

WestBerkshireCouncilcollege alternative educationManagementCommittee

Final Finance Committee (virtual meeting) Tuesday 18th January 2022 at 6pm

Present: Tim Pritchard – Community Governor (Chair) Maureen Sims – Community Governor Judith Fisher – Community Governor (from 6.12pm to 6.50pm) Jacquie Davies – Headteacher Darren King – Community Governor		Apologies: None
Absent: None		Duration of meeting: 6 – 7.35pm
In attendance: Karen Price (KP) – School Business Manager (SBM) Jill Hills (JH) - Clerk		MC members will be referred to as governors
		Action
1.	Welcome & Apologies Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business Declaration of Business Interests	
1.1	The Chair of Governors welcomed those present as Harry James had resigned from the MC in December 2021. There were no apologies, all Governors were present. Judith Fisher advised that she would need to leave the meeting at 6.50pm.	
1.2	There were no declaration of business interests or any other items of urgent business.	
2.	Election of Chair	
2.1	In light of Harry James resignation, the Chair of Governors had spoken to a number of Governors and Tim Pritchard had indicated that he would be willing to take on the role of Finance Chair. This had been agreed by email with MC Governors between meetings and this decision required ratification at this meeting. Maureen Sims therefore proposed and Judith Fisher seconded the election of Tim Pritchard as Finance Chair. Governors unanimously agreed. Tim Pritchard took over as Chair for the remainder of the meeting.	
3.	Minutes of the Meeting on 14th December 2021 and Matters Arising (where not elsewhere on the agenda)	
3.1	The minutes of the Finance Committee on 14 th December 2021 had been circulated with the Agenda. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and will be signed by the Chair as soon as covid restrictions permit.	
3.2	Matters Arising:- 4.3 Include inability to recruit TA's or agency cover on the Risk Register – The Headteacher confirmed that this has been added as well as a note to say that there is a covid contingency plan in the Health and Safety section. 7.7 Circulate LA Deficit Recovery Plan – completed. Governors noted that the report included the reduction of icollege SEN places by 2 places each year for the next four to five years. 9.2 Timing of Staff Financial Skills Audit Summer Term – This action was c/f and would be undertaken in the Summer Term, covid permitting. Action: Review timing of Financial Skills Audit for staff in the Summer Term. 11.3 Revisit Critical Incident Plan – This action had also been c/f to the Summer Term. Action: Revisit "what if" questions raised by Governors at a later meeting.	Chair/Clerk Summer Term 2022 Chair/Clerk Summer Term 2022

