

ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY, KENILWORTH
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON TUESDAY 20TH MARCH 2018 AT 7.00PM

Present: Darren Barrow; Patricia Coopey; Beth Cordrey; Daryl Molyneux; Ruth Cooper;
Richard Owen; Katie Harrison; Rebecca Augustus

In Attendance: Andrea Eastham (SENDSCO); Mary Baker (DHT) Margot Brown (Clerk to Governors)

1. Apologies for Absence and Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

No apologies received. No declarations of conflicts were declared.

2. Election of Chair

The clerk informed governors that there had been one nomination for chair, Daryl Molyneux. The clerk invited Daryl to say a few words to the governors. Daryl informed governors that he was very grateful for the contribution of the previous chair, Trevor Martin, who would be a hard act to follow, however he would do his best to serve the school as well as Trevor had.

The clerk asked Daryl to leave the room. Ballot papers were distributed and governors were invited to complete them. Darren and the clerk left the room and counted the votes. Darren and the clerk returned to the room and invited Daryl to return. The clerk informed governors that Daryl had unanimously been elected as Chair, however Tricia Coopey would chair the rest of the meeting.

3. Reorganisation of Sub Committees

The clerk reminded governors that this item was on the agenda as depending on who had been elected as chair, one or more of the committees may have become inquorate.

Richard Owen: if that is a problem could we combine the committees?

Tricia Coopey informed governors that she was aware of some schools where the full governing body carried out the duties of both committees. This was achieved through having more full governing body meetings. Darren suggested that it would be worth reviewing the meeting pattern and the make-up of committees once Daryl was fully in post. In the interim, Beth Cordrey offered to serve on both sub committees and ***governors agreed that this would be the case for the summer term.***

Daryl pointed out that there would need to be a change to the headteacher's performance management review committee. ***Governors agreed that the committee would now be made up with Daryl, Tricia and Richard Owen, with Ruth to stand in if necessary.***

Action: Darren to email suggested date for his next performance management review. The date will need to be after the Key Stage 2 data is returned to school.

Governors then discussed and agreed how they would mark the school's gratitude for Trevor's years of service on the Governing Body.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2018

The minutes of the meeting of the full Governing Body held on 5th February were approved and signed as a true record.

Confidential Minutes of the meeting held on 5th February 2018 were also approved and signed as a true record.

5. Matters arising from the previous Minutes

Richard asked if there were any outstanding actions formerly attributed to Trevor. Darren informed governors that there would need to be a new Safeguarding Governor. Rebecca Augustus offered and **governors agreed that she would become the new Safeguarding Governor**. Darren informed governors that there had been no reply to the invitation issued by Trevor for a face-to-face meeting to discuss concerns about the Children's Centre expressed by a member of public who had wanted to attend the previous full governing body meeting. That person had been represented at the recent public meeting, however.

6. Staffing Updates

Darren presented and discussed the document **Staffing Structure September 2018**. The aim of the staffing structure was to ensure calmness, stability and consistency in a potential OFSTED year. He stressed that although June Kelly was moving from Nursery to Reception there was no agenda to this change: June has done a fantastic job in Nursery. Rebecca would be moving to Nursery to broaden her experience as Early Years Foundation Stage phase leader. Rebecca has been in Reception for five years. Darren confirmed that Rebecca would continue to work part-time. Her job share partner is still to be appointed. Claire Tennant would be requesting a job share arrangement and Darren recommended to governors that permission for this was granted as the school tries to be family friendly and has provided job share arrangements for other staff. It would enable Katie Harrison to who is a highly experienced HLTA to complete her teaching qualification. Niamh Smith is leaving to teach music: there would be vacancy in Year Four as this is the 'bulge year' so there is a need for two classes. There are currently two temporary contract arrangements on the teaching staff. One of those teachers will not be reapplying for the job as she wants to complete her master's degree. Tricia asked if the two vacancies would be advertised Darren informed governors that he had been able to advertise internally as there were potential internal candidates. Darren informed governors that the interviews would be held on Wednesday April 18. Currently Darren and Andrea were on the interview panel but it would be best practice for a governor to join them. The interview process would consist of observed teaching, a planning exercise and an interview. The governor would need to be involved in all three processes Ruth Cooper offered to attend the interview panel.

Returning to the staffing structure document Darren reminded governors that there was an extra cleaner due to the restructuring of the caretaking and cleaning team as reported at the previous Resources Committee meeting.

Governors agreed the staffing structure for 2018 to 2019

Darren informed governors that the next job with regard to staffing was to look at PPA arrangements.

7. Policies

Safer Recruitment

Tricia reminded governors that following Trevor's resignation at least one governor needed to attend Safer Recruitment training. Darren informed governors that Daryl would be attending Safer Recruitment training and the school would be using the NLE bursary to fund this. Ruth has also offered to attend Safer Recruitment training in the next school year.

Action: Daryl to book himself on the summer term Safer Recruitment training and Ruth to book herself on the autumn term training. (This training is organised by Warwickshire Children's Safeguarding Board: details are on GovernorHub in the folder for this meeting.)

Darren reminded governors that the Safer Recruitment Policy was the Local Authority's model policy which just needed customising to make it St John's policy.

Daryl Molyneux: paragraph 96 of the policy makes it clear that all staff should receive safeguarding training every three years. Do we keep a record of safeguarding training?

Darren confirmed that this is so.

There were no further questions or comments on the policy. **Governors adopted the Safer Recruitment Policy.**

Sickness Absence Management

Darren informed governors that this Local Authority policy was still in draft form and being discussed with unions so governors would not yet be able to adopt it however, he suggested that governors used it as a guide, for example there was useful advice with regard to formalising return to work interviews and identifying triggers for absences.

Beth asked if this was superseding the previous policy. Darren confirmed that this was so. Beth queried if governors in that case needed to follow the existing policy. Darren agreed that governors should do so but it would be useful to use the new policy for guidance.

Richard Owens: if this policy will be in place from September will you then formally inform staff of its existence? Darren confirmed that he had already shared some of the policy with the staff, particularly with regard to leave of absence entitlement and return to work procedures.

Rebecca Augustus informed governors that she had received training on this policy in her own job and she felt that the new policy was a very powerful tool in terms of managing staff absence.

Daryl highlighted paragraph 1 of the policy with regard to the employee reporting process and asked Darren which process the school used for informing of their absence. Darren confirmed with governors that it was made clear to staff what the correct procedures were when reporting their own absence. They were informed that they need to leave a message

on the school answerphone before 7.30, using option six. Darren or another senior member of staff always checks the phone messages on their arrival. Staff are not permitted to send texts. The procedure is clearly highlighted in the school staff handbook.

Governors agreed to continue using the existing Staff Absence Management Policy and would return to the new one for adoption once finalised by the local authority. Meanwhile they would use the new one for guidance.

Action: Governors to adopt the new Local Authority Staff Absence Management Policy when it is ready.

Beth Cordrey agreed to undertake a review of the Governor Visits Policy. **Action: Beth Cordrey to review the governors visits policy**

8. Presentation to Governors on Children's Centre proposals and discussions

Darren reminded governors that there were large changes due to take place at the Children Centre. The presentation he was due to show governors had been presented the week before to the local community. Daryl has had input into the slides. At the meeting were many Children's Centre representatives. There was an audience of around 25. The feeling at the meeting had been positive.

Darren took governors through the slides in the PowerPoint presentation. The slides can be found on GovernorHub in the folder for this meeting.

