

MINUTES OF FULL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Monday 6th July 2020 at 3.45pm
via videoconference

	<p>Present: Judith Smitham - Chair of Governors (Chair) Lara Jeffries – Headteacher (Head) Dawn Howarth - Vice Chair (DH – items 1-17) James Davidson – Headteacher at Penair School (JD – item 5 onwards) Laura Dolan (LD) Elizabeth Phillips (EP) Loic Rich (LR) Victoria Sleeman (VS)</p> <p>Also in attendance: Jackie Parker – School Business Management Consultant (JP) Jon Brown – Clerk to Governors (Clerk)</p> <p>Clerk’s note: this meeting was held during the COVID-19 school closure. Governors participated via videoconference using the Zoom application. Some governors had issues with technology and lost contact towards the end of the meeting. Some governors were not visible on video for certain periods and it was not clear whether technical or other issues prevented them being ‘present’ at the meeting at all times. Despite this, the meeting remained clearly quorate throughout.</p>	
Item	Minutes	Action
1	<p>Welcome and apologies The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from David Parker. James Davidson had sent apologies for the fact that he would be late to the meeting. Giles Horne was not present.</p>	
2	<p>Declaration of business and pecuniary interests relevant to this agenda Judith Smitham declared her business interest with Trelander Stores. Loic Rich declared his position with Cornwall Council.</p>	
3	<p>Clerk’s update to include board membership matters A clerk’s update had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>a) Correspondence The Clerk alerted governors to the newly updated versions of Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Academies Financial Handbook, and explained that both documents would come into force on 1st September 2020, with the existing versions remaining current until then. The Clerk also alerted governors to the latest DfE guidance for full school opening in September, which had been previously circulated.</p> <p>b) Articles of Association The Clerk explained that the make-up of the governing board was not compliant with the current Articles of Association, which also gave limited scope for the</p>	

	<p>board to appoint more governors. This was largely due to the historic sponsorship arrangement with Penair, and enquiries to the DfE about formal de-coupling from the sponsorship had met with indecision. The Clerk proposed amending the Articles in line with the latest model version to enable more flexibility while ensuring compliance, and explained what this would involve and the potential cost, as detailed in the written update. <u>Governors agreed</u> to the proposal. The Clerk agreed to contact the DfE to enquire about the process in the first instance.</p> <p>c) FGB Terms of Reference – to approve The Clerk had drawn up and circulated a draft copy of Terms of Reference (ToR) for the FGB, which clarified that the board’s audit and risk monitoring responsibilities would be undertaken by the FGB in the absence of standing committees. <u>Governors agreed</u> to adopt the ToR.</p>	Jon Brown
4	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting held on 01 June 2020 and matters arising The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated in advance and were agreed as a true and accurate record. Matters arising from the Action Log as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Head and a governor had explored the English as an Additional Language (EAL) support on offer from Haven House, and had also worked with Cornwall Council (CC). A new staff member has good EAL experience and will take this on, but the Head will drive this area until they are up to speed. There is good awareness of the EAL requirements in school. The Head has also been involved with leading discussions around Black Lives Matter (BLM) with CC, and wants to ensure that Tregolls are involved at the forefront of this issue, including with Black History Month and embedding those issues into the curriculum beyond that. <u>Governors expressed</u> support for the strong message regarding BLM on the school website. - <u>The Chair had discussed</u> the structure of the FGB with the Head, the Clerk and others, and this was being reviewed to ensure that the board could start the new academic year firing on all cylinders. <p>All other action points would be discussed under later agenda items or carried forward until the next FGB meeting or until schools were operating more normally post COVID.</p>	
5	<p>Headteacher’s report on current situation in school and future plans The Head’s report had been circulated in advance, along with an updated Risk Assessment (RA) for wider school opening. The DfE guidance for full opening in September had been received on Friday 3rd July so governors had only had sight of the RA today. Classes would be back to their normal size, with each forming their own bubble. Drop-off and pick-up times would be staggered by surname, so that arrangements for parents with children in more than one class could be safe. Each class would have a designated outside space, and lunch would be eaten in classrooms. All children would be back in school with no rota system.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether school would be able to compensate for children’s missed experiences if overnight and overseas trips were cancelled. A) This has been discussed and will be kept under review. If such trips cannot be reinstated it is hoped children can camp out on school grounds and have day trips. School will ensure a rich experience with the new curriculum, with beach visits etc.</p> <p><u>A governor congratulated</u> the Head on the thoroughness of the RA. <u>A governor challenged</u> whether the extra cleaning necessary would have an impact on the budget, and whether government funding was available for this. A) Extra funding is only available for periods of</p>	

	<p>holiday opening, so existing resources will need to be juggled. The biggest issues will be logistical with tight timetabling rather than budgetary.</p> <p>[James Davidson joined the meeting at 4.08pm]</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether the high level of staff sickness absence would impact on September plans. A) This has been addressed. Some of the staff affected will have left, and the school will be more robust on protocols and support for staff absence. The Head will work with the new School Business Manager (SBM) on this.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether the current Y6 cohort had missed out on PHSE teaching usually delivered in summer, and how school could ensure that sex education would be delivered at the right time in children’s development. A) Much of this happens in Y5, and will be caught up next year. The Y6 modules haven’t been delivered remotely, and these gaps will need to be addressed by secondary schools in Y7. <u>A governor challenged</u> whether Tregolls would work with secondary schools to ensure this was picked up on during what would already be a difficult transition period. A) Tregolls will put together a document to explain the gaps, but all schools would be in the same situation so secondaries will be aware. <u>A governor asked</u> whether the statutory aspects of PHSE provision had changed in light of COVID. A) Yes, some of the usual curriculum has been shifted back to next year.</p> <p><u>Governors thanked</u> the Head for the comprehensive report.</p>	
6	<p>Review the Learning Improvement Plan and priorities for next year’s LIP</p> <p>A LIP update had been circulated in advance of the meeting, along with a draft LIP for 2020-21. The Head explained that it had been difficult to address all areas of improvement with the COVID closures coming so soon after the Ofsted inspection, but that she was confident school could hit the ground running in September with the new curriculum in place. Recent recruitment had gone well, and key staff will all be in place. LIP objectives had not been finalised, but there would need to be a focus on finance, which had been identified as an area for improvement.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether the recent recruitment would enable the premises and health & safety (H&S) issues to be addressed. A) Yes, a new SBM was recruited on Friday. There were very strong applicants, and the new appointee has excellent experience. <u>A governor challenged</u> whether the new SBM had a strong H&S background. A) Yes, but they have been asked to complete extra training over the summer holidays.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether it was possible for governors to receive training for their finance-related obligations, given how important this part of the role was. A) Yes, this was a good idea. All governors need to be comfortable with finance if there is no separate finance committee. Jackie Parker (JP) suggested that this should be delivered either as bite-size training at a FGB meeting or in a separate, longer session, and confirmed that she could help deliver this with the new SBM. The Head thanked JP for her support with finance issues since the departure of the previous SBM.</p> <p><u>The Chair reminded</u> governors that as trustees they all had corporate responsibility for the school, and would all need to play a part in monitoring and oversight. Some would have strengths and weaknesses in certain areas, but all would need to pull their weight.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether plans were in place for digital/online learning in case this was needed again in future, and how governors could monitor its effectiveness. A) School will continue to use ClassDojo, including as a reward system in conjunction with the behaviour policy. It is good for parental engagement as it is interactive and accessible. A governor could be given a login to see how it worked. <u>A Parent Governor (LD) commented</u></p>	<p>Jackie Parker Jon Brown</p>

	that ClassDojo had worked well and allowed children to interact with their teacher. New learning material had been circulated regularly and there were fun challenges for children too. <u>LD agreed</u> to write a monitoring report about the use of ClassDojo.	Laura Dolan
7	Review pupil exclusions for the year The Head reported that there had been 9 fixed-term exclusions during the Spring term. CC had been asked for support for 3 children whose actions had endangered themselves or staff members. School is aware that some of these children will have increased vulnerability since lockdown. Some behaviours have improved since the return to school. The implementation of bubbles and more rigid boundaries seem to have helped.	
8	Pupil numbers update The Head reported that pupil numbers have remained stable since the Ofsted report was published. Any mobility caused by families moving away from the area has been balanced by new starters. 54-57 children are expected to join Reception in September – a record number for the school. This is a credit to the EYFS team who have worked so hard ‘selling’ the school to potential new parents. <u>A governor commented</u> that this was great news, and asked the Head to pass thanks on to EYFS staff. <u>A governor challenged</u> what the transition arrangements for new starters would look like. A) There will be a big focus on those children entering Y1, who have missed a big chunk of their Reception year. Reception will start one week later, and there has been weekly contact with parents of new starters. It will be a different start to usual but school will ensure that it is a positive one. Governors should be aware that this looks like being a challenging year group.	
9 10	SEND and vulnerable pupils review Review safeguarding and wellbeing A report from the SENCO had been circulated in advance of the meeting along with a safeguarding report. <u>The Safeguarding Governor (DH) commented</u> that the SENCO report was excellent, and asked the Head to pass thanks on for this. DH has met with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Some positive things have come out of the difficult COVID situation – communication and relationships between different agencies have improved out of necessity, which is promising for supporting children in future. Level 2 safeguarding training has been arranged for all staff in September. <u>A governor challenged</u> whether this could be extended to all staff. A) Good idea, and an opportunity for governors to meet new staff. The Head will circulate the date. <u>A governor commented</u> that they were already trained to Level 3 through their job, but would still welcome the opportunity to meet new staff. <u>A governor challenged</u> whether the DSL training had expired in June. A) The Head will check, but thinks that a subsequent ‘Train the Trainer’ award carries over beyond that date. Following a request from the Head, <u>the Safeguarding Governor agreed</u> to check that all safeguarding information was now present and accurate on the website following recent changes.	Lara Jeffries Lara Jeffries Dawn Howarth
11	Staffing update and review whole staffing structure A staffing report had been circulated in advance. <u>A governor asked</u> whether the senior staff member previously on secondment in another trust would be returning to school. A) No, they had been successful in finding a new role within that trust. <u>The Chair agreed</u> to organise a thank you card for their years of great service to the school.	Judith Smitham

