



**ALFRED SUTTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**Minutes of the Virtual Meeting of the FGB/RCC combined**  
**28<sup>th</sup> April 2021. 7pm**

**Present:** Faruq Bilbe (Chair) Robert Howell; Ian Church; Dave Dymond; Adedayo Benson; Sara Fincham-Majumdar; Attia Rafiq-Sharif; Julia Wordsworth.

**In Attendance:** Alice De Croos; Rachel Lawson

**Apologies:** No apologies had been received.

**Clerk:** Deborah Savage

<b>Agenda Item</b>	
	NOTE: This meeting was held remotely via Zoom in keeping with Government advice to limit contact during the global health pandemic. For this reason also the two meetings were combined.
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies.</b> No Apologies had been received.
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest.</b> There were no Declarations of Interest. The meeting was reminded that the agenda items can be re-ordered if anyone declares an interest.
<b>3</b>	<b>FGB Minutes from 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021.</b> These had been circulated in advance of the meeting and actions were reviewed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some Governors are still to update their training records – ONGOING</li><li>• Chair to sign updated Register of Certifying Officers – ONGOING</li><li>• “book look” date suggestions to be sent by email by SLT – ONGOING</li><li>• Parent elections: The SBM advised that there was a way to run secure elections via WEDUC and that an election could be held from May onwards. There was some discussion about the skills we are looking for (HR skills) and the GB was reminded that people can’t be eliminated from parent elections if they do not have certain skills. It was also pointed out that the GB could be more representative of the school’s demographic and the question was asked about methods of encouraging people to take up posts.</li><li>• A date for some Governors to go into school to sign the SFVS has been arranged and this will happen in the coming week.</li></ul> The minutes were accepted as a true record and would be signed as soon as practically possible.
<b>4</b>	<b>Matters Arising.</b> There were no matters arising.
<b>5</b>	<b>Minutes of the Resources Coordination Committee held 3rd February 2021.</b>

	<p>These were reviewed at this meeting as this will be the last RCC meeting this academic year. The minutes had been circulated in advance of the meeting and actions were reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking information was shared with Governors via GovHub</li> <li>• The Skills Audit is an item on today’s agenda. There was talk in the past of a specific financial skills audit for those who sit on the RCC but this could not be located so a full skills audit of all Governors would take place.</li> <li>• The SFVS will be signed next week.</li> <li>• Chair to sign Register of Certifying officers – ONGOING</li> <li>• BACs payments are still being set up and the Financial Procedures handbook will be updated once this is completed. ONGOING</li> </ul> <p>The Minutes were accepted as a true record and will be signed as soon as possible.</p>
<p><b>6</b></p>	<p><b>Chair’s Verbal Update.</b></p> <p>The Chair reported that since the signing limit had been raised he has not been asked to counter sign any payments since the last meeting.</p> <p>The chair informed the meeting that he intends to remain a Governor into the next academic year.</p>
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Head Teacher’s Verbal Update.</b></p> <p>The Head informed the meeting that TV cameras had been in school to film a visit from PCSO’s into year 1 classes. Parents and carers were informed in advance and the item had been broadcast on both BBC and Meridian local news programmes.</p> <p>Figures for children coming into the Reception next year are strong and the school is full with a waiting list. This is very good news for the school and should be seen in the context of low birth rates and an increase in the number of families choosing to home-school since the pandemic. It is especially pleasing that over 100 families placed ASPS as their first preference, so places have been filled by families who want to send their children here. ASPS has become the school of choice in the area and the school website, school film, virtual tours and our reputation all help to attract families. It is important we continue to work hard to maintain this.</p> <p>A comprehensive and clear report on how the school is spending the Government’s catch-up funds has been written and uploaded to the school website. The DHT was thanked for her effort in writing this report. This report joins the document about home learning aimed at parents and carers and these can be found under the COVID tab on the school website. It is a government requirement that these documents are made available on school websites, so ASPS is meeting its obligation in this regard.</p> <p>The Head informed Governors that the school is beginning to “relax” some of its COVID measures – longer lunch breaks for children are now in place so they have longer to socialise at school and the staggered finish to the school day has ended too. There has been no negative feedback from parents.</p>