Signed: Approved 28.06.22

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4.	P8 Budget Monitoring Report and Year-end Forecast	Actions																																																																																															
4.1	<p>The P8 Budget Monitoring Report along with the Forecast Fund Spreadsheet for the Main School Budget had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The P8 position was as follows:-</p> <table><tr><th>21/22 P7 (October 21)</th><th>Original Budget</th><th>Current Budget</th><th>Current Position as at 31.11.21</th><th>Year-End Forecast 31.03.21</th></tr><tr><td>Budget Summary for Main School Budget (98422)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td>£</td><td>£</td><td>£</td><td>£</td></tr><tr><td>STAFFING BUDGET</td><td>2,162,450</td><td>2,209,950</td><td>1,359,860</td><td>2,116,508</td></tr><tr><td>NON STAFFING BUDGET</td><td>758,800</td><td>708,920</td><td>467,236</td><td>773,054</td></tr><tr><td>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</td><td>2,921,250</td><td>2,918,870</td><td>1,827,096</td><td>2,889,562</td></tr><tr><td>TOTAL INCOME</td><td>-280</td><td>-280</td><td>-5,111</td><td>-5,161</td></tr><tr><td>NET EXPENDITURE</td><td>2,920,970</td><td>2,918,590</td><td>1,821,985</td><td>2,884,401</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>FUNDED BY (input as negative)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD</td><td>-352,760</td><td>-352,760</td><td>-352,757</td><td>-352,757</td></tr><tr><td>101 FUNDS DELEGATED BY THE LA</td><td>-842,550</td><td>-842,550</td><td>-707,954</td><td>-707,954</td></tr><tr><td>103 HNB/SCHOOL FUNDING</td><td>-1,987,020</td><td>-1,987,020</td><td>-745,665</td><td>-1,979,810</td></tr><tr><td>105 PUPIL PREMIUM</td><td>-20,660</td><td>-20,660</td><td>-13,001</td><td>-25,001</td></tr><tr><td>118B/C COVID GRANTS</td><td>-6,600</td><td>-6,600</td><td>-35,513</td><td>-29,838</td></tr><tr><td>118D ADDITIONAL GRANT FOR SCHOOLS</td><td>-220</td><td>-220</td><td>-1</td><td>-221</td></tr><tr><td>TOTAL FUNDING</td><td>-3,209,810</td><td>-3,209,810</td><td>-1,854,891</td><td>-3,105,581</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>SURPLUS (-)/DEFICIT(+)</td><td>-288,840</td><td></td><td>-32,795*</td><td>-221,180</td></tr></table> <p>* No funding received from schools or HND daily rate top up for Autumn Term 2021 causing actual surplus to drop – 7 months expenditure recorded compared to 4 months income received.</p>	21/22 P7 (October 21)	Original Budget	Current Budget	Current Position as at 31.11.21	Year-End Forecast 31.03.21	Budget Summary for Main School Budget (98422)						£	£	£	£	STAFFING BUDGET	2,162,450	2,209,950	1,359,860	2,116,508	NON STAFFING BUDGET	758,800	708,920	467,236	773,054	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,921,250	2,918,870	1,827,096	2,889,562	TOTAL INCOME	-280	-280	-5,111	-5,161	NET EXPENDITURE	2,920,970	2,918,590	1,821,985	2,884,401						FUNDED BY (input as negative)					BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD	-352,760	-352,760	-352,757	-352,757	101 FUNDS DELEGATED BY THE LA	-842,550	-842,550	-707,954	-707,954	103 HNB/SCHOOL FUNDING	-1,987,020	-1,987,020	-745,665	-1,979,810	105 PUPIL PREMIUM	-20,660	-20,660	-13,001	-25,001	118B/C COVID GRANTS	-6,600	-6,600	-35,513	-29,838	118D ADDITIONAL GRANT FOR SCHOOLS	-220	-220	-1	-221	TOTAL FUNDING	-3,209,810	-3,209,810	-1,854,891	-3,105,581						SURPLUS (-)/DEFICIT(+)	-288,840		-32,795*	-221,180	
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4.2	<p>P9 verbal update – The SBM advised that she had completed the P9 Budget Monitoring and that this was in the process of being reviewed by WBC Accountancy. The SBM had some queries around the funding input which she wanted to check before circulating. The submission of the P9 report to WBC was the day of the meeting but because of the need to recheck the figures the SBM had agreed with Accountancy that it would be submitted on 18th Jan.</p>																																																																																																
4.3	<p>As of the end of P9 there was a forecast year-end surplus of £298,872. This figure was higher than the P8 forecast. £88,000 of this could be explained by expenditure which had been removed from the forecast. This was because towards the end of the financial year, some of the committed expenditure could be removed as there was insufficient time to complete activities etc. For example, there was insufficient time left before 31st March for the remainder of the Supply and Recruitment budgets to be fully utilised.</p>																																																																																																
4.4	<p>Potential clawback of grants covering Sports Premium, Recovery Premium and Tutor Led Funding – The Chair asked what the current position was with expenditure on these items and whether there was any danger that funding would be clawed back if it was not used by the end of the academic year. The SBM advised that in respect of Tutor Led Funding, this was being managed by Emma Douglas (AHT Teaching and Learning). The SBM was expecting an update on current useage shortly. With respect to Sports Premium, Governors discussed that there was £25,000 which needed to be used by the end of the academic year to avoid it being clawed back. The SBM advised that this was the total funding as at 31st March 2022, but that an additional £2,700 would be received in the Summer Term. The SBM advised that the Lead Teachers at The Pod and Inspiration are aware of the level of funding and the deadline for it's useage and were putting plans in place to use it by the deadline.</p>																																																																																																

