

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body of Sutton-on-the-Forest CE VC Primary School on Wednesday 5 December 2018 at 6.00 pm

Present: Prof H Hall (Chair), Mr C Henderson, Mrs J Fineran, Mrs V Gale, Mrs H Pye (Headteacher), Mrs H Morris, Mr G Redfern, Mrs A Williams

In attendance: Mrs A Instone, Clerk

Core functions of a Governing Body:

- a) ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction***
- b) holding executive leaders to account for the educational performance of the organisation and its pupils, and the performance management of staff***
- c) overseeing the financial performance of the organisation and making sure its money is well spent***

Minute no

Gov 1 Prayer

The meeting opened with the School Prayer.

Gov 2 Apologies for absence, consents and declarations of interest and reminders regarding confidentiality and gifts and hospitality

There were no apologies for absence. Apologies for lateness had been received from Mrs Gale.

The Headteacher declared that her Brother-in-law had re-designed the logo on the back of the prospectus at a cost of £20. There were no other declarations of interest and no gifts or hospitality had been received.

Those present were reminded of the need to maintain confidentiality at all times.

Gov 3 Approve minutes for signature of the meeting dated 14 November 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2018 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

Gov 4 Matters arising from the minutes and from the Action Plan

Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Action Plan

Item 4 – the Chair circulated, for comment, the proposed text for an article, seeking potential new Governors, to be submitted to the Parish Magazine.

Mrs Williams offered to mention the Governor vacancies as part of one of the regular submissions to the Easingwold Advertiser and this was agreed

Mrs Gale joined the meeting at 6.10 pm

Item 7 – to be dealt with later in the meeting

Item 8 – completed, subject to agreement by the staff

Item 9 – completed, albeit with no successful outcome

Mrs Craig joined the meeting at 6.12 pm

Item 10 – the Chair stated that he had been reviewing the external contracts and service level agreements and that Mrs Morris and Mr Henderson would consider them independently, after which any queries would be raised with the Headteacher and School Administrator. It was agreed that the item would again be included on the agenda for the next meeting

Items 12 and 15 – completed

It was agreed that all members of the Governing Body would e-mail to Mrs Williams, on a single sheet of A4 paper, a bullet point report from any course(s) they had attended.

Item 17 – it was agreed that the Governor Allowances Policy would be amended, in light of the additional information which had been sourced, and brought back to the next meeting for approval. It was noted that all members of staff should have business cover as part of their car insurance policy

Item 18 – completed

Item 19 – Mrs Craig volunteered to monitor the Church distinctiveness elements of the school. The Headteacher undertook to explore, via a Headteacher colleague in a neighbouring authority, the expectations of the Governor monitoring role and the Chair stated that he would seek best practice advice from the Governor Support Unit at North Yorkshire County Council, following which they would provide further guidance. It was agreed that the matter would be considered as a specific item at the next meeting. **Mr Redfern questioned** any role which he could play which was not education-centred and the Headteacher responded that a walk around of the site once per term and a review of the Accident Book to identify any trends would be helpful. The Chair suggested that the Terms of Reference for Premises contained in the Budget Management Policy would help to provide some guidance. The Headteacher emphasised that members of the Governing Body were welcome to visit the school at any time

Item 23 – the Chair agreed to e-mail the Governor attendance sheet to the Clerk for completion.

Gov 5 Chair's opening remarks

The Chair stated that:

- a) he had contacted a potential new Governor and he read out his response
- b) he had written the text for an article for the Parish Newsletter
- c) he had met with Mr Redfern to conduct a Governor induction, discussed his Link Governor role and drawn together an electronic file of information for him to provide guidance on the Governor role
- d) the school had been awarded £5,000 by the Trustees of Miss Mitchell's estate and it was noted that the Headteacher was developing a creative plan for the use of the funds to support the church mission for five to eleven year olds in Sutton and Huby. The Headteacher added that she would be meeting with the Headteacher from Huby CE Primary School in order to form church focussed collaborative links between the two schools
- e) he had amended the Budget Management Policy template and discussed the same with Mr Henderson
- f) he had reviewed all of the contracts and service level agreements and undertook to e-mail them to Mr Henderson in order that, given his expertise in financial management, he, too, could consider them
- g) over the previous two weeks, he had had some interesting conversations with, Ms J Bentley, the Grounds Monitoring Officer in respect of the Ashfield Leisure contract. He added that she had recommended that the contractor(s) should not be allowed onto the site until the necessary documentation and licenses could be produced, along with a signed contract. He read out extracts from the notes which she had provided. Some discussion took place and Mrs Morris agreed to liaise with the School Administrator over the next steps. The Chair pointed out the importance of members of the Governing Body monitoring and reviewing the external contracts and service level agreements in order to ensure value for money
- h) he had also held some interesting conversations with a number of employees within the Maintenance Department at North Yorkshire County Council in respect of the MASS Scheme. He added that, as a result of his enquiries, Mr R Day, the Maintenance Surveyor, would be visiting the school on 6 December 2018. Mr Redfern stated his intention to attend that meeting. Some discussion relating to the cost of the MASS contract, and the extent of the work covered by it, took place
- i) the pupils had all had fun decorating the Christmas tree the previous day
- j) he had been holding weekly meetings with the Headteacher

- k) Ms O Seymour, from the York Diocese, had volunteered to attend a meeting of the Governing Body in order to discuss SIAMS. It was agreed that she would be invited to the next meeting on 23 January 2019
- l) he would be attending the pantomime.