	<p>Staff are exhausted at an earlier point in the school term than used to be the case and teams are still working hard to support each other and SLT are still offering support where they can.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Are lunchtimes improving for staff too? Yes.</p> <p>Governors were informed that video parents evenings have been held over the last two weeks. To start with the take up was less than the school had hoped but this has grown as parents' evenings have continued. Parents are adapting to this new style of parent's evenings and teachers are positive about them.</p> <p><b>Governor Comment:</b> As a parent, these are accessible, and the time limits mean that meetings are efficient. The only downside is that parents can't see children's books.</p> <p><b>Governor Comment:</b> Yes – it is good that staff are sticking to the 10 minute slots but it is a shame not to be able to see the books – perhaps we can arrange a book viewing for parents later in the year if the lifting of COVID restrictions allows this.</p> <p><b>Governor Comment:</b> I have heard from another school (Bulmershe) that parent evening take up has been better by online means than in person.</p> <p>The Head informed Governors that interviews have been held to fill teacher posts. There are 3 or 4 positions available that the school knows of now. These are due to re-location of staff within the UK and overseas and a promotion. <b>THIS INFORMATION REMAINS CONFIDENTIAL AT THE MOMENT.</b> Two strong NQT candidates have been offered and accepted positions already. Candidates had heard of the school by reputation and were enthusiastic about joining us which is great to see.</p> <p><b>Governor Comment:</b> It is good staff have given you notice earlier than they are obliged too – allowing you advertise earlier than other schools and hence interview strong candidates before they accept places elsewhere.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> Do you do exit interviews? Yes – we have in the past done informal exit interviews but we are starting to make records of these.</p> <p>The Head was thanked for this update.</p>
8	<p><b>4th Quarter revenue and capital reports.</b></p> <p>These had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting and the SBM was asked to summarise the major changes and key points.</p> <p>The SBM reminded the meeting that the financial year 2020/21 was challenging due to the Covid pandemic which caused both large overspends and underspends in many areas of the budget. The school ended the financial year 2020/21 with a carry forward of 184K which means we can set a balanced budget for the FY 2021/22. We realise this is a fortunate position to be in, given lots of other schools are struggling.</p>

The budget for 2021/22 has been set to align to the strategic curriculum plans of the school, a focus for the academic year ahead is 'catching-up' pupils, both academically and emotionally and continuing to broaden and enhance our curriculum offer, by investing in the wider curriculum; music, ICT, school library, DT, Nutritional Learning and eco and forest school. In our staffing model a focus on teaching specialisms has been allowed for, and we plan to invest in quality resources to compliment the quality first teaching provision.

Expenditure.

Despite teachers being awarded an unprecedented pay rise last year, above that budgeted for, with some changes to the teaching staffing model and savings from the clubs' overtime budget, were able to close the year with only a small overspend in the teachers' budget line.

Our teaching budget 2021/22 has been set with all known September changes accounted for and we will reduce our FTE by 1, as we were 1 FTE over in 2020/21. We have an AHT leaving, having been offered a deputy Headship who will be replaced by a MPS (Main Pay Scale) teacher, thus reducing our AHT's to 6. We aim to continue to refine our staffing model to reduce our AHT headcount over the coming years.

Two additional Support Staff vacancies for Covid-Catch Up were filled in January 2021. There was a large underspend in Support Staff overtime (including sports staff running after school clubs) as the school was closed for long periods. A 1% inflationary buffer has been included for the Year 2021/22.

There was a small underspend in the Premises budget for 20/21 but a new boiler for the admin block was installed, as was a CCTV and a lockdown system (part funded by the capital budget). For this year, an allocation has been made for redecoration of the school halls in the summer break, and the installation of a Nutritional Learning Suite, as well as general maintenance. We have recently found out that the school is to benefit from 2 new boilers and new doors for both halls which are to funded by RBC. We also found out late last week that we have been put forward to have solar panels installed on the new build – again, RBC will be footing the bill for this.

There was a large overspend in cleaning costs last financial year due to the pandemic. We are reducing our cleaning regime gradually as more of the population is vaccinated.

Utilities for 2021/22 have been budgeted for at the same rate as last year – there was an underspend due to school closures and historical billing issues.

Educational Supplies (non ICT) in 2020/21 had a large underspend due to significant school closure periods. For 2021/22, realistic allocations have been made, which includes resourcing the Nutritional Learning Suite, a provision for forest school, and an allocation to finish stocking the libraries with non-fiction books.

There was a large overspend in ICT Learning Supplies and the budget for 21/22 allows for the purchase of a new laptop trolley.

Bought-in services for 21/22 remain the same as the previous year.