Slide One

Darren reminded governors that when he had started to speak to the Local Authority about the Children's Centre there had been a perception that there was lower need for such a facility in Kenilworth, however this perception disregarded the wider reach of the Children Centre, for example to Beausale and Honiley, and specific local issues such as the highest levels of postnatal depression in Warwickshire being in Kenilworth. The Local Authority's vision was for birth to 11 provision, however St Johns school and the Children's Centre have always worked very closely together on the 0 - 11 offer, indeed this is one of Darren's passions and this is what is attracted him to the post of head teacher at St John's. He shared this information with Bill Basra from the Local Authority and it is fair to say that the Local Authority hasn't realised the full context of how the Children's Centre had been working and its significance within Kenilworth. Bill Basra had therefore offered a transition plan for provision in Kenilworth to continue until 31. 8. 19. This includes scope for Barnardos to continue operating however with a 23% reduction in funding.

Richard enquired where the closest children's centre was. Darren informed governors that this was in Leamington

Slide Two

Darren was able to demonstrate to the Local Authority and at the public meeting that the Children's Centre is already offering what the local community value.

Slide Three

The school has been invited to devise a community led model. However this is difficult as there are no clear parameters for the model, only assumptions made by Darren based on the context of the area and what he knows the Local Authority will support. There are various issues to consider such as funding and making a link between birth to 5. School readiness is one factor known to be high on the Local Authority agenda.

Slide Four

Warwickshire envisage a four tiered level of intervention for families. There was thus a need to devise a package to address these four tiers

Tier 1: space for Health; Early Years; school readiness. Darren reported that there was already provision for these in the work carried out by both school and the children centre. In addition to this the school could supplement this with its work on mental health.

Tier 2: Kenilworth's initial response; this next tier would offer further support for families.

Tier 3: Kenilworth: specialist interventions. Darren informed governors that family support workers were going to be retained centrally and therefore in a new model would not be on the children's centre payroll.

Tier 4: Kenilworth: county social work services. Provision and space for a district social worker.

Darren informed governors that he feels that very confident the school can meet what the authority want both from the point of view of what the Children's Centre and the school already carry out and what could be developed. He felt it would be valuable to have one vision, one team, one community to strengthen the support for families in Kenilworth and to lose the Children Centre would be disastrous for the community. There had been a consultation with local head teachers, councillors, Chamber of Commerce, parents, health visitors, the midwifery team, charitable organisations, the staff-including leadership and now the governing body.

With regard to costs, three financial models were being considered. Current overall costs are broadly £200,000 per year; this has been reduced by 23%. The three models are taking into consideration careful research and some hypothesis. Warwickshire County Council won't look at any financial models unless there are substantial savings. All three models have a total cost of around £90,000. Darren took governors through the three models. He felt that the preferred model for Warwickshire County Council would be model three. This model looked at the school taking on the leadership role. This would present overall savings. A member of staff could receive a responsibility payment for some aspects of children centre leadership, the head teacher would need to receive enhanced salary points to account for the extra responsibility. This would be substantially cheaper than a leader appointed at a salary of around £30,000. There would also be a need for more sessional workers and upskilled administrative support. The model for organisation and finance was to be presented to Bill Basra of the Local Authority on 23 March.

Darren highlighted that the proposals were not without challenge. For example, he does not know if the Local Authority has a particular amount in mind for funding, he does not know if the Local Authority may put the Children's Centre out to others for tender despite the school's offer and there is a need to consider the long-term sustainability of the children centre. Darren informed governors that he intended to put together a model which would require a contribution of £100,000 from Warwickshire County Council. If the county will only offer half of that amount he recommends to Governors that they ask the County Council to allow the school to regain ownership of the building. Darren will make a commitment to services such as midwifery and Health that they can continue to develop their services in the building.

Darren finished his presentation by informing governors that he felt that this presentation given to the local community certainly ensured transparency at all levels. He invited questions from governors.

Beth Cordrey: the cost of the three financial models is similar: is there a difference in delivery?

Darren Barrow: there is a difference, where there are reduced leadership costs more money can be spent on service delivery.

Richard Owens: if we do find that the Local Authority won't contribute £100,000 and we walk away, could we go back on that decision if the County Council tendering didn't work out?

Darren Barrow: I think at that point we would need to rule out the issue, however we would need to make it clear to the County Council that we could have a potential safeguarding concern should another provider take over our building.

Beth Cordrey: who owns the building?

