



**Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the
FULL GOVERNING BODY
of Helsby High School**

Date:	Monday 15 th March 2021 at 5.00pm	
Venue:	Via Zoom Video Conferencing	
Present:	Ms G Fullbrook – Chair Dr A Morley – Vice Chair Mr M Hill Mrs F Miller Mr T O’Neill Mrs J O’Hare Mrs H Coy Mr A Wheeler Mr I Devereux-Roberts Ms R Clarke	Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Head Teacher LA Governor Co-opted Governor Parent Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Staff Governor
Absent:	Mr C Jennings Mr G Corker	
In attendance:	Mrs S Warburton Mr M Vickers John Addison	Deputy Head Teacher School Business Manager Clerk

The meeting met its quorum.

Decisions, actions and areas of challenge during discussions indicated in bold text

Agenda item 1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Discussion:	The Chair welcomed all present. An apology for absence was received and accepted from Mrs A Critchley

Mr Wheeler, as Chair of the Resources Committee here took the Chair

Agenda item 2	RESOURCES
Discussion:	<u>2021/22 Budget</u> The School Business Manager submitted the draft 2021/22 Budget for Governors approval. Governors were advised that with one month of the financial year remaining the School was on course to carry forward a significant surplus for reasons provided to Governors at previous meetings of the Governing Body. For the purpose of drafting the budget a carry forward of no less than £700,000 has been predicted. This could change as there was still some outstanding issues to be settled with local authority. This had allowed the School to prepare a draft budget with significant expenditure (using this surplus) in the following areas:

- A 1% pay award for all staff (providing the School with protection should that be agreed nationally).
- An additional £44,000 for extra staffing to assist with student recovery from COVID-19 (to be used if required).
- £225,000 for capital expenditure on the relocation and refurbishment of the Food Technology Department and to complete the fencing around the perimeter of the School [as per previous plans in line with the School's Site Improvement and Life Expectancy Plan (SILEX)]
- An additional £60,000 for exam fees, as the expectation was that some fees for the 2021 summer exam season would not be invoiced until after the new financial year began.
- An additional £50,000 set aside for Department and Subject Leaders to bid for support to aid the learning recovery from COVID-19 in their departments.
- £200,000 set aside for 2022 and beyond to provide some protection from possible falling income and rising costs (the 3 year plan demonstrated the need to set at least this amount aside)

This additional expenditure was discussed with SLT and some members of the Governing Body, including the Chair of Governors and Chair of the Resources Committee, prior to the production of the draft budget which was now presented to the Full Governing Body for consideration and approval.

The draft budget had been circulated for consideration and included a separate tab which provided detail on the proposed budget for each individual cost centre and supporting commentary (tab 2). The first page of the budget was the overall budget for 2021/22, as well as the predicted budgets for the following two years.

Income – The School's block funding had been confirmed for 2021/22 based on a census return of 1117 students in Years 7 to 11 (a reduction of 8 when compared with the previous year). However, there had been an increase of 34 FSM students when compared with 2019-20.

Despite the fall in student numbers compared to the previous year the School had still seen a significant increase in its' block funding of £423,555. This was a result of the Government's pledge to increase funding for Schools. However, this did include income towards the historic increased cost of pay and pensions for teachers which had previously been provided in the form of separate grants, outside the block funding calculation.

The 6th form funding had been confirmed though it had been reduced by £10,429 due to an error when the census was collected. School was currently in the process of making a case for that funding to be provided.

Other income had been estimated with the majority of which being received via the catering provision, based on 2019/20 levels rather than 2020/21. This was because of the long periods of lockdown when no income was earned from catering.

School had also reduced the estimated income from lettings, as the previous income received from Frodsham JFC would now go into the AGP project. Any income/expenditure incurred by the AGP sat outside this budget and would continue to do so until it was operational.

Expenditure –

Staffing – A budget had been set assuming that all current staff remained, received a pay increment if they were not at the top of their pay range and a 1% pay award for all (from April for support staff and September for teaching staff). Some additional funds were also included for staff to aid the recovery from COVID-19 if required. Also, included in the staffing budget, subject to agreement by the Governing Body, was provision for recruitment in some key areas of School.

