



TADCASTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD (LGB)

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 5th December 2018 at 5.30pm

Present: Philip Turnpenny (Chair), Wendy Wilson (Head of School), David Gluck, Jon Bliss, Jeremy Airey, Jess Ryan, Heather Smith (from item 5.1), Mike Dunphy, Liz Wilson

In attendance: Iain Tessier (Clerk, Governance Advisor)
 Martyn Sibley (Chief Education Officer, STAR MAT)
 Cayte Mulhern (Deputy Headteacher)
 Ria Hennessy (Observer)

1.0 Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest
 The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

- 1.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Chris Burt. Georgina Wright was absent.
- 1.2 There were no declarations of interest.
- 1.3 The Chair reminded governors of their duty of confidentiality.

2.0 Minutes of the Last Meeting – 18th September 2018

- 2.1 **Resolved:**
 The minutes of the meeting held on 18th September were accepted as a true record of the meeting and the Chair was duly authorised to sign the minutes.
- 2.2 Governors noted the unclerked meeting held on 13th November to consider the draft School Development Plan (SDP). The plan was being presented for final approval at this meeting.

3.0 Action Points and Matters Arising

- 3.1 Actions from the 27th June meeting
 - 1) Discharged.
 - 2) Pupil Premium ‘catch-up’ would be examined at the next School Development committee meeting in February.
 - 3) The Clerk to send the link to Safer Recruitment training to Mr Bliss.
 - 4) All governors now had a STAR MAT email account.
- 3.2 Actions from 18th September meeting
 - 1) Matter in hand (*post meeting note: now complete*)
 - 2) 11 students went elsewhere for KS5 (4%)
 - 3) Completed.
 - 4) Clerk to check with Claire Earl.

ACTION

**School
Dev
Clerk**

Clerk

4.0 MAT Matters

- 4.1 The Clerk noted that policy tracking and approval was something that he would be discussing with the CEO in the new year, with the aim to provide forward guidance to LGBs towards the end of the Spring Term.
- 4.2 Governors noted the Code of Conduct as approved by the MAT Board. The Chair reminded governors of their duty to adhere to it at all times.
- 4.3 The LGB procedures document, approved by the MAT Board, had been passed to the LGB for governors to agree on two elements where LGB discretion was permitted.

Resolved:

Following a brief discussion, governors agreed that there should be a 2 year term of office for the Chair and Vice Chair. The quorum for any meeting should be 50% of governors in post (rounded up to a whole number).

5.0 Finance Update

With the SBM absent, the Chair invited Mr Sibley to speak to the finance report. It was noted that the budget had been discussed at some length at the recent Resources committee meeting.

Heather Smith entered the meeting

- 5.1 In essence, the financial position of the school was not as strong as had been predicted, with an in-year deficit of around £118k now forecasted. Such an in-year deficit would result in a nil carry forward. Thus the budget would be balanced (just) but all reserves would be gone. The main factor affecting the budget was a £140k variance in wages: the national pay award for teachers was meant to be fully funded. Finances had also been hit by a £20k shortfall from lower than predicted KS5 numbers. Added to this was the additional top slice requirement placed on the school owing to Sherburn High not joining the Trust as anticipated.
- 5.2 The Chair pointed out that the SBM had already identified areas to make savings – cleaning contract for example – but such savings would not impact on the budget in this financial year.
- 5.3 A windfall of £30k, in a bank account, had provided some relief but a SIF fund of £20k had been removed in order to make the budget balance. The Head of School said that the school was proud of the way it retained teachers but, by doing so, they now had a relatively expensive teaching staff.
- 5.4 The LGB was required to recommend the budget to the MAT. The Resources committee had given its approval for such a recommendation. Comments and questions were invited.
- 5.4.1 A governor was concerned about over-spending as the year continued. Were the budget controls in place sound enough to ensure that the budget remained balanced. The Chair believed that the budget approach was prudent and generally the school ended the year underspending compared to forecasts. The SBM had made it clear to all staff that there were no funds to 'dip into' and that tight cost control measures would be implemented. The Chair added that a further cost improvement plan would be required going forward and that the Head of School had been charged to look at how this might be implemented.
- 5.4.2 A governor talked about potential admin cost savings, such as phasing out the paper planners. Mr Dunphy believed that the Chrome Books had the potential to fully replace the paper planners, however, the school first had to consider how to replicate the power of the planners in terms of the way they aided staff interaction with students. In the meantime, the SBM was seeking corporate sponsorship for the planners going forward.
- 5.4.3 Would the school cope without a minibus? Mr Sibley noted that a minibus had not been around for some time (having failed its MOT) and its absence had not been noticed. A minibus was not viable financially. The governor noted that it would be viable if it was a cheaper alternative to longer-term

