**Isle of Ely Primary School**

**Local Governing Board**

**Minutes of the Meeting**

***held on Thursday 12th January 2017***

Present: Mrs B Surtees (Head)

Dr D Knox (Acting Chair)

Mrs M Lloyd (via telephone)

Mrs S Peachey (arrived at 6.00pm)

Mr S Dove

Ms C Amory (arrived at 6.00pm)

Mrs K Marriott

Mr A Sanderson

In Attendance: Mrs J. Sanders (Clerk)

Ms. T Mason (School Business Manager)

Apologies: Mr D Marriott

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| ***Item*** | ***Notes*** | ***Action*** |
| 1. | **Finance Report**  TM presented a brief Finance Report to LGB members able to attend, prior to the main LGB meeting, as there has been some significant movement which will have an effect on the forecasted year-end figures.  TM said that the budget for this year is very tight, and the forecasted year-end figures are not going to be as good as previously hoped. There have been many reasons for this. In explanation:  **Funding** - clawback equals c. £91K. County have matched up to £82K but the school will have to make up the shortfall.  **Staffing** – there have been numerous staffing issues in the first term which have been previously documented. This means that extra costs have been incurred, especially with supply staff where more has been spent than originally budgeted for. There has been a need for additional PPA cover. BS explained that teachers are allowed time for PPA (Planning, Preparing & Assessment) which takes the form of non-contact time in class. This time is being covered by the Dance/PE sessions. Questions arising included:  AS - did the fact that the swimming sessions went on for longer than the anticipated amount of weeks have any impact? **TM said that the only costs to the school were for the buses used.**  TM explained to the LGB that during the year the school would be able to make some savings on staffing costs moving forward. This has come about due to a full-time TA having left the school. Instead of replacing in full, Ms Butterfield will be increasing her hours by a few extra a week and a part-time TA will be employed. This is expected to save approximately £15K by the end of the year.  **Cleaning contract** – There has been an under-estimation of the amount of hours needed to keep on top of a school this size. Not having a caretaker in place for the months of November & December has not helped and the contracted hours had to be increased. These hours are due to be reduced from February half-term. Questions arising included:  AS – is there any scope for the caretaker to take it on from now rather than waiting until February. **TM replied that at the moment the back-log of caretaking tasks created by the position being vacant for those months is such that the caretaker really cannot have hours away from. She went on to say that the school are considering the possibility of employing in-house cleaners rather than contracted services but that this needs further investigating to ascertain costs to the school.**  **Nursery** – BS explained that the figures for the school are affected as the Nursery costs are also reported in with the school costs. BS explained that she would like the Nursery to have a separate budget but that the Trust want it within the school. At the moment it appears that that the Nursery is running at a loss and that the school is supporting the Nursery.  TM informed the LGB that actually it appears that the school could get an extra £11.5K in funding than anticipated due to an increase of the number of pupils. We have 33 children currently accessing sessions rather than the 26 we originally based our figures on, the Nursery can have 52 children on site at any one time. This should hopefully help to make the Nursery break even at the end of the year as a minimum.  AS – noted that the figures that had been circulated didn’t appear to include any expenditure for everyday equipment etc. **TM explained that at the moment consumables are coming out of a grant received last year that still has some funds remaining.**  DK – asked how far off are the sessions from being full? **It was explained that the morning sessions are reasonably OK but that the afternoon sessions are down in numbers. From September parents can access 30hrs of childcare, rather than the 15hrs accessible now. This could prove to be beneficial in households where both parents work, and hopefully more sessions will be accessed.**  AS – asked if the school needs to ‘market’ the Nursery and employ. **BS said that at the moment she is happy with the situation as it is. As this is such a new venture, she wants to be able to look at the situation and take the time to perfect and tighten things up. The school also want to see how and if the extra hours available to parents from September impact on the Nursery. Moving forward, she would like to be in a position to offer ‘wrap-around’ care like the main school does. If that becomes a viable prospect then obviously that would need to be marketed and extra staff would be needed.**  BS asked TM if she could continue recording the Nursery budget separately as she has done so far. It would make things easier to keep a track of, and see how their figures are affecting the overall budget management report.  **17/18 Budget**  DK – asked that looking forward towards 17/18 budget planning whether or not there would be a better idea of costs, notwithstanding the maintenance contract which is unknown at the moment. **TM said that she has already made inroads on budget planning for next year, and that yes the information from this year has been factored in so the school will have a better idea. The one thing that could not be factored in was the problems with the staffing.**  AS – asked whether or not it has to be ‘accepted’ that there is inevitably going to be some unknowns that may hit. **BS explained that most things that had previously not been accounted for in 16/17 budget are now in place for the future. BS explained that with the staffing problems being totally unexpected and the cost of agency staff, when advertising vacant teaching posts she wanted the best staff she could get but that this obviously means that the salaries are perhaps more than had been budgeted for.** ML suggested that perhaps the budget should be planned at the top-end so that if there are any issues the money is already there.  DK – asked how much income was generated from lettings. **BS said that there are a few regular lettings now, but the biggest problem is having someone able to open/close up the premises during evenings and weekends. There are lettings on Monday, Thursday & Sunday which are all covered.**  AS – asked if the earning potential had been investigated. Would it not be considered remiss if it wasn’t? DK – Especially in the light of how tight the budgets are. **BS agreed that it should be looked into and a discussion took place regarding other facilities in the area that generate income through letting out available space. BS asked TM if she could please look into this and instructed JS to add this item to the agenda for the Resources meeting in February.**  ML concluded the finance report meeting by thanking BS & TM for all their hard work in producing figures that reflect the position of the school, and in their efforts to find savings in this financial year. They were also thanked for the work already underway in preparing the next academic budget so much earlier than in previous years. The LGB seconded this. | **TM**  **TM**  **JS** |
| 2. | **Absence**  ***1.1 Apologies for absence***  Apologies were received from DM.  ***1.2 Consent/Non-consent to absence***  It was agreed to accept the apologies as given. |  |
| 3. | **Declarations of Pecuniary & Non-Pecuniary Interest**  ***2.1 Declaration of any pecuniary or other interest with regard to items on the agenda***  No new interests were declared.  ***2.2 To update the register of Pecuniary Interest***  No updates required at this time. |  |
| 4. | **Chair’s Action**  There were no Chair’s actions to report at this time. |  |
| 5. | **Minutes**  ***4.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 20th October***  The minutes of the last meeting held on Thursday 24th November were confirmed as a true record.  ***4.2 Matters arising from the minutes***  There were no matters arising from the minutes. |  |
| 6. | **Academy Improvement**  ***6.1* Isle of Ely Review (ALT – Nov/Dec)**  BS referred governors to the report from Anne McCormick, Cambridgeshire Hub Lead, circulated prior to the meeting. BS explained that the school had undergone three reviews. The first of these was in November, and BS was not happy with the conclusions. A second visit took place in December with a third in January. Questions arising from the report included:  DK – Regarding Year 2 targets, is it still ‘aspirational’ to meet the National standard. Should target say ‘exceed’? **BS that quite possibly yes it should say exceed. With all the changes in assessment last year, some results may have not been quite as would have wanted. Obviously these are targets, goals to aim for, and that of course we would want all children to do well and be above the National Average.**  DK – In ‘What went well’, what is meant by her comment regarding curriculum expectations? **BS said that in her own opinion, it meant that the school does well with its extended offers**  ML – asked if any data was kept regarding who attends (i.e. gender, ethnicity, PP etc)? **BS said that there wasn’t at the moment, but that she could get something together ready for the next meeting. There was a discussion about PP children accessing the extended offer. BS said that had received an offer of some free places possibly available for PP but would need to confirm how many and then arrange to get this offer out there – maybe via the newsletter or the school website.**  SD – In ‘Next Steps’, what is meant by her comment regarding continue to develop governor involvement? **BS said that it means to continue what we are doing now, with the governor visits and challenging questions at our LGB meetings. BS told the LGB that she has plans to have teachers attending LGB meetings over the next few half-terms to present to the governors.**  SP – Why were you not happy with the original review? **BS said the main outcomes from the first review was that the T & L could be improved, and maybe the curriculum needed tweaking. Following this review, heavy monitoring was put in place between November and December.