

**St Bartholomew's Church of England First School**  
**Governing Body**  
**Minutes of GB3 Meeting held via Teams on 21/01/2021 at 9.15am**

Present: Cheryl Govier, Gemma Coward, Steve Briggs, Emma Harwood, Rachael Howe, Lucy Ramwell,  
Absent: Tsonka Hristova  
Also Present: Sonia Yorke (Clerk)

To minimise staff in school – EH is working in school office so may be interrupted during meeting.  
Chair thanked all for attending this virtual meeting today. Meeting opened with a Prayer and quote for the Rainbow Value this half of term 'Compassion'.

Agenda Item	Detail	Action
1	<b>Apologies for Absence and acceptance or non-acceptance</b> Apologies received and accepted from TH, apologies due to work related COVID-19 issues.	
2.	<b>Declarations of interest</b> No new declarations declared	
3.	<b>Minutes of meeting held including Matters Arising</b>  Minutes of GB2 held on 03/12/2020 were agreed as a true record of the meeting - chair to sign  <b>Matters Arising</b> SIAMS inspection form to follow from CG Finance and HR actions carried out	CG
4.	<b>Finance</b>  <b>Month 9 Report – circulated prior to meeting</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Month 9 report shows anticipated expenditure forecast to end of financial year.</li> <li>• Estimated C/F £84176 - uncommitted £64398 – sch required £66462 to balance budget this year</li> <li>• Cost Centre credit balances or deficits are as detailed in the notes section of the report. Ie: SDP balance due to no supply required to cover leadership and subject lead release days</li> <li>• A015 pension deficit charges – formula for budgeting for this expense over estimated at budget setting - the balance of £10477 to support revenue budget.</li> <li>• Significant COVID overspends – electricity, caretaking and cleaning, admin, after school provision</li> <li>• Covid claim – 2<sup>nd</sup> claim submitted for £7916 for Summer 2020 term</li> <li>• Additional costs generated due to covid for Autumn 2020 and Spring term 2021, SY has enquired about additional government grants for schools to claim, none as yet.</li> <li>• COVID Catch up grant - £3540 received to date – Funds ring fenced to pay for additional TA support for targeted interventions.</li> <li>• DFCG – as highlighted in numerous cleaning reports and previous budget discussions the school must be prepared to invest in repairing interior walls across the school site and additional safety requirements highlighted as priority one's in audit. Quotations have been sought for these works. To move forward propose apply to use DFCG grant – proposal agreed by all present. SY to action</li> <li>• All staff fully aware of financial constraints and constantly seek best value.</li> <li>• SEND provision continues to impact significantly on the budget. Some additional</li> </ul>	SY

funding has been agreed, due BUF 3 see notes V906 in report.

- S codes - PP and PE grants continue to be monitored closely. PP and PE reports updated and shared with the Board termly. Expenditure is as each individual plan and updated by SLT subject to need.

It was agreed by board member's that under the current circumstance the budget is surprisingly healthy, good to be able to have flexibility to fund resources to support our pupils, and have a carry forward.

Essential for school to apply for all funds available to the school to support with Covid situation.

#### **Issues to consider for 2021/22 Budget**

- Staff structure – continue as 6.5 classes - YES
- Financial impact of high needs pupils
- Impact of unidentified SEND need prior to entry to school
- Increased stress levels of all staff due to financial constraints and impact of covid
- Impact on staff with on-going process and uncertainty of Area review
- Maintaining a programme of maintenance across school site

GC/SY have meeting booked next week with senior LA advisor to discuss the 2021/22 budget options

Month 9 report was agreed by all present

#### **SFVS**

Schools informed that the SFVS will continue this year as normal, submission due March 2021.

#### **SFVS Question review - Setting the Annual Budget**

Question 1 - Does the school set a well-informed and balanced budget each year (with an agreed and timed plan for eliminating any deficit)?

The school uses the Education Finance budget plan spreadsheet - This ensures a well informed and balanced budget is presented for approval. As a school our expenditure plans and carry forward are monitored carefully and therefore our current position is sound with no requirements for a school recovery plan.

Question 2 - Does the budget setting process allow sufficient time for the governing body to scrutinise and challenge the information provided?

A draft budget is presented during the Spring term (at GB4 ) for discussion and approval - Budget is circulated in advance of the meeting to ensure adequate time for Governors to read and prepare questions or points for discussion and clarification - this process ensures appropriate time for sufficient scrutiny and challenge. If required a revised budget will be presented at a later extraordinary meeting. Discussions and approval of the budget is recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting and the final plan is signed by the Chair and Head Teacher, a copy is submitted to the Local Authority. Evidenced in GB4 or extraordinary minutes

Question 3 - Is the governing body realistic in its pupil number projections and can it move quickly to recast the budget if the projections and the reality are materially different?