outsourcing of transport. Mr Sibley acknowledged that he did not have the cost comparison details but would ask the SBM to report to next Resources meeting.

5.5 **Resolved:**

The LGB recommended the revised budget to the MAT Board.

6.0 **Headteacher's Report**

The Headteacher's report (in the new MAT approved format), along with FFT data, the final SDP and KPIs had been circulated prior to the meeting for governors' scrutiny.

6.1 **Resolved:**

Governors approved the new SDP. It was confirmed that the plan's priorities and KPIs had been captured in the appraisal objectives for all teachers.

6.2 The Deputy Head noted that student absence remained above national but, notwithstanding the positives, the school was concerned about certain trend data. The Deputy Head believed that the school had to 'turn things around' in places. The level of illness and its impact on attendance was also concerning. Currently attendance was at 95% but historically had always been above 96%. Although the school was better than national when it came to rates of persistent absenteeism.

6.3 The Chair noted that the school was not full in Y7 (5 spaces). The Deputy Head admitted that this was the first year that the school was not full in Y7 and with a waiting list. There were no pending admissions into Y7.

6.4 The level of fixed-term exclusions had been a concern for governors in the past year or so, what was SLTs view on the current position. The Head of School said that they were in a much better position than at this point last year. FTEs remained below the national average. Behaviour was generally much better.

6.5 Governors were impressed with the level of detail when it came to the reporting around Pupil Premium, albeit they acknowledged that everyone would like to see outcomes rise. The attendance rates for disadvantaged students was clearly a limiting factor, there was certainly a gap to their peers. The performance of disadvantaged students remained a worry, particularly as this was an area Ofsted had picked up at the last inspection. Mr Sibley pointed out that if the students were not in the school then learning was not taking place, it was as simple as that.

6.6 The Chair of the School Development committee noted that the committee had looked at the dashboard in some detail at their meeting – there were no surprises for governors or SLT.

6.7 The Chair was surprised to read that the school's SEND rate was 5% below national. The Deputy Head explained that those now regarded as REN (recognised need) did not have funding attached to them and therefore had been removed from the formal SEND register. The school wanted to portray the most accurate picture based on what the published guidelines said.

6.8 There was a brief staffing update.

7.0 **Committee Reports**

7.1 Governors accepted the revised Terms of Reference for the Resources Committee.

Resources

7.2 Chrome Book take-up was initially 85% and this had now risen to 92%, well above the 60% threshold. The devices were being used effectively and Mr Dunphy was receiving good feedback from staff, students and parents. All staff had received training from 'Google educators' in school. The third-party insurance and warranty scheme had covered a couple of breakages.

7.2.1 A governor said that one parent had approached them about the lack of a recharging lead. Mr Dunphy explained that those with a loan device (i.e. had not opted into the scheme) had not been given the recharging device. The school was worried about the leads going missing and after all these were loaned devices. The governor asked if this arrangement would limit home use. Mr Dunphy did not think so. There were charging devices in school and the Chrome Books had a good battery life.

7.3 Other matters highlighted from the meeting were:

- The new electronic signing-in system (from January hopefully)
- The refurb of the stable block, which would be completed for the start of next term.
- There had been teething troubles with the 3G pitch but the SBM had been confident that the pitch would recoup enough from lettings to make it viable.
- Actions from the sports provision assessment were being taken care of via Mr Wagstaff
- There was a comprehensive report on the fire drill procedures.
- The committee had been disappointed to note the lack of responses to the staff survey. Going forward the plan was to split responses into teaching and associate staff so as to gauge whether issues were affecting teachers or non-teachers.