**  ML - asked how did the staff respond to this? **BS said that the staff were disappointed, obviously, but raised their game and things were improving. However, on Tuesday, an external review was carried out by Liz Tennant and very similar observations were made again. In light of this BS said that she had reviewed the time spent at the school and with immediate effect she was now going to spend 4 days in Ely and one in Chesterton. She is planning to hold individual meetings with staff and create new actions plans to move things forward. BS said that the staff did have a phased meeting without the Headteacher or Head of School as it was thought that people may be more honest without them present. It did start off with everyone airing their grievances, but actually by the end of it all there were some really useful ideas that came out of it which are going to try and be implemented. This will also go some way to showing the staff that they are listened to and that their opinions matter.**  **A discussion then took place about what comments were coming out of the meeting. BS said that some staff are possibly finding the work/life balance difficult. KM explained that staff coming in to a new school will find that the approach is completely different rather than finding employment in a well-established school which already has its own routines and ways of doing things. BS explained that she doesn’t ‘sell’ the school any differently now than she did in the beginning. It was wondered if there was need to make things clearer during the interview process; to make sure that new employees realise that the school is still emerging and growing and that everything is constantly being looked at, and if necessary, things will change to ensure that the school is providing the best possible teaching and learning for the children. SP commented that with the school growing at both ends, then it is expected that this will bring its own challenges.**  AS – asked if the staff felt that they were being ‘blocked’ with creativity. **BS said that she was happy to listen and welcomes suggestions. Moving forward, there will be display boards and canvasses going up in the corridors. Key Stage Leaders, under a ‘vision’ from BS will meet and will discuss. The curriculum document is to be adjusted to take into consideration some of the good ideas that are coming out of these meetings.**  BS was asked how much classroom help there was for teachers and what forms did it take. **BS replied that every class has a TA and reiterated the plans to cover the vacancy left by Ms Wodehouse. MH, as a HLTA, is working for 2 days a week in the Butterflies class and does 2.5 days a week working on interventions. KM commented that whilst they welcome help and support from parent helpers, it is sometimes felt that they have a hidden agenda i.e. perhaps wanting to watch their own child. External volunteers normally seem to be formed of those thinking of a career in teaching so want to get some practical experience of the roles, they have no agenda.**  BS was also asked how many times the school is reviewed, and AS also asked if these had cost implications for the school. **BS said that the school is reviewed at least termly by A McCormick (ALT Hub Lead for Cambridgeshire Schools) and J Parke (ALT Director of Primary Standards). There is no cost to the school for these as these are ALT staff. Once a year there will be an external review (as in Liz Tennant), someone who has a good understanding of the OFSTED framework, which is commanded by ALT so they bear the cost of this. The only cost to the school is if the Headteacher instructs an external review.**  This section concluded with SP congratulating BS in her quick action in making the differences outlined as needing in the reviews. The LGB seconded this.  **6.2 Standards and Progress**  BS referred the Governors to the Raise on-line report circulated prior to the meeting. SD noted that the report did not really did not contain a lot of data. The LGB agreed.  DK – noted that the Year 1 Phonics Screening results were good as was the Early Years GLD.  SD – noted that the absences not so good. **BS said that the level of absences was coming down and that as previously mentioned in other meetings CA does an awful lot of work tracking the absences and as such the attendance figures are rising.**  DK – asked could it be that with the school being in such a good socio-economic background that it is more a ‘parent-problem’ contributing to absences rather than children not wanting to come to school. **CA commented that local authorities are now finding it increasingly difficult to fine parents now after a judgement in a landmark case, so there is no real deterrent for people to not take children out of school during term-time.