

THE QUEEN'S SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

THE QUEEN'S C OF E SCHOOL CUMBERLAND ROAD KEW SURREY TW9 4HJ

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governors of The Queen's School
held at the school on Tuesday 25th June 2019 at 7 pm.

Present: *Foundation Governors (4)*
(IH) Inga Hall (*Co-Chair*) (LC) Laura Coughtrie (*Co-Chair*)
(HC) Hatty Cadman (ER) Emma Roberts

Diocesan Governors (2)
(BR) Barnaby Rodgers (CR) Caroline Roberts

Incumbent
Fr Nigel Worn

Non-Foundation Governors (4)
(KB) Katie Bentham (*Headteacher*) (JM) James Merel
(CC) Catherine Christmas (BCW) Bethany Claus Widick

LA Governor (1)
(MO) Mark Ollard

Co-Opted Governors (1)
(HCh) Harry Charrington

Associate Members (2)
(DD) David Durie (JS) Jenny Stroud
(BD) Voulla Demetriou

Other (1)
(AR) Andy Rooney

Opening Prayer (led by Fr Nigel Worn)

1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies were received and accepted from LMF, DB, JU and PA. LC chaired the meeting and LC and IH jointly minuted the meeting in the absence of PA.

2. DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL AND OTHER MATERIAL INTERESTS

All Governors were reminded of the need to declare any direct or indirect pecuniary interest which might relate to any matter under discussion.

3. TO RECEIVE ANY NOMINATIONS FOR THE ROLE OF CO-CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR, TO APPOINT A NEW CO-CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR FOR 2019/20 AND TO CONFIRM THE CURRENT POST OF CO-CHAIR

LC explained that she was planning to step down as Co-Chair at the end of this academic year. ER nominated BCW to be Co-Chair which was seconded by DD. HC would like to step down as Deputy Chair. IH nominated CC to be Deputy Chair and was seconded by KB. IH was confirmed in her post of Co-Chair. LC explained that because of the changes to leadership she has offered to remain as Foundation Governor for St Luke's for one more year, which was agreed.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 21st MAY 2019

These were approved and signed by IH.

Matters arising: Governance Committee Update. It was agreed that we would defer this item to later in the meeting when we plan to discuss the committee and phase group structure.

STRATEGIC – Linked to Vision

- 5. (a) To receive the financial out-turn for 2018/19**
- (b) To approve the final Budget for 2019/20**

MO referred to the paper circulated with the meeting pack, which shows the out-turn for this year (2018/19). MO pointed out that this was discussed at the last FGB and was bigger than expected due to the income received not being spent by the end of the financial year which is ringfenced and will be spent next year.

The underlying budget for next year is in line with last year's budget. Teaching Staff budget is confirmed. AR explained that we have assumed the same complement of TAs as we have now in the budget which is different from the complement we had at this time last year, therefore the cost is higher now than it was at this time last year. The Admin budget is like for like except for the cost of maternity pay and agency cover. Lettings budget was very slightly upped from last year. Catering income assumed a small recovery in terms of take up. We have stepped up the marketing of school lunches in the newsletter to inform parents about the improvements we have been making. Finance committee looked at the draft budget in some detail last week and we added value to some points. MO recommended this budget to FGB.

Q What is the reserves position?

A Don't have the exact numbers but can say, that whilst these are high, much of it can be explained by expenditure being carried forward.

Post-meeting note: AR confirmed that the reserves balance brought forward from 2018/19: £436,102.92 and the projected balance at the end of 2019/20, based on the approved budget, will be £315,746.

FGB unanimously accepted the budget for next year which will now be submitted to AfC

- 6. To view and approve finance communication video to the parent community**

The script was amended at last week's Finance Committee and was circulated with the papers (a further small change made by KB will be incorporated). The date for recording is Tuesday 2nd July, JM will be helping record this with CR and MO. This will then be circulated and approved by LC and IH on Wednesday 3rd so that we can use it at the new parents evening on Thursday 4th July.

It was suggested that we insert 'at present' after the part that says 'our financial position is okay' just to emphasise that this is a snapshot position.

The video will be uploaded to the school website and parents directed to it in that way via the school newsletter.

