



## Minutes of the meeting of the FGB held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 at 6pm

**Present:**

Jacqueline Hudson (Chair)	Christina Clarke (Headteacher)
Matthew Snowden <i>[from 6.05pm]</i>	Helen Thomas
Alison Pawley	Tamsin Tinkler
Francesca Moxon	David Allen
Graham Whitmore	Bill Twist

**In Attendance:**

Danielle Rees (Deputy Headteacher)  
 Debbie Waters (Finance Manager) *[to 6.25pm]*  
 Amy Batchelor (Early Years Lead) *[attending remotely from 6.30pm to 6.55pm]*  
 Jess Swarbrick (Joint Head of Governor Services - Clerk)

		Action
1.	<p><b>WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, extending a particular welcome to Tamsin Tinkler, new parent governor. Apologies were received, with consent, from Charlotte Johnson.</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
4.	<p><b>FINANCE – APPROVAL OF THE START BUDGET 2022/23</b> <i>(previously distributed)</i></p> <p>David Allen, Chair of the Finance Working Group, reported that the group had met to review and discuss the budget in detail with the Finance Manager. He asked governors to be mindful of the fact that the forecast from 2023/24 onwards was based on assumptions on this point, and to focus primarily on the 2022/23 budget which had been set with known details on income, from pupil numbers as well as other grants. Where funding was not guaranteed from 2023 onwards, this had not been included in the forecast, though predicted rises in expenditure had been factored in.</p> <p><i>[Matthew Snowden joined the meeting at 6.05pm]</i></p> <p>David highlighted the forecast, which currently showed a cumulative deficit over three years rising to £-38,010.11 by 2024/25. He noted that this was a better position than expected at the last meeting, following the release of more information on the funding position which made a significant difference, but still needed careful monitoring as this would erode the current surplus held by the school. In addition, there was a proportion of the surplus which had been committed for the development of the MUGA, which needed to be taken into account.</p> <p>With reference to the MUGA, the Finance Manager reported that due to price increases for materials, the original cost quoted for the work could be subject to change. She advised that she had requested further information from the contractor detailing a breakdown of the cost of</p>	

	<p>materials and that of labour, but this had not yet been received. The Finance Manager advised that planning had been submitted to City of York Council (CYC) for the MUGA, and a decision was expected on this before the end of June. She advised that the contract for the work and agreement of final cost would not be confirmed. It was hoped that subject to planning consent being granted, the work could take place over the summer holidays. It was recognised that the uncertainty over the final cost and start time for the project was a risk, as CYC may take steps to claw-back any uncommitted surplus. However, the Finance Manager advised that it was expected that CYC would support the school, and that they recognised that this project was one which had been planned and saved for over a number of years.</p> <p>Governors expressed their thanks to the Finance Manager for her tight budget control, and careful management, which had meant a better than expected out-turn position for 2021/22.</p> <p><b>Governors asked what contingency had been put into the budget for expected rises in energy costs.</b> The Finance Manager advised that on the advice of CYC, an increase of 30% for electricity and 40% for gas had been included in the 2022/23 budget, with a further 2% increase on this for future years.</p> <p>Governors noted the 2022/23 revenue start budget outline as follows:</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="199 846 885 1025"> <tr> <td>Revenue income:</td> <td>£ 1, 672, 014.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Revenue expenditure:</td> <td>£ 1, 681, 128.26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>In-year balance:</td> <td>£ -9, 114.26</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance brought forward:</td> <td>£ 32, 405.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cumulative year-end balance:</td> <td>£ 23, 290.74</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>APPROVED: Governors approved the 2022/23 start budget, which would be signed by the Chair.</b></p> <p>Governors expressed their thanks to the Finance Manager, the Headteacher and to David and the Finance Working Group for their work on the start budget.</p> <p><i>[Debbie Waters left the meeting at 6.25pm]</i></p>	Revenue income:	£ 1, 672, 014.00	Revenue expenditure:	£ 1, 681, 128.26	In-year balance:	£ -9, 114.26	Balance brought forward:	£ 32, 405.00	Cumulative year-end balance:	£ 23, 290.74	
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2.	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022</b> <i>(previously distributed)</i></p> <p>It was noted that David Allen had not been in attendance at the meeting and had sent apologies. The Clerk agreed to update the minutes accordingly.</p> <p>Subject to this amendment, the minutes were agreed to be a true and accurate record.</p>											
3.	<p><b>ACTION PLAN AND MATTERS ARISING NOT INCLUDED ON THE AGENDA</b></p> <p>The Clerk agreed to forward a copy of the latest training record to the Headteacher and Chair as requested at the previous meeting.</p>											
5.	<p><b>SUBJECT LEADER REPORT – EARLY YEARS</b></p> <p>Amy Batchelor, Early Years Lead, attended the meeting virtually to give a presentation on the new curriculum and the school’s involvement in Early Talk for York.</p> <p>Amy advised that changes to the curriculum aimed to improve outcomes for five year olds, particularly in language and literacy. In addition, the new curriculum delivery aimed to reduce workload through the cutting out of unnecessary paperwork. Amy advised that to date, the balance had not been right on this, though steps had been taken in the right direction.</p> <p>Amy advised that in looking at ensuring that a curriculum was in place which was right for the</p>											

