

Bishopstone Church of England School Governors

Minutes of the Governors Meeting held on 14 October 2014 at 6 pm

Present: Gill May (GM – Chair – Co-opted); Mark Clitherow (MC – Vice Chair – Co-opted); Emma Lindsey (EL – Headteacher); Philip Anley (PA – Co-opted); Sue Tremlin (ST - Staff); Karen English (KE - Parent); Lucile McGrath (LM - Parent); Jill Rankin (JR - Foundation); Mike Welsh (MW - LA)

In attendance:

Clerk - Margaret A Whitaker

1.0	APOLOGIES AND WELCOME	ACTION BY
	<p>Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Reverend Bill O’Connell (RevB - Foundation) and Charlotte McEvoy (CM - Parent). The Chair confirmed that CM was standing down as a Parent Governor of the Governing Body as her child was no longer at the school. The Chair relayed CM’s comments regarding enjoying being a governor and her best wishes for the future. Governors recognised the contribution CM had made to the Governing Body. (The election for a Parent Governor was discussed later in the meeting at Agenda Item 7). Governors had been previously notified that Mike Welsh had been appointed as LA Governor. The meeting was quorate.</p>	
2.0	<p>DECLARATION OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS</p> <p>None were declared. All governors present returned signed copies of Pecuniary / Business Interest Forms, for the new academic year, to the clerk.</p>	
3.0	<p>MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING – 10 July 2014</p> <p>The minutes from the last meeting were unanimously confirmed as an accurate record, and signed by the Chair. (One spelling of a name was noted for future reference).</p>	
4.0	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>Items arising and not elsewhere on the agenda were discussed and progress updated, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>10 July Agenda Item 4 – Fair Funding (Sparsity) / meeting with Swindon Borough Council (SBC)</u> - MC reported that it had been planned to meet with Steve Haley of SBC in the autumn term regarding the Sparsity factor, the concept of a tiered lump sum and related budgetary issues. This followed correspondence from Steve Haley in the summer term which indicated that that the DfE had not announced the outcome of the Sparsity element of the Fair Funding Consultation and that that SBC was looking at the concept of a tiered lump sum as a possible funding mechanism. However, a recent email from Steve Haley indicated that there were no significant changes to the Sparsity factor and that the Schools Forum had not wanted to review the lump sum. Governors expressed concern regarding this correspondence. It was understood that the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) offered protection to the school budget but further information was required regarding the longer term implications for operational costs. <p>Governors indicated that this raised a number of questions regarding what discussions took place at Schools Forum regarding tiered lump sums (in the context of the previous correspondence from Steve Haley which indicated that this was being considered) and how MFG would work. A governor asked about the budgetary figures associated with MFG and MC provided an indication of scale, but that further work was required, particularly with regard to longer term implications. Governors agreed that a meeting should be arranged with Steve Haley in order to work together with the local authority, in a collaborative way, in arriving at answers to these questions. In preparation for this meeting, governors agreed to a number of actions including reviewing the minutes of the Schools Forum on the SBC website; contacting the Schools Forum Primary representatives on the Schools Forum to understand what discussions took place; looking at the budgetary figures in relation to MFG; and MC and MW meeting to construct an email to send to Steve Haley ahead of the meeting in order that he could come to the meeting prepared for the questions raised. This meeting would also give governors opportunity to demonstrate that the school was working in an effective and efficient way and showing that it wanted to be sustainable, including looking</p>	

