

LINDFIELD PRIMARY ACADEMY

Minutes of the Local Governing Body Meeting

Held at the Academy on Monday, 22nd May 2017 at 7:00 pm

Governors Present: Mr Mike Brand (Chair), Mrs Alice Allen, Mr Nicolas Heath, Mrs Val Pinfield, Mr Jonathan Roderick, Mr James Smyth, Mr William (Bill) Steele, Mr Marcus Still, Mrs Claire Stone and Mrs Claire Williams

Officers Present: Mrs Vanessa Smith (Vice Principal)

In attendance: Mrs Kathy Jerbi (Clerk) and Mrs Claire Cleverton (Governor Designate)

Apologies: Miss Rachel Anscombe

Mr Brand opened the meeting by formally welcoming new governor Mrs Val Pinfield and Governor Designate Mrs Claire Cleverton.

1 **APOLOGIES for ABSENCE**

Apologies received as above – reasons accepted by the Local Governing Body (LGB).

2 **DECLARATION of INTERESTS by GOVERNORS in ANY ITEM on AGENDA**

None.

3 **MINUTES of PREVIOUS MEETING – 22nd March 2017**

Were agreed as being a true record by the LGB & signed by the Chair.

4 **MATTERS ARISING from PREVIOUS MEETING not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

Action 1: Send Sex Ed Policy to Trust governance team & publish on academy website. Completed.

Action 2: Contact Mrs Pinfield & Mrs Cleverton to invite them to next meetings. Completed.

Action 3: Write to parents informing them of the decision to instigate referrals to WSCC for FPN's. Completed.

Action 4: Replace governance statement 2014-15 with revised governance statement 2016-17 on the academy website. Completed.

5 **URGENT MATTERS NOT ON AGENDA.** None

6 **BUDGET UPDATE**

Mr Still reported that the 2016-17 budget is expected to break even, given no unexpected expenditures before year end.

The deadline to submit the budget proposal for 2017-18 to the Trust for approval is 9th June 2017. The current draft reaches a break even balance. There will be concern if we have any large unexpected costs, e.g. maternity leave. Mr Still reminded governors that the deadline for teachers to resign is 31st May.

Governors asked where we stand in relation to the school fund. Mr Still replied that we currently have £32,000 in reserve.

Mr Steele, Link Governor for Finance, expressed concern that he has not been involved with preparation of the 2017-18 budget proposal. He has suggested meeting with Mrs Oliver, (SBM), and/or Trust finance representatives, but has not been contacted. He has no concern over Mrs Oliver's capability, but feels that if the LGB should have any responsibility for the budget, this is not being exercised. He has a lot of questions regarding the budget proposal. The LGB is being informed, but not involved. If Ofsted were to ask questions of him, he would not be able to answer. Mrs Stone feels the same about her role as Link Governor for Safeguarding. Discussion should take place as to how involved link governors are expected to be.

7 **UoB ACADEMIES TRUST MATTERS**

Risk Management. The Risk Management Group will meet on 26th May to update the risk register. There has been no input from the Trust. Governors observed that not all areas on the risk register can expect to see improvement; e.g. finance will often have contributing factors out of our control, so should remain high risk.

8 **LOCALITY MATTERS**

- The Academy continues involvement with SALT locality literacy, maths & NQT groups.
- Work commenced this week on the long sought after bowling green footpath. The Academy received no notification that this work was due to be carried out, however, our whole community will benefit.

9 **CHAIR'S ACTIONS on BEHALF of the LOCAL GOVERNING BODY, since last meeting**

- Welcoming & liaising with the two new governors
- met with Mr Steele & Mrs Stone reviewing the draft strategy plan (& subsequently proof-read same)
- held talks with Blackthorns' Chair about their own vision moving forwards
- many emails relating to both the Academy & the Trust
- approval of the recruitment of two replacement TA's, the advertisement for which is now live. Shortlisting is to be carried out on 16th June; interviewing on 23rd June. Governor representatives for the interview panel were requested – Mrs Pinfield & Mr Steele both volunteered.

10 **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT** (*previously circulated*)

Mr Still invited questions from governors:

Q. who is our 'new sponsor' for the NQT's? (*page 3*)

A. the Southern Collaborative Learning Partnership (SCLP) Alliance at Pound Hill Infant Academy, through the Trust. They have been praised for the quality & quantity of their courses & are very efficient.

Q. do we pay for this?

A. yes.

Q. attendance to date this year is 96.99% (*page 7*) – what is our target?

A. 96%

Q. what has been the impact of the FPN letter issued to parents in April?

A. an influx of absence requests was received at the start of the summer term.

Q. have any FPN's yet been issued?

A. no, we are only just starting to issue the referrals to WS.

Governors really liked the article in the Lindfield Life magazine celebrating the joint win by Lindfield & Blackthorns of the Mid Sussex tag rugby competition (*page 9*).

Q. what was the LGBT incident reported (*page 13*)?

A. a child in year 6 was using phrases of a LGBT nature to friends. This was reported to the child's parents as being inappropriate language to be used in school.

"no 'noticeable' incidents involved with bullying" (*page 13*) – governors advised Mr Still to change this word.

Q. was any further action required/taken following the 2 reported accidents on site (*page 13*)?

A. no. A representative of the Trust is due to visit 23/24th May re the second incident involving a child.

Q. governors asked for more information on the Target Tracker data (*page 8*).

A. children's progress is tracked from the baseline, GLD in Early Years. Mrs Smith stated that in year data is difficult to track. Teachers will not state that a child has achieved a skill until they are secure in that decision.

End of year data will be much clearer. It is time sensitive – children will not yet have covered the entire curriculum in any year group. Year 6 are the exception, because they have already taken their tests, therefore they finish covering their curriculum earlier.

Q. why are the figures for year 2 so different?

A. year 2 are performing well, but there is a lot of SEN in the cohort.

Q. are staff concerned about the results this cohort will achieve by year 6?

A. yes

Q. what action is being taken?

A. a lot of intervention & booster groups, a lot of support through their KS1 SAT's tests & we will ensure that year 3 is a very strong year for them. They have had a lot to contend with – teacher maternity cover, teacher medical leave, 2 TA's resigning. Given all this, the children are doing very well.

Q. is the 'working above ARE' percentage included in the 'working at ARE' percentage as well?

A. yes

Q. is the Principal's report published on the academy website?

A. yes

"the 'new' Academy Improvement Plan" (*page 3*) – governors suggested the 'new' be removed as it's not 'new' anymore – Mr Still agreed.

Governors also queried whether or not parents would understand some of the terminology used in the report – Mr Still agreed to modify some of the language used.

Q. are the problems with payroll continuing to effect staff morale (*page 4*)?

A. yes. Two representatives from the Trust are coming to speak to our Finance team. They feel that the feedback provided by our team is second-to-none, but so far they have not acted upon it. There are still issues every month. Staff are having to speak to HMRC directly. So far there have been 42 incidences effecting 7 members of staff. Mr Still reported that academy senior leaders at a recent Trust SMT meeting all stated this is not acceptable. Mr Brand will share with governors by email the Trust BoD response.

Action 1: MB

- **Safeguarding.** Included in Principal's report, page 12.
- **Items for next Principal's report.** Governors asked for figures showing the increase in unauthorised absence since the letter re FPN's was issued to parents. They would also like to know whether or not FPN's are being issued by WS. Mr Still suggested that if FPN's have no impact on our unauthorised

absence figure, or if WS do not enforce them, we should review whether or not we issue referrals, due to the large amount of administrative work referral produces for our office staff. **Action 2: MS**

11 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Teaching, Learning & Community (*minutes previously circulated*). Main items discussed at last meeting:

- Pupil Premium update from co-ordinator Miss Rachel Crosbie
- Timetable & resources required for administration of year 6 SAT's tests
- SEN update from SENCo Mrs Helen Dixon, as well as responsibilities involved in her role as Safeguarding officer
- Provision for the 'more able' pupils, being a focus of the forthcoming peer review on 9th June
- SEF & SEF Summary updated documents
- Community relations
- Governor visit reports from PP & Reception link governors

Resources (*minutes to be circulated*). Main items discussed at last meeting:

- Perimeter fencing work required, to be arranged by the Trust
- Flat roof replacement work completed
- New cleaning contract with Churchill
- KS1 toilets – unsuccessful in our bid for WS capital funding for refurbishment
- DFCG money expected, to be used for fencing & KS1 toilet refurbishment
- Finance update from Mrs Oliver, including review of 2016-17 budget, budget proposal for 2017-18 & 3 year financial plan
- Personnel issues, including 1 teacher resignation & successful recruitment of a replacement, successful TA recruitment, teaching staff profile review, current long-term staff absences due to medical reasons & teaching staff interim appraisals
- Updated risk register & action plan
- Health & safety link governor report, including 2 recent incidents of broken limbs on site
- Estates & ICT link governor report
- Breakfast club update
- Feedback to letter to parents re FPN's for unauthorised absence

12 STRATEGIC VISION UPDATE

Following compilation & circulation of the second draft of this document, Mr Steele, Mr Brand & Mrs Stone met to further review. A few amendments/additions are still to be made. Mr Steele is confident that the finished document will be ready by the end of the summer term. He thanked everyone for their input. He hopes it will then be a living document that we review regularly, to be further discussed once it is in place. He will circulate the final version before the next meeting of the LGB on 5th July, when he hopes it will be approved. **Action 3: BS**

13 STRUCTURE OF LGB

Following circulation at the previous LGB meeting of a document entitled 'Common Features of Successful MAT's', Mr Brand asked governors to consider whether or not the LGB needs to continue working with the structure of two Committees, TLC & Resources, meeting & reporting to the LGB, and indeed whether we need to have an LGB at all. This arose from a Trust Vision Day that he & Mr Still attended in March. The DfE recommends a review of MAT governance once a MAT reaches membership of approximately 10 academies – with the merger of the UBAT & the HAT our Trust will reach 15 academies, making this the ideal time to review. One proposal is to not have academy directors sitting on the Board of Directors.

The LGB discussed at length; main points raised:

- Work is sometimes duplicated by Resources & TLC Committees
- The LGB plays an important role in supporting the academy & inputting views
- We are in a lucky position to have governors – some academies do not
- Some major functions that the GB were historically responsible for are now performed by the Trust, e.g. approval of the budget & academy improvement
- Without committees, LGB meetings would change, most likely be longer & governors would have to decide what topics it would need to cover
- Link governor roles, although perhaps feeling under-valued at present, perform an important role & should remain
- We have not asked the Trust for support in areas such as setting the budget or teaching & learning; other academies are asking for support & getting it; support is there should we need it
- We need strategic focus on resourcing additional funding & applying pressure on the Trust to secure this
- As an LGB we currently have 3 core responsibilities; if this is changing, we need direction from the Trust telling us what our responsibilities are
- The work carried out by the current committees will not necessarily change, we will just cover topics in

less depth at LGB level, with all governors being informed/having input

- If brought together, the LGB could be more strategic, have a more general overview, but less in depth
- Some governors would feel uncomfortable spending less time to discharge the same responsibilities
- Responsibilities could be spread more evenly between governors
- What value are we adding by covering topics that we don't need to
- We do not have influence in the same way we did historically
- We wanted someone to take control as WS were not, that's why we chose to academise
- We cannot be strategic if we have no knowledge of the academy finances
- We are no longer a 'critical' friend – that is the role of the Trust
- What do the SLT need us to do; how can we support them best?
- We provide continuity
- We need to continue to consider the Ofsted framework – there is a large section on governance. If no LGB, the Trust governance steps in
- With Ofsted looming we need to be entirely happy with whatever decision we make now
- The Trust are working on revised Terms of Reference (ToR) for LGB's – we need to see this before making a decision
- If some academies have LGB & not others, how will Trust provide ToR for 'one size fits all'?
- The Trust do not have local knowledge of our academy & our community, they never will, this is an area where the LGB can support the Academy
- The Trust Director of School Improvement & our Academy Improvement Partner (AIP) are much more qualified than we are to be critical friends of the Academy
- Will they have enough time to support us adequately, with the Trust getting bigger?
- Mr Still is confident the peer review/support programme will be great next year
- An alternative option, move to fewer meetings per year. Governors felt that more regular meetings are more beneficial
- Curriculum updates are duplicated to LGB & to AIP. We have not added value, whereas the AIP can
- It's not just about questioning: the support of governors is very important to the Academy
- We should expect the Trust to produce a template of their 'ideal'
- The Trust have also set up a Safeguarding Peer Review – another function taken away from us

Mr Brand concluded by stating that the Board of Directors next meet in July, so any decision by them will not be made until then. We are perhaps ahead of ourselves discussing this now, but he feels it is timely. He will contact the Governance Manager at the Trust to ask for some direction & the BoD meeting dates for next year. In the meantime, we will carry on with our current Committee structure. **Action 4: MB**

14 ITEMS to be REPORTED to the TRUST BOARD of DIRECTORS

Query the apparent increase in the Trust service charge from 5%. **Action 5: MB**

15 DATE and TIME of NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 5th July 2017 at 7.00pm

The meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.

ACTION POINTS:

ACTION POINT NUMBER	MINUTE ITEM NUMBER	DETAILS OF ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DUE DATE
1	10	Circulate to governors response from BoD on payroll situation	Mr Brand	asap
2	10	Provide up-to-date unauthorised absence figures & find out if WS are issuing FPN's	Mr Still	Principal's report July
3	12	Complete & circulate final version of strategic plan for approval	Mr Steele	LGB mtg 5Jul
4	13	Contact the Trust Governance Manager for direction & BoD meeting dates	Mr Brand	LGB mtg 5Jul
5	14	Query the apparent increase in the Trust service charge from 5%.	Mr Brand	LGB mtg 5Jul

Signed as being a true and accurate account of the meeting:

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Date:

Name: Mr Mike Brand Position: Chair of Local Governing Body