

Signature of Chair:

Date:

BOW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL - FGB - NO.7
Minutes 27 April 2021 - 6pm - Virtual Meeting via ZOOM

Present: Melanie Bishop; Erin Blake (Vice Chair); Anna Fay; Lesley Hodgson (Head); Tony Neal (Chair); Kathryn Tayler; Megan Heath (Clerk)

Late Arrival: Richard Drake

Apologies: Anita Jellings; Bella Westlake

7.1	Apologies and Business Interests
7.2	Minutes of FGB5 23.02.21
7.3	Matters Arising
7.4	Lead Governor Reports 1. Personnel 2. Premises 3. Curriculum 4. Safeguarding & Inclusion 5. Community & Parental Links 6. Finance
7.5	Clerk's Update
7.6	Budget
7.7	SDP
7.8	Self-evaluation
7.9	Meeting Dates
7.10	Staffing Structure
7.11	Electrical Repair
7.12	GDPR
7.13	Safeguarding
7.14	Swimming Pool Committee
7.15	Training
7.16	Policies and Procedures 1. Anti-bullying Policy (T&L) 2. RE Policy (T&L) 3. Sex & Relationships Policy (T&L) 4. Disciplinary Policy 5. Redundancy Policy 6. Staff Grievance Policy 7. Attendance Policy
7.17	Bow Times
7.18	Website
AOB	Governor Resignation
7.19	Next meeting

PROCEDURAL

7.1 **Apologies** received from AJ and BW. Agreed and sanctioned. RD will be late. There are no changes to business interests.

7.2 **Minutes** from FGB5 23.02.21 were agreed as an accurate record.

7.3 **Matters Arising** from the minutes of the meeting on 23.02.21

- See 'Summary of Actions' document.
- Item 5.3.3 TN and LH have met and discussed the robustness of finance governance. There are issues around only one person knowing certain elements, and the potential problems that arise from this (eg. absence/resignation). This is largely due to the size of the school and staff availability. Carried forward.

- Item 4.12.1 There has been no contact from AJ and BW. MH to remind them.
- Item 5.3 This item is complete.
- Item 5.12 EB has made a start but would like school to settle (post COVID closure) before completion. EB would also like to research what other schools have asked.

ACTION: MH to remind AJ and BW of their task.

7.4 Lead Governor Reports

7.4.1 Personnel - MB

- Personnel report circulated prior to meeting.
- MB now meets with LH termly. Discussions include concerns; trends; policies; etc. MB suggested that she could occasionally meet with AF to free up some of LH's time, and to also get a different perspective, on certain items. AF agreed.
- There is a new 1:1 TA. She is SEND trained and her experience will be beneficial to the school.
- MB met a new member of staff via ZOOM. The staff member spoke very highly of their experience and support so far.
- The SDP links with the mental health and wellbeing of staff.
- All the key actions of the SDP are ongoing.
- Some budget has been allocated for wellbeing.
- *Governors asked about the wellbeing information being sent to staff and whether it needs condensing, due to there being so much of it.*
 - LH explained how she is putting it all out there, and how staff cannot be forced to use it. If they need it they will use it.
 - Staff were very positive about a mental health professional who visited the school to work with the children earlier in the year and have been able to utilise some of her techniques.
- *Governors asked if there is budget allocated specifically for staff wellbeing.*
 - LH explained how a majority of the support information she has shared is free. Staff have been accessing different elements, that are relevant to them.
- A draft wellbeing policy was circulated. However, staff have written their own wellbeing policy. Governors recognised the importance of staff owning their own policy.
- The staff written policy references the governor role, however this has not been disclosed directly to governors.
- *Governors asked that they are made aware of any reference to them in future policies.*
- Governors noted the main difference between the staff written policy and the circulated draft is that the draft references specific places where help can be sought.
- *Governors asked if references to specific places to seek help should be added to the staff written policy.*
 - LH explained how the draft policy was for a school with more staff, where staff are likely to feel more isolated, due to COVID restrictions, than BCPS.
 - Staff in BCPS do not feel isolated and support each other effectively. The emails containing mental health support circulated by LH have been useful.
 - LH explained how staff will inform her if they have any mental health concerns about a colleague.

- *Governors asked if there were any concerns about new members of staff fitting into the team and receiving the same levels of support.*
 - LH explained how she is not sure, however it is unlikely that a new staff member would be struggling straight away.
 - Governors were reminded how MBs ZOOM meeting with a new staff member concluded that they were highly supported.
- The idea of a Wellbeing Lead Governor has been recommended for discussion by Babcock. A potential Terms of Reference (TOR) for this position has been circulated. This covers: staff mental health; staff support; training; and policy.
- Having a wellbeing governor demonstrates that we are taking this issue seriously.
- The TOR will need to be incorporated into next year's annual cycle.
- MB is willing to take on this role to pair with her personnel role.

RD joined the meeting. Governors updated RD on the Wellbeing TOR.

- Wellbeing Lead Governor TOR
 - Proposed by EB. Seconded by KT. Agreed by ALL.

7.4.2 Premises - RD

- The quinquennial survey report has been published. Costings have been provided and this needs combining with the Asset Management Plan.
- The health and safety audit was carried out today. The report will follow. The inspector suggested there were no major issues.
- The surveyor had a lot of out of date information. He focussed on the electrical and mechanical elements rather than a full review of the school fabric.
- Some suggestions will not be practical to uphold due to funds being prioritised elsewhere (eg. replacing the lino in the ladies toilet is not a priority)
- RD is booked to attend Health and Safety governor training.

ACTION: RD to combine costings on quinquennial survey with Asset Management Plan.