**Income.**

The LA has confirmed the funding for 21/22 with the AWPU (Age Weighted Pupil Unit) set at £3231 per pupil. Early Years funding is indicative at the moment until the census. We have calculated SEN funding based on all known ECHP children currently on roll. We understand that Pupil Premium calculations will be based on the October 2020 Census data, so have budgeted accordingly.

We expect our last instalment of Covid-Catch Up funding to be paid shortly. At this stage, we are unsure if the grant will be further extended.

We hope to re-start lettings from the middle of May, and negotiations on the Crescent Under Fives lease are being finalised and this income has been allowed for.

The UIFSM and Sports Grant have been based on 2020/21 actuals.

**Governor Question:** Your decision not to promote internally to fill the AHT post but to reduce the AHT posts in number – has this disappointed some staff who might have been hoping for a promotion? I don't think so, no. The DHT has lots of input into this year group anyway and as it is strong team the loss of an AHT here will not have a major impact.

**Governor Question:** Are there still career opportunities available for staff in the early stages of their careers? We are using temporary TLRs for project-based leadership roles such as subject leadership. We still offer career progression paths, but they are shorter term. This is more impactful in a school our size. The AHT structure was put in place some 4 years ago when the school was in a different situation and we no longer need this structure.

**Governor Question:** Can you tell us more about the solar panels project as we did look at this some years ago and found that heat recovery systems offered more benefits? We don't know much about it other than RBC might be able to get funding for some panels and that they will pay for them. They are also paying for the side doors in the halls to be replaced.

**Governor Comment:** Once COVID measures can be reduced we should return to a normal level of cleaning costs.

	<p><b>Governor Question:</b> Can you tell us more about your plans for a Forest School? There is lots of interest from the staff about using our grounds more within lessons. We might possibly build willow mazes. We don't have plans to construct much – it is more about using what we have.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> We have heard that RBC are losing staff and privatising some services – have you noticed a reduction in the levels of service? No - this has not been an issue for us and we have noticed no decline over the last 2-3 years.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> With regard to income – how confident are you that groups that let our buildings will return and wrap-around care will be needed at the same rate? We had 3 major groups that let our buildings; two are returning in May and the last in September. Wrap around care is happening but we have re-negotiated terms with them. These are not as good for us but there are less children needing the service and we understand that it needs to be able to cover its costs.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> The 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Income and Expenditure report was unanimously accepted by the Governors.</p> <p><b>Capital.</b></p> <p>In 2020/21 we invested in a lockdown and CCTV system that was partly funded through capital, and partly through the revenue budget. We have a carry forward of £14655 but we don't yet know what will be allocated for 2021/22. We expect it to be on a par with last year's 11k. We plan to spend approx. £20k to put towards the Nutritional Learning Suite, and at this stage have no fixed plans for the additional allocation.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> We have spent our allocation from the last 3 years so we don't need to worry about claw backs? No.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Governors unanimously agreed the Capital budgets.</p> <p>The school hope to have a celebrity chef open the new Nutritional Learning Suite – and asked if anyone had any contacts.</p> <p>The SBM had also sent Governors a document covering 2 years budget for planning purposes taken from the new Orovia software system. 1% inflation figures are built into these. The SBM said that she is finding Orovia a useful tool.</p>
9	<p><b>Proposed revenue and capital budgets 2021/2022.</b></p>

	<p><b>DECISION:</b> These had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were unanimously accepted by the Governing Board.</p> <p>The meeting recognised that the year 2020/21 had been especially challenging financially and that the SBM was new in post at this time. The school is in a very strong position financially and the 21/22 budget has been strategically prepared by the SBM to enable the school to pursue its plans. Both the Governors and SLT thanked the SBM for all the work she has put into this during the very challenging circumstances the school faced.</p>
<p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>Roles and Responsibilities Statement.</b></p> <p>This document had been circulated in advance to Governors and there are no changes to it from the previous one. There were no changes that needed to be made to reflect the move to BACs payments.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Governors unanimously re-adopted the Roles and Responsibilities Statement.</p>
<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>Asset Management Plan.</b></p> <p>This had been circulated to Governors in advance of the meeting and they were informed that current projects including the works that would be paid for RBC have been included. Projects are divided into three key areas: those that support curriculum enrichment; capital projects and maintenance projects. A colour coded system is used and all are currently amber as they are all in the pipeline or partially completed.</p> <p><b>Governor Question:</b> From a safeguarding point of view, when is the additional boundary fencing being done? We have had a quote, but it was very expensive and at the moment this is not a priority. We have a meeting with the other schools we share boundaries with very soon to discuss safety and security of all our grounds including the need to lockdown and building security.</p>
<p><b>12</b></p>	<p><b>Crescent Under 5's Lease.</b></p> <p>Further updates on this new Lease were circulated in advance to Governors. Crescent Under 5's have been on the site many years and a new 3-year lease should have started in September 2020. ASPS has a good relationship with them and they offer a complimentary service to ours and are considered an asset to the local community. They act as a feeder school for us and take children at 2.5 years which is younger than ASPS. As a charity, they are restricted in the amount of funds they can carry forward from year to year and COVID has had an impact on their income.</p> <p><b>DECISION:</b> Governors unanimously agreed to accept their offer of a 10% increase on the current rent paid.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> SBM to ask RBC to act on this decision. It may be that a new Heads of Terms document is needed. If this is the case, this would be circulated by email to the</p>