HC arrived at 7.25 pm

- 7. To note the School Partnership Programme Writing Report**

KB explained that there would be no HT report at this meeting as we had that at the May FGB. Also, with the new Ofsted Framework being launched in the Autumn we will wait and

re-do the SEF to reflect the new changes and bring it to the first FGB of the new academic year. Instead we will look at the outcomes of the peer review funded by the Education Endowment Fund. Queen's is partnered with a school to review an area of their choice and they then come to us to do the same. In an academic year we get two of these reviews. Then an improvement champion (for Queen's it is BD) will lead an inset session at that school based on the review. KB reported that we had a day's training, and we were partnered with Sacred Heart and we completed a review at their school. Unfortunately, at the last minute an issue in their school prevented them from coming to us so we carried out a self-review as we already had planned for it happening. We have since moved on and partnered with St Edmonds, we have reviewed them and they have come to review us. We chose to do a review on writing as that has been a focus for the year and is also one of our vision priorities. They reviewed what we had been doing to see how writing was developing within the school, they looked at books, spoke to the children and looked at writing. BD has attended the School Partnership Review on Friday 21st June, to feedback on the learning of these reviews. BD noted that this felt like a validation rather than a review.

In addition, two of our SIP report targets are (i) our writing progress and (ii) the outcomes of our involvement in the peer review. Karen Feeney (our SIP) was in school yesterday and was evaluating where we have reached in terms of our two targets. KB noted they are currently in the process of analysing the data, so we don't, as yet, have the progress measure but KB noted that it feels everything is moving in the right direction.

Q. What did we learn from this and what improvements are we going to make as a result? Did anything new come out of the review?

A. They didn't pick up on any trends going across the year groups although they did identify some smaller specifics to do with class teachers or particular year groups. Karen, at her visit, looked at the recommendations from the report and focused on these to see the impact of the review. Her report will be shared with governors. Overall, she was impressed with the writing.

Q. Does she do a 'before and after', ie follow through with a specific child across visits?

A. No, she spoke to a number of children and the teachers. IH and BCW joined Karen yesterday which was very informative. She spoke to a range of children but not necessarily the ones she spoke to at her previous visit.

The benefits of being involved in this, is the training we receive and identifying some further Improvement Champions. This is a 2-year project, so we want to maximise on what we receive by upskilling a number of our staff.

Q. Has it been worthwhile?

A. Yes, very worthwhile in terms of building better links with other schools, which is also what we wanted to achieve, to become more outward facing and this is a good step towards that. We also found out that, even though we didn't go through with our first review because the other school pulled out, there are two other schools that had the same topic as us, so we are able to see their outcomes and possible run training together in the future. There is scope for more and opportunities to share good practice. It's also another opportunity for us to quality assure what we are doing.

Q. – Was it just the results that prompted us to focus on writing?

A. – Both results and also the progress measures were the things and made us focus on writing.

Q. - Will we see the results coming through when we see the data?

A. – Hope so but it's difficult as a different cohort. The attainment we can look at but it's difficult to statistically analyse. We can look at individual children and see them making progress. We will have the figures in early November.

Q. - This seems like a good way of looking at areas we might be concerned with?

A. - Yes

CR arrived at 7.36.

8. To receive a Safeguarding Report from the Headteacher (Standing Item)

We now have a new online system of recording areas of cause for concern called CPOMS. Teachers are using it at the moment but some teething problems. All paper copies need to go on to the system which KB plans to do before the end of the year. We need to upload the current cohort only.

9. To receive a verbal update on the progress of transition to the Co-Headship model

BD explained that she and JS had a number of specific support measures that were being put in place as well as general overarching handover e.g. meeting with KB on a weekly basis going through a programme of activities eg finance. There is support from the SDBE, an induction programme running from September and also attending the Richmond SIP and Headteacher meetings. BD noted they have recently spent a significant amount of time on recruitment as there were four vacancies to fill. Next task will be TA structure. A great deal of talking to staff to keep them on board and working alongside them..

Q. – How will you be presenting it to new parents next week?

A. – We will be introduced as new Acting Co-Heads. We have had a lot of positive feedback from the school community.

Noted that Hilary Wilson was appointed as Acting Assistant Head and that a replacement for her teaching role has just been appointed.