	<p>at options to potentially increase numbers on roll in the future.</p> <p>As the Swindon Association of Primary Headteachers (SAPH) was represented on the Schools Forum, governors agreed that it would be helpful to communicate with them, as they had been supportive of Bishopstone previously. (It was noted that, in terms of timescale, it was understood that formula factors agreed by Schools Forum were required to be submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) by the 31 October 2014, as part of the Authority Proforma Tool - APT- submission. This determined which factors would be used for formula funding in 2015-16, but not the actual formula values).</p> <p>ACTION – MC and MW to meet within the next 7 days to review budgetary figures in terms of MFG and draft / send email to Steve Haley at SBC to arrange meeting and pose questions ahead of the meeting.</p> <p>ACTION – EL and MW to follow up Schools Forum recent minutes relating to this issue.</p> <p>ACTION – MW to discuss with SAPH / Schools Forum representatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>10 July Agenda Item 4 – Risk Mitigation – The initial template had been drafted and part populated - further work was required. The Chair commented that the budget issues above should be updated into the Risk Mitigation template.</p> <p>ACTION – MC / GM to update template.</p> <p>10 July Agenda Item 4 - Diocesan links – Reverend Bill O’Connell was absent from the meeting due to ill health so was unable to report back on progress regarding Diocesan representation at Schools Forum. (From the previous, 10 July minutes, it was noted that there was a Diocese School Training event on 5 November 2014 which governors may wish to attend – and that there were possible funding opportunities relating to this).</p> <p>ACTION – RevB to continue to follow up.</p> <p>10 July Agenda Item 4 – Skills audit proformas – The clerk thanked governors for returning the skills proformas. Paper copies were circulated to those governors who were having difficulty with the interactive National Governor Association (nga) proforma at the previous meeting.</p> <p>ACTION – Governors to return any outstanding completed proformas to the clerk.</p> <p>10 July Agenda Item 4 – GB Minutes to be put on website (one year of minutes)</p> <p>PA indicated that he was meeting with KE regarding the Big Pond (Virtual Learning Environment) and the website. He indicated that he would prioritise loading the minutes on to the public website. If PA had any difficulty locating electronic copies of recent minutes (from October 2013 onwards) he would contact the clerk. The Vice Chair commented that it was important to have the minutes on the website as they showed all (including OFSTED), the balance of support and challenge demonstrated by the governing Body.</p> <p>ACTION – PA to meet with KE.</p> <p>ACTION – PA to upload FGB minutes to the website.</p> <p>10 July Agenda Item 5 – ICT Suite redevelopment as a classroom etc</p> <p>The Headteacher confirmed that all actions in relation to this had taken place and governors observed the changes. The benefits of the changes were discussed under Agenda Item 8, Headteacher’s Report.</p> <p>10 July Agenda Item 8 – Village Hall proposals developed</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that new tables and chairs had been ordered for school meals at the Village Hall. These were larger tables as they were quicker to set out.</p> <p>The Vice Chair indicated the need to establish the potential wider use of the Village Hall in the context of overall school enhancement and development for the future. MW and PA indicated that the Village Hall AGM was on Monday 24 November at 7pm and that this would be an opportunity to assess the position further. The Chair indicated that there were a lot of questions to be answered and significant further work to be undertaken, including impact assessment and consultation, depending on the initial response.</p> <p>ACTION – EL and GM to consider communication with parents regarding the potential enhancement opportunities for the future.</p> <p>10 July Agenda Item 8 – Boundary wall / Village Hall vegetation issue</p> 	<p>MC/MW</p> <p>EL / MW MW</p> <p>MC/GM</p> <p>RevB</p> <p>RevB</p> <p>PA/KE PA</p> <p>EL/GM</p>
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	<p>Encroaching vegetation from the Village Hall had been cut back to prevent damage to the school's boundary wall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>10 July Agenda Item 9 – “Messy Church”</u> JR reported that, in Reverend Bill O’Connell’s absence, she had circulated some information on the Messy Church children’s art initiative. 	
<p>5.0</p>	<p>STRATEGIC PLANNING - GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND SIGN OFF</p> <p>Documents regarding the previously agreed structure of the Governing Body and the Terms of Reference of the two committees had been circulated ahead of the meeting for final confirmation following reconstitution on 1 October 2014. This consisted 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). The Chair requested confirmation of the structure and Terms of Reference – These were agreed by the Governing Body with immediate effect. This included confirmation of the Chairs of the committees. The structure document, consisting of a brief report, diagram of the agreed committee structure and roles, would be uploaded to the public website.</p> <p>The Vice Chair sought confirmation of the Appeal Committees membership. The Chair indicated that this would be agreed when committees met. The Vice Chair raised the Working Groups and these were also confirmed by governors. (It was noted that as CM had stood down since the documents were produced).</p> <p>The new Instrument of Government, following reconstitution on 1 October, had been circulated to all governors ahead of the meeting. The clerk clarified that all Co-opted Governors (GM, MC and PA) would start a new term of office of 4 years from 1 October 2014, as these were classified as new roles. A letter from the Headteacher regarding an overview of the Governing Body had been included in the School Newsletter and had been put on the website, and this was praised by governors.</p> <p>ACTION – Clerk to email clean electronic versions to PA for him to action. ACTION – PA to upload Structure documents, Terms of Reference and Instrument to website.</p>	<p>Clerk PA</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>STRATEGIC PLANNING – WORK PLANS AND MEETING DATES</p> <p>Following the agreement to the structure and roles of the Governing Body, the Chair confirmed that the Planning Working Group (GM, MC, JR and EL – Chair, Committee Chairs and Headteacher) would be meeting to discuss work plans and timescales for the two committees and the Full Governing Body. The clerk had previously provided planning tools and guidelines and recently provided key dates of specific issues from SBC Governor Support by email (This included a link to the DfE Timeline data).</p> <p>The Chair presented the future meeting dates for the year ahead. All meetings would take place on Tuesdays. The two committees, both to be minuted by the clerk , would be an hour each and follow on from each other on the same evening, as follows:</p> <p>Performance and Standards Committee – Tuesdays 5:30pm to 6:30pm, followed by: Accounting for Resources Committee – Tuesdays 6:30pm to 7:30pm</p> <p><u>Committee meeting dates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 November 2014 • 27 January 2015 • 28 April 2015 • 23 June 2015 <p>There would be two weeks between Committee meetings and Full Governing Body meetings to allow minutes to be presented at the Full Governing Body, and actions to have been progressed. Start time for Full Governing Body meetings would remain at 6pm on the following dates:</p> <p><u>Full Governing Body meeting dates:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 December 2014 • 10 February 2015 • 12 May 2015 • 7 July 2015 	

