

FOWLMERE PRIMARY SCHOOL
MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY

Wednesday 9 May 2018
8.00pm in School

MINUTES

Present:

Sarah Burge (SB), Chair
Philip Atkin (PA), Head Teacher
Bruce Gilliam (BG)
Gill Heathcote (GH)
Chris Martin (CM)
Ashley Meggitt (AM)
Andrew Page (AP)
Nico Schonken (NS)
Hayley Woods (HW)

Lisa White (Camclerk) in attendance.

1. Apologies for absence

The Chair opened the meeting at 8.00pm. Apologies were received and accepted from Sue Raven (SR).

2. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations on interest in relation to the agenda.

3. Minutes of the last meeting and Matters Arising

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2018 were circulated prior to the meeting and were approved by the Governing Body and signed by the Chair as a true record.

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Matters arising from the meeting held on 6 December 2017

Item 6 Head Teacher's Report

a. Governor Monitoring Visits

Liaise with other local schools to discuss what they do with regards to governor visit reports, consider sharing governor visits and observe how they operate as a Governing Body. *To be discussed under item 11 AOB.* **ACTION COMPLETE**

Matters arising from the meeting held on 14 March 2018

Item 4 Appointment of LA Governor

The Clerk to write to AM to confirm his appointment as LA Governor. **ACTION COMPLETE**

Item 8 Parent Questionnaire

Signed Date *13/7/20x*

Data from the latest parent questionnaire to be collated and circulated for the next FGB meeting in May. To be discussed under Item 8 Parent Questionnaire. ACTION COMPLETE

Item 9 Academisation

Head to discuss Budget with Rob Cottle in respect of the funding of four classes and the associated financial difficulties. Discussed at length in preparation of the 2018/19 Budget. ACTION COMPLETE

4. Safeguarding

It was noted that there was nothing significant to report at this time. NS advised that the visit that is currently scheduled needs to be re-arranged. **NS to liaise with PA to re-arrange. ACTION NS**

5. Budget

The 2018/19 Budget report was circulated to governors during the meeting. It was noted that a more detailed report was reviewed by the Finance and Premises Committee and that this report was a summary of the Budget Plan for the next three financial years.

The Head drew governors' attention to the pupil numbers and advised that the 2018/19 Budget is based on a total of 97 pupils (from the October census). The Head explained that for 2019/20 and 2020/21 this number is 96 and 97 respectively and advised that pupil numbers need to be higher in order to balance the Budget in future years.

A governor asked what the intake is for September and the Head confirmed that 13 new children will be joining the school with 16 pupils leaving.

The Head then went on to explain that traditionally funding from the Local Authority (LA) was made up of a £150k lump sum plus a per pupil amount. The Head advised that the lump sum has been reduced to £110k this year, and although the overall 'pot' is the same, bigger schools benefit from the per pupil amount and as a smaller school, Fowlmere will have a net loss of £25k, which will be a significant challenge.

The Head then referred governors to the Income and Expenditure sections on page 1 of the report and advised the following:

Income

- Overall funding of £430k;
- £11.8k Pupil Premium funding which will increase in future years due to an increase in the number of pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM);
- £66k other income – half of which is predicted income from the After School Club;
- £17k Sports Premium funding.

Expenditure

- The aim is to reduce the level of supply staff usage;
- Education Support Staff costs will decrease as number of hours reduce (due to reduction in specific support needed);
- Other costs include Midday Supervisory Assistants, Play Workers for Afters School Club;
- Learning Resources includes £8k for books and IT spend;
- Supplies and Services is high as the LA charges for most of its services now whereas they used to be free i.e. procurement advice.

Signed  Date 13/7/2018

The Head explained that the in-year position for 2018/19 is a deficit of £24.1k and in order to balance the Budget, half of the carry forward amount has been used. As a result, the carry forward to 2019/20 is approximately £24k.

It was noted that the Finance and Premises Committee had reviewed the expenditure and subsequently identified some areas of cost savings, e.g. catering contract renewal.

The Head then confirmed the following and explained that Year 3 is not a concern as the third year of a Budget plan is usually in deficit. The Head stated that more of a concern is Year 2 and advised that by the October census this year an additional 4 pupils is needed to help ensure a balanced Budget in 2019/20:

- Year 1 – £23.9k c/f;
- Year 2 - £16.7k deficit;
- Year 3 - £63.6k deficit.

A governor asked what would happen if these additional pupils did not join the school before the October census and the Head advised that the school would then need to look at ways to reduce costs.

The Chair advised governors that if the proposed housing developments happen quickly, the reduction in pupil numbers will not be an issue. In addition, the Chair stated that it is vital that promotion of the school, achieving better results and closer co-operation and collaboration with the cluster schools to mitigate costs such as the catering contract for example, are all vital.

A governor asked:

Q: Are our results substantially better or worse than other local schools and if so why?

A: Our results are not dissimilar to one local school and we are in the top one third of schools in the County. However, one school has better results as they have key teaching staff in the key year groups who are very strong (i.e. SATs year groups) and they are therefore able to maintain good progress scores.

It was noted that the Finance and Premises Committee recommended the 2018/19 Budget for approval by the Governing Body.

It was noted that the Governing Body approved the 2018/19 Budget.


The Chair wished to note the Governing Body's thanks to the Head for his hard work in putting the Budget together.

6. Sub-committee minutes

It was noted that minutes of the Personnel sub committee from 20 November were shared with governors for their review prior to the meeting. It was noted that the Finance and Premises meeting had taken place before the FGB meeting and information was shared under Item 5 Budget. It was noted that there had not been a Standards sub committee meeting since the last FGB meeting.

Governors noted and accepted the sub committee minutes.

7. Policies

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It was noted that there were no policies for approval by the Governing Body at this meeting.

8. Parent Questionnaire Update

It was noted that PA and SB have reviewed the completed questionnaires and that the feedback was generally very positive. The Head advised that he will circulate a report to governors in due course. The Head stated that some of the feedback provided useful information that can be used in school improvement planning.

The Chair advised that she will write an article for inclusion in the school newsletter before the end of term. In addition, it was noted that she will write an end of year Governor Report that will be added to both the Fowlmere Facebook page and Great Chishill Facebook pages. This report will publicise how the school is responding to any concerns raised by parents in the questionnaire.

A governor suggested that some of the positive feedback is included in the school prospectus ready for the next round of applications.

A governor asked:

Q: What was the level of response?

A: About half of our families responded – 47%.

A further governor asked:

Q: How was the feedback with regards the proposal to extend the school day? Were there any reasons why parents did not agree with this proposal?

A: It was broadly positive. The only concern revolved around the physical logistics aspect of where a parent had a child in a secondary school and the timings did not work for school buses.

9. Governor Training

a. Date of Strategic Review of Governance

The Chair advised that the original date of Monday 16 July is no longer viable and it was noted therefore that this was re-arranged to Wednesday 18 July.

The Chair informed governors that she has enrolled on a NGA 'Leading Governance for Chairs' course and that as part of this, a 360° review is required. As such, governors will be sent an email asking them to complete a short survey on the Chair. The Chair asked governors to complete this survey at their earliest convenience.

In addition, the Chair advised that a skills audit is also required for the whole Governing Body and asked governors to complete this. ACTION ALL

The Chair also advised governors that they are now able to attend training courses run by Peterborough Governor Services.

10. S106 Update

It was noted that the following two documents were circulated to governors for their review prior to the meeting:

- CCC Appeal Supporting Statement – Chrishall Road, Fowlmere;
- S106 – The Triangle, Fowlmere.

Signed  Date 13/8/2018

The Chair advised that at a recent meeting with Jonathan Lewis, Service Director for Education and Rob Lewis, it was confirmed that the school is no longer classified as site constrained (no capacity or space on site to build) and is now site restricted (certain criteria where expansion is allowed). It was also confirmed that the County Council will endeavour to mitigate this if the school needs to expand to 150 pupils as a result of housing developments in Fowlmere.

In addition, the Chair advised that any S106 funding can be made to the school if these housing developments go ahead.

It was noted that during discussions with Councillor Deborah Roberts, she had confirmed that she is in favour of the housing development at the Triangle site, but that most of the Parish Council are not. The Chair explained that as this development should benefit the school, she is prepared to support it. In addition, the Head confirmed that at the recent Parish Council meeting, Councillor Roberts had advised that if the developers reduced the numbers to 20 houses and make the design less urban, she felt that approval from the Parish Council would be granted.

The Chair advised that following a positive visit to the school by Councillor Peter Topping, the next step is to send him a letter with regards the Section 106 funding. **A discussion followed as to the content of this letter and it was agreed to write to Councillor Topping confirming that the school is satisfied that the issue with regards allocation of this funding has been resolved. ACTION SB**

The Head wished to note his thanks, in particular to SB, but also to the other governors involved in this matter.

11. Any Other Business

There were two items of other business:

i. Governance at other schools

The Chair advised governors that following an action at a previous meeting to compare the governance at Fowlmere with other schools, discussions that she has had, showed that what the Governing Body do at Fowlmere is in line with other Governing Bodies.

In addition, the Chair informed the Governing Body that during a discussion with a governor and a teacher from a local school with regards academisation, it became apparent that there are alternative options other than large scale academies and in fact this particular school has actively avoided joining an academy chain.

On this basis, the Chair wishes to contact the Chair of Governors at the 9 cluster schools in the area to suggest setting up a governors group. The Chair explained that this would help with regards potential cost savings and also ensure the school is aware of any local schools opting to academise.

The Head advised that a good starting point for this is to contact Foxton, Petersfield and Barrington as they already work quite closely together and it was proposed and agreed that the Chair would contact Foxton School's Chair of Governors. ACTION SB

ii. Governor monitoring visits

Signed  Date 13/7/2018


It was noted that an update on the governor monitoring visits schedule took place at the meeting and the following actions were noted:

- **Email date to HW for a TOP review. ACTION PA**
- **Arrange a SEND monitoring visit for June. ACTION BG**
- **Arrange a Maths monitoring visit for May/June. ACTION SB**
- **Arrange an English monitoring visit for June. ACTION GH**

12. Time/date of next meeting:

Wednesday 11 July 2018 at 7.00pm.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed  Date 13/7/2018