

**GOVERNING BODY FOR ST JOHN'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL N20**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON  
TUESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2018 AT 18:00**

**MEMBERS**

**FOUNDATION GOVERNORS**

Mrs Imogen Hall (*PCC*) (Interim Chair)  
Mr Jaime Goumal (*PCC*)  
Mrs Rachel Adams-Constantine (*PCC*)  
Mrs Alice Gavin-Atashkar  
(Deanery/Synod)  
Ms Loretta Okpokiri (*LDBS*)  
*LDBS Governor Vacancy*  
*PCC Governor Vacancy*

**PARENT GOVERNORS**

Mr Rupert Coles  
Dr Ajanta Kamal  
Mr Ben Pullenayegum

**LA GOVERNOR**

Mrs Christine Richardson

**STAFF GOVERNOR**

Mrs Alison Cruickshank (mat cover)

**EX OFFICIO HEADTEACHER**

Mr Curtis Sweetingham

**EX OFFICIO PRIEST IN CHARGE**

\* Revd Lynn Davidson

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER**

Mrs Catherine Mitri

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Gina North, School Finance Manager  
Lynne Evans, Clerk

**MINUTES**  
**PART I**

*Opening Prayer by Catherine Mitri*

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome and Apologies</b>	
1.1	The Chair opened the meeting at 18:40, welcoming all attendees and gave thanks to the Clerk and previous Chair of Governors for all of her work over the past 4 years, presenting a series of gifts from the governing body.	
1.2	Apologies were received from Revd Lynn Davidson who was attending a conference. It was RESOLVED to accept the apologies.	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests Relating to Agenda</b>	
2.1	Declaration of pecuniary interest received from RC in relation to item 3 on the agenda and it was RESOLVED that RC would leave the room at the relevant time in the meeting.	
2.2	Declaration of pecuniary interest received from LE in relation to item 4 on the agenda and it was RESOLVED that LE would leave the room at the relevant time in the meeting.	

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Appointment of Interim Vice-Chair</b>	
3.1	<i>RC left the room.</i> The Chair introduced that a nomination had been received for RC to act as Interim Vice Chair until the formal appointment process in the Autumn Term and that RC was willing to act.	
3.2	The governing body RESOLVED to unanimously appoint RC as Interim Vice Chair  <i>RC was invited back into the room</i>	<b>Clerk to update membership lists and GovernorHub</b>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appointment of Clerk</b>	
4.1	<i>LE left the room.</i> The Chair outlined that the previous clerk had resigned which left a gap the governing body needed to fill and presented the proposal received from Lynne Evans of RUN Media Limited to act as Clerk to the governing body. A discussion took place on the terms of agreement proposed, together with fees.	
4.2	It was RESOLVED to proceed with the appointment and for the Chair to sign the agreement  <i>LE was invited back into the room</i>	<b>IH sign agreement and enter into formal agreement with RUN Media Limited for clerking services to the governing body</b>
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Year End Budget (point 6 in agenda)</b>	
5.1	The Chair explained that the meeting would move to item 6 on the agenda so that the School Finance Manager could be released from the standard governing body agenda and accordingly invited GN to give a high level overview of the budget, which was being recommended by the Finance & Premises Committee for ratification by the governing body.	
5.2	GN explained that it had been difficult to balance the school budget, in line with the difficulties faced by most schools at the moment. GN highlighted that school funding had not increased in the amount received per pupil for more than 5 years and that for one-form entry primary schools, it was proving particularly hard to make the money stretch as far as it needed to.	

5.3	GN continued that salaries are increasing more than inflation and that doesn't mean that staff are getting higher than inflation pay rises, but that pensions and national insurance costs are increasing quite dramatically, and schools have to find that money out of their budget. Staffing costs, which typically count for 85-90% of the entire school income, are increasing each year and therefore, year on year, it is proving more difficult to balance the budget.	
5.4	GN outlined that in the 2019/20 proposed budget, the brought forward balance from 2018/19 was shown as £55k and that may increase to around £80k because some items have slipped to be paid in the 2019/20 financial year. GN also advised that for the first time, schools are not being allowed to put year-end adjustments in to the budget for less than £5000. As an example, when working on the year-end budget, GN would have liked to accrue for some utility bills that have not yet been received but were for services received in 2018/19. However as the amount was under £5,000, she was not allowed accrue for this. As a consequence the next financial year budget has had to be amended to include items such as this. Due to various items like this, it is anticipated (but not confirmed) that the brought forward amount (underspend) may be improved by a further £15,000.	
5.5	Turning to the proposed budget detail, total LA funding was noted as being £984,918. The income is per pupil and as the school is now full, funding for this element is as high as it can be. It was also explained that Early Years (nursery) funding is hoping to increase as the school is expecting to have more places filled in the new financial year, than it had in 2018/19.	
5.6	GN continued that other points to note were salary costs. It has been assumed that the teachers' pay award would be 2% and that non-teaching staff would also have a pay award this year outlined by the National Joint Council (NJC) agreement. The NJC covers local government, community and VAT schools. The NJC pay award is more than the rate of inflation and indeed, can be as much as 8% increase for some staff. GN stressed that if schools are abiding by the NJC agreement, the increase must be applied, and this is another reason for financial difficulty.	
5.7	GN advised governors to look at line E30 on the budget and to note that there was no contingency planned, explaining that in order to file a balanced budget, with all of the cost pressures, the school had to be quite prudent and set a budget without a contingency. However, now that the underspend was expected to be higher than the original £55k budgeted, that should allow some small contingency for next year. GN concluded this particular point by commenting that the real challenge is looking ahead to 2020/21 and 2021/22 and that while other schools are setting deficit budgets this	

