MERTON INFANT SCHOOL

Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Governing Body meeting held on Monday 20th November 2023

MINUTES

Present:	Lee-ann Dirienzo		
	Larissa James	Headteacher	
	Carly Jones		
	Gaye Dove	Co-chair	
	Sajish Tom		
	Janel Richards		
	Rachel Hill		
In attendance:	Sophie Durbajlo	Deputy Headteacher	
	Paula Bennett	School Business Manager	
	Mark Livesey	Clerk	

The meeting started at 11.30 am.

		ACTION
1.	**Budget Presentation – School Business Manager** PB talked the GB through the Budget Presentation, the main points of which are summarised below: ***Revised O Budget (Main Budget) - Expenditure*** • the O budget is the main school budget, out of which the main expenditures in terms of staffing costs are met, with the exception of the staffing costs associated with the Breakfast and After School clubs; all day to day expenditure is also met from the O budget • when the budget was originally set, the school knew it would be in deficit by £67,513, this figure having now reduced to £42,626 • as County look at both budgets together, the school is not in deficit during this financial year as the £42,626 deficit in the O budget is offset by the surplus income in the Y budget • there was a change to the cost of teachers as there was a member of staff who has returned to the school earlier than they needed to from maternity leave; in addition the teachers' pay increases have increased staffing costs although there is a grant designed to cover some of the teachers' pay increases • significant items include 3821 (Grounds Maintenance Contracts); the school has employed numerous companies, tendered by County, in the past although after about 6 months the companies have tended to no longer be tendered by County or to stop trading • she understands that no schools in Basingstoke that sign up to the Property Services SLA have been found another contractor by Hampshire; as a result, the school's grounds maintenance is not being carried out by a Hampshire-selected contractor although the 2 caretakers are carrying out some of this maintenance • the school can withdraw from the Property Services SLA • if the school looks to employ an external contractor, the cost would be approx. £2,500 per year, this budget line having been increased as it is still uncertain what this financial year's expenditure will amount to • expenditure on the Furniture budget line was incurred for new chairs and additional rugs for the classrooms • it will be necessary to increase budget line 4540 (Educational Supplies, Stationery and Materials) as it became apparent that £18,000 would be insufficient • 5394 is a new line that has been added; because the school does not have a PTA, staff are now carrying out fundraising for the school; before the school can raise money, it needs to purchase items such as Pick 'n' Mix to sell or prizes for raffles or tombolas, and the cost of such items will come out of this line	

Revised O Budget (Main Budget) - Income

- although it had not been possible to reduce the expenditure very much in this budget, it had been possible to increase the income as a result of which the deficit was reduced
- an Additional Grant was given to schools under 6561 to cover ECT out of class time
- this financial year is the last financial year when the school will receive Catch Up Funding for Covid; there was a slight increase in the Funding because of the pupil numbers at the census
- the total charges figure for Universal Infant FSM Funding (line 6566) was less than predicted, which benefitted the budget
- the Fund Raising and Sponsorship Income line under 6798 is the Income line that cancels out the Expenditure line that she has added to the budget; the original budget figure was £5,000 which the school has already made, in addition to which there are a number of fundraising events to come such as the Christmas Performance, a few discos and some other events; therefore this line has been increased to £8,000
- the biggest increase in income has arisen because of EHCP Top Up Funding; this increase is responsible for the deficit reduction that has been achieved

Revised Y Budget – Expenditure

- expenditure from the Y budget consists of staffing costs and a few items of expenditure
- the Education Supplies line is for the purchase of any items necessary for the After School or Breakfast clubs
- the Catering Provisions line is for the purchase of any food items necessary to keep the After School and Breakfast clubs running
- the costs relating to Jade, who provides PPA cover for Mindfulness in the afternoons, have been arranged to be met by the Y budget in order to reduce financial pressure on the O budget

Revised Y Budget – Income

- the Y Budget includes the income received from the Preschool and also the income from the Breakfast and After School clubs
- the original budget was set to end the financial year at £69,084; the figure is less now as she has reduced the income under GL Code 7203 (the Breakfast Club) which is purely based on the numbers of children coming to the Club through this year
- the other budget line that has changed, and is out of the school's control as it is currently managed by County, is the rental from the Preschool which is based on the number of children in the Preschool; from September to March the Preschool has fewer children because of staffing, as a result of which the rental income received from the Preschool is reduced
- if the GB takes over the Preschool and the pupil numbers increase, the rental should return to its previous level

The revised O budget figures were as follows:

Total Expenditure: £1,409,483 (One Million, Four Hundred and Nine Thousand, Four Hundred and Eighty Three Pounds)
Total Income: £1,370,324 (One Million, Three Hundred and Seventy Thousand, Three Hundred and Twenty Four Pounds)
In Year Surplus/(Deficit): (£39,159 deficit) (Thirty Nine Thousand, One Hundred and Fifty Nine Pounds deficit)
Surplus/(Deficit) Brought Forward: (£3,467 deficit) (Three Thousand, Four Hundred and Sixty Seven Pounds deficit)
Cumulative Surplus/Deficit C/Fwd: (£42,626 deficit) (Forty Two Thousand, Six Hundred and Twenty Six Pounds deficit)

The revised Y budget figures were as follows:

Total Expenditure: £37,624 (Thirty Seven Thousand, Six Hundred and Twenty Four Pounds)
Total Income: £48,648 (Forty Eight Thousand, Six Hundred and Forty Eight Pounds)
In Year Surplus/(Deficit): £11,024 (Eleven Thousand and Twenty Four Pounds)
Surplus/(Deficit) Brought Forward: £55,406 (Fifty Five Thousand, Four Hundred and Six Pounds)
Cumulative Surplus/Deficit C/Fwd: £66,430 (Sixty Six Thousand, Four Hundred and Thirty Pounds

	Comments and questions regarding the O Budget **Q.** GD asked if the Preschool are metered separately for gas. **A.** PB advised that the Preschool are not metered separately and utilities costs are currently cross-charged at 7% of the school's overall costs; at present, rent is paid to the school from Hampshire on the basis of the square footage of the building. If and when the GB takes over the running of the Preschool, the Preschool will still be charged rent by the Infant School. **Q.** GD asked if it is known whether there is anything in the pipeline that would require more specialist equipment that would enable the school to make provision for the EHCP children. **A.** LJ advised that that there is no such need for more specialist equipment at present. **Q.** ST asked if the school needs more money. **A.** LJ advised that the school needs more pupils, which would improve the budget situation as the school's budget is based on pupil numbers. There followed a discussion about various factors affecting the budget, with LJ advising a couple of points as follows: • the number of children applying to the school is 37 (1st Preference), and around 40 (2nd and 3rd Preference) • there is a decrease in pupil numbers across the county (from 30,000 in 2015, to 15,000 now) and this is having a big impact on the school budget ***Agreed:*** to approve the revised O Budget as shown above. ***Comments and questions regarding the Y Budget*** For the benefit of those governors that have joined the GB (Governing Body) relatively recently, LJ advised the following information: • in the past, HCC (Hampshire County Council) have been against the GB taking over the Preschool, which is a charity of which she is the Chair, as their view has been that all the money from the Preschool would then be split among other preschools in the local area • as there has been a change in HCC's position regarding the Preschool, the GB has entered into a consultation for it to take over the Preschool; the consultation period started on Friday and will end on 15th December 2023 • in the future it would be possible to open the Preschool for a longer time than it is open for at present; currently the Preschool closes at 3.00 pm, and therefore a 6.00 pm closure to offer wrap-around care would be a possibility; in addition, opening the Preschool during the holidays would probably benefit a significant number of the school's working parents • when the plans for the Preschool just described have been put into operation, she believes the budget will show a significant improvement **Q.** LD asked if the After School Club was likely to be re-opened during the holidays. **A.** LJ advised that this was a possibility, including perhaps opening the Club for a 2 week period to gauge the level of uptake. **Q.** ST asked if the After School Club is essentially child-minding. **A.** LJ confirmed that this is correct; she also advised that the children do food activities first, and then play activities. **Q. LD** asked if the school would consider opening the Preschool earlier. **A.** LJ advised that consideration will be given to this. ***Agreed:*** to approve the revised Y Budget as shown above.	

The meeting closed at 12.10 pm.

These minutes are accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Signed____________________________Chair Date__________________