

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
GEORGE TOMLINSON PRIMARY SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY  
HELD ON THURSDAY 27 APRIL 2017  
AT 18:00, AT THE SCHOOL**

**Present:** Mrs Debbie Strowbridge – Chair, Co-opted Governor

**Local Authority Governor**

Ms Gillian Barker

**Co-opted Governor(s)**

Mr Alun North

Mr Andrew Warren

**Headteacher**

Ms Verity Carter

**Parent Governor(s)**

Mrs Maya Peyton-Nicoll

Ms Ellie Ross

Clerk to the Governors: Mrs Donna Miller

Also present: Mrs Gillian Hart, School Business Manager  
Miss Chloe Alder, Assistant Headteacher

**Summary of agreements and actions:**

<b>Minute reference</b>	<b>Formal agreements and/or actions identified</b>	<b>Named person(s) for action(s) identified</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
3.2	Action: School to advertised staff governor vacancy	School	May 2017
4.2	Action: Mrs Barker to circulate details of managing agents for school lettings	Ms Barker	May 2017
4.2	School to check if the School's Financial Value Standard submission was made	School	May 2017
4.2	Action: Ms Cater to follow up the status of the executive Headteacher liabilities	Ms Carter	May 2017
7	Agenda item: Complaints policy	Clerk	May 2017
5.6	Action: Ms Carter to share behaviour report when available	Ms Carter	When available
8.7	Action: Mrs Hart to share information on the energy contract with the Resources Committee	Mrs Hart	May 2017
8.9	Agenda item: Photocopy lease	Clerk	May 2017
10.2	Parental feedback summary document be produced and dates of future events to be shared	Ms Carter	July 2017

11.2	Action: Finance training to be arranged	Mrs Hart	June 2017
11.3	Agenda item: Competency framework	Clerk	June 2017
15.2	School policy review schedule to be reviewed	Mrs Hart	Summer 2017

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 1.1 Mrs Strowbridge opened the meeting and welcomed all those present. Governors welcomed all visitors to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.
- 1.2 There were no apologies for absence with all governors present.
- 1.3 The clerk confirmed the meeting was quorate with seven 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 was one staff governor vacancy, with no other terms of office due to expire prior to 2020.
- 3.2 Staff governor election – Ms Carter informed governors that the advertisement was pending. Governors discussed the need to ensure the advert acknowledged the skills audit and advertised those identified areas needing strengthening in line with the governance competency framework.  
**Action: School to advertise vacancy**
- 3.3 There was no consideration to disqualification applicable for this board.
- 3.4 The clerk confirmed that DBS checks were in place for all current governors.

**4. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

- 4.1 Governors received the minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2017 and agreed these to be an accurate record of the meeting subject to the following amendments:  
Minute 4.2 – should read ‘School critical incident policy’.  
Minute 9.11 are struck from the record.  
Having agreed the amendments, Mrs Strowbridge signed a copy of the minutes and these were retained by the school.
- 4.2 Matters arising  
Minute 4.2: The detail pertaining to Link Responsibilities was clarified as:  
Health & Safety – Monitoring role with Gillian Hart now in post to feed highlights back to H/S Link Governor Ms Ross  
Maths and Literacy – to be fed into the link position focused on pupil premium  
Pupil Premium – Ellie Ross  
Governor priorities – these were board improvement priorities and not just for the Chair of Governors; priorities would be revisited on a regular basis.  
Minute 4.2: the Health and Safety Policy was in the school office.  
Minute 4.2: the school field risk assessment was to be an agenda item for June 2017

Chair of Governors Initials:
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**Action: Agenda item**

Minute 4.2: The School's lettings policy was reviewed by Mrs Strowbridge with a view of the pre-school and school field. Mrs Strowbridge informed governors that the revised policy would be circulated to governors and Mrs Barker agreed to circulate details of organisations that oversee school lettings and pricing.

**Action: Mrs Barker to circulate details of managing agents for school lettings**

Minute 9.5: Governors were unclear if the SFVS document had been amended and a final version shared with all governors and the Local Authority; the interim business manager had left.

**Action: School to check if the SFVS submission was made**

Minute 9.6: Governors noted the outstanding query over an existing liability for Executive Headteacher payments in 2016; Ms Carter agreed to follow this up.

**Action: Ms Cater to follow up the status of the executive Headteacher liabilities**

Minute 9.9: A review of governance, this was an agenda item for this meeting.

