



MILLTHORPE SCHOOL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Governors held via Video Conference on Tuesday 16th June 2020 at 6pm

Present:	Trevor Burton (Executive Headteacher) Renee Rainville (Chair) Bill Schofield Dave Merrett Amanda Stipetic Jane Terrett	Simon Bull Tim Moat Trevor Charlton Tim Hooper Claire Smith
In Attendance:	Gemma Greenhalgh (Head of School), Alex Collins (SBM) Michelle Blake (Trustee) Sophie Triffitt (Clerk)	

		Action
1.	<p>Welcome & Introductions, Apologies, Declaration of Interests, Any Items for AOB The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. For the record of the minutes the meeting was held by video conference. Apologies for absence were received, with consent, from Roy Moore and Fay Bound Alberti.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of the 14th May 2020 Meeting for Review and Actions (previously distributed) The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting to be signed by the Chair. Action 1: Ongoing. Action 2: The Health and Safety link governor confirmed that there had been updates by e mail with the SBM. Action 3: It was confirmed that Trevor Charlton needs to be added to the communication distribution list. Action 4: Complete. Action 5: Complete. Action 6: Complete – the Chair confirmed that the Trust will review the levy decision. Confidential Minutes of the 14th May 2020 Meeting. (previously distributed) The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting to be signed by the Chair. Action: The Chair confirmed that a thank you letter has been drafted and will be sent with a gift.</p>	
3.	<p>Review Budget (previously distributed) The SBM explained that due to the current pandemic the ESFA are only requesting a one year forecast at this time but a three year budget forecast has been produced for the Trust and year three of the budget presents a concern. 2020/21 Budget Governors reviewed the 2020/21 budget. The SBM reported that there is an in year carried over surplus and whilst the budget plan is lean there is a level of ambition built in. Challenge: A governor asked what the confidence level is on the starting balance from this financial year. The SBM explained that there has been analysis on cost, income and forecast savings through the pandemic and the savings outweigh the cost and lost income. The main impact is the loss of lettings and catering income but there is a circa £35k saving on consumables, utilities and supply so does not anticipate a detriment to the outturn. Challenge: A governor asked if the assumptions for IT would support investment for a possible blended learning model next year. The SBM explained that the Executive Headteacher has a proposal for G Suite which enables the Google Classroom facility but there would be a need to invest in Wi-Fi and IT hardware at a cost of circa £50k. An application will be made to the Trust to utilise the school condition allowance funds but if not successful will need to look at capital and revenue income to assess affordability. Challenge: The Executive Headteacher informed governors that Vital can make the e mail change for £3/4k which will enable the use of Google Classroom and will be part of the school budget. Ideally each teacher would be provided with a Chromebook at a cost of £12k and whiteboard updates at a cost of £2k and there would be a need to ensure student access. Challenge: A governor asked if there is a view on whole school student access to IT at home. The Head of School explained that this data was gathered for pupil premium and vulnerable students but this information is</p>	

now being gathered across all students.

The Executive Headteacher explained that there would need to be a drive for teachers to use the system and make it the default way of working and delivering lessons in class with a CPD plan to support.

None of these plans have been built into the start budget but can get IT to the desired base level for £4k, could make it better for £16k and make significant improvements for £50k. There would then need to be an additional investment in pupil devices which is funded by parents at other schools and would remove the need to update desktop devices in school. This would also free up five rooms currently used for IT and savings could be used to support disadvantaged students.

Challenge: A governor noted that £50k is a significant investment but questioned if governors want to have an ambitious target to make these changes and plan for a different type of future.

Challenge: A governor was conscious of the pressures on leadership operating the school through the pandemic and asked the Head of School and Executive Headteacher for views on the best way to progress IT changes. The Executive Headteacher informed governors that he had approached the Trust CFO with rough costs to gain an initial Trust view but there are ways to deliver some level of change this year and a proposal can be presented to governors.

The Head of School reported that the SBM has included the IT changes in the Capital Fund Allocation bid which has a deadline of 17th June 2020.

Challenge: A governor noted the exceptional circumstances and questioned what the rationale would be for the Trust not agreeing the funding. The Executive Headteacher explained that there may be a number of bids from all the schools but has asked for all bids to be shared so there is an understanding of priorities across the Trust. There may also be detail in the legislation that prevents the funding being used for this IT plan.

Challenge: A governor asked if there will be a heavy workload on teachers to transfer over resources that have been built up. The Head of School explained that there should be no change as documents can be uploaded to Google Classroom in the same format they are currently in and there are advantages to workload and interactivity. A governor who has experienced changing platforms for teaching confirmed it is straightforward in the Google Suite.

