



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD OF
ALDERLEY EDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL
HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON 26th NOVEMBER 2019**

Governors Present: Tony Smith (TS) Chair
Lindsey Walsh (HT) Head Teacher
Esther Clark (EC)
Wendy Davies (WD)
Claire Finch (CF)
Sheila Keegan (SK)
Andrea Hogan (AH)
Nick Hughes (NH)
Ian Pemberton (IP)
Gary Pickford (GP)
Mel Rose (MR) Staff governor

Also in attendance: Claire Leslie (Clerk) Clerk to the Governors
Lyndsey Platt (DH-T) Deputy Head Teacher

PART ONE – NON-CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Meeting opened at 5:35pm

		Actions
1	APOLOGIES & ADDITIONAL AOB ITEMS The Governing Board agreed that the apologies for absence received from Pete Littlewood (PL) be accepted. Governors noted that Marc Asquith (MA) and Caitrin Adorian (CA) had advised that they may be late to the meeting and had apologised in respect of this. <i>Neither MA nor CA joined the meeting at any point.</i>	
2	CONFLICT OF INTEREST Governors were asked to declare any potential pecuniary interest or conflict of interests with the business to be discussed during the meeting. The following interests were declared: TS is Chair of the Yes Academy Trust and interim CEO of The Collaborative Educational Trust of Wilmslow (TCET). GP is a LA HR advisor.	

	<p>NH is a senior teacher at Wilmslow High School.</p> <p>Annual declarations were signed by all governors at the meeting. Governors also signed the Governors' Charter.</p> <p>Action: LW to secure completion of declarations by PL, CA and MA when they next visit the school.</p> <p>It was noted that the governor section of the school website had been updated recently but that IP would need to be added and that he would also need to be added to Get Information about Schools (GIAS).</p> <p>Action: LW to ensure GIAS is updated with IP's details and TS to update the Governors Profile document and this to be posted on the school website.</p> <p>The register of business interests was inspected during the meeting and the following noted: Mark Dewhurst needed to be removed. WD was a trustee of the local church; this needed to be declared rather than her role supporting the Parochial Church Council. CA and IP needed to be added.</p> <p>Action: LW to update and confirm with CA and IP any interests which needed to be declared.</p>	
<p>3</p>	<p>ELECTION OF CHAIR</p> <p>Governors agreed that the term of office for the Chair of Governors would be 1 year and until the autumn term 2020 FGB meeting.</p> <p>The following nomination had been received by the clerk: Tony Smith.</p> <p>No other nominations were received.</p> <p>TS accepted the nomination and was duly appointed as Chair of Governors until the autumn term 2020 FGB meeting.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR</p> <p>Governors agreed that the term of office for the Vice Chair of Governors would be 1 year and until the autumn term 2020 FGB meeting.</p> <p>The following nomination had been received by the clerk: Claire Finch</p> <p>No other nominations were received.</p> <p>CF accepted the nomination and was duly appointed as Vice Chair of</p>	

	<p>Governors until the autumn term 2020 FGB meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that PL had stepped down as Vice Chair; he had served the school as a governor in a number of capacities over an extended period with distinction. In his absence governors noted the excellence of his work, his commitment and dedication and formally recorded thanks. PL will step down as a governor on 31st December 2019.</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>MEMBERSHIP</p> <p>Governors formally confirmed the election of CF and IP as parent governors and IP was welcomed to the governing board.</p> <p>TS's term of office as a parent governor had come to an end. He was co-opted to the governing board. (Proposed by EC, seconded by SK – agreed unanimously).</p> <p>The resignation of PL as referred to above was noted.</p> <p>Criminal record checks were underway in respect of IP. Ongoing problems were being experienced in conducting the necessary checks for CA; the issues arose because she had been out of the country for a period in excess of 20 years. Formal paperwork had now been sent to Hong Kong by recorded delivery. Problems were not anticipated.</p> <p>S.128 checks had been completed in respect of all governors.</p> <p>It was noted that the governing board had a skills gap in respect of detailed expertise in relation to buildings or Health and Safety. The colleague introduced by Mark Dewhurst was more likely to join the board of The Collaborative Education Trust (TCET) than become a governor at AECPS. His skills seemed better aligned to the trustee role and AECPS would have possible access to his expertise once it had joined the Multi Academy Trust (MAT).</p> <p>A parent, Adam Brooks, had indicated a willingness to carry out a school buildings inspection. He was happy to act as a consultant and to make visits but was not able to make a commitment to becoming a governor. Governors concluded that there was no advantage in appointing him as an associate governor but noted that they would be grateful for his reports.</p> <p>It was agreed that a governor from the Assets and Finance committee should join Mr. Brooks when he carried out his inspection. Governors noted that they would not be expecting to rely on any views expressed by Mr. Brooks and that an independent expert needed to be commissioned in any event.</p> <p>Action: CF to speak to Mr. Brooks and broker arrangements to be made between him, LW and a member of the Assets and Finance committee for</p>	