7.4 School Development

The committee chair noted the following matters from the recent meeting:

- Hearing the feedback from the research project on Mindfulness had been very useful. However, the committee had been minded not to commit to any next steps bearing in mind the financial implications. They would await the final report on the project's impact – if there was a demonstrable effect on students then the LGB would have a decision to make.
- The committee had looked at both KS4 and KS5 data (FFT dashboard and Pinks vs Greens and had received a progress update from both key stage leads.

7.5 Pay

Targets and objectives had been set for Head of School. The committee had conducted its pay review duties in line with the MAT approved procedures and had made decisions based on the Head of School's recommendations for progression. These decisions had subsequently been ratified by the MAT Board.

8.0 **6th Form**

8.1 It was agreed that this could be removed as a standing item on LGB agendas. KPIs for the 6th Form were included in the SDP and would be picked up via committees as necessary.

9.0 **Policies**

9.1 The final version of the Appearance policy had been circulated for LGB approval. A governor asked about the situation re: Intellectual Property rights on the crest. SLT conceded that they had, in fact, been unable to find a record of IP being established. This required further investigation. In the meantime it was agreed (with guidance from the Clerk) that whilst the policy could include the following statement (or similar) 'the school would recommend that uniform items be purchased from Chalks', it could not state that crested items had to be purchased from Chalks. As and when IP was established, the policy could be amended to make it a requirement of parents to purchase from Chalks – as the licensed retailer. Indeed, failure to do this would permit the school to take action.

9.2 Governors' views on the new uniform itself were also sought. A brief discussion followed. Governors supported the recommendation to have a brighter blue blazer as opposed to the darker blue option.

9.3 **Resolved:**

Governors approved the final version of the appearance policy, subject to incorporating a statement on expectations re: 6th form dress code.

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CM

- 9.4 **Resolved:**
The LGB adopted the MAT Safeguarding and SEND policies, with minor personalisations.
- 9.5 **Resolved:**
The LGB adopted the revised Health and Safety policy, as recommended by the Resources committee and Mr Wagstaff. A governor pointed out that if the MAT had opted into CLEEPS for Science then, as the employer, their policies needed to reflect those requirements. Mr Sibley recognised the importance of this and would look into it.
- 9.6 **Resolved:**
The LGB adopted a suitably personalised version of the MAT agreed Pay policy and approved the Performance Development policy (appraisal).
- 9.7 The MAT would shortly be approving an Equalities policy and the LGB would be required to adopt that policy with the addition of a local set of objectives and an action plan that governors could use to monitor progress thereafter. The LGB would also be required to agree an Accessibility Plan based on an agreed template. The Head of School to take the necessary action ahead of approval at next meeting.
- 9.8 The Behaviour Management policy had been reviewed by SLT, with minor amendments made. Given there were only minor amendments the policy had not been submitted, in line with governors' request to only view policies where there were a) significant changes or b) a statutory requirement to review.
- 10.0 Health and Safety Update**
- 10.1 Nothing to report.
- 11.0 Correspondence**
- 11.1 The Chair had received a number of correspondence since last meeting. It was not appropriate to go into them at this stage as matters were likely to be escalated for the board's investigation in due course.
- 12.0 Any Other Urgent Business**
- 12.1 The Clerk wished to draw to governors' attention the Complaints training on the 13th December.

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Date of Next Meeting:

27th March 2019 at 5.30pm

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

	Action Points from the Meeting	Agenda Item	Person(s) Responsible	Date for Delivery
1.	Pupil Premium 'catch-up'	3.1	School Dev Comm	Feb meeting
2.	Send training link to Mr Bliss	3.1	Clerk	ASAP
3.	Circulate governors' contact details	3.2	Clerk (Claire Earl)	ASAP
4.	Cost comparison for minibus vs outsourced transport	5.4.3	MS for MB	Next Resources
5.	Ascertain IP re: school crest	9.1	WW	ASAP
6.	Statement on 6 th form dress code for Appearance policy	9.3	CM	ASAP
7.	CLEEPS requirements reflected in H&S policy	9.5	MS	ASAP
8.	Equalities objectives and action plan. Accessibility plan drawn up from template	9.7	WW	Next meeting