Challenge: A governor asked if there is an IT plan for the next 2-3 years to ensure any bids and actions are in line with the strategy and plan. The Head of School explained that the change to e mails and Google Classroom was being discussed at the point of the Covid-19 school closure and there is an IT maintenance plan. A governor suggested it would be beneficial to develop an IT strategic plan to deliver the outcome the school want.

Challenge: A governor asked if the Google Suite will be in place for September. The Head of School confirmed the plan is to do the changeover and training in the last week of the summer term and run a refresher session on the inset days for September.

Challenge: A governor suggested the development of an IT plan.

Governors supported the £4k cost to change school e mails to enable the Google IT Suite.

Challenge: A governor asked if the budget against photocopying relates to a normal year or are adjusted for the Covid period. The SBM confirmed that a slight adjustment was made on the expectation that school will not be open to all students all the time from day one of next academic year.

Challenge: A governor asked if with more home learning there will be less of a reliance on paper. The SBM hoped that as part of the new normal there will be a move away from the use of paper.

Challenge: A governor asked if a full allowance for exam fees has been included. The SBM explained that there will be a small saving this year and is expecting £2k back but it has been confirmed as business as usual for next year.

Challenge: A governor asked if there is confidence in the staffing costs and if there are any leavers. The SBM explained that a pay proposal of 3% was put to the teacher review board and 2.5% was proposed for support staff before the pandemic but the pay awards are not yet confirmed. There is low staff turnover so there is no significant impact in terms of net losses and gains over twelve months. The Head of School noted that the budget factors in appointments for staff gaps so there may be savings dependent on when appoints are made.

The SBM confirmed that the salary / payroll budget factors in the pay award assumptions.

In response to a governor the SBM confirmed that if the support staff pay award from April is delayed an accrual would be made.

Challenge: A governor asked how assumptions are set. The SBM explained that the assumptions are set by

the Trust and built into the financial planning software.

Resolution: Governors agreed to recommend the budget for 2020/21 for approval by the Trust.

Three Year Budget

The Executive Headteacher explained that the increase in costs of £1.4m over three years is mainly driven by the increase in staff costs. The budget moves from a £37k projected reserve at the end of August 2020 to a deficit of £481k at August 2023. The Executive Headteacher presented a plan to address the cumulative deficit of £482k projected for August 2023 and address the concerns of the Trust.

Challenge: A governor questioned the assumptions and suggested there should be consideration of the historical budget standing at year end.

Challenge: A governor noted that if income is static but are being asked to include staff cost increases then this will deliver a negative trend.

Challenge: A governor asked if the Trust set a target of percentage payroll costs against income. The Executive Headteacher explained that there are national benchmarks which suggest staff costs should not be over 80% and explained that the ratio is impacted as a result of the low funding level for York schools. Staff have managed tight budgets and teaching resources with class sizes rising and teachers teaching more hours. The Head of School explained that to ensure specialist teachers teaching students then timetabling can be difficult and there is no area across the school to make redundancies and have all students taught by a specialist teacher.

Challenge: A governor suggested including the staffing and subject delivery context in any representation to the Trust.

Challenge: A governor asked what the budget picture is like at York High School. The Executive Headteacher explained that there is a similar trajectory but they start from a higher surplus so the move into deficit is in year three. York High School also have higher income per pupil but have a similar journey of increasing class sizes and teacher contact ratio.

Challenge: A governor asked if a meeting should be requested with the CFO and Chair of Trustees to understand the thinking behind what the Trust are expecting in terms of long term budget planning.

Challenge: A governor noted that any impact to class size and staffing in order to manage the long term budget will be detrimental to the school.

Challenge: A governor noted that there have been several years of making changes to ensure a balanced budget and questioned the approach of the Trust to suggest assumptions that seem out of line with thinking in school.

The Head of School emphasised the development of education in school to deliver outstanding education to the pupils and had started to see improvements and expected to see the best results for Year 11 this year. Staff have remained together and positive through this period and all of the staff are with the school on the journey and worked hard on the curriculum and quality of education. The school are not over capacity with staff and removing teachers would mean children are not taught by specialists and this will have a detrimental impact on the children and their learning.

Challenge: A governor felt that the Trust have a distant relationship with the school and was surprised that the assumptions were developed without discussion / input from the schools.

Challenge: A governor was uncomfortable that the assumptions are driving discussion on the potential of redundancies to deliver savings and hoped that any savings can be managed through natural attrition.

Challenge: A governor noted the levy contribution and asked how the other schools in the Trust feel about the contribution. The Executive Headteacher explained that the increase in levy contribution was communicated at a Headteacher Group meeting but Heads have not seen the Trust budget or rationale for the increase and the decision is on hold but the increase is built into the budget. There is a focus on financial compliance but there is a need to review how savings can be delivered across the Trust.