	year (2019/20), St John's were very fortunate not to be there just yet. There would be a lot of work to do in the summer term between the HT and GN, looking forward to seeing what the next few years will look like.	
5.8	<p>The Chair invited questions on the proposed budget.</p> <p><b>Q: A Governor asked how pension increases were set – was it at a national or local level?</b></p> <p>A: GN replied that non-teaching staff were set locally whilst teacher pension costs are set nationally. Teacher pension costs are increasing from 16.5% to 23.5% but the government are funding that, so the increase has not been include in the budget. Non-teaching staff tend to use the LA pension scheme and the employer contribution is currently at 24.8%. Clarification was provided that whatever someone's salary is, it costs the school one-third again, to employ them due to the on-costs. It was explained that the local government pension scheme percentage contribution can vary hugely from one borough to another and Barnet's is particularly high.</p>	
5.8.1	<p><b>Q: A Governor asked what costs were included in expenditure lines E27 and E28.</b></p> <p>A: BP replied that some curriculum services were included there e.g. Educational Psychologist All4Sport (not using anymore) and music lessons; further costs would be HR, payroll and LA traded services.</p>	
5.9	<p>The governing body unanimously RESOLVED to ratify the budget for 2019/20. The Chair and Headteacher signed the budget and returned to the School Finance Manager for LA submission.</p> <p><i>GN left the meeting</i></p>	
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Minutes of the FGB held on 20 November 2019 Part I and Matters Arising (part 5 on agenda)</b>	
6.1	The governing body unanimously RESOLVED that the minute were a true reflection of the previous meeting and the Chair approved, signed and dated the minutes for placement in the FGB minute file.	<b>CS place pocket folder in 2018/19 FGB minute file</b>
6.2	The governing body turned to matters arising and specifically action points from the previous meeting. JG advised that he had not been able to obtain an updated parish list, and this was on-going.	<b>Carry over</b>
6.3	F&P chair to provide detailed report at next FGB. <i>Complete.</i>	
6.4	F&P committee to continue to review financial viability of nursery and if relevant in the future, bring any proposals to	

	FGB. meeting and bring any proposals to FGB. <i>Ongoing in F&amp;P, remove from FGB actions.</i>	
6.5	HT to review consistent terminology used in HT Reports for disadvantages / PP pupils. <i>Complete</i>	
6.6	IH to discuss with SLT how to report alleged bullying to FGB. It was discussed that this is an area Ofsted are looking at and the governors need to be assured of the processes being used. <i>Remove from FGB actions. To carry over to TLS agenda.</i>	<b>Place alleged bullying reporting on TLS agenda</b>
6.7	AGA and CS to plan for 2019/20 online safety training. No need to track this. <i>Remove from FGB actions.</i>	
6.8	Safeguarding and Child Protection policy amends and school upload to website. <i>Complete</i>	
6.9	Resolving Complaints policy amends made and school to upload to website. <i>Complete</i>	
6.10	AK to send CS a sample behaviour contract. <i>Not done. To carry over</i>	<b>AK send CS a sample behaviour contract by 5/4/19</b>
<b>7.0</b>	<b>F&amp;P Committee Report – Verbal update</b>	
7.1	BP outlined that the committee had spent a long time looking at the budget last week and GN's update at the beginning of the meeting was a fair representation.	
7.2	A short summary was that we have an in-year deficit but have a carry-over of funds to the next financial year. It was expected that a 2019/20 would have a further, more substantial, in-year deficit resulting in no-carry over of funds which would then result in the year after (2020/21) showing a large deficit. Whilst it might look very sudden in 2020/21 by way numbers, it wouldn't be sudden, but a cumulative effect of several years in-year deficits, due the reasons of lack of increase income and increasing costs, as has been regularly outlined to the governing body.	
7.3	BP continued that there was really not a lot that could be done by the F&P committee and they would continue to review all of the small bits of spend to try and save and have difficult discussions on everything that is spent, ensuring a log is created on every item that has been challenged.	
7.4	With regards to the Priority List, not a lot is being spent because conversations take place on whether spend needs to come from the school budget or Maintenance Fund and there is very little money in both pots.	

