

STANFORD INFANT SCHOOL: Finance & Staffing Committee

18th May 2020 5pm

Present: James Bates - Chair, Madeleine Denyer - Head Teacher, Mark Topham, Naomi Schubert

Quorate: 4/4

In attendance: Hannah Parker – Bursar, Anna Johnson - Clerk

Item	Objective
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies for Absence There were no apologies.</p> <p>Declaration of any Pecuniary Interest in the Meeting There were no declarations of pecuniary interest in the meeting.</p>
2.	<p>Final Outturn 2019-2020</p> <p>Hannah Parker confirmed that the underspend could be carried into the next financial year. In the first year of the budget this would offset the deficit and produce a cumulative surplus.</p> <p><i>Q. What if any are the financial effects of Covid-19 on the school?</i> A. The full impact is difficult to predict in advance as conditions and effects caused by the virus are still developing. In terms of the financial year 2019-20, the budget forecast underspend of £8,712 is not significantly different from the actual figure of £9,437.</p> <p><i>Q. What is the cause of the £4,745 deficit in the Breakfast Club cost centre?</i> A. This is in fact a smaller deficit than expected in September when numbers attending were low. This was caused in part by an increase in sports club provision at Stanford Juniors. The Head noted that currently Breakfast Club places were being offered free of charge to children of key workers only.</p> <p>It was expected that when the school reopened there would be a staggered start time and no junior school children would be able to attend, therefore Breakfast Club would not be running. Until there was more clarity, it could not be confirmed when this service would resume. It had been assumed in the 3 year budget that Breakfast Club income would be lower in 2020-21 and it was still unclear where government help would be provided to cover school losses due to Covid-19.</p> <p><i>Q. What are the main risk areas that will affect the budget going forward?</i> A. Lettings is the main area of uncertainty.</p> <p>Governors acknowledged that with staffing at 94% of the budget there were not many opportunities for savings and they congratulated the Head and Bursar on achieving a budget surplus.</p>
3.	<p>3 Year Budget</p> <p><i>Q. Why is there a larger increase in cleaning costs predicted from Year 1 to Year 2 in comparison to years 2 and 3?</i> A. This is due to the specialist cleaning required in relation to Covid-19 in this financial year. These costs are placed in a dedicated cost centre with the expectation that these costs may be reclaimed from the Department of Education alongside other expenditure such as online learning resources. Years 2 and 3 show an estimated inflation increase.</p>

Governors **agreed** to review the impact of Covid 19 at the next committee. **Action**

Q. Why is there a reduction in Full Time Equivalent staffing costs following year 1?

A. This is due to a number of staffing changes. The resignation of a staff member from July who will be replaced by an NQT at a lower salary. The ECaR teacher will not be replaced by someone from the local authority team, as teaching assistants have been trained to provide this support in house. This was decision was made so that the counselling service could be retained but if funding is available in the future the school plans to employ a formal ECaR teacher again. Staff leaving in July would be paid until September.

FTE costs across the three years were also affected by staff retirement taking place in the current year and the return of staff on maternity.

Governors noted that the only way to achieve sustainability in the budget was reduce staffing costs by hiring teachers on lower salary scales.

Q. Is it school policy to replace any teacher resigning with an NQT?

A. This has been the procedure for the last four years. However, if there was not a suitable in house candidate to replace a Year Group Leader, then a more qualified teacher would be recruited

The Head had asked staff to let her know of any plans for movement and other than those already confirmed the staff base looked to be stable in September.

Q. What is the increase in the LA formula budget across the years based on?

A. This is factored from pupil numbers and assumes both pupil and staffing will remain the same as the current situation.

The Head noted that if the forecast of £27,000 surplus was sustained until September the school would then consider hiring an ECaR teacher but agreed some level of surplus at year end was desirable.

Q. Why are some areas of expenditure such as supply staff and electricity down in Year 1 but increased in Years 2 and 3?

A. Year 1 variations are a result of the following:

- The LA informed the school in March that a new electricity supplier would lower costs going forward and inflation is applied in Years 2 and 3.
- An agency Individual Needs Assistant was being paid until May but it seemed likely that they would not now be needed for the rest of the summer term as the child will not return to school. In addition, deep dives and learning walks that would have required agency cover are not taking place. In general, Year 1 supply costs have been calculated for two terms rather than three.
- The curriculum expenditure has been decreased due to contributions from the PTFA.
- Office costs have been reduced as the way the office is being used has changed and in addition the Attendance Officer has not been employed during lockdown.

Intake in September was confirmed as 86, with whole school roll number at 267. However, there is a waiting list and Emma Whittington was in regular contact with the LA regarding this, therefore pupil numbers might change before the census.

Governors **congratulated** the Head and Bursar on achieving a balanced budget in extremely challenging times.

Q. Are there any particular areas of concern for next year?

A. A significant fall in income from the Breakfast Club and lettings is anticipated. The costs of staffing to support children with Educational Health Care Plans is also a concern,

	<p>particularly as the LA funding figures for this area don't match with the school's estimate.</p> <p><i>Q. Is there a risk in relation to extra supply costs to cover absence of staff due to Covid - 19?</i></p> <p>A. Currently the majority of staff are able to work and the school prefers to provide cover internally. This will be especially true when children return from the unsettling period of lockdown. However, it is anticipated that the Department of Education would refund agency costs incurred due to Covid-19.</p> <p>The committee agreed to recommend the budget for approval to the full board.</p>
4.	<p>Sports Premium report</p> <p>£3,504 out of £17,740 remained in the sports budget, due to intersports competitions being cancelled in lockdown.</p> <p>The school had bought into the Real Legacy programme as Real PE had been the most successful area of Sports Premium funding development.</p> <p>The government had not confirmed if sports premium funding would be renewed in October and with this in mind the Head and Sports Lead would decide how the remainder would be spent later in the term.</p>
5.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Governors agreed that a benchmarking workshop be provisionally arranged for 3rd July at 10am.</p>

Signature of Chair:

ACTION LOG				
	Date	Action	Owner	Due
1.	18.05.20	Review the impact of Covid 19 at the next committee	All	July?