

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
GEORGE TOMLINSON PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY  
HELD ON THURSDAY 2 MARCH 2017  
AT 6PM, AT THE SCHOOL**

**Present:** Ms Gillian Barker (Chair) - Local Authority Governor

**Co-opted Governor(s)**

Mr Alun North  
Mr Andrew Warren

**Headteacher**

Ms Verity Carter

**Parent Governor(s)**

Mrs Maya Peyton-Nicoll

**Staff Governor**

Dr Matthew Laban

Clerk to the Governors: Donna Miller

Also present: Mr Bradley Ekman, Interim School Business Manager

**Summary of agreements and actions:**

| Minute reference | Formal agreements and/or actions identified                                    | Named person(s) for action(s) identified | Completion date |
|------------------|--|--|-----------------|
| 3.3              | Skills audit, Mr North to return his completed form.                           | Mr North                                 | 5 days          |
| 3.4              | Mrs Peyton-Nicoll welcomed nomination as being a SEND Link Governor.           | Governor Services                        | 5 days          |
| 5.8              | Agenda item – 2 year old provision for September 2017                          | Governor Services                        | 5 days          |
| 5.10             | School to share website development link when available                        | School                                   | When available  |
| 7.3              | Agenda item: Role of parent governors, good governance guide                   | Governor Services                        | 5 days          |
| 7.4              | Agenda item: What governors should expect from school leaders and vice versa   | Governor Services                        | 5 days          |
| 7.5              | Agenda item: Code of conduct and email protocol                                | Governor Services                        | 5 days          |
| 9.2.1            | School critical management policy to be published                              | School                                   | 5 days          |
| 9.3              | Mrs Peyton-Nicoll submit her website review findings to the school for action. | Mrs Peyton-Nicoll                        | 5 days          |
| 9.5              | Mr North and Mr Ekman to meet to review the                                    | Mr North                                 | April 2017      |

|      |   |                   |            |
|------|---|-------------------|------------|
|      | School building maintenance plan.   |                   |            |
| 9.7  | Agenda item: Complaints policy  | Governor Services | 5 days     |
| 13.4 | Mr Ekman to ensure all documents presented to governors had been filed in the governors' file in the school office. | Mr Ekman          | April 2017 |
| 15   | Agenda item: Teaching and Learning Review   | Governor Services | 5 days     |

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 1.1 Ms Barker opened the meeting and welcomed all those present. Governors welcomed all visitors to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Ms Ellie Ross and Mrs Debbie Strowbridge. In the absence of Mrs Strowbridge, governors agreed that Ms Barker chair the meeting.
- 1.3 The clerk confirmed the meeting was quorate with six governors present.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 2.1 The clerk confirmed that all declarations of personal and pecuniary interest forms were in place for all governors.
- 2.2 There were no declarations to consider relating to any agenda items.

**3. GOVERNING BODY**

- 3.1 The clerk confirmed that there were currently no vacancies on the board with no terms of office due to expire prior to 2020.
- 3.2 There was no consideration to disqualification applicable for this board.
- 3.3 Skills audit. This was received from Mrs Peyton-Nicoll and pending from Mr North.  
**Action: Mr North to return his completed form.**
- 3.4 Mrs Peyton-Nicoll welcomed nomination as being a SEND Link Governor.  
**Action: Governor Services**

**4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

- 4.1 Governors received the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2016 and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting. Mrs Strowbridge was asked to sign a copy of the minutes on behalf of the governing body.  
**Action: Governor Services**
- 4.1.1 Confidential minutes were taken.
- 4.2 Governors received the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2017 and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting subject to noting that Chloe Alder, Deputy Headteacher and Vicky Wiley, Assistant Headteacher were the two colleagues present at the meeting. Ms Barker signed a copy of the minutes and these were retained by the school.
- 4.2.1 Confidential minutes were taken.
- 4.2. Matters arising  
Governors duly noted that all requested agenda items were on this meeting's agenda.  
Minute 6.6, Governor training: Governor data training had been attended as agreed.  
Minute 10.9, Schools newsletter: action completed  
Minute 15.1, premises risk assessment reports: this action was pending.

|                                 |
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| Chair of Governors<br>Initials: |
|---------------------------------|

Minute 18, Governor Effectiveness Statement: Ms Ross had completed a draft as agreed; this was now pending final proofing before publishing.