SDBE and AfC are fully involved in supporting BD and JS and the school in this new model. They will both have a mentor from AfC and another mentor from SDBE from Southwark Diocese. Noted that we will want to be mindful of quantity of support being offered and need to get the right balance. BD thanked governors for their support, that both she and JS feel very well supported.

AR left the meeting at 7.50 pm

**10. (a) To receive a verbal update on planned phase meetings and visits
(b) To note the programme of Governor Visits for 2019/20**

Visits and meetings have been included in the Draft Calendar for next year and the numbers haven't changed. Although three weeks of visits have been included in the calendar, it is recognised that this is quite a time commitment, so governors are only really expected to do two visits per year if possible. It was noted that the Spring visit was really well attended.

HCh arrived at 7.55 pm

11. To receive a verbal update and approval for the AfC Governor Hub on-line

LC gave a brief overview of a training session she attended in PA's place, on a new portal for storing documents. It's a web based on-line system to help governors and clerks communicate with each other, store documents, membership details, meeting schedules etc all stored in one place. AfC has bought into this and we can choose to sign up for a small fee. The system is controlled by the Clerk, although there can be other administrators, but it really needs to have one person leading on it. Because we currently pay the full SPARK package we would get this free for the first year, then £150 pa thereafter.

Action: FGB approved going ahead with this, when the time is right.

Q. – Is there a plan in place to review the clerking responsibilities?

A. - At the beginning of the year we changed our model to reduce PA's involvement and to ask Chairs to take responsibility for their own agendas, papers and minutes. We are planning

to review this before the end of the academic year and will report back to governors with our recommendations. We will also be discussing with PA.

- 12. To receive a verbal report from the chairs, including progress of the school vision plan and items of general significance considered by their committees, should be drawn to the attention of the FGB and to note the following:**

Premises – nothing further to report

Curriculum & Standards – nothing further to report.

Finance – nothing further to report.

Kairos – nothing further to report.

Pastoral – nothing further to report.

Pay & Personnel – nothing further to report

Admissions – nothing further to report

- 13. To discuss the changes to governor positions of responsibility and committee and Phase group structure for 2019/20**

This has not yet been finalised as there are still a few governors to have their end of year review meeting. Once these have been done, we will circulate the new Committee and Phase Group Structure to all governors. Also need to consider governors who might take on new responsibilities or projects.

- 14. Governance Committee Structure Review (from Matters Arising)**

LC reported that in 2016/17 we undertook a review of our committees and at that stage took advice from the SDBE which showed that we did have more meetings than their recommendation. Since then we have been slowly reducing the number.

As part of our meeting discussions with governors this term, we have talked to the chairs about the frequency and content of their individual committees, which is something we do as a matter of course every year. As a result of these discussions, we agreed to reduce the frequency of Pastoral Committee from 4 to 3 a year (once a term) and re-combine Pastoral with Kairos, and also reduce the number of Finance meetings from 6 to 5 (Summer 1 meeting) with the proviso that if we need a further meeting, we would re-instate it.

Therefore, by the start of next year, we will have reduced the number of meetings from 38 in 2017 to 29 for next year - a reduction of 31%.

Observations from comparisons with other schools.

KB obtained data from four schools – The Russell School, King's Oak, Archdeacon C of E, Holy Trinity C of E to support this review. Key points to note include the following:

- Difficult to make direct comparisons, as all schools group different themes into their committees;
- What was similar was that FGB frequency and timings are roughly the same with all schools having 5 or 6 meetings a year – we spend 10 hours in FGB meetings and the others range from 9 – 12 hours;
- We are the only school that separates out Finance, Pay & Personnel and Premises, other schools call this Resources Committee and only one other school had Resources as Finance and Premises with a separate Pay & Personnel Committee. We spend a total of 13 hours on these three committees and the other schools range from 10.5 – 12 hours. So not much difference just arranged differently;
- All schools have a C & S Committee, although again all with different names. We spend 5 hours in C & S, the others range from 4 – 12 hours, although we also have Phase Groups which add a further 3 hours of meetings and potentially 4 – 6 hours of visits. Only one other school has a 'learning walk' once a year in addition to their meeting (The Russell School);

- The Archdeacon School has a planning meeting once a year in the summer term (to plan for the following year) to discuss roles with the MLT and Subject Co-ordinators. A report is written and the governors approve this. Probably a bit the same as our Steering Committee, but for us that's only for committee chairs;
- All other schools, bar one, have a separate Pastoral Committee, although again by different names. We spend 3 hours on this and the others range from 2 – 6 hours;
- The two C of E schools have Admission Committees and spend roughly the same amount of time on this as us.