Darren Barrow: the Local Authority own it however it is on our site and the Local Authority could move service delivery to another site. It does present advantages to have the building back; we could use it for potential teaching school training space and the space the nursery ensuring its long-term sustainability.

Beth Cordrey: do you think the Local Authority would return the building to the school?

Darren Barrow: all of the schools in this situation have had an offer from the Local Authority of the return of the building. We haven't yet but we do know that Barnardos will continue to lease it until April 2019.

Ruth Cooper: if we go from model three where the leadership is solely from the school, could this jeopardise the school? For example if there were concerns or issues in the children centre which distracted from the management of the school itself?

Darren Barrow: model three was the model in place when I arrived at the school and I would see this model as an expansion of the current staff team not as a separate team of people.

Tricia informed governors that at the local meeting a local midwife had commented that since the provision was put in place locally to deal with the high levels of postnatal depression those levels have dropped. The midwife believe that if the children centre does not survive there would be nowhere else to hold this clinic as there is no room at the medical centre and the other facilities are not fit for this purpose.

Darren informed governors that he felt fully committed to the Children Centre but it was important that there was a cut-off point.

Richard Owens: would academisation affect any of these issues?

Darren Barrow: I don't believe it would, in fact it would make it easier to regain control of the building.

9. Updates (Academisation, Teaching School, Safeguarding)

Darren reported that he had no further updates to make to the process of academisation. Richard wondered if there was a need to have more governors trained with regard to customisation. Darren confirmed that there is a wealth of courses available and that Daryl had attended one. Daryl agreed that his course had been a good foundation for the process. Tricia asked if Trevor had met with the Kenilworth School chair of governors who had made an offer to share the academisation process with him. Darren confirmed that the Kenilworth chair had not come back to Trevor. Mary Baker informed governors that recent figures had been published that demonstrated that two thirds of academies were currently in deficit. Darren reminded governors that he would like to be 'academy ready' as he would like to make the choice to become an academy and not to be pushed. Tricia informed colleagues that she had had an informal conversation with Kenilworth School chair of governors who had shared that the process of academisation does seem to change all the time. Governors noted that the chair of Kenilworth school governors is a NLG (National Leader of Governors).

Darren informed governors that he had emailed an enquiry to the DFE with regard to when school would hear about its teaching school status; the reply was that this would be at the end of April.

Darren reminded governors that as time had needed to be devoted to the election of a new chair at this meeting, he had agreed with Tricia in her role as acting chair that he would not make a head teachers report on this occasion. The next head teachers report will be presented

at the final full governing body meeting of the year in July. Darren will make a safeguarding report next half term as usual. Darren had however provided governors with two additional documents to keep them informed of progress in school improvement. These were the document which RAG -rated actions against the spring term plan and highlighted for governors the summer term action plan. Darren proposed that these two documents be discussed in further detail at the next Performance and Standards committee meeting. Meanwhile governors should email any questions they had or he would be happy to speak to them on a one to one basis.

Action: clerk to ensure these two documents are included on next Performance and Standards agenda.

Trisha is unable to chair the next Performance and Standards Meetings. The new committee consists of Katie, Rebecca, Ruth and Darren. Daryl will also be in attendance in his new role as Chair. Darren said as Phase Leaders would be presenting the information in the next meeting, he would be happy to chair in Trisha's absence.

After discussion, governors agreed that they needed to attract more members to the committee. The governing body still require a LA governor.

Action: Tricia, as Acting Chair, to investigate the school governors one-stop shop.

Action: Ruth to put up notices in the local community highlighting vacancies. In answer to a question from Ruth, governors agreed that they would particularly welcome people with marketing and human resources skills.

10. AOB previously noted to the Chair

See documents submitted by Darren Barrow in item 9 above.

11. Publication of Documents

Governors agreed that no documents needed to be omitted from publication.

12. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the full Governing Body will be held on:

Extraordinary Meeting (budget approval) 2nd May 2018 at 12.45

Full FGB: Wednesday 16th May at 7 PM