	him to come into the school and carry out an inspection.	
6	<p>PART ONE MINUTES</p> <p>The part one minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2019 were confirmed as a correct record, signed by the Chair and retained by the school.</p>	
7	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>The action log was reviewed. All matters were concluded or were on the agenda for the meeting save for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further investigation was needed into placing governor induction documents on the GVO. The previous clerk had marked the action complete but the papers were not obvious. Action: Current clerk to check the position. • The governance statement on the school website is from the academic year 2018-19. Action: LW to upload the latest document which contains details of governor attendance. • The Governors' training record was reviewed. Action: The Cheshire East Council (CEC) record was incorrect. The clerk to try to confirm the full position. Clerk also to try to obtain the training record for IP for when he was a governor at Wilmslow High School. The Governor strategy document was reviewed. This had been amended to reflect the current Ofsted framework. It was noted that the current document used "governing body" and "governing board" interchangeably. It was agreed that this should be conformed to read "Governing Board". Action: EC to review and put on GVO for comment by governors. 	
8	<p>CHAIR'S ACTION</p> <p>The Chair reported that no action had been taken on behalf of the Governing Board since the last full Governing Board meeting.</p> <p>The Chair believed that no actions had been taken by PL.</p>	
9	<p>COMMITTEES AND NOMINATED GOVERNORS</p> <p>9.1 Governor Roles</p> <p>Governors referred to the document produced as Appendix 1. This was updated and the corrected version appears at Appendix 1 to these minutes. PL was removed from committees. In making new appointments governors had regard to gender balance on committees. IP's expertise in buildings and Health and Safety was welcomed. A new position to oversee issues relating to Brexit had been created (EC). The board decided not to have a Careers Governor.</p>	

	<p>Action: CF to check whether CA is correctly on the Teaching and Learning Committee. Teaching and Learning committee to invite clerk to talk about possible careers support suitable for primary age children.</p> <p>Q: WD noted that she was designated governor for external fundraising and grants. What was involved? A: This was a liaison role. It was confirmed that WD was not expected to actively fundraise.</p> <p>9.2 Terms of Reference of Committees</p> <p>The only committee proposing a change of Terms of Reference was Teaching and Learning, this was to reflect the committee's actual activity. The new terms of reference had been available on the GVO. All terms of reference were approved.</p> <p>9.3 Appointment of external advisor to support the HT performance review</p> <p>Tim Nelson (TN) had been impartial and governors perceived that he had been a positive support in the process. It was noted that TN had two roles, one as Learning Partner supporting the school and one advising on the HT performance review. It was important to keep these separate. TN had been very helpful to the HT so far in the Learning Partner role; it may be that the current remit in this role for TN would be exhausted during the 2019/20 academic year. It was possible that a new learning partner might be sought or that he would have an altered remit. TN was confirmed as external advisor for the HT performance review.</p>	
10	<p>PART ONE REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES</p> <p>Governors had been given the opportunity via the GVO to review the minutes of meetings of the following committees: Strategy Committee 8th October 2019 Teaching and Learning Committee 22nd October 2019 Assets and Finance Committee 7th November 2019</p> <p>There were no comments or other matters arising. There were no reports to be received from governors with special responsibilities.</p>	
11	<p>FINANCIAL MATTERS</p> <p>11.1 Purchase of Annual Contracts</p> <p>ChESS (Cheshire East School Services) purchases had been made. Extensive research into insurance against staff absence had been</p>	

conducted and the Assets and Finance Committee had approved a choice of insurance based on the best value and most appropriate cover. This was CEC option A.

11.2 To receive accounts of the Unofficial School Fund

This had been audited and the audit was on the GVO.

11.3 To confirm the auditor of the Unofficial School Fund for the forthcoming year

Jonathan Christian Hare was confirmed as auditor.

11.4 Review the Budget v Actuals

The Chair spoke to the budget plan shared in advance via the GVO. In Year 1 the budget was balanced.

11.5 Update on the 3 Year plan

In Year 2 there was a projected shortfall of £23,000. In Year 3 the projected shortfall rose to around £100,000.

It was noted that the budget for Years 2 and 3 assumed an increase in costs but no increase in funding.

