Hibbins	HH	Clerk	Ian Moore	IM	Deputy Headteacher
Apologies					
Name	Initial	Position	Reason		

Advice given by Governors at this school, in this meeting, is incidental to their professional expertise and is not being given in their professional capacity.

Governors must not disclose what individual governors have said or how they have voted within a meeting.

Governors must respect the confidentiality of Part Two items of business as agreed by the Governing Board.

Summary of Resolutions

To approve the 2020-21 budget for submission to the Local Authority (LA)

To approve the appendix to the Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy due to Covid-19

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Paul Herring (via SW)
- 1.2 JW, HC and AR were absent without apology.

2 Declarations of Interests on Agenda Items

- 2.1 None declared.

3 To approve the minutes of the Full Governing Board meeting on 12 March 2020

[2020-03-12 FGB Draft Minutes](#)

3.1 Resolved.

4 Update on Actions (not included elsewhere on agenda)

4.1 All Governors to book onto training courses (via the Clerk) and inform the Clerk on completion to update the Governors' training record.

Ongoing reminder

4.2 13/02/2020 5.6 Lead Governors for curriculum matters and personal development to be kept informed of progress of the RHE and PHSE policies.

Ongoing

4.3 13/02/2020 6.2.5 Extra information to be provided in safeguarding review meetings to highlight implementation of behaviour policy.

Ongoing

4.4 13/02/2020 6.2.6 Governors to undertake visits. Implementation of the behaviour policy could be explored.

Ongoing

4.5 12/03/2020 5.4.1 Summary of donations to be included on budget monitors

Ongoing

4.6 12/03/2020 8.6.3 The next Governor to visit school to check SCR
LH had carried this out

Done

4.7 12/03/2020 10.7 All Governors to carry out a school visit in the Summer Term

Ongoing

5 Approve the 2020/21 budget for submission

[Budget 2020-21](#)

[Q & A on budget April 2020](#)

5.1 Questions sent to SW prior to the meeting had been answered and circulated to all Governors.¹ Further questions were asked during the meeting.

5.2 JC commented that the budget presented provided little capacity to react to future funding strains, likely as a result of the impact of Covid-19 on Government finances and therefore schools' funding. Potential future issues were mentioned; an unknown impact on pupil numbers when the school at Matford opened and a change in staffing requirements when the current 3 class year group left the school (in 4 years' time).

5.3 SW explained that staffing changes happened frequently and when taking on new staff, consideration would be given to the foreseeable changes and temporary contracts would be issued if necessary.

¹ See appendix

- 5.4 It was acknowledged that the budget figures had been calculated prudently. Therefore, would it be possible to make in-year savings to mitigate for the deficit budget set for the 2020-21 financial year?
- 5.5 The increase in salaries had been budgeted at 5% for 2020-21. SW explained that on the advice of the School Finance Officer a 2.75% rise for teachers and 3% rise for support staff was recommended based on the Government pay offer.
- 5.6 SW clarified that the top-up funding was not “additional” although it came in as a different strand. Its purpose was to bring the funding up to the minimum level required. The amount of funding shown in the budget was cautious, but it was acknowledged that it would make a significant (positive) difference in subsequent years’ budgets but not to this year’s in-year deficit.
- 5.7 SW noted that there would be three staffing changes not accounted for in the budget. Governors should be aware of this, but as yet, it was unknown what the financial impact would be.
- 5.8 Discussion took place about the Governing Board setting a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) to measure the surplus against, or to maintain sufficient reserves as a buffer. It was thought that in the current climate this would be difficult.
- 5.9 IR noted that the LA had the right to cap any surplus and therefore could claw back anything above that percentage.
- 5.10 Scrutiny of the budget monitors throughout the year would identify any savings that had been made to “bank”.
- 5.11 It was resolved to approve the budget as circulated.

ACTION SW

6 To receive an update on measures being taken in school due to Covid-19

[Covid-19 report to Governors April 2020](#)

[Operational Plan for CV 19](#)

[DBS-CV 19](#)

- 6.1 SW reported that a critical incident pack had been received containing information about handling bereavement, managing illness and other potential issues that may arise over the next few months. This was being shared with staff and relevant aspects would be published on the school website.
- 6.2 Class teachers were phoning pupils to check in with them. FH commented that the calls had been very positive and valuable and that both children and parents appreciated them.
- 6.3 No assessment data would be collected this year and there would be no summer term census.
- 6.4 Nationally there had been an increase in GDPR breaches (none at Exminster School). IM had reminded staff of best working practices.

6.5 Devon Association of Primary Heads (DAPH) were working with MPs to ensure that a list of requirements was provided in advance of re-opening schools to ensure adequate planning time.

7 To approve an appendix to the Child Protection/Safeguarding policy and arrangements due to Covid-19

[Covid policy – appendix – April 2020 ECPS](#)

7.1 SW explained that the policy was already being implemented by staff in school. It was based on a Babcock model policy.

7.2 It was resolved to approve the policy.

The meeting closed at 18:45

Date of next meeting: Thursday 21 May, 2020

Signed.....S McDonald.....

Date.....21/05/2020.....

Appendix to Full Governing Board Meeting Minutes 23/04/2020

Budget questions submitted and answered prior to the meeting

Previously you had mentioned an additional £120k one-off payment from County owing to historic SEND underfunding. Are we still to expect this?

This money is there because of the minimum amount that has been set per pupil, it is not one off, this was my misunderstanding. On the budget calculator document, we were being underfunded. The minimum amount for this year is £3700. As ours was working out below that, they had to top us up, hence the additional monies for this year. Next year, the minimum amount is £4000. This is not currently reflected in the school's budget calculator, so Charles has told us to put an additional amount in, depending on numbers for the October 2020 census. We have aired on the side of caution with this amount and put £63k in but Charles thinks that this will be more like £100k.

Regarding Charles's recommendation of putting in the £63k, is this the first year our funding has been below the minimum/pupil funding? Is there an opportunity for retrospective claims if not? How is there such a big potential swing between £63k and £104k in year 1 if we are budgeting on fixed pupil numbers? What is the unknown?

The unknown is the pupil numbers for the October 2020 census, as above, as this figure will be based on the per pupil funding. The reason Charles has told us to put this in is because our per pupil funding in coming in well below the minimum amount for that year. The minimum for that year will be £4k.

Pupil Premium (PP) - you stated that this was reducing but in the budget it is static across all three years at £79k, which is higher than in previous years' budgets (though only by £1k...)

The amount we got in for 19.20 was higher than I had estimated. I have gone into the site Key2Success that lists all of the children who come into the PP categories and taken worked out based on children in school, what the exact amount will be. This is now likely to increase with other families in financial difficulty and accessing universal credit and then FSM. So far in the last 2 weeks we have had 2 more families sign up to this. We are promoting this at the moment as there is a large incentive for families to join up, receiving £60 per month per child of food vouchers if eligible.

How are support staff costs reducing for each budgeted year?

Support staff costs go down as we have a high volume of children with SEN EHCP in current Y6 and Current Y5. Over time, the need goes down (may get new needs coming in in Reception) and the amount of SEN money coming in goes down but also the first £6k that we have to fund goes down.

How are learning resources decreasing for each year when pupil numbers are increasing?

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That is mainly because we have put some additional money in there for 1 to 2 years to support development of mental health materials and some parental workshops. This will decrease after the first year and only in for 2 years in total.

With service contracts in place, for example maintenance/cleaning, is there a break-clause for instances like C-19 where there is reduced requirement for their services? Are all boilers etc. switched off for the duration of the closure?

Boilers: we need hot water running as we are still open every weekday and every holiday for key workers' children.

Cleaning: We cannot reduce our cleaning contract – we are using all the hours to gradually deep clean classrooms that are out of use and used additional hours during the holiday period.

Maintenance: There are no other maintenance contracts apart from photocopiers – these are still in use (just using less paper and ink) as school is still running and there are children that we are providing packs for due to no devices.

IT technician: we are currently liaising with our IT technician provider to try and reduce this to half the amount of support we usually have but unlikely according to the procurement guidance that has been given.

Dartmoor Sports partnership: we are being supported at this time by the SSO 3 times a week to provide high quality active PE for the children that are attending school.

Waste: Alison is looking at reducing our waste collection and liaising with the company.

Does staff-related insurance cover instances where staff need to stay at home due to self-isolating, caring for at-risk relative, etc?

We go through the mutual fund and I do not know what this covers in terms of COVID. I will ask Alison to contact them.

You ask under other employment costs whether staff related insurance is a risk factor - what are you referring to?

Related the question above – mutual fund pays out 50% part way through the year then the full amount at the end of the year providing there is enough money in the pot at the end of the year. With the strain of COVID19, how will this effect this pot of money?

Following up on the points raised re. no letting income and website improvement with the new school opening soon, can we put the problems to the ESA and fundraising committee to get greater input and suggestions/volunteers?

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The ESA have had their main fundraiser, the summer fair, cancelled. They are doing a craft fair in November which we are hoping will be successful but this was going to be additional money and will now replace the summer fair – may not raise as much? The ESA needs a new new chair person – think we have someone lined up for this. We will need the support of the ESA to raise more funds and get more volunteers.

On a wider point, regarding the risk of the new school to pupil numbers, increasing pupil numbers is our best income generator, more so than any other fundraising project. Can this not be set as a project for the fundraising committee given the skills included in there and other parents within the school to be called on. It could be taken as a wider project for increasing the school's reach, making parents in the wider community, as well as Exminster, more regularly aware of the good work the school does. It will both help ward off some of the threat of the new school, as well as hopefully increase pupil numbers. I know the fundraising committee hasn't been called on recently given the uncertainty in our deficit, but this is certainly one thing for it to start working on.

Yes, especially with the marketing experience we have on there – this would be a good way of involving volunteers.

My Question is on income streams which are of a variable nature. It would appear that you have taken the prudent route and included the medium to low expectation figure. Am I right in thinking that other sources not mentioned specifically by you (ie ESFA funds) are being treated as bonuses rather than necessities?

The main school funding that comes in through the Schools block plus the extra that we have been told to allow for - these funds are all treated as necessity as it accounts for the minimum amount of per pupil funding. If we get over this amount, it would not be treated as a bonus as we are only funded at the minimum level at the moment and we would definitely like to add to areas where possible to provide the best that we can.

How much of this extra have you built into the budget, the same as last year or less for this year but building up in year 2 onwards. I ask as Covid-19 will have affected a high percentage of parents and other fund sources which will likely reduce available funds for school?

It is not actually extra monies. At the moment on the budget calculator it is looking like this but in effect, it is just the minimum funding per pupil. It is all built into the budget within the 3 year plan