In total, including Phase meetings and visits, we currently spend 38 hours a year in meetings the others range from: 20 - The Russell School (one form entry); 23 - Kings Oak (2/3 form entry); 31.5 - Archdeacon (2 form entry) and 44 - Holy Trinity (2 form entry).

Timing of any further Committee re-structure

We have also taken some advice from Angela Langford at AfC Governor Support. Having provided her with some background, she felt that we were within the range, although probably near the top of the number of meetings we have. What she did observe was that we have Phase Meetings and visits which not all schools have, but she thought were a really good idea and showed real governor involvement in the school.

With the departure of KB, we question whether the time is right to embark on a major re-structure of the committee model at the school. We would recommend that any review we undertake should have the full involvement of the Head Teacher. To undertake something of this magnitude should be done when the Head Teacher post has been made permanent.

Conclusions

Having done the analysis, taken advice and thought carefully about the way forward, our recommendation is that we retain the current model, but that we re-visit this issue in 2020 when we can fully involve governors and SLT.

It was also noted that our current clerking position may have an impact on any decision we make about restructuring.

KB was thanked for obtaining the school information. It was noted that this was a thorough analysis and agreed that we should retain our current structure until such times that the Head Teacher post becomes permanent.

15. For noting:

i Co-Chairs' Report

HC and LC were thanked for their contribution to the school in their respective roles but noted that they were not leaving the Governing Board until 2020. LMF was thanked (in her absence) for all the work she has done for the school and we will pass on a thank you card and small gift to her when we meet. DB has also decided to step down as a governor and has provided us with some feedback on his experience which we will review and consider more fully. We will also thank him for his contribution.

It was noted that this was KB's last FGB and was presented with a card and flowers. DD and NW both said a few words of formal farewell and thank you, acknowledging the momentous work she has done for the school in the last 8 years particularly in relation to Ofsted and SIAMS 'outstanding' and overseeing the new building.

Chairs were reminded to contribute a few sentences of achievement of their committees over the last year, for the end of year Co-Chairs' newsletter. Also reminded to complete the Skills Audit.

School Sport day is 10th July, we need governors to sign up to run the refreshments stall. It was noted that the school is trying to reorganise sports day so that Key Stage 2 sports will also be on the school premises.

ii Policy Progress Report (circulated before the meeting)

CC thanked KB for all her work in getting so many policies up to date.

iii Proposed Schedule of Dates for 2019/20

All chairs were asked to thoroughly scrutinise the dates for next year and let LC/IH know of the changes that they would like to make by Friday 28th June 2019.

15. Governor Training

Very few sessions left this year, but governors were asked to consider the new training schedules when they are circulated and book themselves on to the relevant sessions for their committee responsibilities.

ER asked if governors could let her know the level of Safeguarding Training they had completed as this is missing in some cases in the training records.

JS added that there will be a Level II refresher happening during Inset at the beginning of the year and she will circulate the date.

16. AOB

MJ was asked at the last FGB to provide data of children leaving this year. At the moment we are aware of nine children leaving mainly going to the independent sector. These are spread across all year groups. We have waiting lists for all year groups apart from Year 1. This number may go up as we are often don't know until the last minute.

A governor had attended a Complaints training session recently and wondered if we could include that information in our HT report. Need to be careful at what point in the complaint it would be reported to FGB as some complaints are resolved at an early stage.

A question was asked about what steps we had taken to clean the school and communicate to parents about the recent outbreak of Norovirus. It was confirmed that the school was sterilised during May half term, the children had been reminded about proper hand washing and communication to parents was sent out in the newsletter. The school had also consulted with the School Nurse and the local authority.

The meeting concluded at 8.55 pm