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	<p>Governors referred to the SBM's notes which had been forwarded with the P8 BMR which stated that Forest School training had been ordered etc and asked how much this equated to. The SBM advised that she was uncertain of the exact amount as some of it had not yet been registered on SIMs and had not therefore pulled through to the report as committed expenditure. Governors asked for a breakdown of the amount which had been spent and what the remainder would be used for. Potentially there was still a significant amount of funding to be utilised in a comparative short period of time. The SBM advised that in addition to training, icollege was paying rent to use the land, but that this was of low value i.e. peppercorn rent. The Headteacher advised that there was a draft Funding Premium Plan covering 20/21 and 21/22 that could be circulated which included costings. Action: Clerk to add draft Funding Premium Plan to Governor Hub.</p> <p>Action: Include item on MC agenda on use of Sports Premium.</p>	<p>Clerk 19.01.22</p> <p>Clerk MC 15.02.22</p>
4.5	Referring to page 3 of the BMR, Governors sought clarification around the inclusion of POD+ funding onto line 7. The SBM clarified that WBC had coded POD+ income in line 8. This related to place funding which was paid in two amounts, Autumn 21 and Spring 22. POD funding is paid in three tranches, Summer, Autumn and Spring Terms. This was because the places are being funded from the SEN budget and are not paid to icollege until there are learners in situ. Funding had also been received from the Summer Term High Needs Block (HNB) for which invoices are raised and from some schools who had already paid their Summer Term invoices.	
4.6	Covid expenditure – Governors referred to page 4 of the BMR and queried whether the reference to September 21 was correct. The SBM advised that the report covered the financial year which included September 21 and so was correct from that perspective.	
4.7	Governors noted that whilst overall income and expenditure was broadly in line with expectations, there were a number of exceptions especially in terms of expenditure. Whilst the comments in the report provide information around what these exceptions are, it is less clear how they have arisen. The SBM advised that the only budget line which was overspent was Bought in Professional Services for which the budget was currently at 85% usage. This related to expenditure on Agency TA's and offsite educational activities for learners (e.g. the farm, Outdoor Academy, Auto skills and work experience). The budget also included two buy backs/SLA's which pushes up the percentage of the budget used as 100% of the cost is paid at the start of the financial year. There would be further expenditure needed on these before year end. icollege had struggled to find TA's to cover short term illness. Governors discussed that for example the Website upgrade was forecasting an overspend of 355%. Governors understood why Supply Agency and TA expenditure was higher than budgeted due to the impact of covid. The Headteacher advised that when the budget was set, icollege had not been planning to upgrade the website. Governors discussed that there was a back story to this and Governors awareness of the planned upgrade and when this had been shared with them. The reasons for each of the overspends included learning points for the future.	
4.8	The Chair advised that he had received some feedback around the format of the BMR which he would collate and feedback to the SBM when he met with her on the 16 th February and then on 16 th March. Governors were asked to forward any thoughts they may have around the layout or format of tables within the report. Governors discussed that the key area was consistency in the format to aid comparison from month to month but also so that the SBM was not having to rework information etc. There appeared to be some duplication of narrative within the report and whether there was an opportunity to reduce the workload by condensing information. Governors discussed that a note for example, around what was included within Bought in Professional Services would be of benefit. There was also some confusion around the use of +and-. This is complicated as the format required by WBC for the SBS uses the +and- the other way around. Action: Forward any comments around the format of the BMR to the Chair so these can be fed into discussions with the SBM.	<p>All Governors 31.01.22</p>
5.	Combined Action Plan	
5.1	The Chair had circulated a Combined Action Plan which had been used to pull together from a number of sources e.g. the Internal Audit Report and SFVS actions needed over the next year into one	

