



Full Governing Body Meeting Minutes

Thursday 26th September 2013, 5.45pm

Attending: Alan Velecky (Chair), Ian Rothery (Vice-Chair), Julie Harris, Mark Moody, Jo O'Donoghue, Annie Schulte, Sue Warren, Stewart Hunt, Sue Govus, Emma Allen, Matt Kent, Liz Kaye and Jeremy Bamber.

Minutes: David Rogers (Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Rosalyn St. Pierre. Notifications of delayed arrival were received and accepted from MM and IR.

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. New Governor welcome / introductions

AV extended a welcome to new Governors and all Governors introduced themselves.

4. Governor Code of Practice

AV summarized the Code of Practice and particularly emphasized the sections on Partnership, Challenge and Accountability (q.v.)

- **The Clerk was instructed to make minor amendments.**
- ✓ **Subject to the above, the Code of Practice was approved unanimously and signed by all Governors present.**

5. Minutes of the last meeting & actions

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

i. Strategy Committee

The decisions and actions of the minutes were summarized to Governors.

JO contributed an update on Performance-Related Pay: NUT members in the school will be on strike on 17th October. As there will be insufficient staff the school will be closed to pupils (but not staff).

Southover School and Priory have a drafted a policy attempting to link teacher performance to pay and a Pay Committee meeting will be necessary to discuss this issue.

6. Headteacher update

JO had a circulated a Head's Report (q.v.): The number of pupils on roll will increase to 250 with three new traveller children. This will have implications for class organisation. The inset day will be on 6th December (a correction to the report).

7. The year ahead - SEF, School Development Plan, Governor Priorities

i. SEF

The latest version of the SEF had been circulated.

JO had created a 1 year version of the 3 year plan and had made links between the SEF and the SDP. Likewise the 'Dashboard' created by AV followed the same set of categories. Governors discussed the difference in function of these two documents. The SEF was structured around Ofsted categories, and AV delineated the planned distribution of those sections among committees so that these functions could be monitored. AV emphasised the importance of the 'Dashboard' in refocusing subcommittee activity on acquiring independent knowledge of school performance and capturing this monitoring activity in a systematic and easily accessible way. It was agreed that Governors needed to be an integral part of the process of changes to the SEF. JB was impressed by the professionalism of the 3 year plan.



ii. Governor priorities

AV had circulated a document containing Governor Priorities for the year (q.v.) Priorities 1 and 2 had been set in motion (see above) and JO felt that the SEF should be part of Priority 1. Governors discussed how to implement Priority 3 – visiting outstanding schools and how to make the best use of such a meeting. Since the Ofsted Framework changed there are now not many 'Outstanding' schools in E. Sussex. In answer to a question about similar demographics JO considered that London schools are worth seeing despite their difference to South Malling.

- **AS undertook to initiate three visits to outstanding schools, the first to take place before the New Year.**

Priority 4 (restructuring ownership of policies) was in hand by MM and IR. Ten Governor had circulated a checklist summarising what Governors need to focus on under the new Ofsted inspection framework – a document that could be used to support Priority 5 (reconfiguring Subcommittee meetings).

- **AV undertook to make alterations to the Governor Priorities document.**

Governors discussed how Link Governor Visit reports should show monitoring of the SDP objectives and how monitoring, both by Governors and the SLT needs to be logged much more systematically and the data captured centrally.

- **JO undertook to look at the SDP in this respect.**
- **Clerk to investigate how the Cloud can be used for Governors to upload / amend documents and to add document to Cloud to allow Governors to log visits / monitoring**

(IR joined the meeting at 19:48)

- **MK undertook to coordinate a log of Governor Training**
- ✓ **Governors endorsed the Governor Priorities document**

8. Trust update / comms plan

IR had arrived straight from the Trust Launch Process meeting. He reported that Church schools had scarcely figured in this part of the process, and that the main focus had been on the more significant challenges faced by Priory and Western Road due to the changes in their legal status. Southover School has created a letter to Parents, who must be informed on Monday. The Partnership Church school representatives had a brief separate meeting. Their view was that the standard leaflet is not very satisfactory from a Church schools perspective in that it focuses more on the Priory and Western Road perspective, and this was felt by Church schools to be rather disappointing. However, parents can be signposted to copies on the various partner websites.

- **IR undertook to check and customize the letter and circulate it to AV and JO for publication on Monday.**

IR summarized the ramifications of the Trust for new Governors. There is currently a doubt as to whether Western Road will go ahead with the process, and a better picture should emerge by November. Governors considered how to collect parental responses to the consultation.

It was decided that a request for responses sent to parents via book-bags would obtain the most measured response together with a signposting to the Priory School website for those who want more information about the changes to the legal status of Priory and Western Road.

- **IR undertook to produce a letter for book-bags by Thursday 10th and circulate this to Governors.**
- **The Clerk was instructed to send out to new Governors the presentation on the proposed Federation AV had made previously to FGB.**

(MM joined the meeting at 20:07)

9. Report on parent / carer survey results

EA circulated a new version of the Parent Survey report.

