

## Holly Park School – Finance & Premises Committee Meeting Agenda

Date : Monday 8<sup>h</sup> February 2021

Present: Ann Pelham, Janis Hassan, Anna Sherrington, Maria Michael, Fiona Quinton, Clare Wischhusen, Clare Hegarty (Chair), Nicky Eimer, Tim Graveney

Apologies: Simon Reid

AGENDA ITEMS	KEY DISCUSSION POINTS	ACTION (who? /timescale?)
<p><b>Actions from last meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Janis to complete forecast</li> <li>• Ann to contact HR re changing hours of nursery TA</li> <li>• Ann to contact Neil Marlow re support for income lost due to COVID</li> <li>• Clare to keep fundraising on the agenda</li> <li>• Tim &amp; Janis to speak to John Harte re fundraising beyond this year</li> <li>• Maria to contact Norfolk Lakes about position on cancelling if</li> </ul>	<p>Quarter 2 completed.</p> <p>Done. TA now working 1 – 1 with child further up the school. This will probably continue.</p> <p>There is no support for this. We will receive £10,000 support around COVID from gvt that Barnet are distributing. This must be spent on COVID. Loss of income is not one of the criteria for this we don't think. We are holding off spending until it is clear what it can be spent on. It will be carried forward. We will have to keep an eye on expenditure as we will have to report on what is has been used for.</p> <p>Done</p> <p>John Harte has now left the Governing Body. There is a PTA fundraising meeting on Thursday at 4.00 p.m. with the people on the original fundraising committee to talk this through. Further fundraising must be at the right time. People' s appetite for it must be considered. John Harte could assist although he is not included in this committee at present. Amanda is driving this forward.</p> <p>Maria has done this. Norfolk Lakes would reimburse, but the advice from</p>	

<p>we were to go ahead and book</p>	<p>Barnet Insurance was not to go ahead with booking this year. We have therefore cancelled but have booked for next year (2022).</p>	
<p>I. Policies to be reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health &amp; Safety</li> <li>• Adverse Weather</li> <li>• Lettings</li> <li>• Pest Control</li> <li>• Charging</li> <li>• Financial Management</li> <li>• Loan of School Equipment (NEW)</li> </ul>	<p>Comments were sent to Ann from Clare Hegarty and Fiona Quinton.</p> <p><b>A governor raised the issue of the new policy – Loan for School Equipment (loan of laptops to children). The committee will need to review how this is going.</b></p> <p>27 laptops were available. 19 have been issued so far. They were intended for disadvantaged children, however, we have moved beyond this and offered to families who have no devices or where they have one device between 2 or 3 children.</p> <p><b>A governor asked if this was enough laptops?</b></p> <p>We are managing. It is more than adequate at present. More will be available to us in the next few weeks enabling us to loan them to other families. We had a child using a phone and one whose screen was smashed. We were able to help them. We have said yes to everyone who has applied so far.</p> <p><b>A governor asked if we will be able to keep ahead of demand? Is this the first time we have loaned equipment?</b></p> <p>We did not loan any equipment during the first lockdown. We could not loan school equipment due to insurance reasons.</p> <p>This time the laptops are specifically to be loaned to children but we must be sure that they are used for the reason intended. They will be returned to the school when children come back full time. We can foresee more Bubble closures in the future when these laptops could be used – maybe loaned 2 weeks at a time. We doubt that we will have to return them to Barnet. They are adequate – not top of the range and will not have a long life span.</p> <p><b>A governor asked if they could be used for non pandemic reasons. Could they be used for this further down the line.</b> This would be harder as it would not be a short-term loan, but it is a possibility. We would need advice and further information.</p>	

<p>2. School Budget  Review forecast and/or BBVAC  Look at continuing impact of school closure/COVID on school finances</p>	<p>Janis provided the Quarter 3 Forecast. The bottom line is that we predict ending the year with a £2,800 carry forward. We are not showing a deficit budget. This is shocking compared to previous years when we had £80,000 and £100,000 carry forwards.</p> <p>In calculating the forecast we have assumed all budgets spent. We are hoping that with some small savings to the end of the year we may carry forward £10,000.</p> <p>Looking at the Income. The deficit in I01 is due to less income from Barnet as we have fewer children in our Nursery and of those fewer taking up the 30 hour provision. In I08 due to the lower numbers and school closures due to COVID there is a shortfall income. In I05 there has been an adjustment to our pupil premium numbers resulting in a shortfall in this income.</p> <p>There is a big difference in the Barnet Funded places we predicted, than those we actually have - resulting in a massive difference. Had we got this money we would have had a surplus. Fewer parents have taken up the 30 hour offer, actual nursery numbers are low - less income and Breakfast Club numbers are low.</p> <p>There is a shortfall in swimming income. We can't ask parents to pay for something the children are not doing.</p> <p><b>A governor asked about School Meals income.</b> This will be down as the number of children taking a school meal is less due to school closures.</p> <p><b>A governor asked the true loss of income.</b> £162,977 We did not count swimming or meals in this figure.</p> <p><b>A governor asked if the extra COVID money had been included in this forecast.</b> No not in this financial year. There has been some COVID expenditure which has been shown in this forecast - this was from money spent in Summer 2020.</p> <p><b>A governor asked if there was anything due to come from Barnet regarding the loss of income particularly the loss of income due to Nursery places.</b></p> <p>No and people are not hopeful that there will be but it is a possibility in the longer term. Our Nursery is running at a loss. We may have to consider</p>	<p>Janis to work out Nursery costs - money in and money</p>

	<p>closing it. Ann has asked Janis to work out the costs.</p> <p>Two other local schools have indicated that they may have to close their Nurseries. The rest of the school is keeping the Nursery afloat. A few weeks ago we were told that we would only be funded for the children actually coming through the door – only 4 children were in. However, there was a change and we are now being funded this term for all the children with a Nursery place. Numbers are very low. It is a trend across Barnet but we don't know why. If we had not been funded in this way, the Nursery would have had to close in September. After we have set the new budget, we hope to keep it going for another year. There could be a longer strategic plan – if other Nurseries are closing there could be more children wanting to come to Holly Park. We hope to keep the Nursery open but it will be depended on our Budget. We cannot have a negative budget. Barnet would ask us to provide a 3 year recovery plan. We may have to lose the Nursery. We have been in this situation previously but the introduction of the 30 hours helped us. Hopefully, numbers will rise.</p> <p><b>A governor felt this was a common problem across Barnet. Barnet would not want to see Nursery close and children going to private provision.</b></p> <p>Barnet advisors now have to cover both state and private Early Years provision. Not sure the closing of nurseries would be so important</p> <p><b>A governor felt that private funding must also be affected.</b></p> <p>Some parents will choose private provision over school nurseries as they provide year round care and longer hours. There is a surfeit of private nurseries around Holly Park.</p> <p>We have overspent on E03. This is due to Unified Rewards pay increases for support staff which were larger than anticipated. These were not performance related but inflation related.</p> <p>Overall we are showing a slight improvement in our carry forward figures from £300 in Quarter 2 to £2800 in Quarter 3. We are not likely to have a big carry forward. At the Quarter 2 forecast we had to slash expenditure budgets to balance.</p> <p>One area where COVID school closure is saving some money is supply i.e. A teacher has been off with post COVID symptoms for some time but we have</p>	<p>spent</p> <p>Monitor nursery finances over 2021/22</p>
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<p>Nursery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breakfast Club</li> <li>• After-school club</li> </ul> <p>Pupil Premium funding</p>	<p>not had to replace them with a supply teacher.</p> <p>A governor felt that the small savings on resources have helped us not to be in a deficit position.</p> <p>Governors should note that there is grave concern for next year’s budget. We always have an in-year deficit. We could not balance with just the amount given to us from Barnet. The carry forward and income from extended day etc help us to have a balanced budget. The carry forward helped particularly, but we will not have that for the next budget.</p> <p>When working on the budget we will have to take the lower numbers we now have for Breakfast Club and Extended Day which means this income will be much lower than previously. Ann is most concerned that we will not be able to produce a balanced budget. It will be hard to balance.</p> <p>A governor pointed out that the carry forward for 2020/21 was healthy. Yes, it was. We budgeted £80,000 but the outturn was actually over £100,000</p> <p>A governor asked if the carry forward helped. Yes, it did.</p> <p>We predict this year’s carry forward will be £10,000 at best.</p> <p>Covered above</p> <p>Ann, Tim and Clare to have a meeting with Caroline to discuss at an appropriate time in the future</p> <p>We are waiting for the new budget to see what this will be. Adjustments are made throughout the year. This year’s bulge class leaving affected the income. Numbers go up and down and adjustments are made accordingly.</p> <p>A governor asked if we forecast that the pupil premium numbers will be down. We have lost a bulge year and fewer pupil premium children are coming through.</p> <p>A governor asked if the guidelines for eligibility have changed. Yes, it is harder to qualify to receive pupil premium. An example – if we have 19 pupil premium children leave in year 6 and only 5 pupil premium children come into Reception we will have lost 15 children. This will impact on our</p>	
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<p>Indicative budget for 21/22</p>	<p>budget.</p> <p>A governor asked how we spend this money in general and in lockdown.</p> <p>Staff – this continued during COVID</p> <p>Richard Gordon, and Sally Thomas support pupil premium children</p> <p>Pupil Tracker</p> <p>HEWS – Heath and Emotional Well Being service</p> <p>Books</p> <p>Anything not spent will roll over into the new financial year. We have to be able to show what this money has been spent on as we could be audited on this.</p> <p>A governor asked if it is harder to have an impact on these children are out of school. Yes, it is.</p> <p>A governor asked if new pupil premium children get the funding straight away. No, it lags behind the census information.</p> <p>A governor asked if the funding was backdated. It will be backdated to the census where the child/children first appeared. Census dates are October, January and June.</p> <p>A governor asked if Ann had received the indicative budget for next year.</p> <p>Yes, we have. Not good or bad – middle of the road. It has been based on the same numbers as last year. We will not be losing a bulge class this year so there will be no impact on the budget due to this. We have been given more money per pupil. 20/21 we were given £1,885,613 For 21/22We have been given £2008,651 for the next financial year. This is approx. £122,000 more than previous year. This will not go far taking into account salaries. We will be starting in a similar situation to this year.</p> <p>When our present bulge class leaves this will have another impact on our budget. We need to be mindful of this.</p>	
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<p>4. 3 year budget plan</p>	<p>The chair said that this is a standing item. We should look at this when budgeting this year.</p> <p>The tool we use for budgeting predicts a 3 year plan, but it always comes out badly. It just carries everything forward and shows the in-year deficit getting bigger and bigger. With the carry forward smaller - it is a grim outlook.</p> <p>A governor agreed that these tools always tell a bad story. A bulge class will be going within this time frame and nursery numbers down we need to plan ahead.</p>	
<p>5. SFVS</p>	<p>All schools do this in January. Barnet collates this information and then passes it on to the DfE. This ensures that schools have procedures in place for financial matters. When Audit visit a school they look at this document and agree or not. Our Auditor last year agreed with our SFVS. Nothing has changed much since then and it is an accurate reflection of the school.</p> <p>Ann pointed out one point from it - that technically only Tim and Clare Hegarty are actual members of the Finance Committee but to be quorate we have to have more members.</p> <p>This year we can send this to Barnet in May but Ann will send in the next week or so as the SFVS is based on current budget.</p> <p>The second part of the SFVS compares schools in Barnet. There is the DfE benchmarking tool which will compare 3 or 4 schools across the country with a similar make up to ours – size, cohorts, etc. It gives an overall picture.</p> <p>Our spending on teaching is in the highest 10% of similar schools. The reason for this is that teachers rarely leave, meaning we have a staff who are experienced but expensive. This is good for stability and quality of teaching but not so good for our Budget.</p> <p>A governor felt the document was good for governors. Our average teacher costs are broadly in line with other schools but pupil to teacher ratio high.</p> <p>A governor felt that benchmarking is a bit like a “rabbit hole” . However, it is useful to see where it takes the school and to compare locally. Would be useful to explore this.</p> <p>Not sure how we would do this. Our class size shows in the highest 10%.</p> <p>A governor thought this could be because we are full.</p>	<p>Ann to send SFVS to Barnet</p>

	<p>We spend more on supply staff than other schools. We are in the lowest 10% for spending on teacher resources. We spend more on teaching, which affects how much we can spend on resources.</p> <p>A governor asked which would be the best way to take this forward other than observe.</p> <p>Probably observe. We have the teachers we have. In 8 years since Ann became Head the number of staff has gone down. We used to have a lot of staff supporting children.</p> <p>A governor felt this could be part of the 3 year plan. We could identify where we could make cuts.</p> <p>A governor gave clarification regarding Tim and Clare Hegarty and the Finance Committee. Previously John Harte and Michael Crooks were on the committee also. It is good to have 6 other governors also at this meeting.</p> <p>A governor asked if teachers are concerned about resources.</p> <p>No. We are spending less and less but we do buy new resources each year. We are not short of resources. We have accommodated all requests people have asked for. Staff are more careful.</p>	
<p>6. Finance Audit Actions</p>	<p>Clare Hegarty asked Janis to send her a copy of the Audit Report.</p> <p>There are several actions. The Private Funds still need to be audited – the final audit. Ann would like these done before Janis retires. There is more information needed to be put on the Inventory.</p> <p>A governor asked if Andrew Ballam Davies could do the Audit. Ann did ask him, but he is not able to. Ann has someone else in mind.</p>	<p>Janis to send a copy of the audit report</p>
<p>7. Contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catering</li> <li>• Cleaners</li> </ul>	<p>Educo is managing these well. Janis and Ann have termly meetings which gives the opportunity to discuss how things are going.</p> <p>We do have a new Photocopier contract. Janis obtained quotes from 3 companies all recommended by other schools. Tim, Clare and Ann chose the Best Value one. We have 3 new machines which do all the printing. Staff are very happy. We must keep on top of this and upgrade or renew before the machines are out of date.</p> <p>The old company were excellent at maintaining and visiting to sort out any</p>	<p>Janis to chase the removal of the old copiers.</p>

	<p>problems. The recommendation from the other school was that the new company are very good too.</p> <p>A governor asked how the start of the contract went.</p> <p>Not so well. Two machines came without Wi Fi attached. It was a hiccough and was resolved. All is well now.</p>	
<p>8. FSM Hampers &amp; Vouchers</p>	<p>There was a Barnet COVID Winter Fund. This allocated money to needy families at £63 per child to be spent on food or fuel for 3 weeks over xmas. There was a new voucher system for this, which Michelle managed.</p> <p>When we went into lockdown in January the FSM children received Hampers for the first 4 weeks. These were supplied by Caterlink. The government then introduced vouchers. This is the system we have opted to use. The parents prefer this and it is easier for the school and the kitchen. When we have hampers the cost comes out of our FSM income. The government pay for the vouchers.</p> <p>There will be a voucher for winter fund again over the half term week for needy families. Michelle will manage this.</p> <p>During Bubble closures we must provide hampers for the FSM children not vouchers. We did this last term when Y4 and Y6 had to close.</p> <p>The take-up of hampers has been poor. 79 children were entitled to hampers (6 were in school). 73 were left to be collected. Only 23 did so. Parents are saying they do not need the food and to give it to someone else. The need at Holly Park is not high, but there are families in need who do not qualify for FSM. If a family are in receipt of working tax credits they will not qualify even if their income is very low.</p> <p>A charity in Barnet provided Christmas presents for disadvantaged children. About 60 parents collected these – far more than the hampers.</p> <p>A governor asked if we are able to monitor the take-up of the vouchers.</p> <p>Yes, we can. They have a 2 week expiry date. Some are still not using them.</p>	

	<p>There is not 100% take-up – but its quite a bit higher than hampers.  <b>A governor asked how they work.</b> They get a code on-line and this can be used in a shop or on-line.  <b>A governor asked if the hampers were not collected because parents were isolating.</b>  <b>No. A governor asked how we knew this.</b> We gave them lots of reminders and asked if perhaps a friend could collect for them. Many called the school to discuss  <b>A governor asked if there was a way we could ask those entitled whether or not they will take up this provision.</b>  We cannot do this.</p> <p>A group of Holly Park parents got together to raise money at Christmas for families in need. They raised over £700. Six families benefited from this. They were emailed a voucher and Ann sent a covering letter. Only 2 acknowledged receipt of this.</p> <p><b>A governor felt it was worrying that people are getting help who do not need it and those who do possibly need help get nothing.</b>  <b>A governor asked if pupils are slipping through the net of being in school.</b>  Low income and FSM or Pupil premium children are not classed as a criteria for being in school. They should be Key Worker children, EHCP or Vulnerable (have a Social Worker). We have invited some children in to school who we consider to be vulnerable and some EAL children whose parents are unable to help them due to language barriers. Laptops have also been a help.</p>	
<p>9. Fundraising</p>	<p>We are about to re-consider this. The playground project was very successful. £32,000 was raised. We are considering another fund-raiser for this year – ICT - the infrastructure in the school. It is not a good idea to do a big fund-raiser every year, but our IT needs updating. Ann asked for governor’s opinions.  <b>A governor felt that we will be less likely to get engagement. Children are not in school. We should wait until children return and parents would be</b></p>	<p>Fundraising committee to meet before half term for initial meeting</p>

likely to contribute more.

We will need to do the work during the Summer Holidays, so we will either do it or leave it for another year.

A governor felt that parents may not be in a good mental place at the moment. Agrees that the work will have to be done in the Summer Holidays, but is now the right time to fund- raise?

A governor asked if we could research to see what parents think about running another campaign, maybe through WHATSAPP groups.

A governor felt we should leave for a year as some family's finances are not secure.

A governor asked if we did not fund-raise for IT what else would inspire parents.

Nothing particular needed at the moment – this is a high priority.

