

Shebbear Community School
 Agreed Minutes from the Part One Governing Body Annual General Virtual Meeting (Zoom)
 21st September 2020 at 7.00 p.m.

1/2020 Welcome; receive and sanction apologies for absence:

Mr N Alford (Head Teacher), Mr A Goode, Mr J Quance, Mr J Richards, Mrs A Bernstone, Mrs G Cooper, Mrs C Coward (Chair), Miss R Curtis, *Miss N Derwin, Mrs P Kirby, Mrs L Marshall and Mrs S Hawker (clerk).

The meeting was quorate. No apologies were received; all governors were present.

*Came and went throughout the meeting due to poor signal quality.

2/2020 Declarations of Pecuniary Interest:

There were no new declarations to declare; as this was a virtual meeting and governors were unable to physically do the annual update and signing of paper forms the clerk asked if they could all complete this online via the GovernorHub site by the end of the week. Also to make the declaration - via GovernorHub - that they have read the Keeping Children Safe in Education Part One document (updated September 2020).

MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

3/2020 Head Teacher's report:

Mr Alford reported that all children had returned to school and it almost felt 'normal'. There had been a few initial teething problems but these had been quickly ironed out. The children have settled in well and are learning and spending time with their friends again within their 'bubbles', albeit that outside school hours the 'bubbles' are mixing, and have done a great job in adjusting to the new normal.

Already we have identified that lunchtimes are the most challenging to arrange, despite employing an additional MTA. Last week we had a couple of potential cases that fortunately tested negative, and one member of staff was on sick leave and this gave us an insight into possible difficult times ahead. Staff are very flexible and we are fortunate that part time staff members are willing to step in and help out when needed. Another identified concern is that all teachers have school aged children which potentially could cause us staffing problems further into the year. However, our insurance does cover us.

He thanked Mr Quance for removing all the excavated soil from the Teddy Class outside area extension, which is looking great, and agreed that Chris Andrew and Taffy Davies should also be thanked for their support with the project. The Reading Garden looks lovely too, and Mrs Marshall has agreed to sort out the waterproofing of the wood during the October half term.

ACTION: WRITE TO CHRIS ANDREW AND TAFFY DAVIES. (SH/NA)

Q: Looking at the Covid Risk Assessment there is an emphasis on home learning - is that in anticipation of another school closure? CC

Mr Alford explained that it is a DfE requirement for all schools to have this in place by October 2020.

He advised that the current attendance is 98.6% compared to the same time last year of 96.9%; the National figure is currently 88%.

Q: How are the new Reception children settling in? CC

Mr Alford responded that they are settled in very well and are a lovely group. This year is going to be challenging for them having missed so much of Pre-School in the last few months, however early signs are very encouraging. The school was able to run some induction sessions at the beginning and end of the summer holidays which were well received. **Mrs Bernstone commented that her son loves school.**

Mr Alford advised that OfSTED have resumed inspections, however these are not full inspections but 'supportive visits'. We are due to be visited, or at least we would in 'normal times', but it is impossible to know if this is still likely to happen within their usual cycle of visits or if they are employing other criteria to determine where they should be going.

He reiterated that there is an emphasis on safety, but we must focus on learning as well. In anticipation of the 'Catch-Up' funding that we will receive, additional staff hours have been allocated to allow for individual and group work on identified areas of learning need. He observed that the children's attitude to learning thus far is really positive which is good. We have a new after school Dance club started which is full, as well as the Football club, with the majority of children remaining after school on Fridays to attend these.

He signposted governors to the links in his report (available on Governorhub) regarding home learning, particularly the Oak National Academy, acknowledging that our biggest challenge would be if we had some children at school and some children at home as this would mean doubling of teaching workload.

He is also mindful of how Covid-related purchases and warned that costs may impact on our budget, particularly if we have to cover staff hours. We have been able to claim for some expenditure incurred last term, however it is unlikely that this will be an ongoing solution.

Q: How long will the new formula funding promises last? CC

Mr Alford responded that it is hard to say, but wouldn't be surprised if there were cuts as the pandemic has cost the country a huge amount of money.

Safeguarding - Mrs Bernstone has made a safeguarding monitoring visit already, see below.

4/2020 Governors' Reports:

Mrs Bernstone has completed a safeguarding monitoring visit, report available on GovernorHub. She observed that she is satisfied that everything is in place and agreed with Mr Alford that the biggest concerns are being mindful that people have been home for a long time and, secondly, that there could have been changes in family circumstances.

5/2020 Clerk's Report:

Mrs Hawker confirmed that she is attending Clerk's Update training later this week and will report back any items of interest at the next meeting. She encouraged governors to consider attending any of the courses that Devon Governor Services currently have available and to let her know if she needs to book any places.

She drew governors' attention to the Autumn Checklist which was circulated and is also available on GovernorHub.

She confirmed that there have been no GDPR breaches since the last meeting. Our current provider has finally made contact and said that due to administrative errors and staffing changes they have lost half of our report. The clerk has expressed our disappointment at the lack of service they have provided during Lockdown and has actively started to search for alternative service providers.

6/2020 Financial Reports:

Pupil Premium:

Mr Alford confirmed that he is still working on this document and that it would be ready to be tabled at the next meeting.

Sport Report:

Mrs Evans has completed this for 2019/20 and it is now ready to go on our website in order to comply with our statutory requirements. Governors were happy with the report.

Catering:

Mrs Hawker explained the difficulty in which we currently find ourselves: Devon Norse furloughed staff but are now not sure that they were entitled to do this due to schools receiving additional income for school meals through the Universal Infant Free School Meals grant. She confirmed that she has asked Devon Finance Services for up to date advice as to whether schools should be paying invoices received, all of ours have been paid up to and including June.

STRATEGIC ITEMS

7/2020 Approval of Committee Structure and terms of reference and membership:

Mrs Coward advised governors that she had received a letter of resignation from Mr Franklin during the summer holidays. He is very willing for us to contact him should anything practical need doing. This leaves us with a vacancy to fill. Mrs Coward volunteered to move from being a Parent governor (as her child has now left the school) to a Co-Opted governor if we felt that it would be easier to recruit a governor to fill a parent governor vacancy. Mr Goode proposed that we do this, seconded by Mr Quance and agreed by all. Clerk to advertise the parent governor vacancy.

ACTION: CLERK TO ADVERTISE THE PARENT GOVERNOR VACANCY WITH A VIEW TO FILLING THE POSITION BEFORE THE NEXT FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING. (SH)

a) Meeting structure, Committee Membership and Terms of Reference for 2020/21:

Suggested membership and terms of reference for each committee had been circulated beforehand and after some discussion it was agreed that for 2020/21 the governing body would continue to operate a full governing body/one committee (Resources) structure with half termly full Governing Body meetings and termly Resources meetings. As for this year, the meetings will be held on Mondays and the Head Teacher's report taken to the second meeting of each term. Statutory committees would also need to be set up. The following was agreed:

i) Resources:

Mr N Alford, Mr A Goode, Mr J Quance, Mr J Richards, Mrs A Bernstone, Mrs G Cooper and Mrs C Coward with Mrs Hawker to clerk.

ii) First Committee & Complaints:

Mr A Goode, Mr J Quance, Mr J Richards, Mrs A Bernstone, Mrs G Cooper with Mrs Hawker to clerk.

iii) Second Committee & Appeals:

Mrs P Kirby, Mrs L Marshall plus one with Mrs Hawker to clerk.

iv) Pay Committee:

The same as the Resources Committee, with the exception of Mr J Quance as he is married to a member of school staff. Care has been taken to ensure that those governors do not sit on the Appeals Committee also, although duplication on other committees is unavoidable in a school of our size.

Terms of reference were circulated prior to the meeting for all committees, plus individual lead governor appointments. Mrs Coward proposed that the governing body adopt the above committee structure and terms of reference, as circulated, seconded by Mr Goode and agreed by all.

b) Governor Appointments:

i) SEND Governor:

Mr A Goode kindly agreed to act as the SEND governor for an interim period until the governing body is up to full membership again.

ii) Child Protection Governor:

Mrs Bernstone kindly agreed to continue as Safeguarding and Child Protection governor.

iii) H&S Governors:

Mrs P Kirby and Mr Goode kindly agreed to continue as the Co-Health and Safety and Fire Safety governors.

iv) Pupil Premium and Children in Care:

Mrs Coward agreed to continue as the Pupil Premium governor and Children in Care governor.

v) Early Years:

Mrs Coward also agreed to continue as the Early Years governor.

vi) Sex and Relationships:

Miss Derwin agreed to continue as the Sex and Relationships governor.

vii) Head Teacher Performance Management (HTPM) governors:

At the last meeting Mrs Coward, Mrs Marshall and Mr Goode were appointed as HTPM governors. Mrs Coward suggested that a fourth governor be appointed too, as there are times when it is hard during the day for enough governors to be available to attend the meetings, and Mr Quance kindly agreed. The date for the HTPM is Thursday 8th October 2020.

Mrs Kirby proposed the above governor appointments be agreed, seconded by Miss Curtis and agreed by all.

c) Annual Cycle of Business:

The document is available on GovernorHub and contents were noted and agreed - these reflect our new operational structure ensuring the same business will be discussed. All were happy with this.

8/2020 Approval of Minutes from the Previous Meeting(s):

The Part One minutes of the previous meeting held on the 15th July 2020 were agreed by governors present and signed as correct by the chairman. There were no Part Two minutes.

9/2020 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting(s):

Data Protection Officer: This was discussed earlier in the meeting, see Clerk's Report above.

Purchase of Chromebooks: Mr Quance asked if all the money donated from Shebbear and Buckland Filleigh Parish Councils had been spent on Chromebooks, the clerk confirmed that it had.

Mr Alford advised that they are already being used and have been a fantastic addition to our ICT resources. We are hoping to order a couple more as Cllr Hurley has also kindly given the SSSG a grant donation towards them (£500). Staff training has been arranged for an after school session to ensure that we get the most out of them.

Relationships and Sex Education Policy: Mr Alford confirmed that this has been circulated to all parents and, as yet, there have been no comments received.

Head Teacher's Performance Management: Mrs Coward and Mr Alford have asked Neil Swait to do this as Helen Mellody, whilst willing to do it again, advised that we may prefer to have someone who is currently involved/working in education. The meeting has been arranged for the 8th October 2020.

10/2020 Policy Adoption/Review:

Safeguarding Policy:

This is the revised model policy from Babcock and reflects the changes in the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 document - Mr Alford has identified all changes are in green font for easy identification. Mrs Kirby proposed this policy be adopted and published on the school website, seconded by Mrs Cooper and agreed by all.

Governors' Code of Conduct:

This is the most up to date NGA policy. Mrs Kirby proposed that this policy be adopted, seconded by Mrs Cooper and agreed by all.

ACTION: SAFEGUARDING POLICY TO BE PUBLISHED ON THE SCHOOL WEBSITE. (SH/NA)

11/2020 Items Brought Forward by the Chairman:

OfSTED Preparation:

This was covered earlier in the meeting - Head Teacher Report above - and the format will be different. The clerk advised that Q card questions are on GovernorHub, covering likely questions that governors could be asked during a visit.

School Improvement Plan:

Mr Alford advised that this is similar to last year's, however some sections have been removed as they have been completed and the section on home learning has changed. Mrs Evans and Mrs Fuller are working on English and Maths action plans respectively.

Q: What are the first impressions of the children - are they behind or better? JQ

Mr Alford said that some have returned better, progress which he attributes to receiving more attention as parents have had more time during lockdown. Also, for some children, he thinks that parents have realised the children are weaker than they knew which has given the incentive to work with them more.

Mrs Coward commented that one parent had said to her that until lockdown she didn't realise how much her child was struggling - she hadn't believed what the teacher had been telling her.

Mr Alford continued that some children have clearly got gaps in their knowledge but don't appear to have fallen further behind to any significant extent. While this is encouraging, the school will monitor this carefully and assessments are due for the end of October.

The school improvement plan is on GovernorHub with areas of governor responsibility remaining the same as last year.

School Grounds:

As already discussed, work on the Reading Garden and Teddy Class outside area has now been completed. The only query is that the steps are very steep and not little legs friendly. The clerk has contacted Dave Hockin who will meet with her to discuss how this can be rectified.

Mr Goode has agreed to prepare the muddy areas and sow some grass seeds and whilst visiting he completed a grounds inspection. Mr Goode reported that he is happy to also do some serious pruning in the 'quadrangle' area behind the school kitchen and hall. He also advised that we have tree which is showing signs of ash die back and the huge fir tree by the school kitchen which has electrical cables running through it is dying and could possibly be removed too. He also mentioned the fencing between the Playing Field and the pond area needs repairing/replacing, and the pond itself could also do with some attention. Mr Alford agreed that he would like to do something with the pond so that the area could be accessed and used more freely.

The clerk advised that the tree inspection organised by Devon County was imminent and that these trees may feature on that report.

ACTION: MR GOODE TO GRASS SEED THE MUDDY AREAS AND PRUNE AS ABOVE. (AG)

ACTION: CLERK TO CONTACT FENCING CONTRACTOR FOR A QUOTE TO REPLACE THE FENCE AS ABOVE. (SH)

ACTION: CLERK TO CONTACT TREE SURGEON TO LOOK AT THE TREES INDICATED ABOVE. (SH)

12/2020 Correspondence:

Letter received Mr Franklin, as discussed above.

Devon Governor Services - Checklist - sent to all governors and available on GovernorHub.

GOVERNANCE

13/2020 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair:

In line with our agreed procedure, the clerk invited nominations for the position of chairman.

Mrs C Coward self-nominated; there were no other nominations. Mrs Cooper proposed that Mrs Coward be elected as chairman. This was seconded by Mrs Kirby and agreed by all. Mrs Coward resumed the chair.

In line with our agreed procedure, the clerk invited nominations for the position of vice-chairman.

Mrs Kirby self-nominated; there were no other nominations. Mrs Bernstone proposed that Mrs Kirby be elected as vice-chairman. This was seconded by Mr Quance and agreed by all.

14/2020 Impact from this meeting:

We have ensured that safeguarding measures are in place to facilitate a safe return to school for all members of our school community.

15/2020 Dates and Times of Next Meetings:

Clerk to upload the updated document onto GovernorHub. The next dates are as follows:

Full Governing Body: Monday 19th November at 7.00 p.m. - not yet decided if virtual or face to face.

Resources Committee: Monday 19th October at 7.00 p.m. - not yet decided if virtual or face to face.

Pay Committee: Monday 19th October at 6.30 p.m. - not yet decided if virtual or face to face.

There were no Part Two items for this meeting; the Chairman thanked governors for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.35 p.m.