	<p>Apologies should be sent to the Clerk, at least 5 days before meetings.</p> <p>A date for the Pay Committee would be identified by the Chair by email. The Headteacher reported that teacher appraisals were underway. The Chair commented that the deadline for the teachers' appraisals and pay reviews was 31 October. The Headteacher Appraisal Panel was to meet on 4 November 2014 (GM and JR).</p> <p>It was confirmed that email would be used to communicate with working groups etc in the interim, as previously.</p> <p>Governor attendance was reviewed by the Chair for the last academic year. The Clerk had provided a schedule of attendance and identified the process with regard to non-attendance, if apology had not been sent or had not been accepted. The Chair indicated the need to be robust about this process in the future and this was agreed by governors. (It was acknowledged that apologies regarding the ill health of Reverend Bill O'Connell had been accepted on an on-going basis whilst awaiting an update. Further discussion relating to cover arrangements for school activities was discussed later in the meeting).</p> <p>Updated policies had been circulated on behalf of the Headteacher ahead of the meeting. PA commented on the significant amount of work undertaken by the Headteacher with regard to this and governors thanked EL for this work. The Headteacher also thanked governors for the constructive comments she had received. Governors agreed the policies and the Headteacher would arrange for these to be uploaded on to the website after the coming Friday. The Headteacher commented that some further (new) policies would be circulated by email.</p> <p><i>ACTION – GM to arrange Teachers' Pay Committee by email to meet deadline of 31 October 2014 for the teachers' appraisals and pay reviews.</i></p> <p><i>ACTION – The Headteacher Appraisal Panel was to meet on 4 November 2014 (GM and JR).</i></p> <p><i>ACTION – EL to arrange for policies to be put on website (PA) and email new policies to governors.</i></p>	<p>GM</p> <p>GM/JR</p> <p>EL/PA</p>
<p>7.0</p>	<p>CODE OF CONDUCT</p> <p>The Chair thanked KE for requesting that the Code of Conduct be included as an agenda item. The latest National Governors' Association (nga) Code of Conduct template had been circulated to governors ahead of the meeting. Governors agreed that this was a very helpful document that clearly outlined the strategic nature of the Governing Body as distinct from the operational side of the school. Governors agreed to adopt the model code of conduct as proposed by the Chair. This would be included on the website. The Headteacher agreed to have the document customised with the Bishopstone logo etc.</p> <p>Governors also agreed that this was helpful information to include with documentation relating to the parent governor recruitment process which would need to take place as CM had stood down as a Parent Governor. It was agreed that the two Parent Governors (KE and LM) would prepare a letter to encompass what was involved in being a Parent Governor, linked in with the code of conduct. This would then be sent to the clerk to add the formal recruitment part of the letter.</p> <p><i>ACTION – EL to arrange for Code of Conduct to be customised with school logo / header etc.</i></p> <p><i>ACTION – Updated code to be uploaded on to website (referring to nga "model" code) – PA</i></p> <p><i>ACTION – KE / LM to prepare content of letter regarding the role of Parent Governors (linking to the Code of Conduct) and email to clerk.</i></p> <p><i>ACTION – Clerk to complete formal part of recruitment letter and send to EL.</i></p> <p><i>ACTION – EL to arrange for school header to be added to letter, arrange for the information to be put on the website and arrange circulation of letters etc to parents.</i></p>	<p>EL</p> <p>PA</p> <p>KE/LM</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>EL</p>

