

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
EAST KENT**

**EASTRY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL  
MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY EXTRAORDINARY MEETING TO DISCUSS THE  
PROPOSED 3 YEAR BUDGET PLAN HELD ON  
TUESDAY, 2 MAY, 2017 AT 7.00pm AT THE SCHOOL**

**PRESENT:** Dr D Sugden (Chair), Headteacher, Mr S Booth (Vice Chair) Mrs K Plant, Mrs A Wiles, Mrs S Carr, Mr A Bonner, Mrs R Smith and Mrs K Sampson (Clerk).

**1 OPENING PRAYERS**

Rev. D Ridley and Mrs J Willis were not available.

**2 APOLOGIES AND WELCOME**

Apologies were received and accepted from Rev. D Ridley and Mrs J Willis.

**3 DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS**

The Chair gave all governors present at the meeting the opportunity to declare any additional business interests since the last full governing body meeting. Chair declared that as his wife is a member of staff he would leave the room for any discussions involving staffing and would not be able to sit on any panel for potential redundancies. There were no new business interests to declare.

**4 PROPOSED BUDGET FORECAST FOR 2017/18 ONWARDS**

At the Data Monitoring Group Meeting on 25 April, Headteacher highlighted the reduction in income and increased costs and how the proposed budget had been formulated ensuring that the school was in credit at the end of Year 3 only through applying many cutbacks.

Although last year's proposed revenue income was £965,750, the school actually received over £1,000,000 (received additional funds) with a proposed income of £961,242 for 2017/18 so there was no reason to be concerned with this year's budget. When the formula funding for this year was released our proposed income had been reduced to £942,658 down to £883,274 in Year 2 and £848,468 in Year 3; a difference of £94,190 over the 3 years.

There has been a huge amount of press coverage highlighting government funding cuts and the NAHT union (National Association of Headteachers) have written to the Prime Minister explaining how the education system is close to collapsing due to the cuts. This letter was signed by 500 Headteachers and printed in the Mirror newspaper. Theresa May has not replied so far. The Education Secretary who was due to attend the NAHT conference cancelled and at the last moment Jeremy Corbyn stepped in stating that he would reverse the all the cuts etc.

The cuts that the school had to make to get the proposed budget were then discussed;

Psychology services cut at a cost of £1800 per year

Beanstalk services cut at a cost of £1391 per year. The school has offered this service of reading, playing games and supporting children who do not receive support at home since 2009. We have been able to keep 1 member of Beanstalk for a year as Beanstalk have arranged funding through a different source and the 2 other Beanstalk helpers are continuing until July 2017 due to a generous anonymous donation.

The counselling service where a counsellor sees 4 children every Friday morning has had to be cancelled even though there is a waiting list. The service cost the school £5698 last year.

Classcare (KCC buildings maintenance insurance) is being cancelled (£4672 last year). Although KCC paid for a new roof about 5 years ago, they refused to pay for a replacement water tank which cost £6520 (ex. VAT) or help pay for repairs to the playground that tree roots had damaged. This was finally paid for partly by the school and the Parish Council through their insurance. The school is also trying to get help to repair the front gate pedestal (this claim has been ongoing since November, 2016). The school will continue to be insured through the KCC Safehands insurance. The school is not able to continue with staff absence insurance (£4065) which covers part of the cost of staff on long term sick leave; instead the Head and Mrs K Plant will have to cover teacher absence.

The school is unable to continue with the Numbers Count Teacher employed by Ash, Cartwright & Kelsey even though the programme has been so successful (£10998).

The FLO has decided to take early retirement at the end of this academic year and the school will be unable to replace her (£7854). Her workload will fall on to the Headteacher, SENCO and all other staff.

£9000 of High Needs funding is being clawed back from the school because of poor management by KCC.

Mrs G Harvey's temporary contract to carry out interventions for 2 mornings a week has had to be terminated (£7140). This will impact on the intervention groups.

The government have also imposed an apprenticeship levy on schools which will cost Eastry approximately £3091 per annum, which makes employing an apprentice not so appealing.

