**BUCKTON VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

**HELD VIRTUALLY ON 13 JULY 2021**

**PRESENT: Mr Nick Whitbread Parent – in the Chair**

**Mrs Sarah Blake Staff**

**Ms Jackie Brook Co-opted**

**Mr Matt Hartley Parent**

**Mr Arron Leech Co-opted**

**Ms Jenny Ross Parent**

**Ms Taf Sharif Authority**

**Mr Wayne Williams Co-opted**

**Mrs Deborah Brown Headteacher**

**IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs Rachel Lees Clerk to the Governing Board**

**PROCEDURAL**

**Welcome**

The Headteacher welcomed governors to the virtual meeting which was hosted by Zoom Pro. The meeting had been convened to focus on financial matters.

**ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING**

The Headteacher and School Business Manager (SBM) had received information from Tameside which explained that TTO (term time only) calculations for support staff could be incorrect, so the budget needed to include a percentage to cover up to 18 months back pay. Tameside also instructed schools to pay £50 per member of staff for the inconvenience. As a consequence, there was now a £20,000 projected deficit for that repayment. At the moment it was unclear where the money was coming from but it was likely to come from the school’s budget.

In addition, Universal Free School meals (U/FSM) had been miscalculated by about £8,000 and the SBM would find out exactly what school would have to repay. This would mean that school would be heading to a £30,000 deficit, which was an additional stress on the school’s finances which were not related to the school’s own financial management. The Chair commented that schools could not be held responsible for underpayment of staff: the money should be recouped from the LA. A governor agreed that schools needed to come together and lobby the LA.

The Headteacher stated that school was currently in a crisis & operational management position rather than strategically leading. She had spoken to Carol Thomas, external SIP, who commented that all head teachers were finding it extremely challenging to lead school due to the significant issues they are facing. There had been a lot of bubble closures over the past three or four weeks so staff had not had sufficient time to prepare the curriculum for September 2021 due to several self-isolating and the lack of together time as a team. The staffing team were very stressed and asked governors if, on Monday 26 July, school could be closed to children and revert to online learning so that teachers could prepare the curriculum. Governors agreed that it was a reasonable adjustment: teachers needed to try to reclaim some lost time, although the Chair commented that they needed to consider the impact of the late notice on parents. However, there was potential for Mr Williams to run a school sports club in the event of any emergency. Most of the September INSET focused on safeguarding so this was not a viable alternative option.

RESOLVED: To close the school to children on 26 July and revert to online learning in order to

prepare the curriculum for September 2021

Staff had planned a Y6 leaving assembly outside on Friday 23 July. The SBM would ask for parental feedback regarding permission to have the Y6 children going around school to collect signatures and say their goodbyes.

1. **IT issues**

IT issues had been discussed in detail at the Governing Board meeting held on 21 June 2021. The Headteacher reminded governors that the she had requested Chair’s action to order the server and laptops for teachers which were on route. This was a priority as they did not want resources delayed to prevent school opening in September. Steve Gallagher and Tony from Intel Tech had been in school to do a back-up so school was in a much better position.

Louise Astbury had started work on the digital curriculum. This would look at a three year financial costing to be approved at the autumn term Finance, Personnel and Premises committee meeting. Intel Tech were asked to look at investment per annum so that school was aware of future spending, although the Headteacher hoped that some Pupil Premium (PP) funding could also be used.

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| Q | Are you going to get the conditions loan? |
| HT | No, we do not want to enter into a loan. |
| Q | Has anyone taken over maintenance of the website? |
| HT | The Vice Chair had brought to our attention concerns about the website. We have chosen Schudio who are currently in the process of helping us to transfer documentation. [The Headteacher] and Adam Booth met to discuss transferral of documentation or whether to start again and the latter option was preferred. We have come up with a list of new buttons for drop down menus and picked what we want the website to look like. We will send documents so we can launch a new website in September 2021. |
| Q | Have we used the government’s compliance information for the website? |
| HT | The new company run a diagnostic report, which tells us if we are compliant; if not then an email goes direct to the Headteacher. We will get alerts when documents are due for renewal. |

The Headteacher shared her screen to show a similar website for Middleton Parish Church School in Rochdale. The new website would celebrate Buckton Vale Primary School as there were so many wonderful things happening in school.

1. **Office extension**

The Headteacher referred to the costs for IT and suggested that the work to the office extension was delayed, but asked governors for their decision. The current quote for work was between £10-12,000, which would use all the capital funding, some of which had been earmarked for IT improvements. The Headteacher asked governors if they should delay the project or add to the deficit budget.

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| Q | We have a new hybrid way of working. Could we continue to share rotas? |
| HT | We are currently managing it with a rota but sometimes Lisa & Carol have to work together on something, such as banking, so Jackie needs to be in the office. We could plan strategically that the office staff could use the Headteacher’s office at certain times. |
| JB | Storage space is insufficient in the office, we need more space for computers. |
| Q | Can we do anything to resolve that in the short term? |
| JB | I am limited because I cannot show my screen to the public |
| Q | You still have an issue with ventilation. The office does not meet HSE regulations in terms of space and ventilation |

Governors agreed that the project should be delayed. Quotes would be taken to the Finance, Personnel and Premises Committee at the meeting on 22 November 2021 for consideration.

RESOLVED: To defer the decision regarding the office extension to the Finance, Personnel and

Premises Committee meeting on 22 November 2021, therefore delaying the alterations that had previously been planned over summer.

1. **Staffing Structure**

The LA wanted the Headteacher to consider a merged class of Y2/3 children, which would mean that children were mixed in key stages. Staff were concerned that the merging of key stages would bring additional complications and rejected the request. Children had gone through a very challenging time in their education with significant periods in lockdown and bubble closures. There were further issues with the current Y1 cohort, both nationally and locally. It was widely known that the current Y1 cohort were a cohort of concern as they missed Reception in the summer term, then spring term of their first year. Consequently, there were significant concerns regarding phonics, social development academic attainment and behaviour. There was an increased percentage of SEND children in the cohort. The current Y1 was 28 children and the SLT had decided to go with two small Y2 cohorts. The LA wanted the Headteacher to put eight children into the Y3 cohort and, after much deliberation, staff had decided it would not work. Staff had made a potentially controversial decision to stay with 10 classes for next year. The Headteacher had the choice to meet the needs of the budget or the needs of the children and she had chosen the latter. There would be no savings on the staffing budget for 2021/22 but there were some savings which would be shared at the next Finance, Personnel and Premises Committee meeting.

The Chair commented that the Governing Board would be planning for a reduction in the PAN to 30 for autumn 2022. School would have no choice but to restructure for September 2022 and the Headteacher anticipated that some staff would move on before that time. However, she and the external School Improvement Partner had looked at the current support staff structure, particularly in relation to SEND support. The Governing Board would consider whether the current support staff structure was fit for purpose in September in preparation for the 30 PAN in 2022.

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| *Meeting details* |  |
| *Time started* | *1630* |
| *Time finished* | *1700* |

**ACTIONS ARISING FOLLOWING AN EXTRAORDINARY GOVERNING BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13 JULY 2021**

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| **Min** | **Resp** | **Action** | **Date/Audience** |
| 2 | Clerk | Consideration of office extension quotes | FPPC – 22.11.2021 |
| 3 | GB | Consideration of support staff structure | GB – autumn term |