SW had taken action to respond to the question raised about site security. She had obtained quotations for equipment and would be referring this to the Finance Committee. AV emphasised that governors need to communicate to parents that these changes are being made as a result of their feedback.



- **AV / JO to ensure this is communicated via next termly newsletter**

JO had discussed the Survey responses with the Parents' Forum: They expressed surprise at the 'progress' issue but had suggested that a 'target card' could be issued (showing a child's current targets) and that parents would like know what was happening in current class timetables. The Forum said, about the widely varying and mutually exclusive responses to Homework, that 'you will never please everybody'.

- **JO / AS undertook to investigate the idea of 'target cards' and report back to governors**

Governors discussed how to clarify to parents the expectations of the school, what happens to completed homework and what happens if homework is not completed.

AV thanks to EA for the comprehensive work done on the survey.

10. Elect Committee Chairs and agree members

- ✓ **AV was proposed as Chair of Governors by MM and seconded by SH. There being no other nominations, AV was automatically appointed.**
- ✓ **IR was proposed as Vice-chair of Governors by AV and seconded by MK. There being no other nominations, IR was automatically appointed.**
- ✓ **EA was proposed as Chair of the Learning Committee by JH and seconded by SG. There being no other nominations, EA was automatically appointed.**
- ✓ **MM was proposed as Chair of the Finance Group by SG and seconded by EA. There being no other nominations, MM was automatically appointed.**
- ✓ **MM having raised a caveat about his work commitments, IR had agreed to give whatever support to his Chairmanship as was necessary.**
- ✓ **IR was proposed as Chair of the Well-being Group by SG and seconded by LK. There being no other nominations, IR was automatically appointed.**

11. Approve Terms of Reference changes

A new draft of the Terms of Reference had been circulated, the major change being to bring the Pay Committee Terms into line with those of the new Model Pay Policy.

- ✓ **The Terms of Reference were approved unanimously.**
- ✓ **Governors unanimously elected the Chairs of all Committees to the Pay Committee and unanimously elected MM as the Chair of the Pay Committee.**
- ✓ **Pay Committee to agree a meeting date in October**

JB elected to join the Organisation Committee and LK elected to join the Learning Committee.

12. Agree Governor link roles

In answer to a question JO said that Governor Link roles were a useful system: Staff were used to it and good relationships had been made and follow-up was ongoing. The following link governor roles were agreed:

- ✓ **SG – SEN**
- ✓ **EA – Literacy**
- ✓ **JB – Science and Pupil Premium**
- ✓ **MK – Art and Design & Technology**
- ✓ **RP – Safeguarding and Modern Foreign Languages**
- ✓ **LK – Music**
- ✓ **SH – Maths and ICT**
- ✓ **SW – Early Years**
- ✓ **JH – Humanities and PSHE**
- ✓ **AV – PE**
- ✓ **IR – RE**

EA highlighted the issue of reporting curriculum-related visits to the Learning Committee when the visit is made by a Governor who is not a member of that committee. It was agreed that all governor visits must be followed up by sending a written report to the Learning Committee. EA to co-ordinate.



13. Policies update

IR and MM are still working on the Policies Update process and hope to have completed this before the New Year.

14. Any Other Business

A rota was suggested to produce the Governor section of the newsletter – 5 volunteers were needed.

➤ **The Clerk was instructed to send out a sign-up sheet**

MK had accumulated some Training documents that needed to have a library location in the school and discussion of the subject needed scheduling. It was agreed these would be located in the school office.

➤ **IR undertook to add governor training and development to the Wellbeing Committee**

SG had attended the latest inset day and found it enjoyable and informative and felt that teachers were working well as a team.

✓ **SH was proposed as Community Governor by JO and seconded by AV. There being no other nominations, SH was automatically appointed.**

15. Meeting closed at 7.45



Appendix 1 – Action Points

- 1) AS to initiate three visits to outstanding schools.
- 2) AV to make alterations to the Governor Priorities document.
- 3) JO to look at the SDP in relation to logging of all types of visits.
- 4) MK to coordinate a log of Governor training and Development.
- 5) IR to add Governor Training and Development to Wellbeing agendas (may also need to amend Terms of Reference)
- 6) The Clerk to investigate how the Cloud can be used to log ongoing information (including visits / monitoring) and communicate to Governors
- 7) IR to check and customize the letter to parents and circulate it to AV and JO for publication on Monday.
- 8) IR to produce a letter for book-bags asking for written feedback on the Federation proposal by Thursday 10th and circulate this to Governors.
- 9) The Clerk to send out AV's Federation presentation to new Governors.
- 10) The Clerk to send out a sign-up sheet for newsletter piece
- 11) The Clerk to make amendments to Code of Practice
- 12) SW to bring site security to Finance Committee
- 13) AV / JO to ensure changes to site security are communicated to parents in Term 2 newsletter as being a direct result of their feedback from Parent Survey
- 14) JO / AS to investigate 'target cards' for children's book bags to communicate next steps of learning to parents and report back to governors
- 15) Pay Committee to agree meeting time in October