Gov 6 Headteacher updates

The Headteacher stated that:

- a) there were two new pupils in Year 6
- b) eight pupils were expected to join Reception in September 2019, although that figure could increase prior to the deadline at the end of January 2019. **The Chair questioned** whether or not further marketing was required and Mrs Morris responded that the links with the pre-school were building and added that the Teddy Bears Picnic had been awesome. It was noted that prospectuses would be placed in Show Houses on housing developments, such as those in Easingwold, and Mrs Morris commented that previous experience had not shown any demonstrable benefits from so doing but that word of mouth was the most effective way. The Headteacher stated that she was working with the Headteacher from South Kilvington Primary School, where the number on roll had risen dramatically since her appointment. **Mr Redfern questioned** the response from Puddleducks Children's Nursery and the Headteacher informed that she had e-mailed them some time ago and intended to contact them again in the New Year with a view to forming some links
- c) the number on roll was seventy three
- d) growth of numbers was required in Reception and Years 1 and 2
- e) it was incredibly busy in school
- f) the new School Business Manager would be visiting the school on Wednesday 12 December 2018
- g) supply cover was being sought in order to relieve her workload.

Gov 7 Order of business

The order of business was agreed as presented.

Gov 8 Budget Monitoring Report

It was noted that the Budget Monitoring Reports were the most up-to-date available, despite being dated October 2018.

Disappointment was expressed at the lack of context or commentary to accompany the budget and the Chair stated that the Service Level Agreement for the new School Business Manager would be applied to ensure that he/she attended three meetings of the Governing Body per annum in order to provide the detailed explanation of the budget which members of the Governing Body required.

Gov 9 Updated budget and forecast

The Headteacher stated that:

- a) the deficit situation had improved and, by the end of the next financial year, she anticipated that the budget would show a positive balance once more
- b) she had given notice to Schools ICT with regard to hardware and the services of the IT Technician in favour of the Vital Technology Group.

Questions relating to the budget were invited.

Mrs Fineran questioned the income in respect of sports funding where there were two separate entries and it was suggested that one of them related to the costs of employing Mr Warriner.

Mr Redfern sought clarification of the figure of £2,000 for Other Occupation Costs and the Headteacher explained that that related to a number of miscellaneous items, including hygiene services, refuse collection and PAT testing.

Gov 10 Approval of revised budget

The revised budget was approved.

Gov 11 Financial benchmarking and school costs

In terms of the comparative data, the Headteacher explained the reasons for the high costs for HLTA staff.

A brief discussion took place with regard to the high energy costs shown on the comparative statistics and Mr Henderson referred to earlier discussions connected with the possibility of joining the village oil scheme. Mr Redfern stated that he felt that it would be worth carrying out a comparison with the Huby and Sutton oil syndicate and the Chair commented that the matter may be worth further investigation as part of the SLA. Mr Redfern drew attention to the allocation, in the budget, of £10,000 for electricity and **questioned** whether or not the school operated on the 'Economy 7' tariff. The Headteacher stated that, as far as she was aware, that was the case.

Mrs Gale challenged the Headteacher with regard to the changes which had helped to reduce the deficit and she responded that they had included a reduction in staffing costs and in the use of supply teachers, not overspending on learning resources, a review of the staff absence scheme, a refund from maternity costs and some infant school meal funding.

Gov 12 Health and Safety report

There were no issues to report.

Gov 13 Premises report

Mr Redfern distributed copies of plans which he had drawn up for improvements to the courtyard area and welcomed any suggestions.

Mrs Fineran referred to the proposal to place a cover on top of the stage area and **questioned** whether or not the structure was sound in the long term. Mr Redfern responded that, because the posts were tanalised, it would be adequate.

The issue of funding for any improvements was raised and the Headteacher stated that FOSS was willing to contribute £1,000 but that funding from elsewhere would be required in order that the project could go ahead.

Mr Redfern was thanked for his work to date.

Gov 14 Approval of:

a) Budget Management Policy

The Chair spoke to the document and explained that it had been amended from a North Yorkshire County Council template in order to make it appropriate for a 'no-Committee' structure.

The Policy was approved without comment

b) Finance Policy and Procedure, including long term planning and resourcing

This matter had already been dealt with as part of Minute Gov 14a) above

c) PAN

The PAN was approved at thirteen.

Gov 15 Pupil premium

The Headteacher informed that there were two 'Ever Six' pupils in school, both of whom were on target. She added that one of the new starters was both a pupil premium and a LAC pupil.

Gov 16 Sports funding

The Headteacher stated that:

- a) the invoice for the improvements to the playground was awaited
- b) she intended to employ a sports coach for one day per week, in the following year, to provide cpd for the staff
- c) sports funding was guaranteed to 2020
- d) she felt that the pupils in Year 6 were not receiving a quality experience at East Barnby and that, the following year, she planned to take them on a residential trip to Edinburgh
- e) in Year 5, the pupils would experience a residential trip at Robinwood .

Gov 17 Feedback from Governor visits

Mrs Williams stated that the Cake Stall had raised £90.

It was reported that the Remembrance Service had been lovely.

Gov 18 Feedback from Governor training

Mrs Craig reported that she had undertaken an interesting two hour SIAMS training course.

The Clerk informed that cluster New Governor training was being organised; it was noted that the date was not yet known.

Gov 19 Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

Gov 20 Any other business previously notified to the Clerk

There was no other business.

Gov 21 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed as 23 January 2019 at 6.00 pm.

It was agreed that items for the next agenda would include approval of the Child Protection, Whistleblowing and Lock Down Policies. The Headteacher undertook to ascertain whether or not the records for all members of the Governing Body were up-to-date in terms of safeguarding and Prevent on-line training.

Those present were thanked for their attendance and the meeting closed at 8.15 pm. c