

GLADSTONE ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL
"Learning, caring, growing together"

MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY

DATE: Tuesday 11th September 2018

TIME: 6.30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mr. Keith Wright

Mr. Richard Adams (*left 7pm*)

Mr. Peter Southward

Mrs. Helen Kindness

Mrs. Helen Halliday

Ms Jane Pepper

Ms Jane Malpas

Mr. Teddy Sulman

Mr. Ray Williamson

Miss V Lewis (Clerk)

MINUTES

1. Welcome from the Clerk

The Clerk welcomed governors to the first meeting of the new school year.

Action: None Required.

2. Governing Body Membership / Term dates / Vacancies

Clerk informed the governing body that RA will not be renewing his term office and KW read RA's resignation letter. RA thanked the governing body and staff for their support and commitment. JM thanked RA personally for his input and incredibly strong contribution. The governing body as a whole thanked RA for his Chairmanship, professionalism and friendship during a very difficult period (new Head, Ofsted etc). TS added that RA been a great comfort with his diligence and intelligence.

KW agreed and said that school has been through turbulent time and he has valued RA as Chair and a friend of the school. He commended RA on his well-balanced understanding of the Chair role as a strategic challenge and advocate for the school which is a difficult balance to achieve. He has greatly appreciated all the complex work put in to steer, develop and strengthen the governing body. He added that he is particularly glad that school will continue to work closely with RA on the Children's University project.

(NB. RA departed after Items A and B from A.O.B were discussed which were moved forward to the beginning on the meeting).

The following governors' terms of office have now ended and were asked whether they wished to renew their terms of office and continue to be members of the governing body: -

Helen Halliday

Peter Southward

Jane Malpas

Jane Pepper

All confirmed they wished to renew their terms of office until 31.8.2022.

The governing body currently consists of 16 members as per the Instrument of Government:

5 Parent Governors

1 LA Governor

1 Staff Governor

1 Headteacher

8 Co-Opted Governors

In addition to the departure of SS in July, and RA this evening, resignations have been received from EJB (Parent) and SM (Co-opted). JJ (Parent) has not been in contact for over 6 months and as per discussions at the previous meeting, will be removed from the governing body.

At present, of the 16 there are the following vacancies: -

- 3 Parent Governor
- 3 Co-Opted Governors

Governors were asked to consider whether they wish to seek to fill these vacancies or to downsize the governing body and class these vacancies as natural wastage. This was a proposal made by both the external governance audit and governor health check to ensure robust governance.

The suggested proposal is to reduce the governing body to 12 members comprising of: -

- 3 Parent Governors
- 1 LA Governor
- 1 Staff Governor
- 1 Headteacher
- 6 Co-Opted Governors

This would mean there would be 1x Parent Governor vacancy (for which a parent nomination process will be conducted) and 1x Co-opted Governor vacancy (which could be filled by a community, staff or parent member).

Clerk has investigated the technical guidance for reconstituting the governing body and advised that there are some restrictions to comply with (minimum 7 total members, staff governors not to exceed 1/3 of the total, minimum 2 parent governors). Once governors have decided on their desired composition the clerk will forward to the governance legal section for checking and then to be stamped as the new Instrument of Government.

JP said that if the external audit suggested it then it should be considered but did note that the departing governors were some experienced and skilled individuals and it is important to try to fill these gaps adequately. However, if there was found to be a need for a governor with a particular skill set or knowledge base in the future, non-voting associate members could be recruited. JP suggested reducing the number of parent governors to 3 as suggested but retain the full complement of 8 co-opted members, making a total of 14.

Governors discussed the options and decided to opt for the following constitution: -

- 3 Parent Governors**
- 1 LA Governor**
- 1 Staff Governor**
- 1 Headteacher**
- 8 Co-Opted Governors**
- 14 TOTAL**

The Clerk will begin the parent governor election process shortly. Depending on the number of nominations a ballot may be required, or alternatively nominees could be offered co-opted posts if appropriate. Once this process is completed, governors will seek to fill any remaining co-opted vacancies. Once new governors are in place and have been inducted it was suggested that they 'buddy' with an existing governor to gain experience.

