



**Minutes of Willingham Primary School
Full Governing Body Meeting
held on Tuesday 2nd May 2017 at 7.30pm**

Present

Caroline Hyde (CH) Chair
Hannah Francis (HF) Vice Chair
Vyv Francis (VF) Head teacher
Jo Aldhouse (JA)
Liz Bowen (LB)
Fiona D'Arcy (FD)
Emma Fuller (EF)
Matt Haigh (MH)
Paul Joel (PJ)
Louise Johnston (LJ)
Ian Kelly (IK)
Laura Latham (LL)
Emma Mason (EM)
Sarah Morgan (SM)
Marc Ben Nathan (MBN)
Ben Tregenna (BT)

Apologies: Apologies for absence from the meeting were presented on behalf of Jamie Efford, Vicki Hayes and Kate Van Dort.

Also in attendance: Christine Brandon (Camclerk).

The meeting was quorate.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all present.

2. Declarations of Interest

No pecuniary interests were declared.

3. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 21st March 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Membership Matters

RESOLVED

- a) that Jo Aldhouse be reappointed as Staff Governor with effect from 1st January 2017; and**
- b) that Emma Fuller be appointed as a co opted member of the Governing Body to take effect from the expiry of her office as Local Authority Governor on 16th June 2017.**

5. Budget 2017/18

Louise Johnston, Chair of the Finance & Premises Committee presented a report on the proposed school budget for 2017/18. Copies of the report and budget schedule had been circulated in advance. LJ added that costs had been tightly managed throughout the current year and that savings made from non employment expenditure had resulted in a carry forward of £5706. Mention also was made of the impact on the budget of the restructuring of the SLT and other areas of the school staff and the business plan going forward for Honeypots.

It was further reported that the proposed budget for 2017/18 had been reviewed on several occasions by the LA Finance Adviser, the Business Manager, Head and Deputy Head teachers and Finance & Premises Committee.

In terms of an update on the Honeypots Business Plan, the Governing Body noted that the staff consultation period had now closed and that the required reduction in contractual hours had been achieved without the need for any redundancy arrangement.

Regarding the capital budget, MH reported that he had, together with the Business and Site Managers produced an Asset Management Plan which had captured all known future building and ICT needs. A copy of the Plan also had been circulated to Governors and been reviewed in detail by the Finance & Premise Committee. Mindful of the proposed level of capital spending in 2017/18, MH explained that he was about to approach the WSA with a view to seeking their support for investment on ICT items.

Whereupon and on the recommendation of the Finance & Premises Committee, it was

RESOLVED

- a) that the 2017/18 School Budget be approved; and**
- b) that progress of the Asset Management Plan be regularly reviewed by the Finance & Premises Committee and reported to the Governing Body.**

6. Head teacher's Report

By reference to her report (a copy of which had been circulated in advance to Governors), VF commented specifically on the following matters –

Attendance & Absence

VF reminded the Governing Body of the current involvement of the Education Welfare Officer in the introduction of an updated '3 Letter System Attendance Policy' which was helping to tighten up procedures for monitoring absence from school. VF explained that she was now required to meet parents as part of the 'trigger' process and if improvement in attendance did not follow she was required to refer to the EWO who might issue penalty notices. The Governing Body was advised that pupils' absence was only authorised in exceptional circumstances.

Regarding pupil premium children, VF reported that pupil progress meetings were now taking place and where it was apparent that children might not achieve ARE, the school would address the perceived barriers to learning and put appropriate support in place to make an impact. The next TALB meeting would continue to focus on diminishing the difference in attainment between groups.

Although attendance had been improving, LL reported that, as a special project, she had been analysing the attendance of specific groups including pupil premium, SEN and GRT children. LL had established that attendance by Willingham School pupils was lower than in other comparable schools in Cambridgeshire with attendance percentages less than the LA Intervention Target of 95%. Measuring attainment against attendance had revealed that children were significantly less likely to achieve if their attendance at school fell below 90%. The Chair added that LA data had revealed that Willingham and Cottenham Schools were those where GRT attended in greater numbers. In terms of next steps – LL reported that she would share the research outcomes with the Chair and discuss with the EWO ways in which the school could target particular families to raise the profile and importance of regular attendance at school.

In discussion, Governors discussed opportunities to use incentives to encourage/reward children to attend school and to celebrate the attendance of those who regularly attend as well as those where attendance had improved. In answer to a question from a Governor, VF confirmed that whilst not specifically measured, there would inevitably be an impact from a teacher's sustained absence but that the school made every effort to minimise disruption and use only previously known supply teachers where possible.

Safeguarding & Behaviour

The Governing Body was updated on the current position in terms of the demands placed on the SLT to support the significant number of children requiring external intervention and LA involvement. Governors also were advised that the Discipline Committee had met on 23rd March 2017 to review a decision made by the Head teacher to permanently exclude a pupil from school. The Committee had upheld the decision of

the Head teacher. It was noted that the parents of the child concerned had since indicated their intention to seek an independent review of this decision.

The Governing Body was advised that the DfE had published new guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation in February 2017. A copy had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Governors were assured that the Head teacher, as Designated Safeguarding Lead had checked with the PSCHCE lead that the coverage expectations of schools was reflected in the school's PSHCE schemes of work. The Governing Body was assured that the full scheme of work was being completely covered.

Staffing

VF reported that two new staff policies had been introduced which would enable absence to be monitored in a more rigorous way. Reviewing the staff absence data in the report, MH observed that it was difficult to draw any conclusions without benchmarking information i.e. 2015/16 absence records and incidents of absence. JA undertook to produce this comparative information for future reports. As teacher absence and the consequent need to employ agency staff had significant financial implications for the budget, the school was covered by an Absence Insurance although this required continuous absence of 10 days before payments were triggered.