	Governors and the Chair of Governors would then be asked to sign the agreement on behalf of the GB.
<b>13</b>	<p><b>Nutritional Learning Suite.</b></p> <p>A quotation for this project was circulated in advance to Governors who were informed that this would be partly funded from Capital and partly from Revenue. It would provide state of the art, quality space. Governors were also informed that the school had tried without success to obtain more quotes.</p> <p><b>Governor Question: Where is this going?</b> In the back of the Year 6 room opposite the ICT suite.</p> <p><b>Governor Question: Do RBC have an expenditure size limit over which you have to obtain 3 quotes?</b> Yes – and we should ask for three quotes. We have made great efforts to obtain more but have been unable too. Talking to other local SBMs for suggestions has also been fruitless. This is why we are approaching Governors for approval. Educationally, this is an excellent addition to our offer but it also offers us greater flexibility and future-proofing with regard to after school provision (when we need to supply food and drink to children). It has possible revenue enhancement potential as well as offering great educational opportunities.</p> <p><b>DECISION: Governors unanimously approved the commissioning of the Nutritional Learning Suite on a single quote basis as the school had done all it could to obtain other quotes.</b></p>
<b>14</b>	<p><b>Skills Audit.</b></p> <p>There has been a need to do a Skills Audit for some time and the Clerk sent two possible ones to chairs prior to the meeting. The Key and The NGA both have skills audits based on the competency framework for Governing Boards but the NGA one seems more detailed and offers a spreadsheet to use to upload answers and colour code skills which seems more useful.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Clerk to send out NGA skills audit to Governors to complete prior to half term.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: Newsletter items and a WEDUC notice to go out to parents saying that we are seeking additional parent Governors.</b> Sara offered to be a point of contact if anyone thinking about the role wanted to have a discussion to find out more.</p>
<b>15</b>	<p><b>Issues for Parents / Confidentiality.</b></p> <p>Parents would be informed about the need to recruit 2 new parent governors. <b>It was decided that the staff leaving would not be in Part 2 minutes but governors were reminded that this is confidential at this stage as the wider school community has not yet been informed.</b></p>
<b>16</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>There were no additional items of business.</p>
<b>17</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting: Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2021.</b> Monitoring dates would be circulated by email.</p>

Meeting closed at 8.20pm.



## Ongoing Actions

Action	Owner
Governors to update their training records	All
Chair to sign updated Register of Certifying Officers	FB
"book look" date suggestions to be sent by email	SLT
Financial Procedures handbook to be updated once BACs payments completed	SBM

## New Actions

Action	Owner
RBC to be asked to move forward with Crescent Under 5s lease with 10% increase	SBM
NGA Skills Audit to be sent to Governors for completion	Clerk/All
Parents to be informed school are seeking new parent governors.	SLT/SBM

## **Items circulated to the GB since the last FGB:**

- RBC Governor Services Spring Newsletter
- Information on RGA Safeguarding Network Meeting
- Head Teachers report to Governors on school re-opening.
- LA school allocations report
- Information on RBC Directors Briefing
- Information on RGA Finance Governors Network Meeting
- Details of training available from RBC/RGA for the rest of this academic year.

## Attendance at FGB meetings 2020/21 (three virtual meetings to date)

Faruq Bilbe	3
Robert Howell	3
Adedayo Benson	2
Dave Dymond	3
Dave Close	1 of 1 possible meeting
Ian Church	3
Yota Dimitriadi	1
Sara Fincham-Majumdar	2
Attia Rafiq-Sharif	3
Richard Wilson	0
Julia Wordsworth	2
Laura Kerr	0 of 2 possible meetings