7.4.1	<p><b>Q: A Governor asked if other schools are also in similar situations across Barnet, is there likely to be a tipping point when the LA can't handle it.</b></p> <p>A: CS responded absolutely yes, and we are informed that many schools are already filing for a licensed deficit. Central Government will have to seriously consider putting money into education at the next Spending Review.</p>	
7.5	<p>BP continued that whilst the F&amp;P committee insisted on sending their three-year forecast to the LA to warn them that a deficit is forecast, the LA were actually not really interested in seeing the three-year forecast which the governing body thought was strange (of the LA).</p>	
7.6  7.6.1  7.6.2  7.6.3  7.6.4- 7.6.11	<p>IH interjected that the previous Chair had initiated conversations with the LA's Head of School Improvement (Neil Marlow) and also St John's LDBS Primary Advisor (Jayne Pavlou) which she had taken over upon appointment as Interim Chair. At the meeting which took place between NM, JP, CS, IH RC and GN, the external advisors acknowledged many schools were in the same position and advised to continue being focused on costs and also look outward to see if there was any way of increasing income and reducing expenditure.</p> <p>RC commented that whilst not much can be done to reduce costs, the governing body can be open to being as creative as possible as to generating additional revenue.</p> <p><b>Q: A Governor asked if the school had put in for any grants from the LDBS?</b></p> <p>A BP replied yes, and boiler work had been carried out in this financial year.</p> <p>BP further outlined the way that LDBS bids are placed, including the ranking system of importance and another ranking for risk, citing an example of the fence not being a high risk and that it was controlled so therefore funds could not be spent on a low risk and had to be spent on higher risk items such as fire alarms and lighting, concluding that the system is slightly more shackled than the school would like it to be.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>MOTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY</u></p> <p>RESOLVED that, because of its nature, the business to be transacted be treated as confidential and not for publication. Discussion moved to Part II.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Part I Resumed)</p>	

7.7	Governors discussed general school funding issues and a lack of response from Theresa Villiers MP to numerous requests for meetings. It was noted that Mike Freer was also not responding. CR reported that she was due to attend a local Conservative party meeting held by Theresa Villiers and would report back.	<b>CR to report back</b>
7.8	IH summarised an earlier discussion around the need for a list of every area where expenditure had been challenged or ideas for revenue generation discussed and the principles behind the end decision.	<b>IH to create list and circulate</b>
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Admissions Committee Report – verbal update</b>	
8.1	JG explained that the Admissions Committee met in February to rank the applications for entry to the school. 77 applications had been received and so the school was still oversubscribed, receiving more applications than places. JG further explained that most of the ranking was straight forward although there were some tricky ones to discuss.	
8.1.1	<b>Q: A Governor asked if 77 applications was less than previous years.</b> A: CS replied only by a small amount. Last year the school received 79 applications.	
8.2	JG explained the process of ranking according the policy and entrance criteria. The data was returned to the LA who allocate the places and the school will then find out who is joining St John’s on 16 April, which is “Allocation Day”.	
8.2.1	Discussion took place on how the school ranked the applications and how pupils are allocated places.	
8.2.2	JG advised that the Admissions Committee rank the applications according to the Admissions Policy criteria and then the LA puts the ranking into their software. Parents can apply for up to 6 places and so as a school, we do not know who else they applied to. The LA’s software package would then generate where parents are offered places.	
8.3	JG offered that this was the first time the school has applied the revised policy and therefore cannot tell how much of an impact it has had because the school have not yet been informed which pupils have been allocated places. JG reminded governors that the changes to the policy included siblings being higher ranked and also introducing a split of foundation and community places.	
8.3.1	JG further explained that the committee meet in February each year to rank the applications and then meet again in September to discuss whether there are any proposed changes to the Admissions Policy.	