Action: Update records

By: Clerk

Action: Parent Governor Election

By: Clerk

3. Nomination of Chair

In the light of RA's resignation governors were asked for nominations and thoughts.

JP suggest RW who said that he isn't sure he feels quite ready at present to lead the governing body; he has only been on the governing body since January 2017 and Vice Chair for a year. RW also said he was surprised by RA's resignation but doesn't think he has the experience at present. JP said that Chairs don't necessarily have the experience at first, but that they are supported by other officers and the headteacher. It was noted that RW is very good at the management of meetings and has strong financial acumen and clear positive ideas for the pupils and the school.

RW queried whether JP would like to be considered. JP said she would rather not at this stage due to her recent retirement from headship and wishing to take a step back from leadership at the present time. She did say she would be keen to retain Chairship of the School Improvement Committee should she be nominated at the committee's first meeting. She is also remaining on the board fro the Opportunity Area which will take up some of her time.

There was a suggestion of Joint Chairpersons, which is not ideal, but could be a possibility, though both would have to agree on any matters they hold the casting vote for. There would still need to be a vice chair.

KW gave a context of the school's situation and the likely requirements on the Chair for this year. GRPS is currently not in the LA radar due to positive outcomes in the end of KS2 tests and should no longer be classed as coasting. The pressure is still there with work ongoing but not to the same level as last school year. The academisation agenda is in the general fore but school can take their time here due to outcomes. This year will not be as turbulent for school, with a strengthened leadership team and further developing middle leaders. A lot of the suggestions and actions arising from the Ofsted inspection have now been put in place or are being worked towards. The upcoming year will remain challenging but with much reduced external scrutiny.

RW said he feels concerned about being the 'outward face' of GRPS. KW said that he and RW had previously spoken about his concerns but KW reiterated that unless something extraordinary happens the Chair will not have as high a level of involvement as in the past 1-2 years. Nobody expects the Chair to be an expert or to know it all, they are expected to be a challenging friend with a leadership oversight of the governing body.

TS added that he thinks RW would be a strong Chair. Has experience of dealing with public affairs and has been a strong vice chair.

RW agreed to act as Chair, he still feels somewhat reluctant, but was expecting it due to being last year's vice chair. KW thanked him and said that he and the leadership team will support him however RW wishes.

It was therefore confirmed that RW would be the chair of governors for school year 2018/19.

Action: Update records.

By: Clerk

4. Nomination of Vice Chair

Governors were asked for nominations for the role of Vice Chair for school year 2018/19. JP was suggested but reiterated that she would rather remain as chair of School Improvement Committee should she be nominated. The clerk advised she could hold both roles, though there is a need to share out officer roles wherever possible. RW added that he thought JP's skills complemented his own and filled some of the gaps he feels he has in experience and knowledge. However, due to recent resignations and no other nominations JP agreed to act as vice chair.

It was therefore confirmed that JP would be the vice chair for school year 2018/19.

Action: Update records

By: Clerk

5. Chair's opening remarks

RW thanked governors for their support and confidence they have shown in him. The discussion re academisation will be an important one in the coming year, he has no pre-disposition either for or against and feels that the most important thing is to do the right thing for the pupils and the school. Any process involved will involve many options, cost benefit analysis etc.

Action: None Required.

6. Apologies

Apologies received from: -

AC – work related

JL – retrospectively gave apologies – work issue delayed him beyond his control.

Apologies accepted.

Action: None Required.

7. Confidentiality

There were no matters identified as confidential.

Action: None Required.

8. Declaration of Interest in any Agenda Item

There were no matters identified as being of interest to any governor.

Action: None Required

9. Governor Responsibilities – including Code of Practice

Governors were asked to sign the Governor Code of Practice agreeing to appropriate levels of input, training and outlining their responsibilities as stakeholders for 2018/19.