Challenge: A governor felt that there should be realistic central planning assumptions and for schools to be asked for challenges and solutions. There may be some serious challenges down the line but it is unhelpful to have unrealistic assumptions as a starting point and suggested making the point to the Trust around quality of education and specialist teachers.

A governor noted the Trust require a 4% reserve but in order to achieve this teaching will be impacted.

The Head of School explained that there is a good team of Headteachers in the Trust who want to work together but there is a disconnect and the work in the Trust heavily focuses on accountability and process but would want greater investment and focus on school improvement at school level and driving forward impact on

	<p>the students and their learning. The current structures and communications within the Trust at the moment has accountability at many different levels with a lack of clarity and would want the Trust Principal's replacement to have secondary knowledge and experience.</p> <p>A governor suggested presenting the Trust with the school emphasis on quality of education, increasing class sizes and teacher contact ratio, a request that assumptions are reviewed or support to address the budget deficit without impacting education if the assumptions remain unchanged. There is a need for stronger communication within the Trust and an understanding of the budget that drives the levy and there is a need for an increased focus on school improvement.</p> <p>Resolution: Governors agreed to ask for clarity on the assumptions and understanding of what the Trust want in terms of long term budget planning and to develop the proposal document to present to the Trust.</p> <p>The Trustee explained that Trustees are aware of the need to improve communication across all schools and there is an opportunity for change and to think about what the Trust does and how it operates.</p>	
4.	<p>Reopening Update</p> <p>Challenge: A governor asked if there is a plan for more interactive work for Years 7, 8, 9. The Head of School reported that there is now a much larger number of teaching staff in school to manage the Year 10 offering and it will be more challenging for those teachers to respond to lower school e mails but the intention is to commit to the same amount of work. Parent feedback is being analysed to inform any changes to the structure of the offering and changes should be seen this week to more interactive lessons being utilised. A pupil survey has also been issued. A big change will be seen with a move to Google Classroom from September and depending on what the model of schooling is will direct the teacher offering. There should be the capacity from September to schedule online contact with students.</p> <p>The Head of School reported that the significant investment in planning for the return of Year 10 has supported a very positive return to school. There were no behaviour incidents to manage, perfect arrival and compliance with the uniform expectations. The students did arrive slightly subdued but left happy and there was no requirement of emergency pastoral support for any student. The three school union reps sent an e mail to all staff to say how well the return to school went, how safe it was and for staff not to worry. The Head of School confirmed that she has consulted with the union reps throughout and they have worked with the school to deliver a safe environment for learning</p> <p>Governors thanked the Head of School and SLT for the well managed return to school, the positive communications with parents and the video that went to parents to walk through the school system.</p>	
5.	<p>Special Projects</p> <p>Applefields / MUGA</p> <p>The Chair reported that the Applefields project is progressing and the Net Zero commitment to build had been signed.</p> <p>The SBM confirmed that both projects have contractors in place and regular updates will be provided to governors.</p> <p>Action: The link governor to schedule a meeting with the SBM for updates on the Applefields and MUGA projects.</p>	TM
6.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>New Governor Application</p> <p>Governors discussed the skills and link area gaps in the governing body and it was agreed not to progress the application at this time.</p> <p>It was confirmed there is an elected parent governor vacancy that will be advertised next term.</p> <p>Gift for Scott</p> <p>Governors discussed possible options for thank you gifts</p> <p>Black Lives Matter</p> <p>Governors recorded their thanks to the school for the inclusive article around the work being done in school. The Head of School confirmed that she will work closely with staff, students and parents to ensure a positive curriculum, pastoral support and culture in school.</p> <p>Thanks</p> <p>The Chair recorded thanks to governors for the additional time commitment, challenge and support through the pandemic. Governors recorded thanks to the Head of School, Executive Headteacher and staff for their hard</p>	

	work through this period.	
7. Future Meetings 6 th July 2020		
		Meeting end time 8.30pm
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	Ms Renee Rainville Chair	Date Signed

Action Plan following the Meeting of the Local Governing Body on Tuesday 16th June 2020

	Action	Agenda	Person	Date
1.	Include Pupil Premium destination data and transition plans on Pupil Premium Link Visit.	4.1 (25.02.20)	PP Link Governor	June 2020
2.	Link governor to schedule a meeting with the SBM for updates on the Applefields and MUGA projects.	5	Tim Moat	June 2020

Future Agenda Items

July 2020	Future Meeting
Governance Review Action Plan timescales.	Tour of new buildings Extracurricular audit and participation rates