Population forecast is used to project pupil numbers for future year budget planning. If school advised of changes it will respond accordingly. This forms part of our current three year planning process. School can only work with pupil numbers provided.

*Discussion followed on possible delay of local housing developments which will impact on pupil numbers moving forward – SB to enquire*

Question 4 - Is end year outturn in line with budget projections, or if not, is the governing

	<p>body alerted to significant variations in a timely manner, and do such variations result from explicitly planned changes or from genuinely unforeseeable circumstances?  The budget is monitored half termly as finance reports are presented at ALL GB meetings. Month 6 report is also submitted to the Local Authority, and a month 9 report can be submitted if requested by the LA. The presentation of these finance reports allow for adjustments to be discussed therefore unlikely to be any major surprises at year end - evidence in all full GB minutes. Outturns are reported in the Consistent Financial Report (CFR), which is produced by the LA Senior Finance Officer, the CFR is shared with the board and uploaded to the DfE website</p> <p>Are balances at a reasonable level and does the school have a clear plan for using the money it plans to hold in balance at the end of each year?  The Carry Forward/Balance is required to:  -Finance the staffing costs of the additional .5 class to maintain our existing 6.5 class structure.  - Fund the growing demands facing the school to support pupils and provide staff to offer 1 to 1 pupil support.  -Provide a contingency for building and catering maintenance projects.  -C/F is monitored by the Senior Finance Officer and Governors  -School has a well-managed positive balance at present</p> <p>The above SFVS answers were agreed by all present for the 2020/2021 return.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Review Autumn Term Data</b></p> <p>Head teacher is proud to share the data, circulated prior to meeting. The reports demonstrate the amazing work of our staff and children. If you look at base line (September 2020) and then at end of autumn term (December 2020) there is enormous progress, particularly in year 1 and 2 where engagement with learning at home was the poorest and these pupils needed more work on return to school.</p> <p>The data also demonstrates the impact of COVID-19 catch up plan (which will be on the new website ready for 25.01.21) – proves what can be achieved and also offers hope for when our pupils come back after this lock down.</p> <p><b>Discussions</b></p> <p>Member asked if there is much greater engagement from parents now because of requirement, and if so, at some point this may bring added benefits in the future? GC confirmed engagement increases week by week but there are other challenges for parents this time, maybe time of year, financial impacts, working from home not on furlough therefore Remote Learning is harder than during the first lock down for some. All engagement with learning is checked daily and families contacted to offer support.</p> <p>The evaluation at end of first lockdown confirmed mixed feelings – the majority of parents reported their experience of supporting learning at home was good, some parents said we focused on too much emotional and wellbeing work and some said we did not provide sufficient academic work (school did provide extension work for every area of learning across the curriculum) - difficult to strike right balance with everyone.</p> <p>During this current lockdown school is continuing to provide a full curriculum for home learning but understand this is a lot to ask of some families, therefore we emphasise a focus on phonics, reading, writing and maths. This is still a lot for parents so Friday is topic family learning day – therefore all children work on same work for that day, this will hopefully support families to manage the home learning work load.</p> <p>CG echoed GC comments on the progress of our pupils on return to school from September 2020 to December 2020 – these results should be celebrated.</p> <p>Actions agreed moving forward:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor COVID-19 catch up plan – this is robust and impacting at present - no need to make adjustments. The data supports this</li> <li>• School already looking at interventions to support pupils at home ie PP grant being used to purchase on line Rapid Readers – continue to look at options.</li> <li>• Continue to monitor attendance. Percentage of pupils in school at present fluctuates between 19% and 36%. The school will only allow pupils in for the hours while parents/carers are working as critical workers so attendance fluctuates throughout the day and across the week.</li> </ul>	
6.	<p><b>Safeguarding including Online Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on impact for second half of term sent to Safeguarding Governor and C of Gs</li> <li>• Welfare check continues to take place each week</li> <li>• Welfare form is being sent out weekly (Thursdays) and acted on. It checks on illness in the home, child's mental health, child's access to learning and ability to complete it, what devices the family are using, whether the family need any support financially, food etc, what support/contact they have had with the school that week. The FORM gives us clear data on impact e.g. we know that 32 families accessed devices or technical support from school last week</li> <li>• We have used additional funds given to us by the government to support families over Christmas and those who don't meet criteria for FSM, but are struggling</li> <li>• Food bank and FSM information has gone out</li> <li>• FSM quality has been acted upon – list and pictures sourced by SBM</li> <li>• Staff well-being and welfare opportunities have been emailed round. Expectations have been re-enforced (e.g. not working beyond contractual hours and over weekends). Opportunities to talk and share if problems regularly offered. Very different way of working in even more rigorous bubbles so it does feel very disparate. Not all staff take on board the messages, despite workload looked at weekly and staffing changed to act on this. There must be personal responsibility</li> <li>• Risk Assessment updated and ready to go on website on Monday</li> <li>• AUPs and Statement of agreement and understanding were sent out to families in week 1. The Online Safety Leader is being rigorous in following this up with teachers to ensure that no individual families are left out</li> <li>• Remote learning plan is in place and has been shared with parents. Governors should have seen this is the last newsletter SWAY</li> <li>• The Senior Teacher has processed 30 devices for our families. We have had lots of donations from individuals and families. Laptops have been turned into Chrome Books and dongles have been lent for internet access. Each time a loan is made there is a contract to sign</li> <li>• Safeguarding training 19.01.21 with eLIM advisor focussing on Online Safety due to lockdown and an incident at the end of last term. The social worker involved stated, <i>'done a really robust piece of safeguarding work and gone above and beyond moving the families into a strong position over Christmas so nothing else should be able to happen'</i>. After Christmas the Early Help Hub stated <i>'an excellent job'</i> Also looked at ways of making Remote Learning Active and balanced</li> </ul> <p>LR shared with the Board that teaching staff had raised the following concerns with on line home learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screen time</li> <li>• Unsupervised access</li> <li>• Inappropriate content or apps being used</li> </ul> <p>Outcomes from training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Think you know" –advise on activities and internet safety day which school are taking part in</li> <li>• Awareness of change in language ie sexting now say nudes or semi nudes</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of flow chart - how to respond to an action.</li> </ul> <p>LR confirmed it was a positive and proactive meeting for all staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online Safety Leader and DSL taking part in a video case study about the online safe 360 Review Tool. This will go on eLIM website, be shared at the conference and with schools in Somerset. One meeting has taken place so far and filming will take place next Tuesday. Very grateful for the opportunity and to our Online Safety leader for the time she is spending on this</li> <li>• There is a check daily, by teachers, on children accessing learning. Follow-up is made to all families by phone, email or letter if concerns. One family will be discussed at TAS as they are not engaging</li> <li>• Testing for staff. 16 staff members accessed testing at Wadham on Tuesday and all were negative. We are very grateful to Wadham for offering and hosting this. Testing for staff should start next week. The tests have not yet arrived. A risk assessment is in place and Microsoft Forms will be used as a medium to report results and to record the tests that have been given out. This can be stored confidentially. SA already produces – testing will take place twice weekly. Guidance from Government has arrived so process can be finalised today.</li> <li>• Annual Safeguarding Audit has not been started due to workload</li> <li>• SCR checked by Safeguarding governor this morning</li> </ul> <p>EH – confirmed the SCR has been checked, one issue with board member details but will be investigated and rectified. SY to action</p> <p>Board all agreed that safeguarding processes are extremely comprehensive – wonderful how all staff step up to deal with extra issues around COVID-19.</p> <p>Praise also for our staff, who through a joint effort and exceptional preparation were ready to initiate the home learning and welcome pupils of key workers and vulnerable pupils into school immediately the lockdown was announced. Some schools announced up to two day delays with online learning and accepting pupils in school. GC confirmed that staff were totally supportive of the planning and introduction of Google Classroom to ensure we were ready if required, particular thanks to DW</p> <p>Board acknowledged it was difficult for pupils to adapt to the new lockdown, very short notice.</p> <p><b>Operational</b> – CG asked GC to explain school reasoning behind not doing ‘live lessons’</p> <p>Not a requirement to do live lessons- talked as a staff when planning before lockdown about a range of issues that eLIM have highlighted around “live learning” – when you look at what schools are doing for live lessons – they bring children together via zoom / teams – pupils are told lesson plan – pupils then go and get on with work alone – basically doing what we are in Google Classroom. BUT there are issues for teachers with live lessons: who is watching them; judgment from adults on how teacher manage responses from all children; issues about filming at home. At St Bartholomew’s we can pre-record introductions and use videos from the Oak Academy and other resources. No complaints received on our provision and the government is clear there is no requirement to do live lessons.</p> <p>Every Friday, the HT holds a teacher briefing session and the team evaluate our learning offer, scrutinise learning and evaluate if any changes are needed–no teachers have expressed a desire to move towards live lessons. We will keep this under review.</p> <p>As we have more children in school teachers are juggling huge workload therefore timetables drawn up to allow some class based teaching but also provide opportunity for teachers to work remotely and respond to home learning –Google Classroom allows for teacher response but teacher workload has significantly increased. There is weekly review of staffing and timetables to manage this.</p> <p>Board agreed there are serious safeguarding concerns around on line live lessons – for example how can we ensure the privacy of vulnerable children in school.</p> <p>Agreed by all present that the current home learning system is working so well and at present no requirement to change to this live process.</p> <p><b>Additional information</b></p> <p>Update on keeping children safe in education – action GC to forward to governors</p>	SY
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	<p><b>SEND Update - LR</b></p> <p><b>EHCP pupils</b> - All 5 children with EHCP's have been offered a place in school during current lockdown, 4 have accepted and are in school. One pupil is isolating and medically advised to be at home– SENDCo informs County of who is in school and we are pleased with uptake. 1 pupil on a draft EHCP has been offered a place but parental choice is appealing against this as they want specialist provision.</p> <p>The Number of pupils with EHCP's at St Bartholomew's continues to be significantly above national average. In addition we have 2 parents applying for EHCP's, one is working alone and one is being supported by an external agency – SENDCo has been approached to share school information to support these applications, however, the applications are based on parental views so as a school we cannot comment. GC added that if children meet criteria, at this stage, prior to transition point we would be initiating the process.</p> <p><b>Pupils on SEND Register</b> - half of pupils on the register are in school and receiving education from teacher or TA's. Children learning at home receive regular check ins.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Area School Provision</b></p> <p><b>Update on Local Area Review:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update email from Amelia Walker on 19.01.21 stating that the decision had been taken by the County Council to move to Statutory Notices. The timelines suggests the publication of this will be on 27<sup>th</sup> January. The cabinet decision will be on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021. There is a Heads and Chairs meeting on Monday. As the communication was not clear, please assume this information is confidential until the publication</li> <li>• Time line shared</li> <li>• The HT has requested that academisation is added to the CISP HT agenda on Monday</li> <li>• The RSC has been contacted for a statement on their position about MATs in the Crewkerne and Ilminster Area. The outcome of these two things will determine next steps for governing bodies e.g. whether some collective discussions can then begin</li> <li>• Consideration given to agree at what point to inform staff that we are looking at the option of academisation – after 27<sup>th</sup>?</li> <li>• Engagement with consultation moving forward – GC/CG put enormous time, energy and effort into part one of consultation and much of it went unheard. The board must be wise in the use of time and energy moving forwards to share the best outcome which appears inevitable. So many are against the proposals but they are still moving forward so, if academisation is something we will consider then this forms focus. –Board will respond and represent our school in the consultation process but be mindful how we do this making good use of time where it can really impact – strong case forward last time, gone unheard.</li> <li>• Board member raised if the review will take account of issues submitted previously – we will find this out on Monday. In view of channelling energies to best effect, SB to talk with local councillors</li> <li>• Academisation - GC Spoken informally to other heads to gauge interest – real willingness to join together as a collective – all needs and direction must be a collective.</li> </ul> <p>The Board is mindful of the workload the area review is having on both GC/CG, to support them it was agreed that brief updates are acceptable between meetings, to keep the whole board informed.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Fundraising Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FSA AGM it was agreed to disband. Thank you to Steve for attending and reading out the statement</li> <li>• We will continue RAG BAG</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £100 donation from a previous parents' company towards Science week in the summer</li> <li>• £500 STEM grant application made by Science leader for packs for families to make and take away for National Science Week this term, money raised by selling DVDS at Christmas has raised funds to support four year old Digong who lives in Bunawan in the Philippines. Our children will be introduced to Digong through a day's family learning during lockdown. They have learnt all about Digong's life, family and country and told him all about theirs by writing him letters.</li> </ul> <p>Board discussed if members should do more as governors to plan fundraising events– yes eventually would be good – but staff and board need to have capacity. School has some ideas for when children are back to raise income – depends on COVID restriction to minimise mixing and minimal impact on workload.</p> <p>Moving forward elect board member with linked responsibility to fundraising and community generated funds – action SY to add to GB6 agenda</p> <p>Parent community could help in light of FSA folding – newsletter or if they want to donate – include parents</p> <p>Create a framework to involve staff, governors and parent community – Action SB offered to start this process.</p> <p>Useful link – RBL keen to support one another as part of responsibility as affiliated partnership.</p> <p>SB requested a list of local companies who have supported the school ie with funds and laptops etc. Action SY/LR to compile</p>	<p>SY</p> <p>SB</p> <p>SY/LR</p>
9.	<p><b>Christian Ethos</b></p> <p>Church have contacted school to establish ways to work together moving forward and have asked for information on what CG doing as governor and gospel opportunities – GC explained keen to work together but need time to look at what we can do to link together.</p> <p>SIAMS update - worship daily Dan England supporting us and CG shares resources.</p> <p>New website due to go live on Monday – page on Christian vision and values</p> <p>GC communicates our Christian values daily to our school community via facebook</p>	CG/GC
10.	<p><b>H &amp; S</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Covid – R/A continue to be updated in line with government guidance</li> <li>- Introduction of staff testing</li> <li>- Quotations being sought for work to repair internal walls, replacement of safety hand railings and fire exit steps from Elliott huts</li> <li>- School has <b>worked</b> with badger society to find solution to protect a pupil in school and ensure safety of badgers</li> <li>- School is working with contractors to ensure maintenance and routine services continue during pandemic – covid rules followed – ie service of heaters/ lift/grounds maintenance/electrical work</li> <li>- 3 students join us after half term – clear that they should continue to work in school – they will be inducted and COVID R/A shared</li> <li>- LA have raised that the RA's on EEC need to be revisited – we are on this but main RA is updated regularly. Prioritising workload.</li> <li>- Pupils are not required to wear uniform – it is cold in school, doors open when people go out, fan heaters if working remotely in the building as it is not pleasant. School advised warm comfortable clothing.</li> </ul>	
11.	<p><b>Policy Approval</b></p> <p><b>All draft policies circulated prior to meeting</b></p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- H &amp; S</li> <li>- Governor Allowances – those who need, should claim an allowance if extra costs are being incurred. All claims would be confidential</li> <li>- Medical Needs</li> <li>- Staff Absence Policy</li> <li>- Children Looked After</li> </ul> <p>All policies discussed and approved by members present.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Governor Visits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LR confirmed some SDP monitoring visits reports outstanding, please submit asap</li> <li>• The board is up to date with KS Leads, SEND and H&amp;S Autumn term visits.</li> <li>• SCR check by CofG scheduled for February 2021</li> <li>• W/C 22/03/2021 next scheduled week for governor visits</li> </ul> <p>PCSHE – RH has seen online safety as a parent – should she make contact with TC aware of teacher workload at present – LR confirmed not on visit list for this year. However, GC feels that with PCSHE and wellbeing so important – helpful to report on what seeing as a parent governor s, therefore a report would be helpful. If you think it would be valuable to have a meeting liaise with TC but ensure concise and focused meeting as per our guidelines Action RH to prepare report and decide if visit required with TC.</p>	RH
13.	<p><b>Chair and Clerks Briefing Update</b></p> <p>SY attended virtual clerks briefing January 2021. Clerks briefing information circulated to board members prior to meeting – all advised to read notes and ask any questions.</p>	
14.	<p><b>Training and Recruitment</b></p> <p><b>Personnel</b></p> <p>One staff member has shared a personal circumstance – confidential action required at present. Before lock down – school using supply staff to cover TA COVID-19 catch up work - not kept on during current lockdown but will resume when back in school</p> <p><b>Governor Training</b></p> <p>None reported for this term to date</p> <p><b>Recruitment</b></p> <p><b>Foundation Governor</b> – CG application for new term of office in process – current term of office expires Feb 2020</p> <p><b>Ex-officio Governor</b> – Church currently in vacancy and will be looking at putting a profile together for a new vicar, they potentially could have someone in spring 2022. Board enquired if school would be involved with recruitment of new vicar – can we volunteer St Barts to help –should engage when looking at parish profile. Action CG to investigate.</p> <p><b>Co – opted Governor</b> SB membership expires 14/03/2021 - As an extremely valued member of our Board we are delighted that he has agreed to continue. SY to action</p>	CG  SY
15.	<p><b>Feedback from Meeting</b></p> <p>Efficient and effective meeting</p>	
16.	<p><b>Date, Time and Venue of next meeting</b></p> <p>TUESDAY 30/03/2021 5.00pm</p>	
17.	<p><b>Next Meeting Focus – see yearly planner</b></p>	



Thanks for attending and contributions to the meeting – please contact GC CG if you have questions regarding the area review

Thanks to GC and all in school for all you are doing – please look after yourselves

Meeting Closed at 10.55am

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl Govier". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a separator between the signature and the text below.

Signed as a true record:

Date: 25.4.2021