



New York Primary School
Federated with
 Frithville Primary School

Minutes of the Budget Approval meeting for non-staff Governors held on Thursday 9th June 2016 at Frithville Primary School

<u>Name</u>	<u>Governor Type</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Present/Apologies/Absent</u>
Mr P. Bargh	<i>Ex Officio</i>	Head Teacher	P
Mrs A. Virk	Parent		P
Mr G. Curley	Co-Opted	Vice Chair	P
Miss K. Chalmers	Co-Opted		AP
Mrs S. Brackenbury	Local Authority	Chair	P
Mr B. Foster	Parent		P
Mrs S. Holland	Co-Opted		AP

Invitee: Mr M. Adams, Senior Administrator

In attendance: Mrs A. Saxton, Clerk to Governors

The meeting commenced at 6.05 pm. It was quorate. Mrs Brackenbury welcomed everyone and invited Mr Curley to chair the meeting.

1/ Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence had been received from Miss Chalmers due to health reasons and Mrs Holland due to personal reasons. It was resolved to accept these as authorised absences in respect of the above attendance record.

2/ Declarations of interest for items to be discussed at the meeting:

None were declared.

3/ Outturn/Budget Reports:

Mr Curley extended a special welcome to Mr Adams and invited him to present the Outturn/Budget reports. Mr Adams issued the following documents:-

- 2016/17 Provisional Outturn/Budget for New York Primary School*
- 2016/17 Provisional Outturn/Budget for Frithville Primary School*

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Mr Adams explained that the reports were not issued in advance of the meeting due to the sensitive nature of some of the information. Governors were given time to read the reports. Copies are filed as Appendices A and B respectively and form part of these minutes.

Mr Bargh entered the meeting at 6.08 pm.

Mr Adams gave the following verbal update:-

New York:

i/ Overview:

The proposed budget provides a viable 2-year plan under existing funding arrangements and confirmed pupil numbers but immediate action is needed to restructure the staffing establishment and to save money until pupil numbers recover. Ten Year 6 pupils will be leaving in the summer, and 2 pupils will be joining in September.

Mrs Virk entered the meeting at 6.15 pm.

ii/ Agresso:

The figures produced by the Agresso payroll system are still being finalised. There have been major issues with pension figures. It is hoped that the work will be completed by the end of June; the Federation then has just one week to check that the figures are accurate. There have also been issues in the Agresso system with recurring orders. This problem has been identified and is being corrected. The Agresso system was unable to cope with the Federation's shared staff costs arrangement, and there was a salary overpayment for a 6-month period. The money has now been paid back. The Carry Forward figure is only an estimate at this stage.

Following a question from Governors, Mr Adams explained that the deadline for submission of the budget was the end of June. The issues with Agresso are now software-related and not due to human error. The LCC has received £1 million compensation from Agresso. The system has improved slightly but there are still software issues.

A general discussion on this matter took place. **Governors requested that a Budget Update report be presented by Mr Adams at the next Full Governors' meeting on 14th July 2016, or by e-mail if the information was available before that date.**

iii/ Pupil numbers:

Number on roll at the October 2015 funding census was 42. Ten pupils will be leaving in the summer and only 2 joining in reception in September. The resultant drop in income would be from £107,000 to £87,000. In the last few months, mid-year admissions and leavers have been volatile and largely balanced out. **Following a question from Governors**, Mr Adams explained that should pupil numbers continue to fall, New York will struggle to maintain viability beyond 2017/18.

A general discussion took place on falling pupil numbers. Governors noted the increase in capacity at "hub" schools in Coningsby and Boston; the change in use of the Dogdyke

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caravan parks from social housing to retirement use; the inability to attract RAF families from the Coningsby Base; and the large intake of pupils a few years' ago following the closure of Amber Hill Primary School, who were now ready to go to secondary education. Mr Adams explained that when pupil numbers fall below 40 for any length of time, it is difficult for a school to be sustainable. Further discussions on this matter took place.

Mr Adams advised that educational funding is flat but costs are increasing. In the last 4 years, there has been a 10-15% decrease in real terms in funding. National Insurance and pension costs have increased. All schools are finding it difficult to balance their budgets and face issues on how to provide the best teaching service given the available resources.

iv/ Hygiene Suite/SEND provision/TA research:

Mr Bargh advised that the costs of the Hygiene Suite at New York may be funded by the LCC provided that the Federation can demonstrate that it is sustainable, and the SEND provision will be considered on a County-wide basis. **Following a question from Governors**, Mr Bargh advised that SEND provision within the Collaborative Partnership would not be reviewed but that the Lincolnshire Learning Partnership (LLP) would be looking at the use of Teaching Assistants (TA) from September 2016 onwards. Governors noted that the TAs at the Federation undertake a range of additional roles including midday supervision, teaching pupils (lessons having been planned by the teachers), and acting in the place of supply cover teachers. Cohorts of less than 10 pupils will not be included in the research, as it would be easy to identify the pupils. Mr Bargh stated that he disagreed with this decision. A general discussion on this matter took place. **Governors suggested that the Collaborative Partnership cohort could be used in the research.** Mr Bargh advised that the Collaborative Partnership was part of the Mobilise Project that also includes Banovallum School and Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Horncastle, Horncastle Primary School, Tetford Primary School, and St Andrews Primary School in Woodhall Spa.