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document. Governors went through the action plan and noted the following:-				
Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Update/Comments	
1. Complete the Schools Financial Value Statement (SFVS)	Finance chair, FC, SBM	31 st March 2022	Scheduled for FC 01.03.22	
2. Complete governors financial skills audit	Finance Chair, Clerk	January 2022	This would be covered under Item 8	
3. Schedule data provision for governors reports	Finance Chair, SBM	January 2022	Meetings arranged with SBM as per Item 4	
4. Review finance risks and mitigation plans	Finance Committee	Next FC meeting and ongoing		
5. Review procurement procedures	Finance Committee	Before end of March 2022		
6. Investigate financial benchmarking with other alternative provisions	Finance Chair, SBM	Before the completion of the SFVS – mid March 2022		
7. Complete outstanding actions from the audit report. To include;			An update had been included in Section 5 of the BMR.	
a) Copies of agenda and minutes of meetings to be held in the school office	Clerk	December 2021	See 5.3 below	
b) Review the use of the outdoor academy and formalise existing arrangements or seek an exemption	SBM	December 2021	See 5.4 below	
c) Raise POs on FMS prior to receipt of order and invoice	SBM	December 2021	In hand, ongoing work to ensure criteria is met.	
d) Establish procedures for receipt of goods and services	SBM	December 2021	In hand, ongoing work to ensure criteria is met.	
e) Card holders to log transaction at point of transaction	SBM	December 2021	Ongoing work with admin team.	
f) Undertake full and detailed costing of tuition support provided to band rates, discuss banding with Education Service	HT/Chair	December 2021	Ongoing – as part of a wider funding project. See Item 7.	
g) Introduce SLA setting out roles and responsibilities and a costing framework, funding arrangements	HT/Chair	December 2021	Ongoing – as part of a wider funding project. See Item 7	
h) Review and update record of contracts in place	FC/SBM	December 2021	In place, needs further review as changes to contracts for Pod+.	

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	Set budget for 2022/23	FC/MC	March 2022		
	Review effectiveness of FC	FC	July 2022		
5.2	<p>Governors discussed the actions outstanding from the Internal Audit report as the follow up by the LA was imminent. The Clerk advised that she had been through the governance related recommendations and included in the comments section of the Internal Audit Follow Up template provided by the auditor, links to the relevant documents on the icollege website and/or attached documents to the emailed response. Both the Clerk and the SBM were providing evidence in support of the completion of the agreed recommendations, in advance of the Follow up visit wherever possible. The auditor had been in touch earlier in the month but had agreed to postpone the Follow up for two weeks due to the impact of covid on staffing at that time. Once a date had been agreed, icollege would have two weeks to produce the required information to the auditor. They would undertake a desktop review initially before visiting to complete testing etc. Action: Copy in the Finance Chair on the information emailed to the auditor.</p>				Clerk & SBM
5.3	<p>7a) Governance Documentation to Intervention – The Clerk advised that as covid restrictions had started to be eased it had been agreed that the Clerk would arrange to take the minutes and committee papers etc to Intervention by the end of January 2022. In the meantime, the Government had reintroduced the requirement to work from home where possible and so this would be delayed until this restriction was eased again.</p>				
5.4	<p>7b) Review of the use of Outdoor Academy (OA) – The SBM advised that she had started the review but that it was taking longer to complete due to the impact of covid on staffing and the SBM's workload. The SBM had looked at alternate suppliers. Adventure Dolphin based in Pangbourne was a partially similar provider and The Waterside Centre in Newbury provide some activities however, neither provided the breadth of services or the flexibility/immediacy of ad hoc support if cover was needed. For example TA cover for a lesson due to staffing issues re covid, which icollege had been heavily reliant on during the pandemic. There was no one supplier in the area which could provide all of the activities provided by OA. Governors discussed that the concern regarding the use of OA was the cost of the provision. The SBM advised that whilst it may be possible to use a mix of suppliers this may not result in cost savings and would increase the amount of admin time to organise etc. Action: SBM to draft a paper to the FC summarising the outcome of her review. The Headteacher advised that another factor is that icollege does not have any significant facilities for either outdoor or indoor physical activities on site. icollege has in the past looked at what would be involved if they were to try to provide this including minibuses, employment of additional staff and training etc. Although OA are expensive, the service provides good value for money along with their ability to mix and match when icollege is experiencing staffing difficulties or are overnumber, especially during covid. This has included coming into Units to support classes where necessary. Action: Headteacher to circulate review of OA undertaken 4 -5 years ago for background.</p>				SBM FC 28.06.22 Headteacher 31.02.22
6.	icollege Internal Financial Review				
6.1	<p>Revised Terms of Reference (TOR's) had been circulated with the agenda with the wording added as discussed at the last FC to read "To review the daily rates/bandings charged to ensure that they reflect the cost of the provision." Governors discussed by who and when the review would be undertaken. It was agreed that the timeline should follow the audit follow up. Action: FC Chair to discuss with the Chair of Governors the who and when elements of the review.</p>				Chair FC 28.06.22 (to enable audit to be finalised first)
6.2	<p>In respect of objective 5 on the TOR's, a Pay Committee had been formed which Richard Thompson had agreed to Chair. Unfortunately, he had been unable to progress the review due to illness but had drafted a number of questions for Mark Browne SIA. A further update would be provided as available.</p>				