<p>8.0</p>	<p>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</p> <p>The Headteacher's report had been circulated ahead of the meeting. The HT introduced the report indicating that it was in a new format. The HT welcomed feedback on the evolving report style.</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that a pupil had left in Year 4, and that there was a potential issue regarding siblings in Years 4 and 6 due to transport problems by the parent who had a change in working patterns. Governors asked what actions could be considered with regard to this. The Headteacher and PA indicated that possible solutions were being considered with other parents that may assist with part of the week and this was ongoing.</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that the School Improvement Plan had been updated and would be transferred onto Bluewave SWIFT. The Headteacher would email the document to governors in the interim to avoid a delay. Wording from the Governing Body was required for the Governors element, linked to the objective of developing the Governing Body.</p> <p>A Parent Governor asked about behavioural issues before school and the Headteacher explained that a letter had gone out to parents in the School Newsletter reminding parents of their responsibilities to monitor their children when in the playground before 9am. She had also spoken with individuals.</p> <p>A governor asked if a breakfast club could be a possibility in the future. The Headteacher indicated that this would require consultation with another provider, especially as this could not be staffed by school staff.</p> <p>A governor questioned the Headteacher as to whether the restructuring of classes (changing the ICT Suite into a working classroom, allowing Years 2 and 3 to come directly to this classroom in the morning and restructuring the timetable) had any impact on pupil performance. The Headteacher confirmed that it was too early to assess the impact and that around Christmas time would be a more appropriate timescale to assess the impact. The Headteacher reported, however, that it was assessment week that week (week commencing 13 October), and the results from this would be reviewed and also fed into the November Performance and Standards Committee. PA indicated that, from a teacher's perspective it was much more liveable and was a positive change.</p> <p>A governor questioned the Headteacher on the recent appointment processes. The Headteacher confirmed that a Dinner Lady had been appointed, that she was to undertake food safety training and that she would start after half term. The Headteacher also reported that there had so far been three SENCO applicants and these were of a good calibre. She also reported that the Modern Foreign Languages teacher (Mrs Anley) had started and was providing excellent and dynamic teaching. A governor asked which year groups were being taught. The Headteacher confirmed that this was currently Key stage 2 (from Year 3), but in the future they would also be looking at provision for younger children and possibly language clubs. Governors commented that they were very pleased with this appointment and with the direction of travel with regard to expanding access to Modern Foreign Languages.</p> <p>A governor asked the Headteacher for an update on progress of the new Infant teacher. The Headteacher reported that this was going well and that the children were happy. She was dynamic and had very good ICT skills. Governors concluded that from the feedback so far, this was an excellent NQT appointment. The Headteacher also indicated that she was helping her to develop a network of support with other schools and that a visit to Wroughton had been arranged, so that she would not feel isolated in a small rural school.</p> <p>The Headteacher confirmed that Mrs Rousel (Lollipop lady and lunchtime supervisor) was retiring in March 2015, after 24 years at the school. A celebration would be arranged for her nearer the time. A governor questioned whether, when looking to recruit lunchtime support, voluntary assistance from parents could be considered in a flexible way, as parents had indicated a willingness to help but could not commit to every day. The Headteacher said this would be considered alongside the recruitment process in the future. A governor asked about the future road crossing arrangements. The Headteacher reported that Swindon Borough Council was reviewing this in conjunction with the school. Governors commented that any change would need to be risk assessed. The HT would report back at a future meeting when the position was clearer.</p> <p>The Headteacher expressed her thanks to Sue Tremlin for all her assistance with school meals,</p>	<p>P&S Comm. Agenda</p>