Premises – A sum of £225,000 had been included for capital expenditure. The amount spent on

	<p>utilities had also been reduced to reflect actual spend in this area in 2019/20 (not 2020/21 due to lockdown). The budget for cleaning materials had been increased to reflect the expectation that School would continue to provide hand sanitisers, disinfectant sprays and paper towels/wipes for some time to come.</p> <p>Transport – A small reduction in spend had been made to reflect expenditure prior to lockdown.</p> <p>IT & communications – A small increase in spend in this area to reflect increasing costs in the various software platforms the School used.</p> <p>Other costs – A small increase in spend in this area to reflect that, due to the uncertainty surrounding this Summer’s exam season, School might not be invoiced by some awarding bodies until after April 2021, the start of the next financial year.</p> <p>Curriculum – An additional £50,000 had been set aside for Department and Subject Leaders to bid for additional funds to aid the recovery of learning following COVID-19 in their areas of responsibility. Also, an additional £33,000 of underspend from 2020-21 had been given back to the Departments in acknowledgement that they were unable to use these funds in the investment of their curriculum delivery as a result of lockdown, both in Summer 2020 and Spring 2021.</p> <p>Mr Wheeler commented that it was pleasing to see nearly £500,000 of investment in the School.</p>
Resolved:	That the draft 2021/22 Budget be approved.
Discussion	<p><u>Manual of Internal Financial Procedures</u></p> <p>At the request of the School Business Manager this item was deferred to the next meeting</p>
Discussion	<p><u>Staffing – Leadership Capacity</u></p> <p>The Headteacher advised Governors that it was not intended to make any changes to the Senior Leadership Team from September 2021 but 4 areas had been identified where additional leadership would be beneficial. These areas were as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and Technology; • Transition; • External Marketing; and • HR. <p>In respect of the Design and Technology Department following the departure of a member of the Food, Health and Social Care faculty the opportunity had been taken to review this area and it was proposed to merge Food Health and Social Care into Design and Technology and to strengthen leadership by the creation of a Deputy Departmental Leader for Design and Technology.</p> <p>In respect of Yr6 transition, it was planned that the current SENDCO would undertake much of the work in this area as part of liaison with primary schools around Yr6 children coming into School who had SEN issues. It was proposed to formalise this arrangement but in recognition of the additional responsibilities and also in recognition of the importance of the SENDCO role to advertise internally for Deputy Departmental Leader who in essence would be a Deputy SENDCO.</p> <p>The Headteacher advised Governors that there was a recognition that a marketing role was absent within the SLT. As an example it was suggested that the School website was not as attractive as it could be. Accordingly, it was proposed to advertise internally for an extended Leadership role for external marketing.</p> <p>Turning to HR, the School Business Manager reminded Governors that the previous Clerk to Governors had been an internal position who also had a workload involving office</p>

	<p>management and HR administration. Upon this person leaving the School in September 2019, the Clerk to the Governors role had been outsourced whilst the SBM had assumed many of the other responsibilities. This was now felt to be not the best use of the time of the SBM and it was proposed to appoint, from September 2021, a person to lead on HR together with duties involving office management and other associated administrative work.</p> <p>Mrs Coy asked if this post would also assume a staff welfare role? The SBM advised that there was already a well established staff welfare provision within School but that the role could assume some responsibility for support staff in this area. The Chair commented that, with the outsourcing of the Clerk to Governors role, there was no single point of contact in School for Governors which could cause some difficulties for new Governors. The SBM suggested that the single point of contact could be someone already employed in School or it could be the responsibility of the new post. In any event, there would be such a single point of contact for Governors from September 2021.</p> <p>Dr Morley commented that the proposals had merit in that they future proofed the School organisation and provided a measure of succession planning</p>
Resolved:	That approval be given to the establishment of the posts detailed above.
Discussion:	<p><u>3G Pitch Update</u></p> <p>Mr Wheeler updated Governors on the current situation in respect of the 3G Pitch Project.</p> <p>The report provided information in respect of the amended site layout with the change in location of the changing pavilion. It was anticipated that work would start over the Easter break which would necessitate the use of a large crane to unload and position the changing pavilion. The pitch would be ready for use by September 2021 and was still within budget.</p> <p>Dr Morley asked that in terms of the local community would there be any disruption caused by the crane and if so should School take the lead in informing them by producing a communications plan. Mr Wheeler advised that, in terms of planning perspective, there should be no disruption involving the works with the crane but that investigations would be carried out into the best form of marketing for the project.</p>
Resolved:	That the update be noted.

Ms Fulbrooke returned to the Chair

Agenda item 3	GOVERNANCE
Discussion:	<p><u>Appointment of Co-opted Governor</u></p> <p>The Chair advised that consequent upon the decision taken at the last meeting, she had met with Mrs Coy who had agreed to become a Co-opted Governor.</p>
Resolved:	That the Mrs Helen Coy be appointed a Co-opted Governor for a 4 year term of office to 14th March 2025.

Agenda item 4	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
Discussion:	<p>The Governing Body considered the minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 22nd February 2021.</p> <p>Mr Devereux-Roberts sought clarification as to when it would be feasible to carry out his Safeguarding Link Governor visit. It was suggested that the second half of the Summer term was a possibility and that he should contact Mr Cooney.</p>
Resolved:	That the minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 22nd February 2021, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Agenda item 5	ACTION LOG
Discussion:	The Action Log was reviewed and updated.

Agenda item 6	HEADTEACHERS REPORT
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The Headteacher commented that although it was only 3 weeks since the last meeting of the Governing Body, much had happened in that time.

Late-February/early-March

Governors would be aware that School accelerated the plans for mass testing so that students could have their first test in the week beginning 1st March and hence all students could return on Monday 8th. This meant that remote learning and key worker provision ended on Friday 5th March. The Headteacher commented that in his opinion, the whole staff could be proud of how they supported students through the recent lockdown period and enabled students to continue learning. Certainly for the vast majority of students, whose engagement levels were very high, disruption to their learning and progress should have been minimised. The work of Subject Leaders, expertly guided by Karen Neal, was crucial in terms of supporting, guiding and monitoring the work of their colleagues as they worked remotely.

Last Week

It was clear that students were delighted to be back in School last week and with very few exceptions they had settled back into School very well. Despite the unusual circumstances, which included the on-site testing taking place, students had been calm and well-behaved, with compliance with the new expectations on face-covering wearing in lessons almost total. Much of this was down to the work of James Cooney, who had overseen the day-to-day arrangements for students' return and also the co-ordination of the pastoral work which had supported them to do so.

Student attendance had been very high (97% on Monday, 96% for the week as a whole), showing both their enthusiasm for their return and also the levels of parental confidence in arrangements. The following detailed the number of students who had returned to School by Friday 12th March.

Year	No on roll	Number returned	Number yet to return	Notes
7	223	220 (98.7%)	3 (1.3%)	
8	244	239 (98.0%)	5 (2.0%)	NB 2 are long-term absentees
9	225	219 (97.3%)	6 (2.7%)	NB x3 students self-isolating for the whole week
10	198	195 (98.5%)	3 (1.5%)	NB 2 are long-term absentees
11	229	226 (98.7%)	3 (1.3%)	

Mass Asymptomatic Testing

Huge thanks were due to the Deputy Headteacher and School Business Manager for their sensitive leadership of a large-scale team effort to rise to the challenge of the Government's mass testing expectation of the School. Having been tested on-site during the first half of this term, staff had now moved to twice-weekly testing at home. Thanks to the support of parents, 1,200 students came into School for their first test before the School's re-opening on 8th March, with students then taking their second and third tests once returning. Mass on-site testing was due to finish on Monday 15th March, after which all students would be able to access kits in order to continue twice-weekly home-testing. To date, students had undertaken approximately 3,200 on-site tests, with two positive results, both in the week before re-opening. Both students tested negative in PCR tests which their parents took them for soon afterwards and so it appeared that these might have been 'false positive' results of the type

highlighted recently in the national media. The negative PCR result did not change the need for their households to self-isolate though, which was an understandable frustration for both families.

March

Now that students had settled back into classrooms, there were 3 weeks before the Spring Break in order to focus on consolidating learning which took place during lockdown and hence start to ensure that students' progression through their curriculum was back on track.

Although the focus on students' return was very much on their pastoral support and on classroom teaching and learning, there were two aspects of work this month which were worthy of particular note:

- The Catch-Up Programme, which continued to successfully support identified students. This has also been extended to provide focused support for a small group of Year 7 students for whom the Spring and Summer 2020 lockdown meant that they weren't able to receive the support for their transition to high school which with hindsight they needed, resulting in them having a difficult first term with us before Christmas.
- The Year 9 Options Process. Staff had worked hard to develop new ways of supporting students' options choices, with each subject recording both a Key Stage 4 subject presentation and also a taster lesson to give students and parents as much insight as possible in order to inform their choices. It was envisaged that approximately 80% of the cohort would study the English Bacallaureate suite of subjects as School continued to progress towards the Government's current target of 90% take-up by 2025.

Summer Term

The following were shaping up to be the 3 main priorities for work in the Summer Term:

- Reviewing ways of working as national restrictions lifted in line with the published 'roadmap' out of lockdown. There was doubt that the national impact of opening schools would be clearly understood enough to move to different ways of working immediately after the Spring Break but it was hoped that at some stage in the Summer Term (maybe in early May or after half-term in June) students might be able to more freely move about the School building for lessons, allowing greater access to specialist classrooms and hence to a less restricted curriculum offer.
- Managing the considerable challenge of effectively assessing and reporting the progress of all cohorts within a 12-week Summer Term period. All students and parents would be understandably keen to know where learning was up to after the disruption this term, but School didn't normally have to manage assessing Year 11 and 13 during this time as well as all the other year groups.
- Managing the transition of current Year 6 students within the constraints of whatever restrictions were still in place for both primary and secondary schools. As mentioned above, as witnessed last year the impact on the most vulnerable when transition support was limited. It was therefore no surprise that the major focus of the Government's most recently-announced 'catch-up' plans was funding and encouragement for 'Year 6 Summer Schools' to support transition to secondary school for those students who might have been most affected by disruption to their learning over the last 12 months. **Mrs Coy asked what, if anything, had caused these difficulties? The Headteacher advised it was their absence from primary school due to lockdown which impacted on diagnosing any SEN issues. They also didn't sit SAT assessments so that School was not as informed of their abilities as in previous years. The Headteacher also referred to the Jigsaw project which enabled vulnerable children to come into School during the Summer term before September but, again due to lockdown, did not happen in 2020.**

Mrs Coy asked if there would be a Summer School this year and if so who would be responsible for organising this? The Headteacher advised that there were no details as yet but that there would be a national fund against which Schools could bid to access funds. The Headteacher acknowledged that the question raised the point around responsibility as primary school pupils did not become the responsibility of Helsby HS until September.

Summer 2021 GCSE, A-Level and Vocational Qualification Results

At present School was awaiting exam board guidance and information regarding the awarding process for this summer. Once received, School would have to quickly put in place an assessment schedule which would probably involve Year 11 and 13 students undertaking a considerable amount of internal assessment prior to the late May half-term. The Headteacher was confident that the integrity and robustness of our awarding of 'Centre-Assessed Grades' last year provided a template for similar work this year. The main difference this year was the continuing requirement to generate the evidence of student performance - last year evidence already existed when summer examinations were cancelled. As last year, there was confidence that SLT members would lead and guide this work with Year 11 and 13 respectively with great thought and diligence.

Longer-Term Planning

Governors would be aware that School intended to carry out a major self-evaluation of the it's work against the new Ofsted framework this year - work which would have led to the production of new 2021-24 3-Year School Development Plan (SDP), following the postponement of such work in 2020-21 due to the pandemic. It had now been decided to put this back for a further 12 months. This was partly due to limited SLT capacity because of current operational pressures, but mainly because the direction of national education over the next 3-5 years, the context in which the plan would be set, was so uncertain. Changes to examinations, the national curriculum, the academic year calendar, the school day and school-funding had all been mooted as part of post-pandemic thinking about education nationally and the challenge of recovering students' learning following the disruption of the last 12 months. To attempt to implement a 3-year SDP within such national uncertainty appeared to be unwise and so it was planned to have a 1-year 2021-22 SDP with the expectation of constructing a 3-Year 2022-25 Plan over the next 12 months. That wasn't to say that School would be treading water in the short-term by any means - the 2021-22 Plan would be an ambitious, strategic first step in the School's post-Covid recovery stage.

September 2021 Intakes

Despite the challenge of marketing the School in the current circumstances, staff across the school had been buoyed by the continued popularity of the School in the eyes of parents and students, as shown by likely admission numbers in September:

Year 6: School was once again over-subscribed, with 226 places offered and a further 12 students on the waiting list. 35 'out of area' students had been offered places, the highest ever number. Given these students were likely to have never visited the School, the strength of the School's reputation was likely to have been a significant factor in their choice. Numbers in local primary schools suggested that September 2022 would see a very high intake and School had already started to liaise with the Local Authority about the possibility of another 'bulge' Pupil Admission Number (PAN) for the current Year 5 cohort.

In respect of Year 12 recruitment for the Sixth Form in September appeared to be very encouraging, with a greater number of students than previously indicating their intention to stay on at the School and less students than previously looking elsewhere for A-Level study in particular.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

Agenda item 7	SAFEGUARDING UPDATE
Discussion:	<p>Mrs Warburton advised that the focus of her report would be based on attendance and the role of the Pastoral Support Team. Once it was known that School would re-open on Monday 8th March, telephone calls were made to students who had known attendance issues on Friday 5th March to gauge their intentions. Any who did not return had additional phone calls. It was intended to commence home visits week commencing 15th March although School had knowledge of some students who had serious mental health issues or who had undergone complex medical procedures.</p> <p>School knew who the students were whose attendance was continually poor whilst there where 4 School refusers, whilst 1 family was self- isolating because of medical concerns and 1 family had decided to home educate.</p> <p>It was anticipated that there would be a small number of families who didn't respond to home visits and School would take the appropriate action.</p>
Resolved:	That the report be noted
Agenda item 8	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS
	<p>Monday 19th April 2021 at 5.00pm Monday 10th May 2021 at 5.00pm Monday 14th June 2021 at 5.00pm Monday 5th July 2021 at 5.00pm</p>

There being no further business the meeting ended at 18.00