

Bishopstone Church of England School Governors

Minutes of the Governors Meeting held on 22 May 2014 at 6 pm

Present: Gill May (GM – Vice Chair); Emma Lindsey (EL – Head Teacher); Philip Anley (PA); Mark Clitherow (MC); Sue Tremlin (ST); Karen English (KE); Charlotte McEvoy (CM); Jill Rankin (JR); Reverend Bill O’Connell (RevB)

In attendance: Mike Welsh (MW) Associate Member
Clerk - Margaret A Whitaker

1.0	APOLOGIES AND WELCOME Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Lucy Barratt (LB - Chair), Lucille McGrath (LM) and Alessandra Greenwood (AG). Mike Welsh (MW) gave his apologies for needing to leave early due to another commitment. The Vice Chair, (GM) chaired the meeting. The meeting was quorate.	ACTION BY
2.0	DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS None were declared.	
3.0	MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING – 19 March 2014 The minutes from the last meeting were unanimously confirmed as an accurate record, and signed by the Chair.	
4.0	MATTERS ARISING Items arising and not elsewhere on the agenda were discussed and progress updated, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>19 March Agenda Item 4 - Self Evaluation Form (SEF)</u> – All governors had been sent an updated electronic copy of the SEF prior to the meeting. The HT reported how she had worked with JR to update the SEF and that it had been reviewed by the officer from Swindon Borough Council. The feedback was positive, but she had suggested condensing the information further, to contain it within 2 sides. The HT had sent the original version out to governors, as it was helpful for governors to have extended information, and the compacted version would follow. As the optional SATS had now taken place, the results of these would also be sent out to governors. JR commented on how hard the HT had worked on the document and the HT reported that JR had challenged her as she was producing the SEF, which had positive results. A governor asked what information had been taken out. The HT said that this had included Key Stage 2 information, as this was already available on Raise On-line and she had agreed that this should come out. A governor commented on ensuring that there was not too little information, in relation to Ofsted. The HT commented that the evidence presented at the back of the document would remain and the overview (coloured pages) at the front would be condensed to two pages with some further information being moved to the back of the document with the other evidence. The aim was to make it more concise at the front, showing links with the staff performance document and School Development Plan etc. A governor commented that even if information is taken out, this should still be available should an inspector want to see it. Governors recognised that it represented a lot of work by the HT and thanked her. The HT reminded governors that it was a “working document” and will change and will reflect assessment results. The HT commented that a separate meeting may be required to enhance governors’ understanding of the data. • <u>19 March Agenda Item 4 – Schools Forum</u> – MW had forwarded a document to all governors ahead of the meeting regarding changes to the Schools Forum. He reported that changes were taking place over the summer, with new representations. The approach for Bishopstone could be either to seek direct representation in one of the categories or supportive representation via other members. MW clarified that members were representatives of their specific category (such as Primary Heads etc), and were not just simply representing their own interests. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>19 March Agenda Item 4 - Diocesan links</u> – Reverend Bill O’Connell was continuing to look into Diocesan representation at Schools Forum, in terms of either fielding or finding appropriate contacts. <p>Governors agreed that Schools Forum representation would remain a standing item on the agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>19 March Agenda Item 4 – Fair Funding Consultation (Sparsity)</u> – It was reported that a letter had been sent to Swindon Borough Council regarding the authority’s response to the Fair Funding Consultation and Bishopstone School’s continued interest in the Sparsity Factor. <p>A letter had been received back from Swindon Borough Council (from John Gilbert, Board Director Commissioning – Children and Adult Services), sent to all four schools that could be affected by a Sparsity Factor – It indicated that SBC had taken note of the points made and would continue to monitor.</p> <p>A governor asked about the effects of the Eastern Development on demand for places at Bishopstone School. The HT indicated that some cohorts are already full, and she was keeping records of all enquiries. She reported on positive admission numbers, and that the school would soon be losing the low cohort at the top of the school (i.e. 2 pupils in Year 6). Numbers were going up, but the school would reach capacity. A governor commented on the possibilities for extending capacity, and the Village Hall would be discussed later on the agenda.</p> <p>Points from the letter from Swindon Borough Council were discussed further, including the possibility of tiered lump sums, the invitation for discussion, the quote regarding the “view that the current school finance regulations to do not allow this”, and the issue of how distances are calculated.</p> <p>Governors agreed to take up the offer of the briefing/discussion invitation in terms of what this would mean for Bishopstone, which would involve MC and MW, and RevB also offered. It was also agreed that South Marsdon School would be contacted to see if they were also interested in joining a discussion. It was agreed that it was important that the Borough and the school understand where each other are coming from (although Bishopstone is a small school, it is improving its efficiency) and that it was positive to have on-going engagement.</p> <p>ACTION – MC to follow up arrangements for meeting with SBC – email SBC. ACTION – MC to email South Marsdon School to see if interested in joining discussions.</p> <p>A governor questioned if it would be helpful for John Gilbert (from Swindon Borough Council) to be invited to come to Bishopstone School. This was greeted as a positive suggestion and could be included in the email to SBC, saying both prepared to go to see them for discussions or welcome to come to the school. The Vice Chair and HT commented that it would be helpful to target this to a specific event that it would be helpful for John Gilbert to see, such as demonstrating the strength of the school in terms of wider community focus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>19 March Agenda Item 8 – Risk mitigation</u> – The initial template had been drafted and part populated, but further work was required. There had been other priorities on which to focus, but this was integrated into other work on the budget, Sparsity and structure etc. <p>ACTION – Working group to update template.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>19 March Agenda Item 15 – Election of Staff Support Governor</u> – It was reported that ST had been re-elected. It was also confirmed by governors that the term of office would be four years which would be reflected in the Instrument of Government. (The Clerk commented on the need for this to be updated in the Instrument of Government, and this was to be updated under the 2012 regulations. This was discussed further under AOB). 	<p>RevB</p> <p>Agenda Standing item</p> <p>MC MC</p> <p>MC/GM/ CM</p>
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COMMITTEE REPORTS / WORKING GROUP FEEDBACK (BY EXCEPTION ONLY)