A governor asked if the Laptops on loan would help

Not really it is the whole infrastructure - white boards, etc that needs an upgrade.

A governor pointed out that the server and software are out of date.

The fund raising will have to have spin - benefiting every child in the school. Hopefully parents would get behind ICT as it is modern and forward thinking.

A governor felt we could leave it or go ahead on the heels of the previous campaign. COVID may have scarred parents about the future. We could sound them out. How far ahead would we need to plan?

By Easter. We would need to book a company to come on site during the Summer Break. The money would need to be in place by July.

A governor felt we should have a live event when that possibility arises. It would be an opportunity to get people back together as a community.

We don't think we will be able to do this for the Summer Term. Social distancing will go on for a long time and no parental gatherings.

A governor felt that this could be a trigger to launch something. People are jaded. A more sociable event would give people the impetus to do something.

A governor asked what the ballpark figure is that we need to raise.

Just need to raise as much as possible and then see what we could do with

	<p>that. Would not be as much as last time. May be £20,000. We could do a lot with that.</p> <p>A governor asked how urgent this is.</p> <p>Quite urgent. Our server is on its last legs.</p> <p>A governor said that we will need to make it clear to parents that it is the whole IT infrastructure of the school.</p> <p>A governor said this will all be discussed at the meeting on Thursday with the PTA and Fund raising committee to carry this forward.</p> <p>A reminder that - It is not the role of the governors to fund raise for the school, but governors do need to be aware of it as a finance issue. This item should stay on the Agenda.</p>	
<p>10. Office restructure</p>	<p>Janis Hassan will retire at Easter. She gave a lot of notice and it was made public after Christmas. Ann and Janis agreed that it would be best not to replace her with a Business Manager. Things have changed a lot. Salaries and finance are more complex and it would be better to buy into the Barnet Schools Finance Service.</p> <p>We would have 1 Finance Assistant one day each week to do the day to day finance and 1 Schools Accountant every 2 weeks to monitor payroll, do the forecasts, end of year and attend daytime governing body meetings. Lots of schools do this. The staff have current, up to date, training and are experienced.</p> <p>We need to have an office restructure with a new Office Manager role. This person would do the other jobs Janis now does i.e., census, 30 hours, Single Central Record, Extended Day, etc.</p> <p>Ann had discussions with Tim and Clare, Janis, Barnet HR, Andrea, Michelle and Barnet Schools Accountancy.</p> <p>From April there will be two people in the office with Schools Accountancy. There is a potential for a third person working a few hours a week from September. This will result in a £20,000 saving to the school. The restructure document will be sent out today with a two-week consultation.</p> <p>A governor asked if Michelle Hounslow would be the Office Manager.</p> <p>There will be an internal recruitment and the likelihood will be that Michelle</p>	<p>Office restructure</p> <p>Followed by internal advert and recruitment process</p> <p>Barnet schools Accountancy to come into school for hand-over, A governor felt a hand-over with Janis will be a good thing. The Financial Management policy will be a good tool to use for the restructure.</p>

will get the job. She will complete the School Business Manager course in April. She is not ready for a School Business Manager Role yet. It is too much for her to take on Janis's role at this point in time. We can buy into the Barnet Finance package year on year. Later on down the line Michelle could take on more responsibility. This option gives us flexibility.

**A governor asked who will do the committee minutes.**

This is in the job description for an Office Manager. We asked Michelle to observe today as part of her course but also to see how Janis produces the minutes.

There will be an internal interview. Michelle has good IT skills. She is quick to learn and has lots of positive attributes.

**A governor asked whether she would line-manage**

Line management is not part of the Unified reward Office Manager job description, even at the highest level. We have to use the Unified Reward Job Description. The office manager would manage office resources, protocols, tasks etc – but not appraisal of staff.

**A governor asked why the role will be for 34 hours a week.**

We feel this is what we need. Janis does this now and Andrea does 35 hours which is the standard number of hours across the week.

**A governor asked how this will be divided across the week.**

It can be flexible to suit the school and the person.

**A governor checked that it is definitely 34 hours and no extra not paid for.**

It is 34 hours. It is a new situation with Schools Accountancy. In a year's time we may see things differently.

**A governor felt this is the right solution at the moment. Janis will be taking a lot of expertise with her and Barnet Accountancy do not know the school.**

**Having someone in the office who does is a good thing.**

We may need to look at the Business Manager role in the future with regard to the SMT. Simon does some things a Business Manager would do and if he left a Business Manager role could become a need. This solution gives us options. It is an evolving situation and we can see what we need in the future.