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7.	HFG Working Party Review of icollege	Actions
7.1	<p>The Headteacher provided feedback from the meeting of the Heads Funding Group (HFG) on 12th January 2022. The HFG had received the report but there had been no discussion or comments made at the meeting. The following day, the HFG representatives shared the report with the Secondary Heads Group at which there had been lengthy discussion. The main issues were:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From a financial perspective it was likely that students would need to be on dual roll but this had other implications for schools; The LA had proposed to have a set number of icollege places for learners with EHCP's which the Secondary Heads were uncomfortable with; They also were uncomfortable with the LA's strategy to use icollege places to prevent learners from becoming permanently excluded as they felt the process was not sufficiently transparent; and there was concern what would happen in subsequent years if the ten places, that it had been proposed were retained for learners placed by the LA, were filled in year one. <p>The consequences of this was that the HFG Working Group proposals would not be going to Schools Forum on 24th January 2022 as previously timetabled, the next meeting being 14th March 2022.</p> <p>Judith Fisher left the meeting at 6.50pm.</p>	
8.	Financial Skills Audit	
8.1	<p>The outcome of the Financial Skills Audit had been circulated with the agenda. This had shown that there was a general need for some Governors to improve their understanding of a number of the financial aspects covered by the review. The Chair advised that there was a document available on the gov.uk website entitled High Needs Funding 2022:23 Operational Guidance which included a section on how Alternative Provisions are funded, which it would be beneficial for all Governors to read. Governors discussed some of the aspects of the technical document around how the High Needs Block Funding was allocated to the Local Authorities who in turn determine how the funding will be split between SEN places within Special Schools and icollege etc. Action: Clerk to circulate link to document.</p> <p>Paragraph 144 onwards https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-needs-funding-arrangements-2022-to-2023/high-needs-funding-2022-to-2023-operational-guidance#Permanent%20exclusions:%20funding%20adjustments</p>	Clerk asap
8.2	<p>The Clerk had also been looking for sources of finance training including virtual training provided by CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) and was in the process of requesting additional information about what the courses cover to ensure it was relevant to alternative provision. Another possibility was whether someone from the WBC Accountancy Team would be able to provide some bespoke finance training for governors. Action: Clerk to follow up finance training options for Governors and provide summary of options.</p>	Clerk Ongoing
9.	Policies	
9.1	<p>Premises Management Plan – The document had been updated for names, dates etc. Governors unanimously approved the Premises Management Plan. Action: Include on MC agenda.</p>	Clerk MC 15.02.22
9.2	<p>Honoraria and Gifts and Hospitality Policies – A draft of both policies had been forwarded to the Chair of Governors to review and the Headteacher was in the process of making a number of suggested changes prior to wider circulation. The Clerk had forwarded an example Honoraria policy from another authority which the Headteacher felt contained some elements which it would be useful to include in the icollege policies, especially around the admin processes along with some clarity around the payment of acting up allowances. Care would need to be taken not to make too many alterations in</p>	