Minute 22.3, Governors' Briefing: Ms Barker had attended the governors' briefing as agreed.

## 5. HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

Governors thanked Ms Carter for her informative report to governors.

### 5.1 Pupil premium letter

Q – Has the agreed letter sent to parents had an impact on pupil premium?

A – Not to date, but the school was more thorough in identifying children during the admissions process and it was hoped this would have an impact.

### 5.2 Exclusions

Q – There have been three one day exclusions and a further 2 day exclusion, why?

A – Challenging behaviour, there would be a discussion at the fair access panel regarding one pupil. Ms Carter noted to governors that further training for school staff on managing behaviour had been scheduled to enable the school's approach to behaviour management to be embedded across the whole school. It was highlighted that a mock Ofsted will be completed by the end of March. An external review on behaviour and attendance is also planned and will be undertaken by the Hawkswood Executive Head Julian Lee before Easter.

### 5.3 Bullying incidents

The schools report of serious bullying incidents in the school was reviewed, governors thanked school colleagues for the effort being made to change untrue perception of the school and bullying incidents; it was noted that training had been provided to mid-day assistants to address this with little impact currently, this remained an ongoing school focus.

### 5.4 Capital projects

Governors noted the school's proposal to use its existing capital funds balance to create a school library and sensory room. It was agreed that these would assist the school in addressing the needs of many of the pupils in addition to enabling an enhanced focus on reading; match funding available from the local authority was noted.

Ms Carter noted that the school was in initial planning stages and once quotations had been received governors would duly be consulted. Governors noted the need for staff to be clear that these works were financed by capital funding and not the schools general fund.

#### 5.4.1 Confidential minutes were taken.

### 5.5 Assertive mentoring

Ms Carter noted that the school was currently working to ensure visibility of impact of pupil premium funding. The school was implementing a scheme of assertive mentoring; the intention was to ensure that colleagues were empowered to ensure that those eligible children were receiving the support and services needed with an impact evaluation being scheduled for the end of term.

Governors clarified this was an additional role for those mentors and thanked Ms Carter for the policy detail.

### 5.6 Staffing structure

Governors noted the details within the Staffing structure as presented.

5.7 Workshops for parents

Governors noted these workshops were aimed at parental needs and establishing clear effective relationships.

5.8 EYFS development

Governors noted the report as issued and discussed the new funding available to schools focused on 'rising 2s'. The need for a 2 year old offer was acknowledged and highlighted that the potential offer would incorporate a much wider scope than that offered by any schools locally. Governors welcomed an update on this at the summer term meeting following a full feasibility study and the assessment of two year old provision.

**Action: Agenda item – 2 year old provision for September 2017**

5.9 Pupil Premium strategy and report 2016/2017

Governors noted that the information reviewed was published on the school website. Governors discussed the format of published data and agreed that future reports be produced in a different format to enable a clear identification of income and expenditure and how governors are monitoring spends, their impact and monitoring programme.

5.10 Website plan

Ms Carter informed governors that the work on this would take 6/8 weeks for completion. Governors noted that the costing for this work was below the benchmark where governors needed to consider spends; Mr Ekman assured governors that there was no need for financial approval of this spends. It was agreed that a link for the development site be shared with governors when available.

**Action: School to share development link when available**

5.11 Marketing plan

Governors reviewed the distributed plan and thanked Ms Carter for the work on marketing the school.

Q – Is there a known list of children who have opted out of their photos being used, and social media?

A – Yes, this was in place within the school. The school was confident this was in line with safeguarding procedures.

**6. CHAIRS ACTION**

In the absence of Mrs Strowbridge, Ms Barker informed governors that there had been no actions for governors' consideration.

**7. GOVERNANCE ITEMS**

7.1 Preparations for OfSTED

Governors noted that the self-evaluation form review was ongoing; it was agreed that the final draft of the Governors' effectiveness statement be considered by Ms Barker.

7.2 External review of Governance

Ms Barker advised governors that a National Leader of Governance, Mr Miller had been contacted with a view of him completing this, Mrs Strowbridge would be following this up.

- 7.3 Role of parent governors, good governance guide  
Documents deferred  
**Action: Agenda item**
- 7.4 What governors should expect from school leaders and vice versa  
Documents deferred  
**Action: Agenda item**
- 7.5 Code of conduct and email protocol  
Documents deferred  
**Action: Agenda item**
8. Leadership review  
Mr North informed governors that senior leaders had been asked to make a presentation to himself and Mrs Strowbridge detailing their role within the school action plan and their participation and impact within that; a presentation from leaders was scheduled for 16 March 2017, 4PM at the school.
9. School items
- 9.1 Pupil Premium letter  
Governors noted that the requested Pupil Premium letter to parents had been issued.
- 9.2 Critical incident management policy  
Governors thanked Mr Ekman for his work on this policy document and the merging of the schools two existing policies. Mr Ekman noted that the document clearly identified contacts, locations, local authority contact details etc. as necessary.
- 9.2.1 Governors reviewed the emergency contact list page and asked that an amendment to the closing line be made to ensure a cascade system is adopted, that page numbers be added, and that posts are named and not post holders. Having noted these amendment governors agreed to adopt the policy and for this to be shared with school colleagues.  
**Action: School critical management policy to be published**
- 9.3 School website compliance  
It was agreed that Mrs Peyton-Nicoll submit her website review findings to the school for action.  
**Action: Mrs Peyton-Nicoll**
- 9.4 School field  
A local community group had requested use of the school field on two occasions a week. The school would agree to this arrangement and review it in autumn 2017. Governors note that the organisation would be responsible for their own safeguarding arrangements and that the agreement ensures that this is confirmed.
- 9.5 School building maintenance plan  
The school had been working to update this to include a full review cycle. Governors noted that Ms Ross had been unable to attend a meeting with Mr Ekman and therefore Mr North agreed to stand in and attend this meeting with Mrs Peyton-Nicoll.  
**Action: Mr North to meet with Mr Ekman**
- 9.6 SLT Staffing plan  
This was included in the HT report with no planned changes for September 2017.

Q – Has the increased senior leadership team capacity had an impact in the school?

A – Yes, there was an evident impact and the school was now focused on ensuring that middle leaders were engaged in the school improvement plan and their role in achieving this. Governors noted the existing volume of learning support assistants in the school providing one to one support in the school.

Q – How are the teaching assistants working?

A – A clear timetable had been established, read write inc. groups had been established and these were working very well in the school with an evident culture change in approach and identifiable impact.

## 9.7 Communications

### 9.7.1 Complaints policy

Governors thanked Mrs Peyton-Nicoll for her ongoing work on this and welcomed a full draft for consideration on 30 March 2017.

**Action: Agenda item, 30 March.**

### 9.7.2 Newsletter Q&As

Governors discussed having frequently asked questions 'FAQ' published in the school newsletter and website, it was agreed this would assist parents and therefore it was agreed that this be implemented.

## 10. **FINANCE**

Governors thanked Mr Ekman for his detailed budget position to January 2017 (Appendix A).

Mr Ekman highlighted:

### Expenditure

- A full reconciliation to end January 2017 had been completed
- There was a variance in teaching staff, this was 77% spent whereby this would normally be 80% in January monitoring. This was due to a number of posts in the staffing structure being changed and a number of vacant posts in the autumn term 2016; spend in agency supply for autumn supported this.
- Education support staff was showing 99% spent, this was due to a coding error by payroll, this had now been rectified and would be reported accurately going forward; it was acknowledged that the report confirmed that reports were 20% out.
- The schools spend on staffing was anticipated to achieve a benchmark of 75% total spends.
- Overall the school was at 82% spent on staffing, +2% on where the school should be, however there had been some additional hour claims that had not been forecast in addition to redundancy costs.
- The schools budget planning tool and actual spends now connected and 'talked' to one another to ensure accuracy in the monitoring reports being considered by governors. All coding errors have been rectified and would be accurate in the new financial year.
- There was a need to amend the budget report to reflect the 1% backdated pay, the payments were pending backdated to September and therefore the -3% being presented would rectify itself.
- Indirect employee expenses were noted as per Mr Ekman's report

- The school's rates budget was showing 169% spent, this was a historical issue governors were aware of. The school was aware of an amendment being made and this would balance itself in the 2017/2018 budget.
- Learning resources was underspent at 53%; governors recorded their requirement for the school to be allocating funds across the school in line with the school development plan for 2017/2018.
- The current 3% spend in catering was subject to an invoicing delay for school meals, this would be rectified by year end.

#### Income

- A full in year receipt of funds was anticipated, the school was currently at 81% received.
- Breakfast club income for 2017/2018 required a full review as it was not felt the existing budget of £159K was achievable; an estimated c£123K was expected in 2016/2017.
- Catering income was currently at 48%, this was anticipated to increase following the school's meal price increase.

#### Overall

- The school previously predicted an in year deficit of £17,834 the school was now able to confirm a predicted carry forward balance of £150,387. Governors noted that this figure was accurate as of January 2017 and would need to be reviewed when considering the financial year closedown.
- The school's financial predictions identified a reduction in school funding over the forthcoming three years.
- The school bank balance currently reported as £472,766.15 subject to those known pending commitments being paid; totalling £24,015.
- Governors reviewed the school's financial dashboard (appendix B) and noted that the predicted carry forward balance was 6% of the schools income. Governors noted that the presented 2017/2018 figures were not accurate and therefore not to be referenced.
- The school's capital funding was ring fenced and not to be used when considering the school's financial position.

Thanks were expressed to Mr Ekman for his work on the school's budget.

## 11. FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION

### 11.1 Statement of internal control (Appendix C)

Ms Barker informed governors that she and Mr Ekman had reviewed this document proposed for approval. Governors held a vote and unanimously agreed to adopt the statement of internal control.

### 11.2 School financial regulations (Appendix D)

Mr Ekman noted that this document had been updated to include information on BACS payments, Petty Cash and school Charge Card. Governors held a vote and unanimously agreed to adopt the school's financial regulations.

### 11.3 Best value statement (Appendix E)

Governors held a vote and unanimously agreed to adopt the school best value statement as presented.

## 12. DRAFT 2017/2018 BUDGET PLAN AND THREE YEAR BUDGET PLAN

Governors duly noted the need to defer this item to the next meeting following financial forecasts from the local authority.

**13. FINANCIAL AUDIT REPORT (Appendix F)**

- 13.1 Governors noted receipt of the financial audit report.
- 13.2 Governors discussed the financial audit report findings and unanimously agreed that concerns be raised with the local authority as governors did not feel that the position being reported for 2016/2017 was one of financial certainty.
- 13.3 Governors further advised that Ms Carter liaise with the local authority regarding the report as she had been named within the audit but had not reviewed it
- 13.4 Governors recorded their wish for Mr Ekman to ensure all documents presented to governors had been filed in the governors' file in the school office.

**Action: Mr Ekman**

**14. SCHOOLS FINANCIAL VALUE STANDARD**

- 14.1 Governors thanked Ms Barker for her time spent on reviewing this.
- 14.2 Governors agreed to defer the school financial value standard to the next meeting.

**Action: Agenda item**

**15. TEACHING AND LEARNING REVIEW**

- 15.1 Deferred.

**Action: Agenda item**

**16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was none.

**17. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

- 17.1 Confidential minutes were taken.

Chair: ..... (print)

..... (sign)

Date: .....

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| Chair of Governors<br>Initials: |
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