There had been a recent meeting between the CEC budget officer and representatives from the school where a more realistic view of subsequent years had been sought.

If the government continued to fund the pay and pension grants then the Year 2 figures were close to balance (there was a projected deficit of £2,500). In Year 3 the deficit would drop to £78,000.

There continued to be a challenge around the SEN funding for the school. The school continued to make a case to CEC for more funding. This had been unsuccessful so far during the current academic year. The school's finances were being supported by reserves from Squirrel Club.

Q: Would the position change when the school entered TCET.

A: Yes.

11.6 To agree arrangements for the SFVS (School Financial Value statement)

PL would oversee this for the final time but TS, LW, CA and the school bursar had all been trained on the process and would be taking over. WD would be undertaking the training early in 2020.

The school had been awarded the top category in the audit for 2018-19.

	<p>The SFVS was not due for submission until 31st March 2020 but it was possible to submit early. The school intended to submit well before the 31st March 2020 deadline and was starting to work on the SFVS on 12th December 2019.</p> <p>11.7 To approve the MOIFP (Manual of Internal Financial Procedures)</p> <p>LW and school bursar have completed a review and MOIFP is with CA who would now be looking at this and would report at the next meeting.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to place on the agenda for the next meeting.</p>	
<p>12</p>	<p>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT AND MATTERS ARISING FROM THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</p> <p>The HT spoke to the report which had been placed on the GVO and responded to questions posed by governors as follows:</p> <p>Q: How was the music provision to be run? A: There were planned changes to the music provision. LW was working with MR and Angela Aitken (AA). For two terms AA would be leading curriculum delivery of music. The younger classes up to Year 3 would be doing music and movement run by the Kodaly method. The children in Years 4-6 would have more traditional curriculum based music lessons. There would be a team of 5 peripatetic music teachers who would all have an obligation to deliver a music club relevant to their instrument. On Friday 29th November 2019 the music teachers would be coming into school to demonstrate their instruments; they would be running a market place for children. The tutors would be working on a self-employed basis as suppliers and their employment status would be confirmed against IR 35 if necessary.</p> <p>The success of the venture would be determined by the children's enthusiasm to learn instruments. There would be no on-going obligation after the end of the 2019-20 academic year.</p> <p>The cost would be approximately £5,643 which would be split across two financial years with a charge of £2,418 in the 19/20 and the balance in the 20/21. This would be cost neutral. It also meant that in the event that required costs savings had to be implemented the music lessons could be dropped without any need for a redundancy.</p> <p>Q: When will individual music lessons be delivered? A: Children will come out of their lessons for music lessons. The lessons would be available for children from Year 2; they would be allowed one lesson per week until they reached Year 6. Children in Year 6 would be allowed to opt for two lessons subject to availability.</p> <p>Q: What was the impact on attendance levels of children with SEN? A: Average attendance at the school for the 2018-19 academic year was 96.8% against the national average of 95.8%. The average similar school had an attendance rate of 96.5%.</p>	

	<p>If children with Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) were excluded from the statistics then average attendance would be 97.4% which would be officially categorised as “above average”.</p> <p>It was noted that the impact on attendance depending on the nature of an individual EHCP.</p> <p>Q: What was the impact of the new school kitchen on the uptake of school dinners?</p> <p>A: The school lunch provision was in a state of flux while the school waited for the provision of a permanent cook. The current cook was very enthusiastic and had applied for the permanent post. She might be able to effect the necessary change if she were to be appointed.</p> <p>The HT had looked at the uptake of school lunches over the three months from September to November in 2018 as compared to the same period in 2019. In the latter period 669 fewer lunches had been purchased.</p> <p>The reason for the drop in demand was the inconsistent quality of the meals.</p> <p>CA was doing an audit of providers. There was now a good kitchen and good meals needed to be produced.</p>	
13	<p>SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (SDP)</p> <p>It was noted that it had been the school’s practice to run this in line with the financial year and that the school was now moving to bring this in line with the academic year.</p> <p>LW had rewritten large parts to fit the new Ofsted framework.</p> <p>A governor development plan was included in the SDP. Governors were asked to request a paper copy of the relevant section when coming in to make inspections. This was a live document and was annotated.</p> <p>Much work had been done to improve interaction between staff and governors, more work can be done but feedback from staff was that governor visits were constructive. Staff value the interaction.</p>	
14	<p>SCHOOL LEARNING PARTNER.</p> <p>This learning partner had not produced a report. A charge of £600 would be made for this. The work of the learning partner to this point had been in the provision of training and support to the SLT and there was no substantive information to report.</p> <p>It was noted that the reporting came through the process of the HT’s performance management.</p>	
15	<p>DIRECTOR’S REPORT</p> <p>The report and a precis were on the GVO. There was nothing further to be brought to the attention of the meeting.</p>	