We have 3 temporary teaching assistants (TAs) whose contracts are being terminated at the end of this year (31/08). 2 TAs were covering children that are leaving (1 child in Year 1 and another in Year 6) and the other was used as top-up cover where needed. Governors asked whether children who need one-to-one support would still receive this – this was confirmed that they would still receive one-to-one support. All reductions relate to the current year to drop our expenditure down to £936,365.36. In 2018/19 our projected income is £883,274 and expenditure of £880,103.15 and in 2019/20 projected income is £848,468 with expenditure at £882,513.02. One-to-one TAs leave when their child leaves the school. FLO expenditure comes out of code E07 which is why the costs drop from £17,549.15 in 17/18 to £12,147.05 in 18/19. (FLO contract will terminate in August 2017 which is halfway through the financial year) E19 – Learning Resources drop in years 2 and 3 as residential/class visits and swimming money has only been included in Year 1.

Page 2 shows a predicted rollover of £31,681.64 in Year 1, £34,852.49 in Year 2 and £807.46 in Year 3.

The Headteacher felt that governors and parents/carers should be made aware how many of the services being cut will affect the service, welfare and wellbeing of both staff and pupils.

Governors wanted to know whether other services could be cut so that counselling could continue as it can make such a tremendous difference to children not just at school but at home. The Headteacher explained that many scenarios had been tried and that the proposed budget presented to governors had been the least drastic and best academic for the majority of pupils. The majority of the budget is spent on staffing (85%); the school is fortunate to have very experienced staff. We do train student teachers but can only have so many students in at a time to ensure they are monitored correctly. The school nurses now have the contract for arranging counselling. The school has made 4 referrals so far and has not heard back yet.

Governors asked about predicted income figures. These are based on predicted school numbers (currently 210 pupils with a maximum of 218). The school was able to fill a place in Yr 4 within a week of a child leaving (parent's job move to Wales). We also have 2 new children in Year 3 and 5 with another child starting in Year 4 next week. We are having difficulty filling the reception class (currently 26) and are expecting 24 in September.

High Needs Funding (I03) drops from £40,764 in Year 1 to £26,910 in Year 2 due to 2 high needs children leaving in July, 2017.

The Every Child Counts Teacher, Mrs L Carr, who generated income from training Numbers Count is actively looking for another job as the training has dried up because schools cannot afford it.

Governors asked about staffing in each class. The Headteacher confirmed that there would continue to be a teacher and 2 teaching assistants in most classes. Staff were consulted on the state of the budget which is one reason why the FLO is taking early retirement and 2 teaching assistants are thinking of dropping to 4 days per week.

Governors wanted to know if E27- brought in professional services could be reduced (Elite Coaching, KCC Personnel cover, IT support and payroll). Headteacher explained that Elite coaching covers teacher's PPA time that has to be provided under the teacher's pay and conditions and that we receive approximately £9000 sports funding to cover the majority of this (£11000 spent last year). Headteacher will speak to Elite to try and arrange a more competitive package.

Governors questioned whether this was the only option available and that it would have been useful to see other options. Headteacher explained that the proposed budget had been achieved by gradually cutting services to obtain a workable budget and the only other option available would be cutting staff as the majority of the budget is spent on this. If the school can increase its pupil roll then this would help our income and we do not know yet if we will have high needs funding children coming in to Fledglings in September. Other local schools are having to merge classes to reduce costs.

The Headteacher has written to local MPs and asked for a meeting with Charlie Elphicke and local Headteachers to discuss the government's cuts in education funding. He also felt that parents should be made aware of the cuts and reasons why some services would no longer be available and ask them to question their local MP about the cuts.

Dr D Sugden proposed (Mr S Booth seconded) that governors agree and ratify the 3 Year Budget Plan. All governors were in favour.

**5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The proposed letter to parents was discussed in detail on its content and whether it should go in the weekly newsletter or as a separate letter.

**ACTION POINT** – Headteacher to email draft letter to governors for comments.

Children currently receiving counselling will continue until the end of their sessions.

Chair advised governors that the school has a parent who has had an ongoing issue with the school for over a year. The parent had been offered mediation but turned this down and had then decided to make a formal complaint. Mr S Booth and the Chair have both been involved and asked Rev. D Ridley to take over the matter which he has done. The school has not heard from the parent for several weeks and are not sure whether the parent is still going to make a formal complaint.

If a formal complaint is made there needs to be a panel to consider it. The Headteacher, Mrs K Plant, Mr S Booth cannot be involved so it will be between the other governors. A panel of 2 governors and Rev. D Ridley as Chair will be needed.

**6 CLOSING PRAYERS**

No closing prayer.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

There were no matters of confidentiality.

It was confirmed that there were no items to be excluded from the Minutes to be made available for inspection under paragraph 24 of the Education (School Government) Regulations – 1987.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_