

LINDFIELD PRIMARY ACADEMY

Minutes of the Local Governing Body Meeting

Held at the Academy on Wednesday, 5th July 2017 at 7:00 pm

Governors Present: Mr Mike Brand (Chair) (*arrived 7.05pm*), Mrs Alice Allen, Miss Rachel Anscombe, Mr Nicolas Heath, Mrs Val Pinfield, Mr Jonathan Roderick (*arrived 7.30pm*), Mr James Smyth, Mr William (Bill) Steele, Mr Marcus Still and Mrs Claire Stone

Officers Present: Mrs Vanessa Smith (Vice Principal)

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

Apologies: Mrs Claire Williams

(Mrs Stone opened the meeting in the absence of Mr Brand)

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 May 2017

A couple of minor wording amendments to be actioned by the Clerk. Otherwise, agreed as being a true record by the LGB & signed by the Chair. **Action1: KJ**

Items 4, 5 & 6 deferred until later in the meeting for Mr Brand to arrive.

7 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (*previously circulated*)

Mr Still invited questions from governors, to which he responded:

Q. Governors commented that the 'unauthorised attendance' figure for this year (*page 6*) is very high.

A. This is almost entirely because of families going on holiday in term time, which is why we have instigated issuing FPN's.

(Mr Brand arrived at this point, 7.05pm, and took over the Chair of the meeting)

Q. does the Academy get copied in on letters sent from WSCC to parents re unauthorised absence?

A. as far as we are aware, only one family have been issued with a FPN.

Mr Still tabled 2016-17 end-of-year results (*document entitled 'Data entry info 2016-17' attached*).

Mr Still reported that, overall, he is very happy with this year's results.

EY results have seen a rise: 74% (70% last year);

Y1 phonics pass rate 95% - governors agreed this is a fantastic achievement;

Y2 phonics retakes 77% - this was a very small number of children, the two that failed have severe SEN;

Y2 SAT's, assessed by teachers - sees increases in pass rate across all subjects, including RWM combined;

Y6 SAT's very impressive. With the pass mark having been raised from 21 to 26 this year, our predictions were awry, therefore Mr Still did not know what to expect national figures to look like. Particularly pleasing is the writing result, as we have worked very hard on writing this year. Mr Still complimented the staff for this result. The maths pass mark was dropped from 60 to 57, possibly due to the difficulty of the test. Mr Still is disappointed that we did not match the national figure by just 2%: two children who joined the cohort during the year did not pass & were not expected to; two further children with SEN did not sit the test; if the pass mark had remained at 60, our pass rate would not have changed, but the national figure would have. This percentage appears to show that staff are not focusing on maths, but Mr Still assured governors that they are; indeed, governors recognise that for themselves having seen evidence of the work taking place.

Governors' questions & responses from Mr Still:

Q. has budget restraint been a factor?

A. yes; he would like to have run booster groups for this cohort from September, but funding prohibited this.

He will ask the PTA to fund booster sessions next year as suggested at the Resources Committee meeting on 19th June (item 9). But, he added, the fact that these results have been achieved just on class based teaching

is even more reason for him to be pleased with them.

Q. did the two SEN children who did not sit the maths test sit the other subject tests?

A. no, they are working below curriculum.

Q. is that likely to be reflected nationally?

A. yes, although it is unusual for us.

Mr Still highlighted the RWM combined pass rate of 63%, a considerable increase on last year's 49%, again due to the staff. He reported that the Trust produced a table of all the academies' results & he was very impressed with how we compare. All the academies have at least one area where their results are below the national average. Due to a change in the reading pass mark, the Trust have asked us to look again at results in this area. If the mark had not been changed, another 5 of our children would have passed. Overall, our assessments & predictions have been very accurate. Mr Still feels we have good systems in place & congratulated the staff.

Pupil Premium report, pages 10-11: Governors noted that all 3 PP children in year 1 achieved a pass in the phonics test & congratulated Miss Crosbie, PP co-ordinator.

Reported Incidents, page 12: governors asked for details of the racist incident reported, which Mr Still provided.

Accidents, page 13: governors asked for details of the fractured wrist incident, which Mr Still provided. Governors discussed how best to celebrate the staff's hard work this year & agreed to make voluntary contributions towards the staff end-of-term night out.

- **Safeguarding.** Included in Principal's report (page 12).

- **Note items for next Principal's report.** Not discussed.

(Mr Roderick arrived at this point, 7.30pm)

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

Action 1: Circulate to governors response from BoD on payroll situation. Mr Brand reported that the BoD has not met since this was raised. As discussed at the Resources Committee meeting on 19th June, Trust Directors have visited LPA to discuss payroll problems with our finance staff. At the TUPE consultation meeting on 20th June staff members raised concerns with Trust representatives. Issues with payroll are still on-going, taking up a lot of time, both of the effected staff members & our finance assistant. Communication from the Trust has not been very helpful. Governors expressed frustration that this fundamental function is going wrong & feel the source of problems needs to be identified in order to be rectified. Mr Brand explained that the new payroll provider employed by the Trust has had difficulty coping. Problems occurred initially when the changeover took place last summer (the timing of which was advised against by our finance staff). Issues are gradually being rectified. Governors noted that the issue has been taken to the highest level within the Trust, therefore there is no more that the LGB can do to help.

Action 2: Provide up-to-date unauthorised absence figures & find out if WS are issuing FPN's. Provided in the Principal's Report to Governors.

Action 5: Query the apparent increase in the Trust service charge from 5%. Mrs Oliver, School Business Manager, has provided this clarification to the LGB: "The trust central charge has not changed – it remains at 5% of ALL INCOME (including pupil premium, donations and parental contributions). Perhaps where the confusion or query has occurred is that I was unaware that the charge was 5% of everything – i.e. including our UIFSM income, our lettings income, as for some reason I thought these were excluded". Governors noted that Mrs Oliver is thorough in overseeing all financial matters. Mr Still expressed confidence in the new Trust CEO & his vision that the money will come back to us by way of school improvement.

5 **URGENT MATTERS NOT ON AGENDA**

Mr Brand was keen to discuss the issues raised by Mrs Williams at the TLC Committee meeting on 27th June (item 16). Questions she raised & discussion:

- *What benefit are we seeing from having joined the Trust?* Answer: Academic Improvement Partner support, peer reviews, management of premises and health & safety issues, risk management, support for the SLT, IT support. Governors noted that academisation for us has happened at the same time as the national funding crisis in schools; staff are seeing a reduction in resources & perhaps attributing it to the Trust. Staff may have expected to see more people physically coming to the academy to give support – they do not necessarily see support going on in the background, i.e. IT support, SLT support. Governors also noted that at the time of academisation we were unaware of quite how bad a financial crisis we were already in. The Trust have invested in IRIS, which is having a big impact on staff CPD. Additional TA support is just not affordable at the moment. Governors noted that if we had not joined the Trust when we did, we would most likely be in a worse position than we are now. Governors asked for quantifiable figures as to how much extra funding is being spent in the classrooms now. The WSCC top slice of funding was 12%, with the Trust it is 5% - that is quantifiable & could be translated into the loss of a teacher, for example. Staff see teachers having to put in extra hours to do extra tasks – this is a result of finance issues. In the past, spending was uncontrolled. Now, we have an efficient SBM in post who manages our spending effectively. Other schools are having to re-organise & make redundancies. Governors noted that

the Trust could help further by being creative in CPD to save us having to pay supply cover whilst staff attend training: Mr Still stated that this is being looked at for 2018-19. SLT see good practice at other academies & bring it into our academy to make improvements. Governors also noted that for 5 years we have been carrying the cost of an extra teacher to keep 3 classes in each of our cohorts of 75 children. We have just one more year of this to go, after which we will see a big difference in our finances.

- *Query the apparent increase in the Trust service charge from 5%. Covered above (item 4).*

Mr Brand to speak to Mrs Williams to relay these responses to her points raised.

Action 2: MB

Governors asked what is the feeling amongst staff in relation to Mrs Williams' questions. Mr Still replied that there are still some members of staff wary of academisation. He re-iterates to them what a worse position we would be in now had we not joined the Trust. The on-going problems with payroll have not helped. Accountability is questioned – are we feeding back to the Trust, and are the Trust listening? Staff see the AIP coming into the classroom & know that she feeds back to the SLT. The suggestion raised at the TLC Committee meeting 27th June (item 10) of the AIP speaking to staff in advance of/after their classroom visit will help. Governors asked are the Trust supportive of communication with stakeholders. Mr Brand replied that they have instigated the Chairs Forum, which is the forum for this & he found it very useful, especially bearing in mind that from September we will not have a seat on the BoD.

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

- Attended Lindfield Village Day – many thanks to the PTA for the academy's entry into the procession
- Dealt with one informal complaint
- Attended the summer production at Burgess Hill Academy
- Attended one Trust Board of Directors meeting

8 COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

- Approved residential off-site visits for 2017-18 to Bowles Outdoor Activity Centre and Isle of Wight
- Academy Improvement Plan 2016-17 Interim Evaluation
- Lesson observations summer term 2017
- Academic Partner report summer 5
- Peer Review: Impact Visit 9th June report
- Construction of 'bowling green' footpath on Lindfield Common, which we had campaigned for for years
- Discussed solutions to abuse of the car parking & vehicle access policy
- Governor visits

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

- Update on new cleaning contractor performance
- Perimeter fencing update
- New risk for 2017-18 proposed budget – maternity leave
- Review of 2016-17 budget
- TA resignations & recruitment
- Staff long-term absence
- On-going payroll problems
- Annual review of accidents/incidents
- Risk management
- Health & Safety link governor report

Governors asked if there is any update on the cost of the perimeter fencing. Mr Still reported that all the quotes have been received, we await the Trust to decide which contractor to employ.

9 'CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER' ANNUAL REPORT

(*Circulated prior to the meeting*)

Since January 2017 we have 1 child on roll who is 'looked after'. The designated teacher for Children Looked After (CLA) is obliged to complete & submit this Annual Report to the Governing Body, which comes from the Virtual School. The child is in year 6, therefore leaves us this term. The report will be passed to the receiving secondary school & the LGB will not receive another report unless we have another CLA on roll. Attainment results for the child have a question mark because the report was completed prior to SAT's result being received. Child's results: maths – missed by 1 mark, we will be appealing; writing – below target; reading – on target. Governors noted that Pupil Premium funding was well spent for this child.

10 ELECTION of CHAIR of LGB

As informed to the LGB at its meeting on 1st February 2017, Mr Brand resigns from the LGB, and therefore as Chair, with effect from 31st August 2017. He has tendered his resignation to the Trust. He will attend the Board of Directors meeting on 22nd July. Mr Steele has been the only self-nomination to take on the role of

Chair. **The LGB agreed to nominate Mr Bill Steele to the Trust to stand as Chair of the Local Governing Body of Lindfield Primary Academy.** Mr Brand to take the nomination to the BoD.

Mr Steele took this opportunity to present gifts and a vote of thanks to Mr Brand for his time given to the Academy, as well as to Miss Rachel Anscombe, who also resigned from the LGB as of the close of this meeting.

(Miss Anscombe left the meeting at this point, 8.10pm)

11 THREE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

(Circulated prior to the meeting)

The final draft of the plan has been circulated by Mr Steele, who has received no further comments. **The LGB adopted the Strategic Plan as presented.** The clerk to post the plan on the academy website. **Action 3: KJ**
Mr Steele to send the plan to the co-chairs of the PTA & John Smith, Trust CEO. **Action 4: BS**

Mr Still to send the plan to the SLT & staff, & to put a line in the academy newsletter, 21 July & 8 September, advertising it to parents. **Action 5: MS**

Mr Steele will ensure this remains a living document. Governors asked will the plan change with the proposed new governance structure. Mr Steele replied that it dovetails nicely.

12 GOVERNANCE: THE WAY FORWARD

(Documents circulated prior to the meeting:

- PowerPoint presentation by Trust to LGB Chairs
- Paper copy of that Presentation
- Blown up copy of one of the PowerPoint slides - Proposed Governance Structure
- New Terms of Reference and Constitution
- Suggested Meeting Agenda (from 1st Sept)
- Suggested headings for future Principal Reports
- Copy of Minutes/Action Points arising out of the Trust Meeting)

Having read the papers in advance, the LGB had a long discussion about the governance review proposed by the Trust & the format/role our LGB will have moving forward. Main points raised/discussed:

- Of paramount importance will be Ofsted's view of any new structure, but this is not yet known
- Are governors happy to give up our seat on the BoD, what use has that been
- With the disbanding of LGB Committees, meetings will be reduced from 16 to 3 per year
- The previous governor role of 'critical friend' no longer exists, governors are now more 'support'
- The Principal report template is very impersonal, Mr Still's version is much better & should be an exemplar
- The BoD is trying to give Local Boards flexibility to interpret into their own way of working as they see fit
- It is probably right to rotate the role of Chair every 2 years
- The main aim of the new structure is to streamline & avoid duplication of roles/tasks
- Governors should be 'steering the boat' rather than 'rowing'
- Governors' role is to be very much a 'people' role – all about pupils, staff & parents, a more visible role
- Governors will no longer be 'governors', instead 'local board members'
- Main functions that the LGB previously had – i.e. finance, health & safety, pupil premium, etc – will no longer be the responsibility of the LGB; the reporting line of Principal's will be direct to the Trust
- Local Board roles will be based on the headings in the terms of reference, e.g. income generation, PTA link, getting closer to local businesses, communication
- Safeguarding will remain a role of the Local Board
- 3 meetings per year may not seem enough, but members with specific roles can act outside of the meetings & report back
- Do we have the right skills on the LGB to carry out the new roles – Mr Steele believes we do
- Governors should think about whether this is what they signed up for
- Mr Still feels already that he is more accountable to the Trust than to the LGB, & that there is a lot of duplication of work
- Ad hoc working groups could be established as required to focus on specific tasks
- It is the DfE that have instigated a review of the Trust governance now that the Trust has reached 15 academies following the merger of the UBAT with the HAT; therefore, Ofsted opinion should be favourable, but **Mr Steele will raise this**
- The Trust will send representatives to meet with Ofsted inspectors at any inspection, taking this responsibility away from governors; this support will be visible to staff, which is good
- Is there provision for Local Boards to challenge the Trust BoD & hold it accountable – governors would like to see clarification of this in the terms of reference – **Mr Steele to raise.**
- The Trust wants Local Board members to sit on the Trust Committees, i.e. Education & Standards, Finance & Resources, Risk & Audit, Remuneration & HR, in order to provide feedback from grass root

level; the 'New Governance Structure' paper shows a two-way communication line between the BoD & these committees; also, the Chairs' Forum

- Trust Committee meetings will most likely take place during the working day, which defeats the object as most Local Board members work & will not be able to attend
- Without a Resources Committee, financial headlines will come to governors only via the Principal's Report to the Local Board
- Most link governor roles will go – Finance, Health & Safety, Pupil Premium – but Safeguarding will stay
- The new Local Board will define its own roles, whereas before they were dictated to it by the Trust
- The terms of reference give governors more power in a smaller sphere
- The new structure seems to tie in nicely with our three-year strategic plan
- John Smith would like Local Boards to be more effective
- Roles & accountability will become clear as we move forward
- There seems to be a big focus on community
- Staff representation on the Local Board will continue to be important, bringing a different & important viewpoint; governors suggested that 'membership' on the terms of reference should include at least 1 staff member – **Mr Steele to raise**
- The proposed new format is exciting & has the potential to be supportive to the academy
- LGB transparency with the parent body in the past has been well received
- Celebrating success will help staff & parent morale
- When asked if the new proposed structure would work for him, Mr Still replied he thinks so, there is a good basis to start with & we can re-think as we move forward

The LGB agreed the following:

- To disband the current Resources Committee reporting to the LGB
- To disband the current Teaching, Learning & Community Committee reporting to the LGB
- To adopt the new governance format proposed by the Trust
- To henceforward be known as The Local Board of Lindfield Primary Academy & for its members to be known as Local Board Members
- To hold 6 scheduled Local Board meetings per academic year, one every half term, to be attended by the Principal & the Clerk
- To allocate new roles & responsibilities at the first meeting in the autumn term 2017
- To use the Trust suggested template for the first Principal's report & first meeting agenda, to be adjusted as seen fit for purpose moving forward
- To suggest to the Trust that the Terms of Reference for Local Boards contain this phrase under the 'Communication' section: "To act as a conduit to be able to challenge the Trust on behalf of the staff, parents & children" – **Mr Steele to raise**

Action 6: BS

13 MEETING DATES FOR 2017-18

First meeting Wednesday, 20th September at 7pm. All other dates to be agreed at this first meeting. The Clerk to ask the Trust Governance Manager for dates of Board of Trustees meetings & Chairs Forum meetings.

Action 7: KJ

14 ITEMS to be REPORTED to the TRUST BOARD of DIRECTORS

Mr Steele to report on the discussion held at this meeting re the proposed Governance Review.

The meeting closed at 9.35 p.m.

ACTION POINTS:

ACTION POINT NUMBER	MINUTE ITEM NUMBER	DETAILS OF ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	DUE DATE
1	3	Action minor wording amendments to minutes of 22May & publish	Mrs Jerbi	immediately
2	5	speak to Mrs Williams to relay responses to her points raised at TLC Committee mtg	Mr Brand	immediately
3	11	post the three-year strategic plan on the academy website	Mrs Jerbi	immediately
4	11	send the three-year strategic plan to the co-chairs of the PTA & John Smith	Mr Steele	immediately

5	11	send the three-year strategic plan to the SLT & staff & advertise in academy newsletter	Mr Still	Immediately & 8Sep
6	12	Raise highlighted issues re the governance review with the Trust	Mr Steele	BoT mtg 22ul
7	13	ask the Trust Governance Manager for dates of Board of Trustees meetings & Chairs Forum meetings	Mrs Jerbi	LB mtg 20Sep

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