



St Michael's CE Primary School

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Cultivating Respect, Persevering, and Learning with Courage

Minutes of the Full Governing Board (FGB) Meeting held on 20th April 2023 5.30pm (virtual meeting)

Present:	Robin Conway (RC) - Co-opted Governor – Chair Hayley Leyshon-Brady (HLB) – Headteacher Adele Frankum (AF) – Parent Governor Nigel Goode (NG) – Local Authority Governor Ruth Gardiner (RG) – Staff Governor Steve Green (SG) – Parent Governor Philip Sutton (PS) – Foundation Governor
Apologies:	Sam Shaw – (SS) – Co-opted Governor Kathryn Mendus (KM) – Foundation Governor Tim Owen (TO) – Co-opted Governor, Vice Chair Alex Rennie-Lis – (ARL) – Parent Governor Ann Parham (AP) – Co-opted Governor
Absent:	None
Vacancies:	Foundation Governor / Co-opted Governor
In attendance:	Nicole Brooks (NB) Local Authority (LA) Clerk

Item	Details	Action
1.	Welcome and Opening Prayer and Admission of Observers The meeting was held virtually, via Google meets and started at 5.32pm. RC welcomed everyone to the meeting. There are a number of governors unable to attend this evening, but RC was aware of that when this extraordinary meeting was set. There are enough governors for the meeting to be quorate. PS opened the meeting with a prayer.	
2.	Apologies for absence As reported previously, due to work commitments, SS is unable to attend FGB meetings on a Thursday for this academic year and the board have accepted this. Apologies were received and accepted from Tim Owen (TO) – Co-opted Governor, Vice Chair, Ann Parham (AP) – Co-opted Governor, Alex Rennie-Lis – (ARL) – Parent Governor, Kathryn Mendus – Foundation Governor and Sam Shaw – (SS) – Co-opted Governor The meeting was quorate and remained quorate throughout.	
3.	Urgent Additional items None raised	

4.	Declarations of interest Every governor present stated they do not have any declarations of interest.	
5.	Budget discussion and ratification <i>(Appendix A & B)</i> NG spoke to the board. There are two documents to read alongside this budget discussion The first is the draft budget by ledger – this contains the numbers and the breakdown of all income and expenditure for the 3-year cycle. The second document is the commentary report to give wider context to the numbers and supports the rationale behind this budget setting. NG explained that a minus before a number indicates income / credit. This is a 3-year budget cycle however, 2023/24 is the focus for now. The 2024/25 and 2025/26 years are useful for a strategic viewpoint as governors and shows a credible understanding for the numbers / pupil forecasting. The school receives standard pupil funding based on the number of pupils, so the pupil forecasting plays an important part in the budget planning. Almost 80% of the budget expenditure is staffing costs. Broadly broken down to 50% teaching staff and the other 30% is made up of TA staff and Admin staff. Further information on staffing is provided on the commentary sheet. Page 7 of the budget ledger provides details of budget forecast. The board can see that at the end of this financial year (2022-23), there is an overspend of approx. £2K. The budget was balanced. This report does not take into account the £97K carry forward (of which £43K is committed expenditure leaving an actual carry forward of £54K). The 3-year budget forecast has a cumulative carry forward each year. NG explained that it is prudent to try and keep this going to demonstrate sustainability, but to also balance that with ensuring that the school spending is to the benefit of the pupils. Any carry forward should be no more than 8% of the total budget. HLB added that the pupil predictions are on the cautious side because nursery pupil numbers are not yet known. NG supported HLB and assured the board that budget income predictions are realistic but cautious. The largest risk to the budget is any future pay settlement agreement as staffing costs are 80% of the expenditure. Any increase in pupil numbers will mean that more staff will be needed. There was a short discussion around the built-in salary increases. For 2023-24 a 3% increase has been used. Governor question – There are reports of a 4.5% pay settlement. If this is the case, can the school afford it? NG advised that it would amount to a £7-8K increase. Looking at the carry forward, the budget could withstand this. HLB advised the board that the % salary increases they have used are figures provided by OCC. There is some room for movement if this changes. NG spoke about the capital budget. This also has a healthy balance. The school has plans for refurbishment of outdoor areas and replacement ipads. Questions were invited: Governor question – Is the school currently fully staffed? HLB confirmed they were in fact overstaffed.	

	<p>Governor question – Re: financial benchmarking. How does St Michael's compare to other similar schools with regards to the percentage of staffing costs? HLB explained that OCC do not like staffing costs going over 80%. HLB is aware of this and ensures this won't happen. Allocation of TA hours is worked out thoroughly to stay within the boundaries. NG added that the staffing costs are actually 78% so they haven't reached that threshold. The data from benchmarking sites tends to be published 2 years in arrears so this information tends not to be useful by the time of release. The teacher / TA ratio is high, but it works well for the needs of pupils.</p> <p>Governor question – What is the staff turnover picture like and what are the notice periods for staff? HLB stated that May 31st is the cut off date for teachers to resign if they want to leave at the end of August. Teachers must give half a terms notice and TAs must give 4 weeks' notice. TAs are harder to replace. When recruiting for teachers, the school would usually recruit to a lower pay scale. If there are a lot of teachers on the UPS (upper pay scale) then it would impact on the budget. This is not the case at St Michael's. In summary – the budget can manage the staff turnover.</p> <p>NG spoke about contracts and processes. ARL has previously asked about this during an FGB meeting. The competitive benchmarking systems that are in place are very rigorous and effective. NG is satisfied that the school gets the best value from the numerous contract they enter into. There are robust processes in place. The budget setting timeline this year was very tight from the date they received the information to now (with the Easter break in between). Due to the processes the school has, it was very straight forward to draw the information together.</p> <p>Governor question – The expenditure in budget years 2 and 3 look to decrease – what is the reasoning behind this? HLB stated that OCC have advised the school on some predicted expenditure. It is their belief that areas such as energy costs will go down and have advised the school to reflect this. Also – there was a lot of work carried out on the maintenance plan in 2022-23. This work does not need to be repeated yearly so maintenance costs will also reduce. The 2022-23 year was an expensive year. It was acknowledged that staff costs will not decrease though. HLB stated that Sharon Scaysbrook (School Business Manager) is very proactive with maintenance for items such as the boiler that may require new parts / replacement.</p> <p>CERA capital income goes back to when the money was devolved to the schools. It was previously held centrally. The school should hold around £15K in reserve in case of emergency repairs or other unexpected costs arising.</p> <p>The board expressed thanks to NG, HLB and the team for their work on managing the budget and setting this budget plan. HLB stated that Sharon Scaysbrook deserves the thanks due to her dedication and hard work on finance.</p> <p>Action: Email on behalf of the board to Sharon Scaysbrook to thank her and acknowledge her part in budget setting and finances.</p> <p>RC proposed the 3-year budget plan for approval and the board voted. Decision made – the budget plan was approved for submission to OCC</p>	<p>RC</p>
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6.	Meeting schedule - Meetings for 2022-23 will be as follows: Thursday 11 th May 5.30pm (remote) Thursday 8 th June 5.30pm (remote) Wednesday 28 th June: In-School Day then meeting at 3.30pm (in person).	
7	AOB None The meeting closed at 6.02pm.	

NB 20.04.2023

Appendices (documents and reports discussed)

Agenda Item	Appendix	Name
5	A	SMPS draft budget 2023-24
5	B	Commentary to support the budget 2023-24

Action Log

Meeting Date	Item Number	Action	Owner	Deadline
20.04.23	5	Email on behalf of the board to Sharon Scaysbrook to thank her and acknowledge her part in budget setting and finances.	RC	This week

■ End