	<p>All vacant positions had now been recruited for successfully, and the leadership structure changed slightly. There is no need for an Assistant Head. Interviews will be held this week for a Deputy Head position. This has been an internal recruitment process.</p> <p>The staffing structure was also discussed under item 17.</p>	
12	<p>Review H&S update including progress on action plan</p> <p>The Head reported that the last H&S audit had been carried out in 2018. The action plan had been worked on and a new audit was due in the Autumn term. H&S had now been separated from the SBM role due to workload issues. It is an area that requires work and governor focus with robust monitoring.</p> <p><u>A governor commented</u> that they had carried out a H&S walk with the previous SBM, which covered the items that were needed at the time. <u>The Chair asked</u> for a date and written note of that monitoring visit. The Head confirmed that she had carried out a H&S walk with a governor in conjunction with the re-opening Risk Assessment.</p>	Loic Rich
13	<p>Review premises, including ICT, CIF bid</p> <p>The Head confirmed that the improvement works to the Area Resource Base (ARB) were going ahead as planned this summer. The school had not been successful with the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bid for other works.</p> <p>JP explained that the school's CIF bids had been turned down two years in a row. The criteria have been tightened and more preparatory work needs to be done in advance of the bid (architects plans etc). A building survey is also required to demonstrate that the bid is directed to the areas of most need. £5.5k has been quoted for a full survey, including mechanical and electrical. It is a lot of money, but JP suggests it is needed. It would also inform the maintenance schedule and priorities. The Head explained that this area had been neglected for a few years since the new build, and that it was important to go ahead, otherwise future CIF bids would fail. The EYFS area in particular needed work. JP confirmed that financial benchmarking showed that maintenance spend was very low at Tregolls.</p> <p><u>A governor confirmed</u> that some candidates at the recent SBM interviews had picked up on the low maintenance spend, <u>and asked</u> how quickly a decision was needed regarding the survey. JP advised that it should be made now if possible. The next bid cycle opened in December, and lots of preparation and costing work would be needed before then.</p> <p><u>A governor commented</u> that this seemed an important issue for a growing school with a focus on H&S. The survey would be a useful document, worth spending money on. <u>Governors agreed</u> to go ahead with the survey.</p> <p>The Head explained that the ICT budget had become very stretched. Plans were in place to share iPads across two classes rather than buy more. A plan for future IT requirements is needed, but an asset management system needs to be in place before spending decisions can be made.</p>	
14	<p>Review monthly management accounts, cashflow forecast, aged debtor report and responsible officer report</p> <p>The monthly management accounts for May 2020 had been circulated in advance. JP explained that the SBM procedures had not been robust, and she was unpicking this with the new finance assistant. Progress has been made, and JP is confident that the picture is much healthier now, but things are still becoming apparent on a daily basis which will affect the budget figures. <u>A governor commented</u> that the budget narrative had been good at explaining certain lines, and they felt confident that the right systems were in place now – the new Finance policy was indicative of this.</p>	