**5. SAFEGUARDING**

- 5.1 Governors thanked Ms Carter for the distributed report. Ms Carter noted that the school was pleased with the safeguarding review report produced by GHSL; the review being completed by Gill Hand.
- 5.2 Ms Carter noted the identified area for improvement was the single central record; governors noted that they were aware of the identified need to improve the accuracy and maintenance of the register. Ms Carter assured governors that the school was now confident the school's business manager had the register completed and in line with requirements. Mrs Hart assured governors that all columns were now in place with the report producing accurate reports. Ms Carter assured governors that as per her report, Mrs Hart was confident in the school's systems in place.
- 5.3 The report confirmed that all of the school's policies and processes relating to safeguarding, including training, designated safeguarding leads, Governance, risk assessments and parent and pupil voice were all highly effective.
- 5.4 Mrs Strowbridge highlighted the report detailed that the auditor considered the school's practices to be exemplar and that they could be used as models to support other schools and governors strengthening processes. Governors recorded their acknowledgement of this and thanks to the school staff for their commitment in ensuring safeguarding processes and procedures have been rectified and implemented effectively. The Safeguarding link governor was welcomed to review the single central record upon their next visit to the school.
- 5.5 The school had also had a mock inspection completed by Paul Burton, an ex-HMI with 27 years experience of working for Ofsted. The outcome of this was that the school was judged to be 'good' in all categories.
- 5.6 A behaviour report was undertaken by Mr Julian Lee, the Executive Headteacher of Hawkwood PRU. This will be shared with governors once compiled.
- Action: Ms Carter to share behaviour report once received**

**6. CHAIR'S ACTION**

- 6.1 There were none to report.

**7. SCHOOL ITEMS**

- 7.1 Complaints policy  
Mrs Peyton-Nicol advised governors that she was working on reviewing the policy to ensure the schools golden rules are incorporated within the policy to ensure it is tailor made for George Tomlinson Primary.
- Action: Agenda item**

## 8. SCHOOL BUDGET

8.1 Mrs Hart informed governors that:

### 2016/2017 Outturn

This had been submitted to the local authority with a surplus balance of £145,146; £96,977 Revenue and £48,169 Capital.

8.2 There had been an in year overspend of £65,789; the reasons for this overspend was detailed as per appendix A.

8.3 Unusually, orders were being placed January – March 2017, it was believed this was done as a result of poor advice being given to school on funding available for resources; the school's previous business manager had not reconciled the financial accounts to account for final spends and therefore the liabilities were reported incorrectly.

8.4 Ms Carter and Mrs Hart assured governors that the information provided to this meeting was accurate.

8.5 Governors noted the shared documents supporting table one, the school's balances and reserve sheet and reviewed the balances as detailed and in Mrs Hart's notes to governors.

8.6 Governors considered the poor support the board had been received from the local authority throughout a period where critical support and assurances were need from the local authority. Governors challenged the financial proficiency of those council employees deploying business managers and that of the business managers deployed. Governors reviewed the information shared at the meeting on 1 March 2017 and noted these evidenced the information previously given. Governors wanted checks and balances in place to ensure confidence in the reports they receive; up-to-date bank statements, financial training from both the business manager and Waltham Forest will support this undertaking.

8.7 Governors recorded the school's carry forward surplus balance as £145,145. Ms Carter reminded governors that the school had a plan for Capital funding spends for school library and sensory room with £40,000 being placed in contingency

Q – What is the situation with the school's energy provider, has a contract been sought?

A – Yes, this is being led by the Local Authority. Governors discussed the need consider best value for the school and that the school was contracted for a fixed term – the term to be clarified.

**Action: Mrs Hart to ascertain details on the Energy contract aware and share this with governors.**

**Action: Finance Committee agenda item**

8.8 Governors reviewed the 2017-2018 Section 251 – Income

Governors noted that the 2017-2018 budget could not be considered at this time as it was not finalised and therefore a special meeting would need to be called to consider a fully informed budget.

**Action: Additional meeting scheduled for 25 May 2017**

8.9 Photocopy lease

Mrs Hart informed governors that the school's existing three photocopiers were out of lease and did not support the school's needs; there was a need to consider changing the lease to a new provider.

Mrs Hart shared information on a potential supplier, costing £1,315 per quarter; not including paper but did include toner and waste toner etc.

Q – Were three quotes obtained for this proposal?

A – No, as the spend was £20,000 over five years.

Governors thanked Mrs Hart and asked that alternative quotes be obtained to ensure best value and requested that Local Authority be consulted before any formal consideration is given.