children in Early Years at Fishergate, on reflection this had already been mostly in place, and as a result there had not been the need to make any significant changes. There was an increased focus on early language and extending vocabulary, along with opportunities to embed and develop vocabulary skills to improve child development across the whole curriculum. Amy advised that the team in Early Years were very experienced practitioners, who had the knowledge to push language on within the different provision areas. She advised that the focus for the next few months would be looking at the development of vocabulary in each of the areas, and ensuring consistency in the delivery of this. Understanding how this development supported children's next steps into Key Stage 1 would have a greater impact as they moved through school. Amy advised that the development of progression maps which fed into Key Stage 1 had been a key part of this work, and would support transition.

Amy advised that Early Learning Goals (ELGs) had changed under the new curriculum to be clearer and more specific. She advised that there was no measure of "exceeding expectations" within the new framework. The ELGs were used as an assessment during the summer term, rather than racing ahead during the year.

Amy advised that the challenges which children started school with would change from cohort to cohort, but language was a key area in which many were needing more support. She explained that this was a focus of the school's involvement with Early Talk for York, a CYC-led approach aimed particularly at children who had not met their ELG in literacy at the end of Early Years.

Amy outlined the three steps to the Early Talk for York approach, and explained how these were being undertaken by the Early Years team. She advised that the expectation would be that the end of step three would be achieved by the end of the next academic year. The three key elements to the approach were:

- Screening of all children in Early Years using the WellComm toolkit.
- Completion of ELCLAN training and the cascading of this to other members of the team
- Family liaison and engagement.

Amy advised that all children had been screened in the autumn term using the toolkit, with a second screening taking place this term. She advised that the progress which had been made by children during this time was really positive, and reflected the language-rich provision within Early Years, even taking into account the fact that some planned interventions had not been able to take place due to Covid.

Amy advised that one of the other practitioners in Early Years had undertaken the ELCLAN training and had achieved Level 3. Over the coming months, she would roll this out to the rest of the team. It had also been suggested that this training could be further cascaded to other staff across the rest of the school, which was really positive.

With reference to family liaison, Amy outlined the work of another of the Early Years team in leading on this. Support was being provided by the Family Information Service, in setting up story-time sessions, as well as phonics and maths workshops. Amy noted that the reputation of the school for its high level of parent support was also being recognised within the LA.

Governors thanked Amy for her presentation. Governors asked what level of engagement there had been from parents for the support provided. Amy advised that this had been primarily targeted at families where the need for additional support had been recognised. There had been a positive response to this, and engagement within this group had been good.