	<p>The responsible officer (RO) visited last week. The draft report hasn't been received yet, but verbal feedback had been given to the Head. It will be a report of two halves! Some systems weren't in a good way, but governors will be heartened to see the work that has been done to address this, which will be reflected in the report. <u>A governor challenged</u> whether the report would be shared with governors. A) Yes. JP explained that the RO is like a mini audit (often called internal audit), which focusses on financial and wider assurance. Visits take place once per term and reports go to governors and external auditors. <u>A governor commented</u> that reports should have come to governors previously, and was not sure why this hadn't been picked up by external auditors. JP explained that the Academies Financial Handbook outlines governors' duties around audit and risk assurance, and that the annual governance planner would help the FGB ensure that they were addressing these.</p> <p>The aged debtor report had been circulated in advance. JP talked through some of the lines, and explained that some debts were a legacy of the SBM issues.</p>	
15	<p>Review major school contract performance (catering, cleaning, grounds)</p> <p>A catering analysis report had been circulated in advance with recommendations. JP explained that the picture wasn't as bad as the budget suggested. Parental debt would be addressed by introducing a cashless system, with meals paid for up front. A procedure for non-payment would need to be agreed to avoid children not being fed.</p> <p>Catering staffing costs were higher than benchmarking figures. Without overheads catering is around break-even, but overheads should be factored in. The catering manager understands the issues and is on board with the report's recommendations. Governors have a duty to get best value from major contracts, and JP recommends exploring the options of outsourcing catering by going to tender next term. There would be no obligation to accept any tender, but governors should test the market.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether existing staff would lose jobs if catering were outsourced. A) No, staff would transfer under TUPE to the new contractor. <u>A governor commented</u> that they had been involved in outsourcing catering elsewhere – it has thrown up some issues but can be a positive step. Governors should be aware that food samples provided at tender are not necessarily reflected in the quality of everyday provision. <u>Governors agreed</u> the need to check the ongoing quality of any provision.</p> <p>JP commented that Penair had recently outsourced their catering and it had been a positive experience. <u>A governor (JD) confirmed</u> that the decision at Penair had been financially-driven and that it had been very advantageous, saving lots of management time for issues now handled by the contractor. He would support recommendations to explore the options. <u>Governors agreed</u> to the recommendation to look into the options. <u>A governor challenged</u> that any new contract would need to be scrutinised and managed well, along with the need to ensure that nutritional standards weren't compromised.</p> <p>JP explained that the cleaning contract had lapsed a while ago, which needed addressing. Tregolls put it out to tender with three other schools. A new contract has been awarded which should commence 1st August. It should result in a better service for less money. The grounds contract is due to expire in May, and needs reviewing. The new SBM will take this on.</p>	
16	<p>Review financial benchmarking data</p> <p>A financial benchmarking report had been circulated in advance. JP highlighted the need to be aware of the time lag for the data – 2018-19 were the most recent figures available. Tregolls has been compared against similar schools nationally, and also top-performing schools in terms of KS2 progress. In general, spending on teaching and classroom-based</p>	

	<p>staff at Tregolls was high, and spending on admin and premises was low. The adult to pupil ratio remains slightly high, but it is good to have capacity for what is a growing school.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> why the figure for bought-in professional services was so high. A) This was a historical accounting error rather than overspend. <u>A governor thanked</u> JP for the comprehensive report, <u>and commented</u> that the data was very useful. The Head confirmed that it had informed recent decisions, and commented that governors needed to be aware of Tregolls' particular circumstances when comparing with wider data. JP explained that governors should bear in mind the need to consider benchmarking annually.</p>	
<p>17</p> <p>Review outcomes of old budget and approve annual budget for next year</p> <p>The 2020-21 budget had been circulated for approval. JP explained that the outcomes of the old budget were still not fully known. The bottom line will be ok – there won't be a deficit, but the finer detail is still being examined with the LFS technician.</p> <p>Notes had been provided regarding assumptions made for unknowns in the future budget. The departure of the senior staff member discussed under item 11 had had a positive effect on the budget.</p> <p>(11) <u>A governor asked</u> for confirmation that 1 new teacher and 2 new TAs had been recruited. A) 3 teachers in total had been recruited – 2 to replace outgoing staff, 1 for the new class already agreed. The TAs are required to address increased need in some classes. JP explained that the Head can make appointments within the approved staffing structure. This would normally come to governors now but that hadn't been possible in current circumstances. The new SBM would draw one up to be presented to governors.</p> <p>[Dawn Howarth left the meeting at 5.44pm]</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether the new TAs were on a temporary contract for COVID catch-up, or was it a material change which needed governor approval? A) It is not temporary but to address children with high need joining the school. One TA was already budgeted for with the new classroom. One child comes with EHCP funding. Existing TAs have been deployed where possible, but extra requirement was identified. <u>Governors agreed</u> to approve the change to the staffing structure.</p> <p>JP highlighted that water costs were very high and needed looking at urgently. <u>A governor asked</u> what miscellaneous spending referred to. A) Miscellaneous employees, such as minibus driver, pastoral support staff.</p> <p><u>A governor challenged</u> whether the £10k figure for supply teaching next year would be adequate in light of the £8k overspend this year. A) Yes. Much of the overspend was due to insurance claims not being submitted. Also some supply cover will be able to be provided by HLTAs. The £10k figure is realistic.</p> <p><u>Governors agreed</u> to approve the 2020-21 budget.</p>	<p>Lara Jeffries / SBM</p>	
18	<p>To appoint an interim Chief Financial Officer</p> <p><u>The Chair explained</u> that there had been no Chief Financial Officer in place since the departure of the SBM. The Responsible Officer had suggested appointing JP as interim CFO as she had been covering the SBM role. <u>Governors agreed</u> to appoint JP as interim CFO.</p>	
19	<p>Policy Review</p> <p>A number of policies had been circulated for approval. Governors had reviewed some policies and certain changes made in light of the reviews. Some reviews were outstanding. Governors agreed to review the Risk Assessment and Admissions Policies.</p>	<p>Laura Dolan Elizabeth Phillips</p>