**Action: Mrs Hart to obtain additional quotes**

**Action: Agenda item**

## **9. GOVERNOR SERVICES SLA**

9.1 Governors agreed that the Resources Committee consider the arrangement with governor services to ensure best value is being obtained.

**Action: Finance Committee agenda item**

## **10. GOVERNANCE REVIEW/ OFSTED PREPARATION**

10.1 Governors agreed that a cycle of presentations being implemented within the board's annual cycle of business to ensure colleagues and governors were aware of one another and clear communication channels were open.

10.2 Parental voice was discussed and governors discussed the need to engage with those less vocal parents in the community. Parent workshops were acknowledged to be a strong mechanism of engagement with parents that gained information on perspective of the school. Ms Carter noted that all responses to those sessions held were positive, with no negative feedback being received. Governors requested that a summary document be produced by the school for governors to consider at the summer term meeting.

**Action: Summer term agenda time – Parental engagement session feedback**

Governors discussed the importance of governor attendance at parental events where possible to raise visibility of governors; Ms Carter agreed to share the schedule of dates with governors including the year 6 leaver events.

**Action: Ms Carter to share schedule of school events with governors**

## **11. GOVERNORS' TRAINING**

11.1 Mrs Strowbridge informed governors that she had attended training on mentoring and coaching, and Multi Academy Trusts training in her role as a national leader of governance.

11.2 governors noted that it had been agreed for a training session focused on Finance was to be arranged with Mrs Hart.

11.3 Governors agreed to defer consideration of the governors' competency framework,

**Action: Agenda item**

11.4 A governance review meeting with was scheduled for 26 June 2017 @3PM. Matt Miller MBE & NLG Advocate

## **12. ESG SERVICE REVIEW**

12.1 deferred pending receipt of information from the Local Authority. The known information on funding of services was discussed however governors did not feel that they had sufficient information on this item to give this item their full consideration.

## **13. LEARNING PARTNERSHIP**

13.1 Mrs Barker noted that a consultation was underway regarding the establishment of a learning partnership that would be driven by schools. No decision had been taken regarding the direction of educational policy and therefore governors agreed that they

did not feel this was an appropriate time for governors to consider joining a learning partnership.

- 13.2 Governors noted that there was a need to consider the schools future status at a later date.

**14. DATE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

- 14.1 The next board meeting was scheduled for Thursday 25 May @6PM.

Agenda items:

Budget

School Policies:

Inclusion and SEND

Anti-Bullying

Governor Services SLA

- 14.2 There was to be a special Governance review meeting with Mr Miller, Thursday 26 June 2017 @3PM.

- 14.3 Governing Board meeting: Thursday 29 June 2017

Agenda items:

School Development Plan

Head teacher's report

School field risk assessment

Competency framework

Parental engagement session feedback

A meeting of the Resources Committee was to be scheduled by Mrs Barker; on a Friday at 3.30PM.

Agenda items:

Governor Services SLA

Energy Contract

Mid-day Assistants

Draft School budget 2017/2018

- 14.4 Schedule of meetings for 2017/2018

Governors asked that the clerk prepare a schedule of meeting dates consisting of two board meetings per term (one a half term) and with the Resources Committee to meet once per term.

**Action: Clerk**

**15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 15.1 Governors noted the need to review the school development plan.

- 15.2 School Policies

Governors asked that Mrs Hart review all school policies to ensure a robust review cycle was in place.

**Action: Mrs Hart**

- 15.3 Governance Priorities

Mrs Strowbridge informed governors that she felt there was a need to record three priorities that governors can focus on and monitor. Link governors will be assigned to these priorities; these were agreed as:

1 - Improvement to the pockets of teaching 'requiring improvement'. The tools to track and challenge this were identified as the Head's report to governors, support plans in place and an impact presentation focused teaching and learning.

2 – Pupil Premium spends impact and the outcomes for disadvantaged children. Governors noted that evidence for this would be school data.

3 – Governors recorded that priority 3 was to be determined; this priority would be focused on outstanding governance and therefore agreeable following the governance review meeting in June 2017.

15.4 School Website

The school's new website was acknowledged to be live and very accessible, all outstanding actions previously identified had been actioned with assurance being sought from the school that all data was up to date and all statutory publications are published.

15.5 Governance Effectiveness Statement

Governors agreed to review this following the review of governance.

**16. CONFIDENTIAL**

16.1 Confidential Minutes were taken.

There was no other business.

Governors were thanked for their attendance and participation in the meeting. The meeting closes at 19:55.

Chair: ..... (print)

..... (sign)

Date: .....

Chair of Governors Initials:
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