RW raised that he had read about governors having a requirement to read the updated statutory child protection guidance. JM advised that she had the documents available and clerk will forward them to all members.

Action: File returns as per procedure

By: Clerk

Action: Forward Child Protection guidance to governors

By: Clerk

10. Confirmation of Committee Membership

Governors discussed the previous year's committee membership and the following was decided for 2018/19: -

Resources Committee

Peter Southward, Keith Wright, Ray Williamson, Andrea Cowley, Jane Malpas

School Improvement Committee

Teddy Sulman, Helen Halliday, Keith Wright, Jane Pepper, Julian Leader, Helen Kindness

As AC and JL were absent, it has been assumed they wish to remain on the same committees but clerk will contact them to check.

Action: Update records to reflect committee memberships

By: Clerk

Action: Contact absent governors re committee membership

By: Clerk

11. Appointment of Child Safeguarding and Attendance Governor

It was proposed that the same governor have responsibility for safeguarding / attendance and LAC. PS said he would be willing to have this responsibility. There were no further proposals/nominations.

PS was appointed.

Action: Update records

By: Clerk

12. Appointment of Looked after Children Governor

PS accepted this role as per Agenda Item 12.

Action: Update records

By: Clerk

13. Appointment of Pupil Premium Link Governor

HK advised she was happy to continue her responsibility in this area. Mrs Jenkinson will continue to act as the school staff lead for Pupil Premium.

Action: Update records

By: Clerk

14. Appointment of SEND Governor

HK with JP support.

Action: Update records

By: Clerk

15. Appointment of three Governors for Head teacher Performance Management

Peter Southward and Teddy Sulman agreed to once again undertake this role (with advice from a Local Authority Adviser). AC was suggested for the third panel member, due to her HR background. Clerk will approach her to see if she would be willing to be involved.

Action: Update records

By: Clerk

Action: Contact AC re involvement

By: Clerk

16. Appointment of Governors to serve on Complaints Panel

PS and HK offered to be involved. AC was on this Panel in 17/18 and the Clerk will email to see if she would be willing to continue responsibility in this role.

Action: Update records

By: Clerk

Action: Contact AC re involvement

By: Clerk

17. Appointment of Governors to serve on statutory committees

- Pupil Discipline
- Staff Discipline
- Staff Dismissal Appeals

Pupil Discipline = HK, TS, PS

Staff Discipline = AC, JL, TS

Staff Dismissals = JP, RW, HK

Action: Update records

By: Clerk

Action: Contact AC re involvement in Staff Discipline Committee

By: Clerk

Action: Contact JL re involvement in Staff Discipline Committee

By: Clerk

18. Appointment of Health & Safety Link Governor

It was clarified that this does not have to be a non staff governor. JM volunteered and was accepted. Clerk will inform the SBM (Caroline Sarney) of this.

Action: Update records and inform SBM

By: Clerk

19. Register of Business Interests

Governors completed a pro forma indicating their business interests.

Action: Compile pro formas and file as per procedure

By: Clerk

Action: Contact absent governors to complete returns

By: Clerk

20. Register of Hospitality

Governors completed a pro forma indicating if they had been in receipt of gifts or hospitality.

Action: Compile pro formas and file as per procedure

By: Clerk

Action: Contact absent governors to complete returns

By: Clerk

21. Forthcoming Meeting Dates for School Year 2018/19

Dates for 2018/19 were set as follows: -

Whole Governing Body: -	Resources Committee: -	School Improvement Committee:
Tuesday 4 th December	Tuesday 13 th November	Tuesday 2 nd October
Tuesday 19 th March 2019	Tuesday 12 th March 2019	Tuesday 5 th February 2019
Tuesday 9 th July 2019	Tuesday 7 th May 2019	Tuesday 21 st May 2019

NB. All meetings are scheduled for 6.30pm.

