



COWES PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINUTES OF FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Held on Thursday 8th July 2021 at 4.00 pm via Zoom

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| Attendance | |
| Amy Duncan (AD) Chair | Nicky Coates (NC) Associate |
| John Cross (JC) Chair P&F committee | Rachael Groves (RG) |
| Margaret Goodwin (MG) | Stephanie Praetig (SP) Head Teacher |
| Mary Hillary (MH) | Sue Cox (SC) |
| Also Present: Donna Robinson (DR) Business Manager, Tina Jarvis (TJ) Clerk | |

Attachments issued before the meeting are shown on page 5 of these minutes. Pre-meeting questions are shown on page 6.

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| 1 | <p>Apologies Julie Drew (JD), Liz Jackson (LJ), Andy Mayes (AM) and Sam Pickard (SamP) had all sent apologies prior to the meeting. The apologies were accepted.</p> | |
| 2 | <p>Pecuniary & Business Interests MH reminded Governors that she works for the Isle of Wight Council HR department and there were several HR policies for review and adoption under item 10.</p> <p>JC advised Governors that, outside of his Governor role, he had performed an audit of the School fund which would be covered under item 4, Business Managers Finance Report.</p> | |
| 3 | <p>Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising The minutes of the meeting held on 24/05/2021 had been distributed prior to the meeting. The minutes were agreed and will be delivered to the Chair for signing.</p> <p><u>Action Points</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maths presentation – this action had been carried forward throughout the year as face to face meetings had not been allowed. It was agreed a session on maths would take place during 2021/22 at an appropriate time as in previous years, but not at the next meeting. Item closed. • Governor confirmations that they have read and understood the updated version of Keeping Children Safe in Education – one response remains outstanding (SamP). As SamP was not at the meeting this item will be carried forward. • Vacancy on P&F committee – there had been no volunteers for the role. MH requested more information on the role to assess if it was something she could take on. JC will contact her. • The latest SDP and updated monitoring form and visits policy had been uploaded to the Governor secure site. Item closed. • Governors with marketing experience – AM had provided a number of ideas to the School on marketing. However, the school was looking for assistance in actually undertaking the tasks. As a first step AD will speak to AM to see if the ideas can be converted to specific tasks. • Monitoring visits dates – A number of dates had been circulated since the last meeting to allow shadowing opportunities for newer Governors. Item closed. • Contributions for the report to parents – only two contributions had been received. It was suggested each Governor should make a contribution. In addition to topics | <p style="text-align: right;">SamP</p> <p style="text-align: right;">JC/MH</p> <p style="text-align: right;">AD/ AM</p> <p style="text-align: right;">All/TJ</p> |

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| | <p>previously identified, suggestions included the parent survey and staff survey. DR will send examples of previous reports to TJ for circulation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent survey – this had been issued. SP and AD thanked the Governors involved (SC, MH and JD) for their quick and helpful support. Item closed. • July FGB meeting – unfortunately covid restrictions had been extended and this meeting could not be held face to face. Item closed. | |
| <p>4</p> | <p><u>Business Manager’s Finance Report</u></p> <p>Copies of the following were available to Governors prior to the meeting; SBM report to FGB 08.07.2021, Monitoring statement May 2021, All expenditure by CFR May 2021, All income by CFR May 2021, and Budget v actuals May 2021.</p> <p>DR outlined that at end May, actuals were at 17.8% of the expenditure budget and 22.6% of the income budget, but that historically both income and expenditure was higher in April than other months.</p> <p>There was a marginal staff saving due to a staff resignation and an increase in expected income due to PE and sports funding. It is hoped the PE and sports funding can be used towards an outdoor gym.</p> <p>As a result of these changes the projected surplus at 31.03.2022 will be slightly higher, however, this does not take into account any provisions needed at the November mid term review. The school currently remains on track to repay the deficit. Pupil numbers remain a challenge, with the loss of another student, the shortfall is currently 13.</p> <p>The summer works are going ahead. A settlement has been agreed with the insurers for the mobile contents. Invoices need to be submitted. The Local Authority will perform their Health and Safety audit after the works have been completed.</p> <p>Governors asked about the possibility of running after school clubs doing sports activities such as archery which already take place at school, to generate income. DR explained that these sessions are run by external parties and carry a cost to the school, but could be explored.</p> <p>SC offered to advertise any events on the ‘I love Cowes’ website.</p> <p>The Governors thanked DR for her comprehensive reports.</p> <p>Prior to the meeting the following documents were made available to Governors; Letter to the Chair on school fund audit, Letter appendix on school fund assurance work and the CONFIDENTIAL school fund accounts for the year to 3.03.2021.</p> <p>DR thanked JC for his audit work on the school fund. The Governors ratified the school fund accounts for the year to 31.03.2021.</p> | |
| <p>5</p> | <p><u>Head Teachers Update</u></p> <p>Prior to the meeting a report on changes in September 2021 had been made available, along with the updated School Development Plan (SDP) and CONFIDENTIAL Leading Learning Professional (LLP) report.</p> <p>No questions were received on the reports. SP advised that the changes for September 2021 could vary, depending on Government advice received throughout the period.</p> <p>SP has advised parents that ‘bubbles’ would remain until the end of term. SP said that this approach had been recommended by the Local Authority. MH commented that she felt the</p> | |