This item was brought forward on the agenda as MW had to leave early due to another commitment.

Finance Committee – Budget 2014-15 and future budget plans

The Finance Chair and HT reported that the Budget had been agreed at the Finance Committee, and was in balance. There was one issue requiring further review and this was to ensure that the ICT plan had adequate funding, particularly as the school is a leader in this field. This could be accommodated within the balance. The HT reported that the position was similar to the previous year and budget headings had been tightly controlled. However, budget had been assigned to support French (as Ridgeway had withdrawn support) and staff salaries. The Full Governing Body approved the budget, with the additional ICT funding to be identified within the overall balance.

Website Developments

It was reported that the new website was up and running and significant improvements had been actioned, although the process was on-going.

School Meals Working Group

The working group had circulated an option appraisal document to all governors ahead of the meeting. (A correction to the paper was noted in that Goddard Park school should read Oak Tree Primary School). The governing body thanked the working group for the research undertaken and the production of the paper.

The member of the working group indicated that they had tried to seek a local solution. In the absence of this being available in the short term, a one-year contract was proposed with Cygnet to deliver hot meals cooked offsite. The Vice Chair agreed, that this would mean that a solution would be in place for September, but that the school could continue to look at other local options as the market developed. A provisional contract had been received which was to be reviewed by the Chair of the Finance Committee. The HT said that there needed to be a clear action plan and time line. A governor commented that a local solution may be part of broader local solutions, particularly in terms of capacity. A governor asked the HT if parents had been informed about the new meal arrangements and HT confirmed that this had been included in the newsletters to parents. Governors voted unanimously to agree the one year contract.

ACTION – Chair of Finance Committee to review provisional contract.

ACTION – Working Group to continue working on action plan and timelines and seeing the contract through to completion.

ACTION – Option appraisal document to be corrected as above, and uploaded to the electronic system as evidence of due diligence in determining the decision taken. (PA to advise governors on uploading information).