<p>16</p>	<p>GOVERNOR MONITORING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>It had been noted that the SFVS training had been completed by the HT and several governors and the school bursar.</p> <p>There had been a good uptake of training by the board. Prevent training and Safeguarding training had to be undertaken by all governors at intervals of no more than three years.</p> <p>Action: Some governors needed to redo Prevent and Safeguarding training. Where necessary they could contact the school for the school to assist and to cover any training cost.</p> <p>It was important to try to align training to link governor roles. Those governors assigned to complaints and exclusions panels were encouraged to undertake the appropriate training.</p> <p>Governors were invited to consider the self-evaluation information which was passed around at the meeting. This had been RAG rated. Generally the governors have a good range of skills; identified weaknesses were in understanding best practice from elsewhere through interaction with other schools. It was noted that collaboration with local schools would improve once the school entered TCET.</p> <p>It was agreed that the self-assessment of skills should be repeated annually to identify trends. It was further agreed that weakness by the governing body in understanding HR practices would be addressed by the provision of training by GP.</p> <p>GP left the meeting at 8.02pm.</p>	
<p>17</p>	<p>SCHOOL POLICIES</p> <p>It was noted that the policies for approval were on the GVO. The following were approved: Child Protection Admissions Data Protection Additional Needs Complaints Policy (subject to amendment in line with comments received on the GVO).</p> <p>The following policies need urgently to be approved: Attendance Policy Whistleblowing Peer on Peer</p> <p>It was agreed that these would be approved when three governors had noted approval on the GVO, provided that no governors had dissented.</p>	

	<p>Action: Governors to review policies on the GVO.</p> <p>The RSE policy was held over for the next meeting.</p> <p>The social media policy needed to be considered. There was discussion around next steps after the HT had requested that any post on social media be taken down and in the event that the person posting refused to take that action. It was agreed that there should be reference to the involvement of governors at that point. The policy was to be updated accordingly and could then be considered approved.</p>																			
18	<p>PLANNED RESIDENTIAL VISITS</p> <p>The Year 2 class would be visiting Beeston. The Year 4 class would be visiting Forest The Year 6 class would be visiting Pensarn. All risk assessments would be undertaken in the normal way and would need to be approved by CEC.</p>																			
19	<p>MEETINGS</p> <p>Meetings for the remainder of the academic year were confirmed as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Spring 2020</th> <th>Summer 2020</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Strategic Review</td> <td>14 Jan 20</td> <td>28 Apr 20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>T&L</td> <td>3 Mar 20</td> <td>12 May 20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Finance</td> <td>6 Feb 20</td> <td>7 May 20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Assets</td> <td>11 Feb 20</td> <td>16 Jun 20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>FGB</td> <td>26 Mar 20</td> <td>25 Jun 20</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Strategic Review	14 Jan 20	28 Apr 20	T&L	3 Mar 20	12 May 20	Finance	6 Feb 20	7 May 20	Assets	11 Feb 20	16 Jun 20	FGB	26 Mar 20	25 Jun 20	
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20	<p>GVO</p> <p>Governors continue to make good use of the GVO. This remains a standing agenda item.</p>																			
21	<p>TO NOTE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION OF MEETING PRECIS</p> <p>Governors were reminded of the need to produce meeting precis. It was also noted that recent meeting precis have not been produced.</p> <p>Action: CF to produce precis for the Teaching and Learning meeting. Clerk to produce precis for Assets meeting.</p>																			

	<p>TS to produce precis for this meeting.</p> <p>WD left the meeting at 8.40pm.</p>	
22	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>SK enquired as to whether there was any system in place to cascade messages to governors in the event that they needed to be contacted in an emergency.</p> <p>There was no such system. In the event of a crisis CEC would be involved but it was agreed that a central point holding all governors mobile numbers would be sensible.</p> <p>Action: All governors to send email numbers to the school administration team.</p> <p>There was no further business.</p>	
23	<p>IMPACT STATEMENT</p> <p>Governors have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed the School Development Plan. • Managed succession planning through the recruitment of new governors with key skills ahead of the retirement from the board of PL. • Challenged the Head Teacher on the contents of the Head Teachers Report. • Approved policies. • Discussed annual contracts and reviewed the value for money they provide. • Discussed the financial position of the school and looked at financial planning over the next three years. • Considered their own strengths as a governing body and considered training needs. 	

The meeting moved to Part 2 at 8.50pm

.....Chair

.....Dated