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| | <p>email received by parents explained the rationale for this clearly.</p> <p>SP advised that the pupil survey is currently underway.</p> <p>SP advised Governors that the safeguarding refresher training would take place on 1st September 2021.</p> | |
| 6 | <p><u>View from the Chair</u></p> <p>AD reiterated that contributions to the report to parents were still needed.</p> <p>AD thanked Governors for the recent efforts especially in respect of undertaking the staff and parents surveys.</p> | |
| 7 | <p><u>Staff survey update</u></p> <p>Prior to the meeting a CONFIDENTIAL analysis of the 2021 responses had been circulated. SC outlined that, in summary, the survey found staff were happy to work at Cowes Primary. One minor issue had been raised about communications, which seemed to be an understanding issue.</p> <p>SC advised that approximately two thirds of staff had responded. The survey had been followed up with a couple of face to face meetings, which had been requested by staff.</p> <p>SC plans to come into school regularly in her role as Wellbeing Governor. SP suggested that termly maybe appropriate.</p> <p>Responding to a question SP confirmed that the staff survey is usually undertaken annually.</p> | |
| 8 | <p><u>Parent survey update</u></p> <p>Prior to the meeting a CONFIDENTIAL report on the 2021 Parent survey had been circulated. MH started by congratulating the whole school, as the survey results had been overwhelmingly positive, which was especially impressive given the stressful year.</p> <p>The response rate had been disappointing, however it was hoped that there would be better engagement in the future.</p> <p>There were a few areas which scored lower, especially related to the use of separate entrances and staggered times, which MH recognised was outside the school control. The next step was for MH and SC to meet with SP and AD to discuss the results in more detail.</p> <p>SC advised that it been a positive experience meeting parents when handing out the survey forms. It was good to feel engaged with the school and parents and she received positive feedback from parents.</p> <p>SP said that under normal circumstances Governors would have more opportunities to meet parents, such as sports day, but given covid restrictions this had not been possible.</p> | |
| 9 | <p><u>Policies to review and ratify</u></p> <p>The Governor allowances policy had been made available to Governors before the meeting. The policy was agreed and accepted by the Governors.</p> <p>Item 9.2, physical restraint guidance, had been removed from the agenda pending further review.</p> | |
| 10 | <p><u>Local Authority/DfE policies to be adopted.</u></p> <p>The following Local Authority policies had been circulated to Governors prior to the meeting; Flexible working, Employee code of conduct, Menopause guidance, Paternity Provisions and Special Leave policy.</p> | |

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| | Two additional policies had also been circulated and added to the agenda; Admissions policy September 2022 and Fair Access protocol. The Governors agreed to adopt all seven policies. | |
| 11 | <p><u>Monitoring Update</u></p> <p>In addition to the recent visits circulated before the meeting JC had also done an attendance visit today.</p> <p>TJ reminded Governors that there were some subjects where forms had not yet been received, and asked for these to be completed and submitted before the end of term.</p> | All |
| 12 | <p><u>SDP update</u></p> <p>The updated SDP had been made available prior to the meeting. AD had also asked Governors to consider any further areas for inclusion, specifically around developing as a Governing body.</p> <p>Governors asked if diversity should be included in the SDP or whether this was covered elsewhere in school. SP advised that the SDP does not cover every area to be monitored. SP has overall responsibility for equality and diversity and is happy to share information on this topic with Governors.</p> <p>It was agreed that AD and MG would meet to discuss the working group findings from the 2020/21 Governor audit and consider any areas for inclusion in the SDP.</p> | AD/ MG |
| 13 | <p><u>Governor Training Update</u></p> <p>MH had attended the first session of the new Governor training run by the Local Authority. The training was considered very useful, especially in clarifying the role of a school Governor.</p> <p>MG had attended a wellbeing webinar entitled 'wellbeing beyond school gates'. MG was pleased that the school appeared to be covering all the areas explored by the webinar.</p> <p>SC had attended a pupil wellbeing webinar. The webinar had provided a number of statistics on mental health issues, such as loneliness. Whilst not all the information was relevant to primary aged pupils, the webinar had been both interesting and informative.</p> | |
| 14 | <p><u>Impact</u></p> <p>The Governors agreed on the following impact achieved at this meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run through of key findings for both the staff and parent surveys, and pleasing to see results are positive. • Especially good to note staff are happy to work at school. • The meeting has highlighted that Governors are pitching in to help out the school (such as running surveys) and are feeling part of the school. • Received good financial update and aware of the new PE and sports funding. | |
| 15 | <p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>SP advised that during covid there has been an increase in child protection concerns. The team at school was liaising with relevant agencies.</p> <p>Previously safeguarding had been a separate agenda item, with a related question for Governors at each meeting. It was agreed to reinstate this as a specific agenda item.</p> <p>SP advised that there was now a new Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for the Isle of Wight, and the role was no longer Island based.</p> | TJ |
| | <p><u>Date of next meeting</u></p> <p>The next meeting had been scheduled for Monday 20th September 2021 at 4pm. This will be held in school if covid regulations allow, with refreshments from 3.30pm to include school staff.</p> | |
| Meeting Ended 5.20pm | | |

