

## Full Governing Body Meeting Minutes

*Wednesday 17th October 2012, 5.45pm*

Attending: Alan Velecky (Chair), Ian Rothery (Vice-Chair), Emma Allen, Julie Harris, Stewart Hunt, Matt Kent, Mark Moody, Jo O'Donoghue, Alastair Pickering, Annie Schulte, Rosalyn St.Pierre, Sue Warren.

Minutes: David Rogers (Clerk)

### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Anne Baker and Sue Govus.

### 2. Declarations of Interest & Confidentiality Reminder

No declarations of business or pecuniary interests were made. Governors were reminded of the confidentiality of some items in this agenda.

### 3. Minutes of the last meeting & matters arising

AV had issued a new version of the Governor Planner. Dates of meetings were unaffected. All other actions had been or were being discharged.

The minutes were agreed to be a fair record of the last meeting and signed by the Chair.

### 4. Committee minutes - key points, actions & approvals

#### i. Strategy Committee

- ✓ **JO undertook to give the RAISEonline password verbally to Governors.**

AV had met with AS and JO to setup a Governor's section on the school website. Governor pictures and descriptive notes were being prepared and would also be used for the notice-board.

'Christian Distinctiveness' had been made a standing item for this committee.

The Ofsted Parent View site would be a priority to encourage parents to leave comments.

Monitoring the new housing development was important because it affected school numbers and the local traffic situation.

#### ii. Organisation Committee

JO reiterated the issues raised by the new Appraisal & Capability Policies (q.v.). The Finance Group had made several decisions on the wording of the policies as they had to be ready for staff appraisals in October.

- ✓ **Governors approved the changes made to the Appraisal & Capability Policies.**

MM, SH and SW were working on the Schools Financial Value Standard. The Budget was said to be looking positive and the various work on the premises looked good.

- ✓ **The Clerk undertook to amend the Finance Group Minutes because MK and SH were not shown as present.**
- ✓ **All Governors were to complete the Register of Pecuniary Interests.**

#### iii. Learning Committee

This committee's main focus in the near future was to be 'Targets'.

### 5. Changes to Terms of Reference approval

MM and IR had been working on the Terms of Reference. The wording added to disallow members of staff from being Chairs of committees (to prevent conflict of interest) was changed to be more coherent.

Governors discussed the composition of the Pay Committee.

- ✓ **It was decided that the Pay Committee be made up of the Chair of Governors, the Chair of the Finance Group, the Chair of the Well-being Group and the Headteacher. The Chair of the Finance Group would be Chair of the Pay Committee**

- ✓ **The Clerk was instructed to change the wording of the Terms of Reference as above and re-issue the new version.**
- ✓ **The Terms of Reference document was approved by Governors, subject to the above changes.**

## 6. Discussion of Governor roles and responsibilities

Copies of the Code of Conduct document were distributed and the undertaking to adopt the Code was signed by all those Governors present.

AV summarised the key themes:- the first section sets out the methods by which the purposes of the Governing Body shall be achieved. The next section stresses that Governors do not act alone but share responsibility and a commitment to the welfare of the school (commitment to attend meetings was mentioned in this respect). Confidentiality in the next section was imperative and putting aside personal agendas and interests in favour of those priorities agreed by the Governing Body.

## 7. Election of FGB Chair / Vice-Chair and Subcommittee Chairs

- ✓ **AV was proposed as Chair of Governors by EA and seconded by MM. There were no other nominations and AV was automatically appointed.**
- ✓ **IR was proposed as Vice-chair of Governors by AV and seconded by MK. There were no other nominations and IR was automatically appointed.**
- ✓ **EA was proposed as Chair of the Learning Committee by JO and seconded by SW. There were no other nominations and EA was automatically appointed.**
- ✓ **MM was proposed as Chair of the Finance Group by IR and seconded by SH. There were no other nominations and MM was automatically appointed.**
- ✓ **IR was proposed as Chair of the Well-being Group by EA and seconded by AV. There were no other nominations and IR was automatically appointed.**

## 8. Creation of Pay Committee

- ✓ **Governors ratified the creation of the Pay Committee according to the Terms of Reference issued with the agenda and modified by Item 5 above.**

## 9. Headteacher update (inc School Development Plan)

JO gave a presentation on the topic of *'What's on the horizon'*

### i. Background Information & Implications

#### a) *Admissions and space*

There are more children than ever before and the school is pressed for space. There is little space for small group teaching. The hall is small and three sittings for lunch are required. More work space is needed.

#### b) *Staffing*

The two new teachers and AS as deputy are all proving positive assets.

#### c) *Buildings & premises*

The Roof, Boiler and Hall floor are all encouraging but there is more to do. The building is showing its age.

#### d) *Children*

There are 10 statemented children - more than ever before – and the SENCo requires a lot of time and space. The Pupil Premium is used for FSM children – a report has been put onto the website.

#### e) *Data*

Figures are improving – progress is good (above national levels) but South Malling needs them higher. The next Learning Committee meeting will look at data.

### ii. National Issues

#### a) *Curriculum*

There will be a new National Curriculum – its contents are still indefinite but it is likely to be more knowledge-based and less skill-based.

**b) SEN reform**

Statements will no longer be issued. EA is taking part in the SE7 Pathfinder project which is trialling a new approach to SEN funding, whereby parents work with professionals to pull together Education Health and Care Plans for children who would receive statements under the current arrangements. JO is unclear how the funding will work - some may now go to parents to spend directly. EA said that there is little information as yet from County, but the greatest impact may be on children currently on School Action or School Action +, as these categories will be withdrawn. The timetable of introduction is changing fast and EA will keep us posted.

**c) Funding Formula**

The new funding formula is still in draft – South Malling stands to lose because need is based on Foundation subject results not on SEN need.

RS explained that the formula will use Deprivation Indices which are identified by Postcode. ESCC Councillors believe that children in Rural Local Areas will lose out and Councillors are having meetings with DfE to attempt to resolve this. JO said that Heads are not happy, particularly those of Secondary Schools.

**d) KS2 Testing**

JO said that the new end-of-KS2 SPAG (Spelling, Punctuation & Grammar) test is on the horizon but it is still unclear what it will look like.

**e) Ofsted changes including Parent View**

There are some new changes to Ofsted inspections which do not come into effect this year but need to be planned for. Also Ofsted has launched Parent View, an online survey that gives parents an opportunity to give Ofsted their opinions on aspects of their child's school.

**iii. Local Issues****a) Role of LA**

The role of the Local Authority is changing fast – generally in the direction of reduction and cutback.

**b) Federations and Trusts**

Federations and other forms of partnership are on the increase (see Item 10).

**c) Proposed Housing development**

MK said that a decision on this will be taken in December. Money (£116k) will be set aside for schools.

**iv. School Agenda****a) Leadership and staffing - sustainability**

JO said that Governors need to look at staffing and how long the present situation is sustainable. This will be considered by the Wellbeing Committee.

**b) Implications from data analysis**

The implications of data will be the new primary task of the Learning Committee.

**c) Self Evaluation Form - new format**

Although the SEF is no longer a statutory requirement it is still a useful document. JO needs Governors' input on a new SEF format.

**d) School Development Plan - priorities**

- 1) Coaching and appraisal for all staff. JO is using the new methods and will report back.
- 2) Personalised learning agenda to ensure gaps in learning are identified and filled during and after each lesson.
- 3) The outdoor areas of the school are developed to be integral to the cross-curricular learning.
- 4) Each child's basic skills continue to improve (Phonics, handwriting, mental maths, comprehension and reading skills)
- 5) Behaviour and safety – improvement
- 6) Playtime and unstructured time to better reflect the ethos of the school

EA asked if the Golden Rule Champions has been instituted to any effect on unstructured time. JO said the Buddy system was in operation and the Golden Rules were being internalised by the children.

JH asked if personalised learning was adversely affecting teaching time. JO replied that teachers assess during the morning and Teaching Assistants conduct a revision period in the afternoon. MM asked how the effect of this practice is measured. JO said that the data should indicate results and this is one aspect that Governors should be monitoring. RS said that the Pupil Premium would be based on Standards showing an improvement and JO said that some of the P.P. had been put towards Personalised Learning with T.A.s and that there would be a report at the next meeting about how the P.P. is used for children's learning needs.

## 10. Federation proposal update

AV reported on meetings of senior leaders Lewes schools – instigated by Priory School and attended by Wallands, Southover and Western Road schools. Priory have been against the Academy route and are committed to some form of Federation, probably within the year.

The two extremes of the continuum are so-called Hard and Soft Federations – the main difference being a single or two separate Governing Bodies and Headteachers respectively. There are Economies of scale in procurement and purchasing power. Funding would be separated from the LA as would contact with Ofsted. Priory School sees educational benefits in their potential involvement in the transition of Year 6 children from local primary schools. A steering committee will be formed with all schools involved to explore the issues and options.

JO said that South Malling should be asking 'what's in it for us' and should avoid working to Priory's agenda. Governors wanted to know if any commitment had yet been made. AV said that, at present, the meetings were just exploring options.

IR said that the working party had looked at Academies and Federations last year and that the documents generated could be circulated.

JH asked if Priory were in favour of hard or soft federation but AV said that this was not clear.

RS said that East Sussex schools were generally resistant to the Academy route. The schools currently in discussion are the larger schools; why were the smaller schools not invited? JO said that all local schools were invited but many did not attend so their opinions remained unknown.

There was some discussion about the pros and cons of Federation and Priory's agenda.

- ✓ **It was decided to reconvene the Partnership Working Party, which will consist of SW, AS, EA, IR, MK and AB.**

## 11. Planner update and FGB Development Meeting

The joint Governor-Staff Development meeting will be on 5<sup>th</sup> December. AV canvassed Governors for ideas and views.

The last meeting had a first part devoted to a forum on the Role of Governors and the second part a set of 1-to-1 meetings between Link Governors and the apposite subject leader.

AV said that there could be another shared vision of priorities, though not linked to Ofsted as this had been a turn-off to the Staff.

JO said that Staff feedback asked for more 1-to-1 time and suggested that the vision had been agreed and comprehended by all and further discussion was not the best use of this time.

AS said that the SDP priorities were very clear but AV said that it was only designed to look one year ahead and that staff should have a clear picture and a shared understanding at least 3-5 years ahead.

JH said that the date of the next Ofsted inspection (in approx. 2014) was relevant to the long term strategy.

There was discussion of how a long term visioning exercise could be fitted into the Joint Development Meeting and whether this would be useful to staff. It was felt that the question 'What do you think school will look like in 3 years?' might be a good starting point for the 1-to-1 exercise.

## 12. Link Governor Visits

- ✓ **Governors decided on the allocation of Link Governor Roles (see Appendix 1).**

A new round of visits needed to be arranged. There was an issue with timetabling visits as some Governors would need to meet with more than one subject leader.

- ✓ **JO and AS undertook to look into visit scheduling with the above in mind.**
- ✓ **It was agreed that Link Governor meetings would be considered a Governor Visit, generating a Visit Report.**
- ✓ **It was agreed that Link Governor meetings would include consideration of an appropriate Policy review.**

## 13. Discuss Governor / CPD Training

AV said that the Governing Body needed to show commitment to CPD. EA said that the SIS documentation contained some good whole Governing Board training.

JO confirmed South Malling has opted for the 'pay-as-you-go' Governor Training.

The Governing Body course 'Asking Challenging Questions' was considered. It was suggested that other schools' Governors might be involved.

- ✓ **AV undertook to bring this up at the next meeting with other Chairs of Governors.**

## 14. Safeguarding update

AS had done the training and was now designated secondary Child Protection Officer.

## 15. Any Other Business

Teacher Jill Burgan was retiring and all Governors were invited to a tea-party in her honour.

## 16. Meeting closed at 7.30

**Appendix 1 – Link Governor Roles**

		Governor link – non curriculum	Governor link – curriculum
Emma	Allen		Literacy
Anne	Baker		MFL
Rosalyn	St.Pierre	Safeguarding	Creative Arts: Art;Music;Drama;Dance
Sue	Govus	Vulnerable groups SEN;G&T;FSM	
Stewart	Hunt	Financial Benchmarking	Maths
Annie	Schulte		
Mark	Moody	Pay;SFVS	
Joanna	O'Donoghue		
Alastair	Pickering		Science ; ICT
Matt	Kent		DT
Ian	Rothery	1)Health & Safety;Premises 2)Collective Worship 3) Induction	
Alan	Velecky	Performance management	PE
Sue	Warren		Early years
Julie	Harris		Humanities, PSHE