Discussion ensued on the promotion of wellbeing at work and Governors were assured that this subject regularly featured at staff meetings. VF added that she was acutely aware of the need to monitor workloads and protect staff from overload given the levels of expectation and external scrutiny now prevalent in a school environment. Mention was made of the opportunity provided to make use of free LA Employee Counselling Sessions which had been appreciated by staff and were important to retain, should the school become part of a wider MAT. **Having suggested some ideas to improve morale, the Chair suggested that the Personnel Committee be requested to look at opportunities to introduce well being initiatives for staff.**

Visits, Visitors and Themed Days

Governors were urged to give reasons for their visits to school when signing in at reception.

SIMS Parent Details for FSM Eligibility

The Governing Body was made aware of a new process for checking the eligibility of children for FSM and was assured that the School was gathering parents' details as required.

6. Academisation – Update from the Working Party

The Governing Body noted that little progress had been achieved on the Academisation Project since the last meeting as the lead Governor was waiting for Reach4 (now

rebranded as Astrea Academy Trust) to offer dates for potential visits to schools and to respond to questions raised about finance issues.

The Chair of Governors reported that she had met a representative of the Cambridge Primary Education Trust (CPET) whilst attending a Governors Workshop, and the Governing Body was of the view that it would be useful for the Chair to take up the opportunity they had offered for a meeting to discuss the matter further.

Referring to the Asset Management Plan discussed earlier in the meeting and how this might be funded if the school was part of a MAT, Governors considered that questions around asset management would be pertinent in any future meetings with potential Trusts.

7. Reports and Updates from Committees

The Chair/Vice-Chairs of Personnel and Finance & Premises Committees reviewed the business considered at each of their meetings. TALB had not met recently.

In terms of the Personnel Committee, EM updated Governors on the outcome of consultation on the two restructuring proposals relating to the SLT and Honeypots and other forthcoming staff changes. Mention was made of the successful recruitment of two new teachers, work on new policies (including one on Medical Conditions), communications and appraisals. Governors were also advised that the school would be signing up to the more comprehensive version of the Primary Package - the 'Rapid Improvement Package' which is designed to support schools in their readiness for Ofsted Inspections. This was recommended by the school's new primary advisor, Belinda Harvey. It was noted that Safer Recruitment Training was ongoing for those Governors likely to be involved in selection panels.

Regarding the Finance & Premises Committee and, in addition to budget discussions, LJ reported that the Committee had authorised payment of the second year STAT invoice following advice received from the LA. Governors were mindful of the need to be cautious, in future, of financial commitment and contract obligations.

8. Governing Body Business

i. Model School Complaints Policy (Amended Version March 2017) –

Having received an amended version of the School Complaints Policy, it was

RESOLVED

that the Model Schools Complaints Policy (as amended) be approved.

ii. RAISE Online: New Service Update – The Chair alerted Governors to a new DfE service intended to replace RAISE Online but designed to continue to provide detailed performance analysis to support school improvement. The current

Headteacher: Vyv Francis. Chair of Governors: Caroline Hyde

RAISE online service would be available until 31 July. It was thought that the new service would be easier to access and manipulate. TALB would have the opportunity to view the system and a short introductory video at its next meeting.

- iii. **Governor Training Programme** – Governors noted upcoming training opportunities as follow: Termly Workshop to Improve Governance (14th June, 6.30 -8.30pm CPDC) and Preparation for Heads Performance Review Training (20th June, 7-9pm CPDC). The Chair confirmed that she would, together with HF, VH and one other member of the Personnel Committee, undertake the latter.
- iv. **Governor Visits & Training Feedback** – The Governing Body discussed forthcoming opportunities to observe Y6 and KS1 SATS to ensure the integrity of the testing process and HF and BT agreed to participate. EM described her attendance at an event hosted by 'Blue Smile', an organisation that offered counselling and therapy services around prevention of mental illness. HF reported that she had attended 'Preparation for Ofsted' Training where the key message was 'impact'. HF undertook to check whether slides used during the training were available to distribute. The Chair added that free 'Ofsted Ready Training' was available for Governors.

In preparation for Ofsted, the Chair undertook to circulate a proposed schedule for governor visits and requested Governors to add the dates upon which they would be available to undertake a visit.

- v. **Calendar of Meetings** – It was noted that the Calendar would be available for the next Governing Body meeting and that dates would be set to better enable Governors to review current pupil progress data.
- vi. **Succession Planning** – The Chair asked Governors to consider their roles on the Governing Body going forward with a view to taking on positions as Chair/Vice Chairs of the FGB and Committees.

10. Any Other Business

VF announced that, after much consideration, she has decided that she would be leaving her post at Christmas to pursue new professional opportunities beyond headship. She explained that, in the meantime, she remained fully committed to continuing to work with the staff and governors to make the rapid improvements required so the children received the best educational provision possible. She hoped that this advance notice of her intentions would give the Governing Body ample opportunity to plan for her succession and the recruitment of a replacement Head teacher.

11. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Governing Body was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 20th June 2017 at 7.30pm.

Headteacher: Vyv Francis. Chair of Governors: Caroline Hyde

12. Outcomes and Key Messages

In closing the meeting, the Chair commended the work of the Finance & Premises Committee and their contribution towards the agreement, by the Governing Body, of a balanced school budget for 2017/18. The Chair also drew attention to the preparations already underway for the upcoming Ofsted visit and the awareness of Governors of the likely framework for this year's inspection. She also highlighted the proactive decision taken by the Governing Body to request the Personnel Committee to consider wellbeing initiatives for staff.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Hyde', with a small horizontal line at the end.

Chair

The Meeting ended at 9.14 pm.

