

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HANDSWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON 10 MAY 2022 AT 6PM
AT THE SCHOOL**

Present: Mr. Richard Trainor Chair – Co-opted Governor)

Co-opted Governors:

Ms. Katherine Bromley
Ms. Jennifer Smith
Ms. Mary Cheng
Ms. Lauren Banks

Parent Governor:

Ms. Katherine Buckee

Local Authority Governor:

Mrs. Stacey Dobbs (online participant)

Staff Governor:

Ms. Fiona Buckley (Virtually)

Headteacher:

Ms. Claire Nairne

Clerk to the Governors: Mrs. Pauline Dorney

Also Present: Ms. Afua Addai-Diawuo – Deputy Headteacher
Ms. Anna Devereux-Murray - Observer

Minute Ref.	Formal Agreements and/or actions identified	Named person(s) for action(s) identified	Completion Date
4.1	Mrs. Anna Devereux-Murray would be an Observer Governor	Governor Services to note	ASAP
4.2	Jenny Smith had resigned from the Governing Body.	Governors Services to note	ASAP
5.1	The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 29 March 2022 would be written up by the Clerk from the Notes given to her.	Clerk	ASAP
10.1-3	Circulation of White Paper, Green Paper and Education Staff Wellbeing Charter to all Governors.	Chair	ASAP

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Ms. Louisa Augustine-Fraser and Ms. Kathryn Ball.
- 1.3 The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate with nine Governors present.
- 1.4 There were no Confidential items to be discussed.

2. NOTICE OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS/CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

2.1 There was nothing to report.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 Nothing to report.

4. GOVERNING BODY/BOARD

4.1 The clerk confirmed Membership of the Governing Body. It was noted that there was one Parent Governor Vacancy.
Mrs. Anna Devereux-Murray's term of office expired on the 14 March 2022 and it was agreed that she would be an Observer Governor. To be confirmed re future co-opting.

ACTION: Governor Services to note

4.2 It was noted that Ms. Jenny Smith had resigned from the Governing Body. Thanks were conveyed to her for her support and hard work during her term of office.

ACTION: Governor Services to note

4.2 It was noted that all DBS checks had been completed.

5. MINUTES

5.1 The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 29 March 2022 were in draft form as the Meeting took place without the designated clerk. The Clerk agreed to produce Minutes from the notes taken at the meeting by a Governor.

ACTION: Clerk

Agenda item

5.2 There were no Matters Arising.

6. SCHOOL BUDGET 2021/2022

6.1 The Chair of the Resources Committee addressed Governors and the following points were highlighted:-

6.2 It was noted that from the Budget 2021/2022 the Full Governing Body agreed that it would be necessary to spend £65,000 of the reserves due to the year being exceptional and there were needs. It was reported that the School had actually spent £90,000 of the reserves. In the main, this was driven by staffing costs, absence and supply costs. The School had a closing carry forward and was 'balanced'. However, a lot of assumptions in the income were stated as 'slightly risky'. By this, it was noted that there was income from The Friends of Handsworth, certain assumptions that may or may not happen.

6.3 The School would be carrying forward a reserve of £85,000 but £30,000 was already accounted for. The carry forward was reported as £55,000.

6.4 The Budget for this coming year, as previously stated, is very finely balanced. When looking further forward to the forthcoming three years the School had reported deficit budgets: - £90,000 In Year deficit, the following year - £150,000 and similar the following year.

6.5 The School would have to make some changes because the Local Authority may not ratify a Budget that is showing a deficit moving forward which is not sustainable. Ms. Mary Wilson had carried out some Benchmarking and this showed that the School's Staffing Costs were a very high proportion of the Budget – 95% of Section 251 and the recommended level is 75% to 80%.

Adjustments would have to be made for the coming years in the staffing areas.

6.6 There were a number of key areas that had impacted on the Budget. These were highlighted as follows:-

- PPA cover is very expensive in comparison to other Schools. Agency Supply costs are very high. However, the decision to provide support staff from Agency was the best decision at that time to provide flexibility. When trying to recruit staff the quality of candidates was not very high; compared to Agency Staff.
- Pupil Numbers – the School would have eight vacancies which would reduce the funding from the Local Authority. This would have to be looked into.
- SEND Numbers are above average – a strain on the Budget as the School does like to be inclusive. Professional Services have had to be bought in to support the SEND children and has been costly.
- Staff absence had also had an impact due to the COVID Pandemic. It was noted that the School had purchased a Staff Absence Management Program which allows the School to track absence more closely and follow a process.

It would be necessary to reduce the above costs to bring the Budget into a non deficit position. This could be done by reducing the LSA support staff and using cheaper PPA cover.

Thanks were conveyed to the Chair of Resources for such a clear and transparent Report to Governors.

General discussion took place amongst Governors. Questions were answered as they arose.

Various options to reduce costs was discussed.

It was noted that the School were making a great deal of EHCP Applications at the present time which would bring in funding.

The School intend to do a Summer Club and moving over to Parent Pay which would be good for dealing with the voluntary funds.

6.7 It was suggested that some cost cuts would have to made during this financial year.

6.8 It would be necessary to ensure that staff understand the severity of the situation. It was noted that the School spend £20,000 per year on printing which would have to be reviewed.

Question:

Is the absence teaching staff?

Answer:

No – Teaching staff and LSA Staff. Obviously Teachers are more expensive to cover. The School cover the majority of LSA absence.

Question:

Do the LSA's understand the cost of replacing them during absence.

Answer:

No they do not know and realise the cost of absence.

The Chair suggested a few different scenarios need to be worked up to look at cost savings and need to work through which is the most important.

Question:

Does the Local Authority provide any support in this area?

Answer:

We speak to other Schools and I communicate with Ethne Lemming for advice. Other Schools' Staffing Structures are perused but all schools are very individual and our School is very different to what it was in 2018. We need to know what our situation is and what is needed.

The Chair stated that it would be necessary to make a saving of £60,000 to be more sustainable.

General discussion took place amongst Governors.

It would be necessary to introduce Performance Management for the LSA's.

- 6.9 It was agreed that the School would ask for more time from the Local Authority to review the three-year Budget Plan to try to reduce the deficits. Governors agreed that further review was needed for the three-year budget plan in order to reduce the deficit going forward and enable a sustainable budget.

Governors ratified the 2022-23 Budget.

Thanks were conveyed to Katherine Buckee for her Report to Governors on the present situation relating to the Budget.

7. GOVERNOR SERVICES SLA FOR 2022/2023

- 7.1 This item was deferred.

Agenda item

8. FINANCIAL RISK REGISTER

- 8.1 This item was deferred.

Agenda item

9. BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

- 9.1 This item was deferred.

Agenda item

10. For information: Documents for Governors to review before July 2022 Meeting:-

- 10.1 WHITE PAPER

- 10.2 SEND GREEN PAPER

- 10.3 EDUCATION STAFF WELLBEING CHARTER

ACTION: Chair agreed to circulate these documents to Governors

11. DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

- 11.1 Full Governing Body Meeting 19 July 2022 6.30pm

11.4 Governors noted the Governors' Briefing dates accordingly.

12.1 Gifts were presented to Mrs. Jenny Smith thanking her for her input and support whilst undertaking her role on the Governing Body. Mrs. Jenny Smith thanked the Governing Body for her gifts and the enjoyable time spent on the Governing Body.

The Meeting closed at 8.15pm

..... (sign)

Date: