



Bishopton Primary School Governing Board Extraordinary Virtual FGB meeting - Minutes 12 May 2021 @ 5pm

Present: TP ASk AS KM SS HH JM OT AM LP

In attendance: SL (clerk)

Apologies: VC

This was a short additional meeting for governors to approve the budget for submission by 14th May 2021 deadline.

Papers provided prior to the meeting:

- *Summary financial report to governors Spring Term 2021*
- *TS005 Budget submission*

Governors were advised that the balance for 2019-2020 is higher than expected as a result of savings and additional funding accessed through the Sustainability Action Group process. An additional child admitted at Easter into Reception took numbers over the 30 threshold and funding for an additional member of staff was allocated for the year. Growth funding of £36K and top-up funding of £27K were also added.

The LA committed to 2 Reception classes for 2021-2022 amounting to £63K+ for Reception alone. Growth funding for KS1 and lower KS2 brought the additional funding to around £176K

There is no commitment from the LA for top-up funding in Reception for 2022-2023 due to low projected birth numbers. However, the growth funding for KS1 and lower KS2 will continue with the additional funding of £87K

This has resulted in a much healthier position with a 6-figure carry forward for 2 years. The later years currently show loss but the LA only work on a 3-year budget and governors were assured that the growth funding with current Y2 will follow them through. Governors commented that this gives time to tackle pupil numbers and increase them.

Do we have any projected pupil numbers for September 2022?

Not at this stage – the intake for September 2021 is still to be confirmed. Of the 34 applying for Bishopton as first choice, 26 have accepted, 4 have siblings at the school and 4 are yet to accept. New appointments that are being made for September are offered on fixed one-year contracts in the first instance just in case.

Does a decision need to be made on the shortfall relating to BASH?

The shortfall has been covered and the budget reflects this. As the reason for fewer children attending BASH is the pandemic, funding claimed due to COVID will be directed to offset this. This is a resource for parents rather than a money-making scheme and, as with all extra activities on offer, funding such as pupil premium and sports grant can be used to ensure that they are affordable. Numbers are increasing as more parents are returning to work situations. Governors acknowledged that this is an important asset for Bishopton, run by familiar staff, which is a bonus, and considered to be extremely flexible and good value for money.

Governors agreed unanimously to support the BASH provision, aiming for it to break-even.

Governors unanimously approved the budget for submission.

Governors discussed the situation regarding financial stability going forward. A proposal was made to make a formal request to the LA to consider reducing the PAN and changing the catchment area to reflect the vision for the school and the additional building work in the area local to the school.

Are there any disadvantages with this?

One of the attractions for Bishopton are the small class sizes. Reducing the PAN to 45 will ensure that R classes are limited to 27 and enable us to achieve the long-term vision of 11 classes over the next few years. This does not stop the school from accepting more should that situation arise.

Why are the new houses not in our catchment area?

This is historic – based on Bishopton as a one-form entry school. It is thought that the catchment area that originally served Holy Trinity Primary (The Willows) was changed when Bishopton was built, with a circle drawn around the school which initially included all of the new housing at the time. The new building out to the A46 is outside that circle and therefore officially serves Holy Trinity. Any of these new properties can select Bishopton as first choice and would be offered a place but it seems sensible for the catchment area to reflect the nearest school and secure the position for us.

How long does the process take?

There have already been discussions for many years and, should the LA agree, there is a lengthy process involving consultation before any changes can be made. However, by making a formal proposal linked to the budget, financial stability and long-term vision for the school, it may result in a stronger position going forward.

Proposal:

In submitting our budget, for future financial stability, the board would request the county to continue its support of the school while it grows, reduce the PAN to 45, and adjust the catchment boundary northward to the A46.

Proposed by TP

Seconded by AM

Carried unanimously – this will be included with the budget submission.

AOB:

In order to raise the school's profile on google searches, a report has been received outlining ways of making Bishopton Primary appear high on the search list. This will be forwarded to AS for information.

Meeting ended 6.45pm

Minutes agreed

Signed:

T Pearson

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

Date: