



MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY HELD ON TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2018 AT 1800 HOURS

PRESENT: N Briggs (Chair), L Clapham, S Horsbrough, V Khanna, A Lomas, H Rush, M Thorp

IN ATTENDANCE: C Meredith, T Wright (clerk), A Redding (item 6)

APOLOGIES: R Butterfield, R Rehman

1. APOLOGIES

Noted above.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST/AGENDA CHANGES

No declarations of interest or agenda changes.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (30 JANUARY 2018)

Received: Doc 18/17-18

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of events.

Proposer: A Lomas Seconder: V Khanna

4. MATTERS ARISING (NOT COVERED ON AGENDA)

4.1 [Item 4.1] All Governors were reminded to complete PREVENT training.

Action: All Governors

5. CORRESPONDENCE

5.1 Received: Doc 19/17-18. Resignation from A Lomas as Governor dated 1 March 2018. N Briggs read out the letter. N Briggs extended thanks to A Lomas and iterated she had been an outstanding Governor who had held School and the Governing Body together through warning notices; the support she had provided over the past year had been amazing. V Khanna had worked with A Lomas the longest and felt this would be a big loss to the Governing Body. H Rush said A Lomas had made her feel very welcome and had taught her so much. M Thorp said it had been a pleasure working with A Lomas and he would look forward to receiving her advice and guidance on integrating the ARC into the School.

5.2 Received: Doc 24/17-18. Resignation from Anne Schofield, Year 3 UPS Teacher dated 28 February 2018.

5.3 Received: Doc 25/17-18. Resignation from Leanne Towers, Assistant Head Teacher dated 28 February 2018.

5.4 Both teachers would leave at Easter and thanks were extended to both for their contribution to the School.

6. FINANCIAL POSITION

Received: Docs tabled 26/17-18 and 27/17--18

6.1 That the School was predicted a deficit this year of approximately £47k. A Redding attended School to discuss at end of January. C Meredith had been preparing a three-year forecast to show how the deficit would be addressed. Thanks were expressed to C Meredith for his work in this area.

6.2 C Meredith reported that A Redding wanted the School to take a moderate to pessimistic view to future costs.

6.3 A Redding had suggested some sensitivity analysis which C Meredith had completed; this showed some historic changes over the years.

6.4 C Meredith used the HCSS budgeting software to generate the data. The software is particularly good at predicting future staff costs.

6.5 LA Income had used the most recent indicative figures provided by A Redding. A pessimistic view had been taken for other income.

6.6 A Redding clarified that the National Funding Formula (NFF) would be implemented from April 2018. Grove House was neither capped nor protected under these arrangements. Risks outside of the three years were what Government does going forward. Immediate risks were early years funding primarily around numbers so the School would need to report numbers on a termly basis.

6.7 A Redding suggested considering mini-budgets underneath the figures in relation to spend and income and what areas might be subsidising others to get an overview of what is going on.

6.8 N Briggs reported that the School was previously subsidising early years but in April/May 2017 there was a drive to take capacity forward and increase numbers which was achieved. N Briggs thanked A Redding for his observation around mini-budgets and felt this was useful to consider.

6.9 A Redding asked about the community-focussed activity. C Meredith clarified this was for after school club and that before school club was now a bookable drop-in. A Redding questioned whether the fees had been market-tested. N Briggs noted that this has not been a priority for School recently but that there would be more of a focus in this area going forward. It was agreed that the activity should at least break-even for it to be viable.

6.10 A Redding expressed caution in FSM and pupil premium figures going forward. N Briggs asked C Meredith if the School were robust in communicating entitlement to FSM to parents. C Meredith confirmed.

6.11 M Thorp reported there would be a piece of work around School data and ensuring pupils were coded correctly.

6.12 A Redding requested that the budget setting incorporates year 2020-21 to show a full three year forecast.

- 6.13A Lomas asked where the SEN Notional Funding was reflected in the figures. A Redding confirmed Grove House SEN Notional Funding for 2018-19 was £286,725 which was included in the total LA delegated funds.
- 6.14V Khanna asked why there was a reduction in the miscellaneous income. It was suspected there had been some different coding recently so that will have moved elsewhere.
- 6.15C Meredith reported that the guideline for staff costs is about 70% so the School needs to save about £80k in this area.
- 6.16C Meredith reported a saving in education support staff due to re-negotiated terms and conditions.
- 6.17 In relation to premises staff, there was previously a significant amount of overtime being spent which was now under control.
- 6.18A Redding asked who would lead on executive finance if the School Business Manager was not replaced. M Thorp explained there would be an Executive Business Manager shared with Crossley Hall.
- 6.19C Meredith clarified that any vacancies through leavers were included in the figures. There was currently no long-term sickness being covered by supply.
- 6.20A Redding suggested that when budget setting a list was created of assumptions that had been made. He also suggested double-checking the data, especially where there were big differences from previously.
- 6.21 M Thorp noted that money had not always been spent strategically in the right place so some areas of expenditure were likely to increase.
- 6.22N Briggs was confident there was a plan in place to address the deficit. A Redding expressed his confidence in what C Meredith and the Governors had done. There would be further discussions around the time budget is allocated.

7. STRUCTURE OF GOVERNANCE

Structure

- 7.1 In February/March 2017 there was a new structure put in place to hold the School to account. N Briggs suggested this structure was no longer appropriate and was stifling leaders with too many Committees.
- 7.2 N Briggs proposed half-termly Full Governing Body meetings with no Performance or Resource Committees in order to be more strategic. This had already been agreed with M Thorp and L Clapham.
- 7.3 S Horsbrough suggested an annual Pay Committee following performance management. N Briggs agreed.
- 7.4 All Governors ratified the proposal.
Proposer: S Horsbrough Seconder: H Rush

Constitution

- 7.5 N Briggs referred to Statutory Guidance 2014 from the DfE in relation to constitution. The guidance stated the Governing Body should be no bigger than necessary, that election of Governors should be through skills and experience needed and that the Governing Body should review its effectiveness regularly.

- 7.6 That the constitution currently has four co-opted Governors, four parent Governors and one LA Governor.
- 7.7 That the proposal was to move to three co-opted Governors (R Butterfield, S Horsbrough, N Briggs), three parent Governors (H Rush, R Rehman, V Khanna), one LA Governor (vacant), a staff Governor (L Clapham) and the Executive Head-teacher.
- 7.8 V Khanna asked for M Thorp's views. M Thorp reported that in his experience it was better to work with a smaller group and that this model had run at Crossley Hall for the last two years. He fully supported the proposal.

8. OFSTED FEEDBACK

- 8.1 M Thorp reported that the overall outcome in all areas was Requires Improvement.
- 8.2 There were some tricky moments which entailed gathering evidence to show the School was not in special measures.
- 8.3 The inspectors came away with the same view as Governors with a mandate to move the School forward.
- 8.4 The School could expect a monitoring visit within 12 weeks.
- 8.5 M Thorp reported they were happy with the result and felt the process was fair and provided some reassurance.
- 8.6 L Clapham noted it was her first inspection as a Head of School. She found the process very supportive and felt they were well prepared. The report and outcome would now be used as a platform to move forward.
- 8.7 N Briggs expressed strongly that he felt the outcome was as a result of M Thorp and L Clapham's input since January. H Rush agreed they had made a major impact and V Khanna reported big improvements.
- 8.8 N Briggs thanked Governors who took part in the Governor session.
- 8.9 A Lomas noted a different feel to the inspection, that the School was calm, led by M Thorp and L Clapham. She also felt it was a good inspection team and it had not been the negative experience it had been on previous occasions.
- 8.10 L Clapham reported that Ofsted had been in touch with areas for improvement and they were awaiting the draft report.

Next steps

- 8.11 Transferring ownership and accountability to the School.
- 8.12 The School will be entering a tricky period with a step change between now and July in order to implement a vision for September.
- 8.13 A School Development Plan would be produced once the Ofsted report had been received.
- 8.14 The challenge for Governors would be to be less hands-on but more strategic and support leadership in implementing the School Development Plan as a key document.
- 8.15 L Clapham suggested it would be useful for Governors to speak with TLRs regarding action plans.

8.16 M Thorp reported that Yasmin Umarji had enquired about reducing LA support. M Thorp does not want to reduce support until they have got through section 8. N Briggs noted he would be deliberately reducing communications with the LA to encourage more communication through School.

9. HR

Received: Doc tabled 28/17-18 Head of School Report

- 9.1 L Clapham referred to section 10 Teaching and Learning Profile.
- 9.2 There were questions from Ofsted around quality of assessment in early years, especially Nursery, and the quality of teaching due to the disparity between classes. The previous inspection for early years had been 'good'.
- 9.3 A number of KS2 teachers require improvement.
- 9.4 M Thorp noted a strategic plan to ensure all aspects of school were fully staffed. Crossley Hall had been over-recruiting and have discussed with applicants potential opportunities at Grove House. Through this approach, an Assistant Head Teacher would be ready to start after Easter who has an early year's background. Crossley Hall will employ and deploy staff which can be followed by an internal recruitment and selection process to recruit them at Grove House. Crossley Hall would also be loaning a teacher to Grove House.
- 9.5 An advertisement had been placed for September for two teachers.
- 9.6 An experienced year 6 teacher from Crossley Hall would be doing a term's cover for year 6 at Grove House.
- 9.7 An Assistant Head Teacher due to return from maternity leave had been asked to consider a secondment at Grove House for four terms.
- 9.8 N Briggs agreed the plan provided a wider flexible model.

10. FINANCE

- 10.1 The audit report presented at Resource Committee was ratified.
- 10.2 Any significant actions that needed to be taken had been completed by C Meredith.
- 10.3 The report would be considered again in May.
- 10.4 Thanks were expressed to C Meredith for his efforts.

11. ACADEMISATION

Received: Doc tabled 20/17-18

- 11.1 N Briggs tabled a presentation for Governors to read.
- 11.2 It was agreed that M Thorp would invite someone to meet with the Governing Body. **Action: M Thorp**

12. SCHOOL WEBSITE

- 12.1 L Clapham provided a walkthrough of the new website. Some information had been taken from the old website.

- 12.2 The plan was for some professional photographs to be done for September when the new uniforms were issued.
- 12.3 There was some work to do on Ethos and Value (Governor section).
- 12.4 The prospectus requires proof-reading and will then be added.
- 12.5 Register of interests needs to be added. **Action: T Wright to send to L Clapham**
- 12.6 Some training was being undertaken with the admin team so they would be able to update the website. Someone from the ARC would also be trained. A Lomas suggested this would be Bridget Thompson.
- 12.7 A twitter and Facebook feed features on the homepage.
- 12.8 Alternative languages are available through a drop-down menu.
- 12.9 V Khanna asked if the website had been checked for compatibility. L Clapham clarified this had been done as part of the development. V Khanna pointed out the website was not working on Samsung phones. L Clapham will report to the developer. **Action: L Clapham**
- 12.10 A new screen will be erected in the hall tomorrow so the website can be displayed for parents' evenings on 22nd and 27th March. It was noted the parents evening would be a good opportunity for Governors to attend to talk to parents.
- 12.11 V Khanna enquired about website accessibility for colour-blindness. L Clapham had not received any feedback regarding this but noted the screen can be changed by individuals. A Lomas noted that, if requested, Braille documents can be produced by ARC staff.

13. BEHAVIOUR AND ATTENDANCE

- 13.1 Behaviour continues to improve.
- 13.2 L Clapham reported improvements in the way children were moving in and out of the hall which now needed to be rolled out to all behaviour across School.
- 13.3 There had been a reduction in the number of blue and red letters being issued. Those pupils on the radar had a clear nurturing need.
- 13.4 M Thorp reported increased exclusions across Schools. They have recently joined a local behaviour and attendance collaboration for primary schools and have a current bid with Shanadar for a behaviour and attendance training programme. This would be a four-term project starting in September with a training value of around £20k.
- 13.5 There was one exclusion of 1.5 days before the half-term break.
- 13.6 L Clapham reported on one pupil whose attendance was improving but he is unable to get himself into the classroom. The pupil has been referred for behaviour support; this had received support from mum.

14. GOVERNOR VISITS

- 14.1 R Butterfield undertook a Health and Safety site visit, the report was tabled at the Resource Committee.

Received: Doc 21/17-18

14.2A Lomas had undertaken an SEN visit to look at work around outcomes, support and funding. N Briggs reported feeling vulnerable in this area during the Ofsted visit. Attempts for a joint visit with R Lait last term were unsuccessful. A Lomas felt it would be useful for the School to engage someone with an SEN specialism.

15. POLICY REVIEW

Received: Doc 22/17-18 Nursery Admissions Policy

15.1 This was a Bradford LA policy. Agreed.

Received: Doc 23/17-18 ICT Acceptable Use Policy

15.2 This policy had been streamlined from the previous version.

15.3 V Khanna clarified that pupils would not be issued with a School email address. L Clapham confirmed.

15.4 Policy agreed.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

16.1 Received: Doc tabled 29/17-18. L Clapham reported that following the Ofsted visit she had spent some time getting to know staff and had done some work around expectations, referenced to teacher standards. Document on 'non-negotiables' had been sent to HR for approval. S Horsbrough suggested the document was signed in agreement and understanding. Expectations for non-teaching staff would be done at a later date.

16.2 M Thorp reported that the School had the opportunity of some funding for out-of-school activities of £13k. The deadline for bids was 9th March. M Thorp had been contacted by Diane Richardson, Swain House, to work in collaboration on a bid to employ a person to run school sports clubs between both schools. This would leave some money left to run other clubs. A Lomas noted that Swain House also had an ARC whose children rely on transport at the end of the day. It was agreed there may be some lunchtime clubs the ARC children could attend.

16.3 N Briggs asked Governors to consider the role of vice-chair following A Lomas' resignation. This would be considered at the next meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 2010 hours