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	<p>without which it would not have been possible. A governor said that it is important that parents are made aware of what Sue had done, a commitment that included coming in on her days off. A governor also commented that people were probably unaware of the Headteachers role in serving the meals and the commitment required in a small school.</p> <p>A governor asked about feedback on school meals. The Headteacher confirmed that a questionnaire was being sent out after half term and that parents would be invited to try meals next term. She confirmed that menus were on a four month rolling programme, so changes would be seen after Christmas. The contract was for one year so the Working Group / Committee would continue to review this.</p> <p>ACTION – Headteacher to circulate updated School Improvement Plan by email and update Bluewave SWIFT.</p> <p>ACTION – GM to provide wording to EL for Governor element.</p> <p>ACTION – Headteacher to make initial enquiries regarding the possibilities of a future potential breakfast club with possible local provider.</p>	<p>EL</p> <p>GM</p> <p>EL</p>
<p>9.0</p>	<p>SAFEGUARDING</p> <p>This item was taken as a confidential item in order that a child would not be inadvertently identified from the comments in the minutes, in the context of a small school.</p>	
<p>10.0</p>	<p>AOB / CORRESPONDENCE</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cover for Reverend Bill O’Connell</u> – Governor’s asked about cover arrangements for school activities during Reverend Bill O’Connell’s absence due to ill health. The Headteacher confirmed that arrangements had been made for Harvest Festival and Christmas and other opportunities were being discussed. Governors agreed to send a card to let Reverend Bill O’Connell to let him know that the Governing Body was thinking of him. ACTION – GM • <u>Governor Curriculum Visits</u> – KE had met with PA regarding Maths and had produced some brief notes of the meeting. She had also arranged a meeting on 16 October with Mrs Morris regarding Maths. This would be discussed more fully at the Performance and Standards Committee. PA indicated that it had been a helpful experience. PA thanked JR for her visits and excellent support with literacy. ACTION – Performance and Standards Committee Agenda • <u>Swindon Unifest</u> – MW reported on a working group relating to bringing University to Swindon. The Unifest would be held at the Steam Museum and was focused on post 16 year olds in college or work and their parents, and was about how to become a graduate. • <u>Celebrating Success</u> – This item, previously proposed by RevB, had been absorbed within the agenda items. • <u>Exceptional (unpaid) leave</u> – This had been granted in July but was no longer required. • <u>Big Pond Update (Virtual Learning Environment - VLE)</u> – PA updated the Governing Body on the Big Pond / VLE and produced a summary of what a VLE can provide, which was circulated to governors. PA outlined how he was working with KE and MC to develop this further and the summary displayed the support for other schools. • <u>Enhancing Engagement with Parents</u> – LM raised parent surveys. The Headteacher clarified that a survey was undertaken annually. It was agreed that the advertisement for the new Parent Governor, along with the nga model Code of Conduct gave a helpful opportunity to increase understanding of governor roles. The Headteacher also confirmed that she was happy to include contributions from the Governing Body in the School Newsletter. A governor suggested the possibility of a monthly parent governor surgery for parents. The Chair commented on the need for governor roles to be understood as strategic and not operational. • <u>Website</u> – The Vice Chair sought clarification that the school website was meeting the 	<p>GM</p> <p>P&S Comm. Agenda</p>

	<p>statutory requirements that had recently been circulated by the clerk. PA confirmed that the requirements were being followed, and enhancements were being made.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Training</u> – The Vice Chair confirmed that he was attending a Health & Safety SBC Governor Training Course. He also commented that the recently advertised Governor Body Building Course was a useful course that he had attended on a previous occasion. The clerk confirmed that she had requested and received an updated schedule of training attended by current governors from SBC which she would circulate. <i>ACTION – Clerk to circulate latest training schedule.</i> • <u>Access Survey</u> – The Vice Chair raised the Access Survey and it was confirmed that this would be considered at the next committee. • <u>Three Year Condition Report</u> – The Headteacher confirmed that this had been completed and sent to SBC. Some significant sums were involved. The Vice Chair commented that some issues would be met from Capital Reserve. This would be discussed further at the next Committee. 	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Comm. Agenda</p> <p>Comm. Agenda</p>
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The meeting ended at 8:05pm

Signed:.....Date:.....
Chair of Governors