<b>9.0</b>	<b>TLS Committee Report -verbal update</b>	
9.1	JG continued his verbal update but moving to the TLS Committee where he is the new Chair. JG explained that 2 x TLS meetings take place each term. One is a daytime meeting daytime meeting where the committee observes school life consisting of a learning walk and also pupil voice with a focus area together with subject leader.	
9.2	JG commented that this term's pupil voice meeting was, as ever, brilliant and it was great to see variety of teaching going on in classrooms with happy, well behaved children. In this session, the governors had a chat about RE with pupils and viewed some of the learning they do in the classrooms together with collective worship, hymn practice and also spoke with the subject lead, CM. When meeting with CM she advised the committee that she has realigned the RE syllabus to fall in line with the LDBS syllabus and how St John's are now seen as a beacon of good practice and Christianity. CM is now leading on some RE forums.	
9.3	CM interjected that once a term she attends LDBS training and once a term Barnet RE Leaders meet. CM facilitated the first meeting and a second one takes place in May, which will be hosted by St John's. A whole agenda has been mapped out and the RE leaders will moderate each other's RE books. They are all looking forward to working together.	
9.4	JG continued that the TLS evening meeting looks more at data, safeguarding, interventions, PP and SEND. At the last meeting the committee specifically delved into the new data format. He referred to the governing body to the TLS minutes for a more detailed understanding of the data.	
9.5	JG concluded that in the past term the SLT has had to deal with a number of safeguarding issues within the school, the resilience programme was continuing, and interventions were also running.	
9.5.1	No questions from the governing body.	
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Headteacher Report</b>	
10.1	The Chair reminded the governing body to ask questions that were strategic in nature and not operational.	
10.2	BP noted that much information in the HT Report was repeated each term and asked whether a form of shading could be used to highlight any new information. Governors agreed this would be useful and the HT indicated this would also be very helpful for him.	<b>CS to shade new information in HT Report</b>

<p>10.3</p> <p>10.3.1</p>	<p><b>Q: A Governor asked how the newly introduced "Good to be Green" initiative came about.</b></p> <p>A: CS replied that the school were looking for a solution to some low-level behaviour issues and this was recommended as a system to try. Still early days and trialling to see whether it is of use.</p> <p>Discussion took place where the SLT described in detail what the idea behind the initiative is and how it works in practice including how sanctions are dealt with. It was specifically noted that it complements the existing Behaviour Policy and is merely a visual method to help the children. The SLT also commented that the number of times a child was praised in a day far outweighed any reminders for good behaviour.</p>	
<p>10.4</p> <p>10.4.1</p>	<p><b>Q: A Governor asked if the governing body were doing enough to support the SLT in terms of the amount of work that had recently been undertaken with regards to safeguarding issues and specifically dealing with the LA MASH team.</b></p> <p>A: CS responded that he could not go into detail, but the issues were random and whilst it was a lot of referrals for St John's, it was not too much in the grand scheme of things and he hoped it would not become a pattern. Issues that had to be reported were not to do with school life. The school, however, need to remain vigilant and always do what they think is right.</p> <p><b>Q: A Governor followed up asking if the SLT thought the school was doing enough.</b></p> <p>A: CS responded that the school would always want to be better but at this stage only more money would make a difference. For example, if enough funds were available, a Learning Mentor would be very beneficial for safeguarding.</p>	
<p>10.5</p>	<p>A Governor commended the SLT, referring to page 8-9 of the HT Report, on evidence of the broad and balanced curriculum and the school not only focussing on academia. Governors discussed that being able to maintain the participation in sporting events for the last three years was brilliant. CS thanked the governors for their kind words and noted that he was very proud of this achievement.</p>	
<p>10.6</p>	<p>CM explained that the school has been working really hard to introduce a variety of educational visits so that the school now maps every year group's trips to ensure the same year group does not visit the same place multiple times.</p>	
<p>10.7</p>	<p><b>Q: A Governor noted that the attendance figure had dropped and asked if there was a particular reason for this?</b></p> <p>A: CS replied that it is down to the winter months and</p>	