Governors asked whether the screening toolkit could also benefit children in Year 1 and above, and if so whether this could be rolled out. Amy advised that there would certainly be a benefit

	<p>to this, and it could be done as part of transition meetings in preparation for the next academic year.</p> <p>Governors asked what the potential further benefits of the Early Talk for York approach were for future cohorts coming through, particularly screening. Amy advised that there were really clear benefits. She noted that the screening in the autumn term identified around 70% of children needing additional support. Amy explained that this was a direct result of the impact of Covid and lockdowns on younger children’s language and social development. She advised that the toolkit clearly outlined the steps needed to bring children’s language development back on track to age related levels in terms of understanding and communication. Amy also highlighted the benefits of the toolkit in supporting children with English as an Additional Language (EAL).</p> <p><i>Governors thanked Amy for her presentation, and she left the meeting at 6.55pm.</i></p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>HEADTEACHER’S REPORT</b> <i>(verbal update, plus School Development Plan previously distributed)</i></p> <p>The Headteacher reported that the half term leading up to Easter had been incredibly challenging half term in terms of staff absence due to Covid. She advised that all staff had been great at the need to be flexible in ensuring that classes were covered, as supply staff were also very difficult to engage at the moment. The Headteacher advised, however, that the knock-on effect of covering absences in class had meant that it had not been possible for a lot of the planned interventions to take place.</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that even with the easing of restrictions, it had been decided to stick with the current arrangements for break and lunchtime, with staggered timings for different year groups. She advised that there had been a clear reduction in the number of issues as a result of the change. It was hoped that when the MUGA was up and running, this would provide further flexibility all year round on the use of the field for older year groups at playtimes.</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that the school continued to provide support for Naburn Primary. The Headteacher from Naburn had visited school to look at Maths provision, Key Stage 1 and English. She advised that the support work had also benefited staff at Fishergate, giving them the opportunity to share good practice and expertise.</p> <p>The Headteacher provided an update on staffing for information. She advised that Amy Batchelor, Early Years Lead would be leaving at the end of the academic year. Stability within the Early Years team would be maintained as Amy’s job-share Lisa Dewhurst would be moving to full-time. Governors agreed that Amy would be very much missed.</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that the school had received two LA reviews since the last meeting – the first on 17<sup>th</sup> March had focused on early reading, led by Rachel Lanzilotti, School Effectiveness and Achievement Advisor. Feedback from the report, which had been circulated with the agenda, identified a lot of strong practice, including the effectiveness of the parent information sessions and book swaps. The report identified that children were passionate about reading, and loved being read to every day, and getting support in choosing books which matched their interests and reading level. The Headteacher highlighted that a key focus this year had been on vocabulary development, particularly supporting disadvantaged children in this area.</p> <p>Recommendations from the report had included ensuring that all children were actively involved in sessions, with a re-cap of questioning techniques. The Headteacher noted that the report had also stated that the pace in Early Years phonics had been judged to be slow in some sessions. She advised that the new scheme which was being introduced, Little Wandle would</p>	

	<p>support further development in this area. The Headteacher advised that whilst the scheme was very prescriptive, it had been proved to be extremely effective in supporting children to get to age related levels by the end of Year 1.</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that Derek Sutherland, Head of Primary Effectiveness, had also carried out a visit to school, focusing on the curriculum. This had been an incredibly positive visit, and the Headteacher agreed to share the report with governors when this was received.</p> <p>As noted earlier in the meeting, the Headteacher highlighted the importance of ensuring that the Early Years curriculum now fed into the rest of the school, rather than being stand-alone. She noted the importance of an understanding from all staff about how the skills learned at this level provided the foundations to build on throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Governors noted the updated School Development Plan, which had been circulated with the agenda. There were no questions raised. It was noted that a final review of priorities and progress would be provided for the next meeting in July.</p>	
7.	<p><b>POLICIES TO REVIEW</b> (<i>previously distributed</i>)</p> <p>* Budget Management Policy</p> <p>A number of amendments were highlighted relating to named individuals with delegated authority in Appendices D and E. The Headteacher agreed to update these.</p> <p>A question was raised regarding the roles and responsibilities set out within the policy, and governors agreed to this being discussed in more detail at the next Finance Working Group meeting before final approval was given.</p> <p><b>ACTION: David Allen agreed to contact the Finance Manager to discuss the details within the Budget Management Policy and to take this to the Finance Working Group for further discussion.</b></p> <p>* SFVS Checklist</p> <p>It was noted that this version had been submitted to CYC on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and was presented for information to the FGB. Governors agreed that a full review of the checklist should take place ahead of the 2023 submission date.</p> <p><b>ACTION: The Headteacher agreed to ask the Finance Manager to circulate the finance training assessment to new governors as required.</b></p> <p>* Teacher Appraisal &amp; Capability Policy</p> <p>A question was raised about what was being done by the FGB to monitor that the requirements within the policy were being met. It was agreed that this should be done through challenge to the Headteacher, as well as questions to staff during link visits. In response to a question from governors, the Headteacher confirmed that all staff were provided with a copy of the policy, and it was also available to view on the school website.</p> <p><b>APPROVED: Governors approved the Teacher Appraisal &amp; Capability Policy.</b></p> <p>* Whistleblowing Policy</p> <p>It was noted that a copy of the Whistleblowing Policy was on display in the staff room and also on the school website. The Headteacher confirmed that all staff were asked to read the policy, and to confirm when they had done so.</p> <p>Governors discussed the detail within the policy specifically around the lack of named individuals on the policy, which meant that it could be unclear to staff who they should go to outside of the school if they had a concern. Governors noted, however, that this information</p>	<p>DA</p> <p>HT</p>

	<p>could be obtainable through accessible internet sources if needed.</p> <p><b>APPROVED: Governors approved the Whistleblowing Policy.</b></p>	
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>WORKING PARTY UPDATES</b></p> <p><b>8.1 Finance &amp; Staffing Working Party</b> Update discussed as part of item 4.</p> <p><b>8.2 Health &amp; Safety Working Party</b> No updates to report since the last FGB meeting.</p> <p><b>8.3 Progress &amp; Standards Working Party</b> The Chair reported that the Progress &amp; Standards Working Party had met to review the latest data. She reported that the impact of the last two years and the disruption to children’s education through school closures was still being felt, though staff were working really hard to close the gaps and get children back to where they needed to be. The Chair reported that data was lower than previous years, but was improving. Gaps in children’s learning were clearly identified and interventions were in place and regularly reviewed to ensure continued and effective impact.</p> <p>In response to a question about how long catch-up work was expected to be, the Deputy Headteacher advised that the impact of this period was likely to have an effect for some years to come. She noted that younger children in particular were facing significantly more speech and language challenges, having missed out on opportunities to socialise and interact with their peers. The Year 6 data was actually better than expected at this point, and the Deputy Headteacher noted that this cohort had been better able to engage with online learning and retain what they had learned through this. In response to a further question from governors, the Deputy Headteacher confirmed that this was a similar picture across both the city and nationally, with Year 1 being the cohort who had been most impacted by the disruptions of this period.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>GOVERNANCE MATTERS</b></p> <p><b>9.1 Visits &amp; Activities Update</b> There were no updates to report.</p> <p><b>9.2 FGB Membership Update</b> The Chair welcomed newly elected parent governor Tamsin Tinkler.</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>CORRESPONDENCE</b> There were no updates to report.</p>	
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b> There was no other business to report.</p>	
<b>12.</b>	<p><b>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETINGS</b> Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022, 6pm (David Allen submitted his apologies for this meeting).</p>	

**The meeting closed at 8.00pm**

**Action Points from the meeting of the Full Governing Body held on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022**

Action		Item	Who	When
1	<i>David Allen agreed to contact the Finance Manager to discuss the details within the Budget Management Policy and to take this to the Finance Working Group for further discussion.</i>	7	David Allen	11/07/2022
2	<i>The Headteacher agreed to ask the Finance Manager to circulate the finance training assessment to new governors as required.</i>	7	Headteacher	11/07/2022

**Items for next agenda:**

- \* Head of Primary Effectiveness Visit Report (April 2022)
- \* Budget Management Policy (for approval)