Following a question from Governors, Mr Bargh advised that the best use of TAs would be a Federation Improvement Plan priority for 2016/17.

A general discussion took place on how the Federation markets itself. **Following a question from Governors**, Mr Bargh advised that the staff constantly tweet to make everyone aware of what is happening.

v/ Pupil Premium & Service Pupils:

Mr Adams referred to the section of the report on Pupil Premium and Service Pupils and advised Governors that the amount per pupil is steady at £1320 each this year, and the amount for Service Pupils remains at £300 each. **Following a question from Governors**, Mr Adams advised that most of the funding is allocated to staff costs, especially those staff engaged in intervention strategies. The Sports Grant of £8000 plus £5 per pupil has been extended until at least 2019.

vi/ Staffing Structure:

Mr Adams explained that there would be no change to the teachers' staffing structure. The SENDCO teacher will take over the STAPS/STT function across both schools, saving on the costs of buying in this service.

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Two TA2 staff are leaving and so there is no need for redundancies. Two TA1 staff have had their hours increased to 30 per week as a temporary measure until July 2017, at which point one temporary contract will cease and the other revert to 25.5 hours in line with the expected reduced number of pupils on roll of 34.

vii/ Sickness Insurance:

Mr Adams suggested that to reduce costs the Federation apply for the Restricted Cover Sickness Insurance from this year onwards. The Restricted Cover scheme has a longer excess time of 10 days compared with the 5 days of the current scheme, and insurance reimbursements cease once an employee's pay drops to half-pay. **Following a question from Governors**, Mr Adams advised that a saving of £2000 per year would be made by opting for the Restricted Cover scheme.

A general discussion on this matter took place. **Governors agreed unanimously to opt for the Restricted Cover sickness insurance scheme and agreed to review the matter again in 12 months' time.**

Further discussions on this matter took place. Governors noted that in the event of Mr Bargh's absence, the LLP would arrange for an Interim Head.

viii/ Goods & Services:

Satisfactory funds are available to maintain resources and equipment. £2000 has been allowed for an ICT Server Refresh project as the current equipment is out of date. **Following a question from Governors**, Mr Adams explained that the options were to take the £2000 from the Devolved Capital Budget or lease the equipment at an additional cost of £500 or £600.

A general discussion on this matter took place. Governors noted that the priority for the Devolved Capital was to re-surface the EYFS outside area at a cost of approximately £4000, and that more laptops were needed as the existing equipment was very slow. **Governors agreed that the lease option should be adopted for the ICT Server Refresh Project.**

ix/ Premises Buyback:

Mr Adams explained that, from September 2016, schools will pay only for the repairs that they need. The LCC will provide statutory maintenance work at an actual price but the schools will be able to manage their own repairs. The new arrangement will be hard on small schools with older, high-maintenance buildings.

A general discussion on this matter took place. Governors noted that a tree inspection is required every two years at New York and that both schools were well maintained.

x/ School Block Allocation:

Governors noted the yearly Lump Sum Allocation of £118,010 and the De-delegation Deduction of £691. Mr Adams explained that this latter figure was retained by the LCC to

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cover the cost of exclusions. The exclusion figure in Lincolnshire is currently very high. **Following a question from Governors**, Mr Adams explained the Prior Attainment figure of £13,953 was based on the school's results and had been assessed as being constant over the next few years.

xi/ Expenditure:

Governors queried the £4000 allocated in the 2016/17 budget for Agency Supply Teaching Staff. Mr Adams explained that this amount had been allowed for Agency Teaching Staff and some of it may need to be used as the Restricted Cover Insurance will be in place. Where possible, TAs cover for teacher absence.

Governors queried the £9,259 allocated for Catering Supplies. Mr Adams explained that this figure was incorrect due to an Agresso coding issue, and it would be rectified.

Governors noted the total expenditure for 2015/16 was £343,703 and the income was slightly in excess of £350,000.

There were no further questions or comments on the 2016/17 Provisional Outturn/Budget Report for New York.

Frithville:

i/ Overview & Pupil Numbers:

Mr Adams explained that over time there had been a pattern of reducing pupil numbers which will result in the number on roll falling from 64 to 56 from September. If these numbers are confirmed at the October 2016 funding census, then AWPU funding will drop by £20,453 for 2017/18.