**  AS – informed the LGB that he had recently undergone some Raise on-line training providing by the County Council and was informed that the system ceases to exist from March 2017 so this is probably the one and only report they will see!  16/17 Data  EYFS – 74% currently on track to achieve GLD. The target is 83%  Year 1 – It was noted (DK) that there seems to be a wider spread over the different levels. **BS said that by the end of Christmas it would be expected that children would be at 1 beginning or 1 beginning +. The figures do appear slightly high and may need looking at. Reading in Year 1 is better than Writing & Maths. There is a lot of reading and phonics work which may contribute to this. The cohort of boys didn’t achieve ELG in writing. Holly is working on Big Writing with Year 1. Year 1 progress data not reported at the moment as some of the data is missing due to one of the teachers only starting in October. The data can be back-filled so progress should be able to be reported next time.**  Year 2 – It was noted (DK) that the Year 2 levels stop at Developing +. **BS said that this is more realistic as the cohort move through Year 2 from Year 1.**  **6.3 Review the SEF**  BS referred the Governors to the SEF as there were changes made to it in December 2016. **BS explained that she had downgraded her SEF following the recent reviews. The data looks good at the moment but there is a lot of work needed to get back to where they were previously. It is good that the issues have been raised now as the school is due an OFSTED inspection so there is a chance to make changes before then. BS said she cannot argue the case for outstanding at the moment; the school needs to get back to a solid ‘good’ and move on from there.** | **BS** |
| 7. | **Governor visits**  **7.1 To receive reports from recent Governor visits**  BS referred to the various reports submitted by those who had undertaken recent visits. BS informed the Governors that Liz Tennant had commented favourably about the visits and how challenging the Governors were.  SP – said how much she had enjoyed meeting with Miss Playle, and was disappointed to hear that she had left the school. Do we know why? **BS said that Miss Playle had been struggling with the work/life balance. It is also thought that there may have been some external pressures that had some bearing on the decision. Miss Playle has decided to continue with supply teaching for the time being.**  DK – had met with Place 2 Be previously, and had also undertaken a visit to see how Maths was taught in the school. A discussion took place as to whether there was any evidence of any impact that P2B is having.  **BS said that it is very hard to see. P2B are able to produce lots of data and analysis of progress within the P2B room, but that it is not necessarily showing itself in the classroom. BS also said that Marilyn Toft from ALT wants to meet with Governors to talk about P2B.** BS was asked whether or not P2B was at risk, given the budget constraints. **BS said that it was only at risk if the school really needed to save money. The balance has to be worked out against the cost of the service against the support it is providing. KM says that she meets with them on a weekly basis but the feedback is only ever general.** AS – asked whether or not there is a possibility of an ‘abuse’ of the expensive time by children that perhaps just want to chat. Are we sure that the right children are getting the support if places are limited. **KM explained about ‘bubble time’ which can take place in the classroom, almost as a ‘triage’ service for children who may have things on their mind that they want to talk about. They would put their names down and then get invited to talk. In much the same way, children can self-refer to P2B. When KM meets with them, they look to see if the same names are cropping up and then a decision can be made if there is more of a support need.** ML pointed out that we should also ascertain whether there any contractual obligations that had to be fulfilled in the extreme event that the school had to consider pulling the service i.e. notice period, or contracted for a certain amount of time, and suggested that it may be prudent to invite P2B to the next LGB |  |
| 8. | **Term & PD dates for 2017/18**  ***8.1* For consideration by the LGB**  BS had previously circulated a list of term dates for next year, along with proposed PD days, but then informed the LGB that she had come up with another idea. This would involve the staff coming back earlier (end August) and putting the PD days there, and perhaps finishing teaching a little earlier at the Christmas break.  Following a discussion, and the proposal from Ms Lloyd, the LGB agreed to support the Headteacher in whatever plan she saw fit and agreed that anything that would help to support the staff would be acceptable to them. BS will inform the LGB of the dates once she has discussed with the staff and finalised. | **BS** |
| 9. | **DfE Information**  ***9.1 To note any updates from the Need To Know area of the DfE website.***  <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/toolsandinitiatives/cuttingburdens/b00216133/need-to-know-schools> |  |
| 10. | **Any Other Business**  None at this time. |  |
| 11. | ***Dates of Next Meetings***  Future meetings were agreed as follows:  Local Governing Body: ***Wednesday 1st February @ 6.00pm (Resources focus)***  Thursday 2nd March @ 6.00pm  Thursday 27th April @ 6.00pm  ***Wednesday 17th May @ 6.00pm (Resources focus)***  Thursday 15th June @ 6.00pm |  |