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	case any issues arose as the draft policies were based on the WBC model policies.	
9.3	In respect of the Gifts and Hospitality Policy (Governors and Staff) this was not a mandatory document and had been based on an example from The Key but for Academies. The Chair of Governors had also provided feedback/comments on the draft document. Action: Headteacher to update Honoraria and Gifts and Hospitality Policies and circulate for email approval.	Headteacher FC 01.03.22
9.4	West Berkshire Terms and Conditions – Goods & Services – The SBM advised that this was a WBC document which all Schools were required to comply with and which are referred to in the Financial Management Policy. The SBM downloads each year the latest version of the documents via SLA online to ensure that icollege is using/complying with the most recent version. Action: SBM to forward copies of all of the documents linked to the Financial Management Policy. Clerk to add to Governor Hub.	SBM/Clerk asap
10.	Health and Safety	
10.1	The Clerk advised that there had been no response to the email requesting a volunteer to take on the role of the Health and Safety Governor following Harry James resignation. The Chair advised that he had spoken to HJ who had felt that Health and Safety was in very good hands with Monica Romano, the Health & Safety Co-ordinator. The Headteacher advised that icollege buys into the WBC SLA for Health and Safety and that additional advice and support can be accessed through this. It was agreed that the Chair would undertake the Health and Safety training for Governors being run by WBC on 24 th January 2022. Once new Governors were on board the distribution of the role would be revisited. Action: SBM to forward terms/scope of Health and Safety SLA for information.	SBM asap
10.2	The Chair referred to the BMR and reference to work being needed to the garage at Intervention and asked if there was any risk in relation to asbestos. The Headteacher confirmed that an asbestos survey was in place for all icollege buildings etc and that there was no asbestos in the garages. There was however, some asbestos present in the main Intervention building but it was situated in an area where it could not be disturbed/boarded up and was therefore safe. A kiln which had recently been found to include asbestos had been safely disposed of.	
11.	Any Other Urgent Business – Covered under Part II	
12.	Focus of Next Meeting	
12.1	Governors discussed the need to reschedule the Budget Strategy Meeting prior to the next FC on 1 st March 2022 as it had been postponed due to covid. Governors agreed to meet on 8th February 2022 at 5pm . The meeting would focus solely on the initial assumptions which would be used when drafting the 2022/23 Budget and Three-Year Forecast. The Headteacher advised that the assumptions would likely be similar to the current year. However, the outcome of the HFG review could impact on those assumptions. Governors discussed that icollege could only plan for the way things were currently. The main outcome from the HFG review would be who was responsible for which strand of funding, rather than how much overall funding icollege received. The Headteacher advised that in terms of Group size it would also impact on how many learners icollege would be able to accommodate. If college places were limited to 72 learners then the LA would need an alternate strategy for any additional places they needed to meet their statutory obligations. Governors discussed that the number of learners icollege could take was limited by capacity within units and staffing. The Headteacher advised that there would be room to grow through mixed packages of learning so that they were not all on site at the same time. Governors discussed that even if learners were on a 50% timetable, they would count as one full time equivalent (fte) for funding purposes. The Headteacher advised that they would be on a full timetable, just not on site for all of it. Governors asked if this was the direction icollege should plan strategically for. The Headteacher advised that if icollege had reached the total number of learners for its Group size then it wouldn't be able to take on any more. Governors discussed that this was more in keeping with the Admission Number rather than the Group	

Signed: Approved 28.06.22

Date:

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01635 877114

INTEGRATION KS3&4
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01189 416636

INTERVENTION Y9&10
88 Newtown Road . Newbury
Berks . RG14 7BT
01635 49397

INDEPENDENCE Y11&KS5
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Newbury . Berks . RG14 1QY
01635 48872

WestBerkshireCouncilcollege alternative educationManagementCommittee

Final Finance Committee (virtual meeting) Tuesday 18th January 2022 at 6pm

		Actions
	Size, although the two were linked. Governors discussed that it was dependent on the LA to determine its strategy but based on their High Needs Block Recovery Strategy, it seemed to be based on icollege providing more outreach services and schools retaining more of their learners who would have previously accessed icollege placements.	
12.2	<p>The subsequent meeting would be on 1st March 2022 8am and would focus on:-</p> <p>P10 Budget Monitoring Report/First Draft Budget 2022/23</p> <p>Covid-19 Related expenditure</p> <p>SFVS</p> <p>Internal Audit Follow Up Report</p> <p>Policies</p> <p>Action: Clerk to copy across the 2020/21 SFVS from excel into the new Word format and forward to FC Chair.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to confirm which policies are due to be reviewed at the next meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk asap</p> <p>Clerk asap</p>

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.35pm.

Signed: Approved 28.06.22

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