A general discussion on this matter took place. Governors noted that the 3-class system would be at risk unless pupil number increased. **Following a question from Governors**, Mr Adams advised that the proposed budget provides a viable 2-year plan under existing funding arrangements and confirmed pupil numbers but immediate action needs to be taken to reduce the staffing establishment from September 2016 to save money until pupil numbers recover.

Further discussions on this matter took place. Governors noted the over-capacity in some Boston schools and that the staffing levels were higher at Frithville than New York due to the higher number of KS2 pupils.

ii/ Refurbishment of Class 1 and EYFS area:

Mr Adams advised that there was an allocation of approximately £4,068 which will be added to the Carry Forward amount of £9,204, giving a total of £13,812. This money has been allocated to the Phase 1 refurbishment of KS1/EYFS classroom. Total cost will be approximately £19,000, so £7,500 will be taken from the main budget to enable the work to be done. A general discussion on this matter took place. Governors noted that much of the preparation work (redecorating, installation of new cupboards and storage areas) had been undertaken by Mr Bargh, Mr Bargh's family, and Mr Carter, the Caretaker, thereby saving a

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significant sum of money. Mr Bargh advised that volunteers would carry out the next phase of the refurbishment – removing carpets, lino, old piping, and sinks. This work would be done before the summer holiday, allowing the builder to do his work at the start of the holiday. A general discussion on this matter took place and Governors thanked Mr Bargh for his hard work and dedication to the Federation.

Governors noted that the Classroom refurbishment would be advertised in September and November in the local press well in advance of the admissions deadline in January 2017. A letter drop to prospective parents/carers in the area would also be undertaken. The Head Teacher at Gipsey Bridge Primary Academy has been consulted on this matter to ensure there are no “boundary” issues.

The Governors agreed unanimously to proceed with the refurbishment work in Class 1 and the EYFS area provided the cost did not exceed £18,000. **Mrs Virk advised that lottery grants are available to fund school building projects and money is available in Lincolnshire.**

Action: Mr Adams and Mrs Virk to liaise on this matter

iii/ Staffing:

Following a question from Governors, Mr Adams confirmed that in the worst-case scenario of a budget deficit, the school had a plan in place for a 2-class system. All employees are employed by the LCC so, technically, can be redeployed elsewhere. Dependent on pupil numbers at the October 2016 census, it may be necessary to complete a redundancy cycle before agreeing the budget for the following year. A general discussion on this matter took place. Mr Bargh advised Governors that he had spoken to all TAs in the Federation and advised them that staffing levels will have to be reviewed over the next 18 months if pupil numbers continue to fall.

Further general discussions took place. Governors noted the importance of retaining the Federation’s educational offer and the difficulties involved in providing a high standard of education within a limited budget.

There were no further comments or questions on the 2016/17 Provisional Outturn/Budget Report for Frithville.

Mr Curley proposed that the Governing Body ratify the budgets for both schools. The proposal was seconded by Mrs Brackenbury and agreed unanimously by the Governors.

The Governors, led by Mr Curley, thanked Mr Adams for his work in preparing the budget reports.

4/ Policies:

i/ Policies for approval:

The following policies had been issued to Governors in advance of the meeting:-

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Finance
Whistleblowing

The Governors confirmed that they had received and read the policies. Copies are filed as Appendices C and D respectively and form part of these minutes.

Mr Bargh advised that "secretarial" amendments had been made to the Finance Policy. Mr Adams advised that a Finance Policy based on the Agresso system would be introduced in due course.

The Governors agreed unanimously to adopt the policies. Mrs Brackenbury signed and dated the policies.

Governors noted that, to comply with safeguarding requirements, all policies would have the following wording in the introduction:

"The Governing Body is committed to the safeguarding of children and young people across the Federation and the wider community."

ii/ Policy Review Committee:

The Clerk advised that the Policy Review Committee had met on two occasions. All policies had been reviewed and either archived or included in a new review schedule. Some new policies had been added to comply with DfE recommendations.

Action: Clerk to send new Policy Review Schedule and minutes of Policy Review Committee meetings to all Governors for information

5/ Any Other Business:

Mr Foster advised that some local people are unaware that New York has a Primary School. A general discussion on this matter took place. Governors noted the problems in seeing the school from the main road due to the trees and poor signage. It was agreed that the school needs to be promoted in the local area. Mr Foster offered to place copies of the New York School Prospectus in The Hive in Coningsby and on the RAF camp.

6/ Items for the next Agenda (14th July 2016):

Budget Update from Mr Adams (unless received prior to the meeting)

Policies

Governors to complete and sign Declaration of Interests form and Code of Conduct (new version)

SATS Results

Self-Evaluation Form

Update on Head Teacher's Performance Review Objectives

As there were no further matters for discussion, Mr Curley thanked everyone for attending and for their contributions, and extended a special thanks to Mr Adams. The meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

Signature of Chair.....

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