	bugs kicking in. He further explained that the autumn term is short and absence tends to increase the more the year goes on. CS did explain that St John's figures were still way above national and he was aiming to be in the top 10 for attendance for Barnet this year, last year St John's was 12 <sup>th</sup> .	
10.8-10.8.2	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>MOTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY</u></p> <p>RESOLVED that, because of its nature, the business to be transacted be treated as confidential and not for publication. Discussion moved to Part II.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Part I Resumed)</p>	
10.9	<p><b>Q: A Governor asked whether the school might create more revenue by undertaking school clubs at the same time as Breakfast Club.</b></p> <p>A: CS replied that it would be too great a risk of losing income from Breakfast Club</p>	
10.9.1	CS continued that in terms of making money, after Easter, the Sports Apprentice will run some additional chargeable clubs in the evening, although the school will try to make the clubs cheaper than other external companies.	
10.10	Governors concluded that the HT Report was full of good news and no further questions were needed.	
<b>11.0</b>	<b>Attendance and Punctuality Policy Review</b>	
11.1	The Chair explained that the policy had a minor tweak which was highlighted for governors' ease. The change was to allow the HT to have more flexibility to grant leave in exceptional circumstances at the start or end of term.	
11.1.1	Governors discussed various aspects of the policy and it was agreed that the HT should consider each case on its own merits and will grant exceptional circumstance leave, at his discretion.	
11.2	<p><b>Q: A Governor questioned whether the school had considered adding a section on pupils with medical conditions into their attendance policy and cited that Disability Action and Epilepsy Action are championing this as it was felt that policies do not always cover those children with complex medical conditions.</b></p>	<p><b>RAC to share with CS a sample attendance policy which includes allowances for pupils with complex medical conditions</b></p>
11.2.1	Governors discussed the possibilities and asked the governor to share a sample with the Headteacher for consideration at a future review period.	

11.2.2	<b>Q: A Governor asked if the formatting of policies for review could be changed so that the highlighted sections show – when viewing on GovernorHub the highlight was not clear.</b>	<b>Clerk to pdf all docs for review on GovernorHub</b>
11.2.3	It was agreed to PDF the policy for ease of viewing.	
11.3	It was unanimously RESOLVED to ratify the change to the policy. Clerk to update policy record and send finalised version back to CS for distribution and upload to website.	<b>Clerk finalise policy and send to CS for website</b>
<b>12.0</b>	<b>School Improvement – what evidence have we received to show strategic priorities’ progress</b>	
12.1	The Chair summarised that evidence to show progress of the school’s strategic priorities had been received by all of the individual committee reports and the HT Report which allowed the governing body to see that the entire SIP is being worked on and to know how the progress is being tracked. The next review point of the SIP was noted as being April 2019.	
<b>13.0</b>	<b>Class link governor and best way to monitor school life/support staff</b>	
13.1	The Chair introduced this agenda item as wanting to discuss whether governors were comfortable with dropping the class link governor role. The Chair explained that class link governors were appointed some years ago which didn’t really work, then one governor was appointed to visit all classes, which also did not work. The TLS committee undertakes good monitoring of school life via learning walks and the governing body also want to support staff as much as possible. It was noted that governors are always welcome to come and spend time in school and, indeed, every governor should make a point of visiting at least once per year. It was also noted that many of the governors were parents who already had a good overview of school life.	
13.2	Governors discussed writing up as visit reports whenever they attended class assemblies, sporting matches, collective worship, nativity plays etc.	
13.3	The Clerk mentioned that at a recent local school Ofsted inspection, the Inspector did view governor visit reports – although it was unknown as to whether the school offered the reports or whether the Inspector asked to see them.	
13.4	It was unanimously RESOLVED not to have a class link governor.	

<b>14.0</b>	<b>Staff Party</b>	
14.1	The Chair introduced a discussion concerning the governor hosted staff party and whether the format should change or if governors and staff were happy with the existing format.	
14.1.1	The Chair commented that the date of the next FGB meeting was very close to the end of term and a discussion took place as to whether an alternative format might be to have a Governor Day whereby a meeting was held to review the SEF, perhaps attend assemblies or visit some classes to help the teachers, maybe a lunch with staff or champagne and strawberries at the end of the day.	
14.2	The HT offered that the staff very much enjoyed the parties at governors' homes and would be infinitely more preferably than having an end of day social on school premises or a local establishment that might be frequented by school parents on the same evening.	
14.3	Various options were discussed with recommendations for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue at a governor home</li> <li>- Hadley House (Barnet High Street) private room</li> <li>- St Barnabas Church</li> </ul>	<b>IH firm up staff party format and date</b>
14.3.1	No decision was reached, or action set other than to continue to think about party / social aspect.	
<b>15.0</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
15.2	The Chair asked if CS could include an item in the newsletter inviting anyone with financial expertise to consider joining the governing body as an Associate Member.	<b>CS to include note in newsletter re more financial expertise required on governing body and interested parties to contact IH</b>
<b>16.0</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	
16.1	The date of next meeting was originally set to be Tuesday 16 July 2019 at 7pm, however, discussions were ongoing re setting a Friday 8am meeting. Date tbc  <p style="text-align: center;"><u>MOTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY</u></p> RESOLVED that, because of its nature, the rest of the business to be transacted be treated as confidential and not for publication. Discussion moved to Part II.	<b>IH firm up date of next meeting and format</b>

<b>17.0</b>	<b>Close</b>	
17.1	The Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 20:40, with a closing prayer from Catherine Mitri.	