Action: Circulate dates for the year to all governors

By: Clerk

22. A.O.B.

A **RA – Robert Goodwill letter**

RA reminded governors that he had written to Robert Goodwill MP about the core funding issues facing school. Mr Goodwill visited and met with himself, KW and CS and spoke at length about matters. Mr Goodwill then promised to raise concerns at local and national government level. However, having heard nothing further RA sent a follow up reminder letter in the Summer. Mr Goodwill then wrote to the LA asking for reasons for the evident funding shortage and making clear that there is being a significant impact on provision. Mr Goodwill subsequently sent a copy of a reply he received from Stuart Carlton (Director CYPs NYCC) which states GRPS has not missed out due to funding formula but is impacted by the numbers of pupils on roll. There is a disparity between the views of the MP and County and the clear evidence of serious funding issues in school. The letter from Stuart Carlton shows that Barrowcliff is in worse position than GRPS and are at the stage of cutting staff. The fact that other schools are suffering funding shortfalls and issues is evidence that GRPS is not due to funding mismanagement. JP did add that the LA are not picking on the school, merely applying the nationally agreed funding formula as they are prescribed to do so. There are always winners and losers in a national funding formula due to the huge variety of locales, school sizes and deprivation. RA reiterated that it seems Stuart Carlton is not acknowledging what is going on however this seems to be in opposition to a letter sent to headteachers which suggests that the LA is aware of the financial strain on schools and is being lobbied against at national government level.

RW asked whether there any suggestion that the funding formula adversely impacted GRPS due to the school's size and location. JP said that one of the problems in the county is small schools, sparsity and locality factors and other schools are in the same situation. Scarborough town schools are definitely being impacted negatively by the funding formula. RW agreed that there is a definite battle for the coast to be recognised as an area of high deprivation. Similar schools in other parts of country receive more funding. Inequality of geography. North Yorkshire is seen as an affluent county overall and the pocket of deprivation that Scarborough is in doesn't seem to be recognised.

RA added that as he departs the governing body, he would hope that members continue to push for support from Robert Goodwill MP regarding funding.

B Social Event – Governors

It was suggested that in light of the number of departing governors a social evening be planned as a 'farewell' and a 'thank you'. Clerk will circulate date and details.

C Outcome re Permanent Exclusion

Following a permanent exclusion of a Y5 pupil at the end of 17/18 school year, upheld by the Pupil Discipline Committee (PDC), parents requested an Independent LA review (IRP) as is their right. This appeal was attended by KW and RW (as chair of the PDC) but was quashed on inaccurate procedural grounds. KW and RW have made a formal complaint regarding this. Following the IRP a further panel of 3 governors met to consider the outcomes of both the PDC and IRP meetings. They opted to support the PDC original outcome of upholding the permanent exclusion. The LA have been informed and the child has been removed from school roll. There is a cost of £4000 to school for non-reinstatement due to the outcome of the IRP. However, when considered in terms of cost of staff to support the child and repairs to premises / replacement of resources due to actions/behaviour this is not an unreasonable expense.

D Request for leave – staff member

There has been a request for 2 afternoons' leave by a Y6 teacher (part time). The TA in this class is also a HLTA so could cover to ensure consistency for the children. JP asked HH/KW whether they have a view re the impact on pupils. HH said that the HLTA is in class every day so there would likely be a minimal impact. However, not all classes have a TA who is a qualified HLTA and so it is important to consider whether a precedent is being set. Governors agreed that requests will be considered on a case by case basis with reference to previous requests to ensure consistency.

She added that the plan is for any requests for leave to be made in writing consistently to the governing body as some have been made / approved without governors' input historically. JP said that approving these very low impact periods of leave would generate goodwill for staff who have worked very hard over the last year. RW agreed that approving this small requests would show the governing body's appreciation and goodwill.

Governors granted the leave requested as Unpaid Leave.

Action: Arrange social evening and email governors

By: Clerk

Action: Response letter to staff member re leave in term time

By: Clerk/RW

The Meeting was closed by the Chair at 8.05pm

Signed _____ Dated _____