Action Points

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| 191120/3 | SamP to confirm he has read and understood the updated version of Keeping Children Safe In Education. Confirmation can be via email or Governor Hub but either way to notify TJ. | SamP | ASAP |
| 240521/4 | Contributions for the Governors report to parents to be sent to AD as soon as possible. Previous examples will be circulated. | All | ASAP |
| 080721/1 | JC to contact MH to provide information on the role of the P&F committee. | JC/MH | By September FGB |
| 080721/2 | AD will speak to AM to see if the marketing ideas he submitted can be converted to specific marketing tasks. | AD/AM | By September FGB |
| 080721/3 | 2021/22 monitoring visit forms to be completed and submitted to TJ before the end of term. | All | By 23 July 2021 |
| 080721/4 | AD and MG to meet to discuss the working group findings from the 2020/21 Governor skills audit, and consider any areas for inclusion in the SDP. | AD/MG | By September FGB |
| 080721/5 | Safeguarding to be included as a separate agenda item | TJ | September FGB |

Attachments for FGB 08/07/2021

The following documents were available prior to the meeting;

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| 1. | 3.0 Previous minutes and actions 24.05.2021 (Draft) |
| 2. | 4.0 (Updated) SBM report to FGB 8 th July 2021 |
| 3. | 4.0a Monitoring Statement May 2021 |
| 4. | 4.0b All expenditure by CFR May 2021 |
| 5. | 4.0c All Income by CFR May 2021 |
| 6. | 4.0d Budget v Actuals May 2021 |
| 7. | 4.0e Letter to Chair re school fund audit |
| 8. | 4.0f Letter Appendix A – School Fund Assurance Work |
| 9. | 4.0g CONFIDENTIAL School Fund Accounts – year to 31 March 2021 |
| 10. | 5.0 HT Report re changes Sept 2021 - FGB July 2021 |
| 11. | 5.0a CONFIDENTIAL Final LLP visit report June 2021 |
| 12. | 5.0b SDP Autumn 2021-22 |
| 13. | 7.0 CONFIDENTIAL Staff survey analysis 2021 |
| 14. | 8.0 CONFIDENTIAL Parents Survey 2021 results – Report to FGB |
| 15. | 9.1 Governors Allowances Policy |
| 16. | 10.1 (Updated) Flexible working policy |
| 17. | 10.2 Employee code of conduct |
| 18. | 10.3 Menopause guidance |
| 19. | 10.4 Paternity provisions |
| 20. | 10.5 (Updated) Special Leave policy |
| 21. | 10.6 Admissions policy September 2022 Primary intake |
| 22. | 10.7 Fair Access protocol |
| 23. | 11.1 Governor monitoring forms since last meeting |

Pre-meeting questions FGB 08/07/2021

| Agenda item | Question | Response | Responder |
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| 4.0 SBM report | Towards the end of page 2, I think the figure of "21,162" is wrong. I think it should read "6,554" (or left blank?). | Agreed – amended | DR |
| 4.0 SBM report | In the table on page 3, I think that the -248 shown is really a projected cumulative surplus position. | Agreed – amended | DR |
| 4.0 SBM report | On page 5, when referencing the School Fund, I think it should say "Bank balance" rather than "balance". | Agreed – amended | DR |
| 4.0 SBM report | On page 5, charitable donations are not really part of the expenditure as the School Fund was never entitled to the money collected on behalf of the various national charities. | Agreed – amended | DR |
| 4.0 SBM report | The School bank balance was about £102k at 31 May 2021 compared to an adjusted balance of £38k at the same date. The difference between these two figures is therefore about £64k. There has always been a difference but it appears to be growing. Please could you explain why the increase has come about? | This is the total of last years surplus and this years projected surplus which is required to repay the deficit in March 2022 of £66,000 | DR |
| General | If we now view the fence as safeguarding issue, then it would be helpful to get an update on progress towards resolving this. | <p>Following a visit to the site by Property Services, they have advised that the fencing is NOT a safeguarding issue as the boundaries around the playground/school site to protect the children are all of the appropriate height.</p> <p>The fencing around the car park, whilst in a poor state of repair, does not therefore come under this remit. Apparently a number of schools have been advised of the same thing and Property Services will be liaising with the Insurance team to clarify this point.</p> <p>We did take the opportunity to point out that due to our budget, we are not in a position to replace the fencing, even though it does really need doing. Property services, whilst not making any promises, will bear this in mind and will endeavour to source some funding for a replacement.</p> | DR |

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| 5.0 SDP | In the School Development Plan ("SDP"), there are references to October 2020 on pages 4 and 5, and to Autumn 2020 on page 6. I think these need to be updated. | Relevant corrections will be made. | SP |
| 9.2 Physical Restraint Guidance | Following some clarification questions on the physical restraint guidance it has been decided to withdraw this document from the July FGB meeting in order it can be further reviewed. | | SP |

Signature _____ Position _____

Name _____ Date _____