	The Clerk confirmed that final policy approval could be made via GovernorHub after the meeting. The Head agreed to confirm when all policies had been reviewed and finalised for approval.	Lara Jeffries
20	Dates and times of future meetings <u>The Chair agreed</u> to liaise with the Clerk to propose and agree dates for next year's meetings, including a business meeting in early September, via GovernorHub.	Judith Smitham Jon Brown
21	Confidential items None	
22	Any other business – urgent matters only <u>A governor asked</u> whether their term of office as parent governor continued after their child left the school. The Clerk confirmed that it did. The Head thanked governors for their support during her first year in post. <u>Governors thanked</u> the Head for all her hard work during the year. <u>A governor challenged</u> whether the RA for full opening in September had been adequately scrutinised given its newness, <u>and suggested</u> that a single-agenda meeting was called for the summer holiday so that the RA could be re-examined in light of what was a changing COVID situation. <u>The Chair agreed</u> to liaise with the Clerk to arrange this for late August.	Judith Smitham Jon Brown

The meeting closed at 6.10pm

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Signed as an accurate record

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Print name

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Date

Action Log

Action date	Action	Who?	Due date
2019	Staff governor appointment	Clerk/Chair/Head	Sep-20
2019	GDPR training to be provided at staff meeting - governors to be invited	SBM/Head	Post COVID
2019	Invite PCSO to future meeting	Head	Post COVID
2019	Governing Body structure to be reviewed	Clerk/Chair	September 2020
24/02/2020	Invite Parent Governor applicants for meeting with view to appointing	Chair/Head	Post COVID
24/02/2020	Carry out curriculum monitoring visit	DH/DP	
24/02/2020	Arrange monitoring visit training - Penair contact?	Chair/JD	
24/02/2020	Monitoring visit to support SLT on lesson-planning and schemes of work	EP	
24/02/2020	Invite subject leaders to future FGB meetings	Head	

24/02/2020	Obtain external report to check new website compliance	Head	
27/04/2020	Provide contacts at CC and DfE regarding school capacity discussions	JD	
01/06/2020	Present new curriculum to governors at future meeting	Head	FGB Summer 2020
06/07/2020	Contact DfE re amending Articles	Clerk	
06/07/2020	Arrange finance training for governors	SBM/JP/Clerk	Autumn/Spring 20-21
06/07/2020	Provide monitoring report about ClassDojo and remote learning	LD	
06/07/2020	Circulate date for safeguarding training in September to governors	Head	
06/07/2020	Check DSL training remains in date beyond June 2020	Head	
06/07/2020	Check school website for accuracy and completeness of safeguarding information	DH	
06/07/2020	Organise thank you and leaving card for senior staff member	Chair	
06/07/2020	Provide date and written note of H&S monitoring visit	LR	
06/07/2020	Draw up new staffing structure document and present to governors at FGB	Head/SBM	
06/07/2020	Review Risk Assessment policy and feedback to Head	EP	
06/07/2020	Review Admissions policies and feedback to Head	LD	
06/07/2020	Confirm when policies are ready for approval via GovernorHub	Head	
06/07/2020	Propose and agree times for 2020-21 meetings	Chair/Clerk	
06/07/2020	Propose date for summer meeting to scrutinise Risk Assessment	Chair/Clerk	