MC
KE/CM/
LM
KE
PA

Village Hall Working Group

MW reported that he had been asked to become the Chair of the Village Hall Committee of the Parish Council. PA and MW are both on the Committee. The use of the Village Hall in terms of extending the capacity of the school had been discussed, but a lot more detailed work was necessary, including exploring what capital funding was available and equipment needed. This would also involve talking to the village and other users to explore options and solutions. The use of other community resources was also mentioned, including the future of the True Heart Pub. RevB suggested a wider use of the Church building for school and community use, which was welcomed by governors and PA requested immediate discussions with RevB regarding this.

CM, who has a background in community policy and funding, commented on strategic partnership possibilities within communities and that there were funding streams associated with this. This included the multi-use of buildings as community assets. This would need a core group to come together to get momentum going. A governor suggested that such developments would make the village more attractive to young families. Another governor commented that some residents were looking more for a quiet village.

It was agreed that this would be explored further and time would be dedicated to this at the July meeting - with discussions in the interim, to include looking at the school meals overlap - MW and KE to meet (involving EL with regard to practicalities). A governor suggested that Swindon Borough Council could be contacted to see if they could offer any officer time for a local community

	<p>partnership project. It was commented that it was essential to consult at the beginning. It was agreed that CM and MW would bring this back to the Full Governing Body at the next meeting in July. An email to the Parish Council was suggested – they had responding to the Sparsity issue, and a further email could be sent from the school.</p> <p>ACTION – CM and MW to meet to further develop the concepts of community partnership projects (email SBC re potential officer time / email Parish Council) and report back at the July meeting of the Full GB.</p> <p>ACTION – KE and MW to discuss school meals overlap.</p> <p>ACTION – PA to discuss school use of the church building with RevB.</p>	<p>Agenda July</p> <p>CM/MW</p> <p>KE/MW</p> <p>PA/RevB</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p>STRATEGIC PLANNING - SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN / HEADTEACHER’S UPDATE</p> <p>The Vice Chair advised that every governor needs to fully familiarise themselves with the School Development Plan (SDP). The governing body needs to know when objectives have been achieved and to pin down measurables. The HT suggested that if there was any lack of clarity, then a separate meeting could be set up to go through it in detail. It had been updated, and would be updated again in response to questions and challenge from governors.</p> <p>The Vice Chair proposed that after the May break, an evening meeting would be arranged for governors, dedicated to the SDP – looking in detail and using the “Twenty key questions for a school governing body to ask itself” (embedded in the Departmental advice for school leaders and governing bodies – January 2014) to guide questions and challenge in terms of what governors want to know. At the session governors should ask questions, challenge and scrutinise aspects of the SDP. Then the top headlines would be brought to the July meeting, including any other action points.</p> <p>Governors commented that the specific objective for the Governing Body needed to be included in the SDP (Governors had agreed at a previous meeting that the objective of “Improving the Performance of the GB” would be included in the SDP). The restructuring of the governing body and its committees, to make it more strategic, efficient and effective (and to link directly in with objectives within the SDP) had been undertaken and could be marked as green in the SDP.</p> <p>ACTION –EL / GM to arrange evening meeting on the SDP for governors.</p> <p>ACTION – EL to update SDP for the specific governor objective relating to improving the performance of the governing body (restructuring) and mark this as completed (green).</p>	<p>EL/GM/ All</p> <p>EL</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>STRATEGIC PLANNING - STUCTURE OF THE GOVERNING BODY / COMMITTEE STRUCTURE / GOVERNOR ROLES / TERMS OF REFERENCE</p> <p>Further to the above item, the revised 2 committee streamlined structure was discussed. (This was Model 1 as discussed at the March meeting, consisting of 2 key Committees – Accounting for Resources (including Finance, Deployment of specific funds, Staffing, Premises, Staff appraisal) and Performance & Standards (including Pupil achievement data, Closing the gap (SEN, Pupil Premium), Pupil development, Parent satisfaction, Community involvement and School Development Plan).</p> <p>The template documents of governor roles were being finalised and would be circulated shortly by the Vice Chair. Any queries from governors regarding roles should be referred back to the Vice Chair.</p> <p>Skills audit proformas had been sent out to all governors for completion and a number had been returned to the clerk. These were based on National Governor Association (nga) templates. Governors were requested to complete both of the templates as the first identified specific evidence of skills and training needs and the second document (a tick list) linked governor skills to the roles outlined in the Governors’ Handbook. This would also provide good evidence for Ofsted as well as being helpful evidence in relation to re-constitution.</p> <p>Additional information on governor roles would be put on the public website. Some information on individual governors was already on the site, but governors were invited to add to this.</p> <p>Some work had already been undertaken on Terms of Reference, but further work was required. MC/GM&EL to further review terms of reference.</p> <p>ACTION – GM to send out populated governor role / committee documents and any comments to</p>	<p>GM</p>

	<p><i>be returned to GM.</i></p> <p>ACTION – Remaining skills audit proformas (both types) to be returned to clerk (hard copies accepted if any difficulties with interactive form).</p> <p>ACTION – Skills proformas to be consolidated.</p> <p>ACTION – Remaining Terms of Reference documents to be reviewed and updated.</p> <p>ACTION – Skills proformas to be resent for those having difficulty with electronic copies.</p>	<p>GM/Clerk MC/GM/ EL Clerk</p>
8.0	<p>GOVERNOR’S TRAINING REVIEW / UPDATE – INCLUDING INSPECTION GUIDANCE FEEDBACK</p> <p>Governors provided feedback on the evening session (open to all governors) at the school with Bridget Sinclair (from Swindon Borough Council’s Governor Support Section), as part of the GB’s preparation for Ofsted inspection. She commented positively, noting the comprehensive evidence provided by the detailed minutes. They evidenced the hard work that had been undertaken and demonstrated challenge, where challenge was appropriate. The minutes are on the Big Pond and are available in hard copy, but will also be made fully accessible on the updated website (one year of minutes would be uploaded).</p> <p>Three governors had also attended the “An Inspector Calls” training session provided by Swindon Borough Council’s Governor Support Section in Swindon. There was a question as to whether preparation for Ofsted should be noted in GB minutes and the advice was to document this as it shows that the GB is being proactive.</p> <p>ACTION – GB Minutes to be put on website (one year of minutes) – PA to advise.</p>	<p>GM/PA/ Clerk</p>
9.0	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Celebrating Success</u> – RevB commented on the importance of celebrating success and that this should be part of regular business. This was absent from the Governors’ Handbook but was a key concept for successful team working. He proposed that this was an agenda item for future meetings and this was agreed by governors. ACTION – future agenda item. • <u>Links to previous Ofsted</u> – A question was asked about what items for improvement were included in the previous Ofsted feedback to ensure that it had been demonstrated that these had been addressed and incorporated into the SEF. ACTION – HT to confirm these items addressed. • <u>Subject assessment feedback</u> – With the restructuring of the GB and new governor roles defined, it was agreed that subject governors (particularly for maths, reading and writing) would meet with the teaching subject lead with regard to the process of assessment. (A schedule of teaching subject leads had been circulated ahead of the meeting). A short report (approximately 1 side A4 was suggested) would then be fed back to all governors at a future full GB meeting, to ensure that all governors had a full understanding of assessment processes. A Venn diagram pictorial approach was mentioned to show the assessment results for pupils across maths, reading and writing. This would also link with intervention. <p>The HT asked if governors agreed to an approach involving individual governor visits, rather than the previous cohort days, and governors agreed to this approach. (Other activities such as the Big Lunch provided opportunities for groups of governors to be involved in activities).</p> <p>ACTION – Governor Subject leads to undertake assessment review, produce report and feedback to the full GB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Re-constitution</u> – the clerk referred to recent correspondence from Swindon Borough Council Governor Support regarding re-constitution. It was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the July meeting. ACTION – Clerk to include on agenda for next meeting and provide the advice received from Governor Support. • <u>Local Offer</u> – The HT reported that the Local Offer for all children needs to be published on 	<p>Agenda Standing item</p> <p>EL</p> <p>JR/KE & others</p> <p>Agenda July Clerk</p>