7.4.3 Curriculum - AJ/BW

- Both AJ and BW are absent.

7.4.4 Safeguarding & Inclusion - KT

- The Governance Briefing on 02/03/21 was very helpful and touched on safeguarding.
- The importance of the school website was emphasised as this is a 'shop window' for Ofsted. KT reviewed the safeguarding area of our website and it appears strong, however it would be appreciated if governors could double check to ensure compliance.
- Governance Today would like stories of 'best practice' to share.
- All governors were recommended to look at the safeguarding Q Cards on the Babcock website.
- The importance of school attendance record was discussed at the briefing. This links to safeguarding. Staff were praised for our good attendance rates, when compared to the Devon average.

- Complaints guidance was covered in the briefing. Governors confirmed that a governor not linked to our school would attend a second (appeals) committee hearing, but not the initial first committee hearing.
- KT and LH attended Safer Recruitment Refresher training. There was not much new material. They reinforced to need to be vigilant and the link to school policies.
- Maintaining the Single Central Record (SCR) is important. KT visited the school on 19.03.21 to review the SCR and sign the relevant documents. There were no issues to raise.
- It was established that recruitment paperwork is kept on file for 12 months. Interviewer's names will be noted at the top of the paperwork, as evidence that at least 2 people have carried out the interviews.
- KT would like to attend school to carry out a safeguarding and SEND learning walk.

ACTION: 1. ALL governors to check safeguarding pages of the school website and email any concerns of issues to KT.

2. KT to arrange a safeguarding and SEND learning walk.

7.4.5 Community & Parental Links - EB

- There are concerns around the strength of FOBS (Friends of Bow School). Numbers are declining and current members appear unmotivated. Fundraising during COVID is difficult. Some members are unwilling to think of alternative fund raising ideas. Parents are also not supporting ideas being carried out (the Easter trail had a poor turnout). Governors need to be aware that any additional funding streams from FOBS will be unreliable.
- It was noted how parents' personal struggles are not always known, and this could be a reason for the lack of motivation from some members. The school, in conjunction with FOBS, is planning a 'sponsored mile' event.
- Bow Bears Pre-school have had a piece of land allocated for them to build their own premises. It will mean they will be able to provide care from ages 2 up and could provide before and after school clubs. If the school got involved there could be many benefits, including appealing to working parents. This project is in the very early stages.

7.4.6 Finance - TN

- This will be covered under item 7.6.

7.5 Clerk's Update

- Governors were reminded to send training certificates or proof of attendance to MH. This could be a simple email with a sentence summarising what they learned. MH will send individual reminders to governors.
- The policy folders in the office have been updated. The No-Smoking Policy in the folder is newer than the copy MH holds electronically. It contains newer dates but the content is the same. This policy has not had any changes made to it for a long time, therefore this is not an issue.
- MH will continue with the catch-up filing tomorrow.
- MH explained how she will note actions she is aware of as complete, rather than ask for an update, from now on. If governors have any further comments they can bring this up during the meeting.

- The Development for Clerks Course
 - The title for MHs school based project is “To support the governing body of Bow Community Primary School by researching alternative leadership options for the school and the associated advantages and disadvantages”.
 - Part of the plan for this project is to email governors monthly mini-reports ensuring governors are aware of the current position of BCPS, in order to make informed decisions.
 - MH has her first mentor call next week so the project plan and title may alter slightly.
 - A delegation activity flagged the need for a FGB TOR. MH will write this and edit with TNs support over the summer.
 - ‘Conflicts of Interest’ is an item that should be on every agenda. The idea being that governors declare if they have any personal conflicts of interest with any item and they potentially leave the meeting for that item. This will be added under item 1 with apologies and business interests.

ACTION: MH to send governor training evidence reminders to all relevant governors.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

7.6 Budget

- The summary forecast is over 5 years.
- The budget ended up better than anticipated, with years 1, 2 and 3 balancing. Years 4 and 5 are currently in deficit. Years 4 and 5 are not causing concern due to the fact that the income is not inflated and pupil numbers are currently unknown.
- The benchmarking highlights that the driver of our high staffing cost is our high percentage of SEND pupils. Our EHCP share is 8%, which is double County average. This is taking £40-50K per year out of our budget, which is a large over-balance for a small school. The benchmarking supports our budget claim and it highlights that in every other area we are average. Reducing our budget would involve reducing EHCP pupil numbers. It is more cost effective for County to support EHCP pupils through mainstream schools.
- *An email was circulated around governors encouraging them to question and challenge the budget. This note will be filed with FGB minutes to record the budget related questions raised.*
- Staff costs should not go above 78% and ours are at 80%. Without extra funding this will start to impact other children’s education.
- Staff are frugal as they are aware of the budget situation.
- The carry forward has been aided by the reduced costs during the COVID closures.
- COVID handwashing regimes have reduced levels of illness within the school.
- *Governors asked if handwashing routines will be maintained post-COVID to keep the illness levels low.*
 - LH explained how they will and it has vastly improved attendance. Although they will be scaled down slightly.
- Budget approval
 - Proposed by TN. Seconded by MB. Agreed by ALL.

7.7 SDP

- *Governors asked if an update of the catch-up programme will be provided at T&L3.*
 - LH explained that it will. Each day the catch-up has a different focus.
- *Governors asked why the training is on hold (under Quality of Education) and what the impact of this has been.*
 - LH explained that the maths mastery has not been possible during remote learning. The method relies on pupils being together. Now pupils have returned, it is being filtered back through the classes.
 - The maths mastery lead teacher's training has been postponed.
 - *Governors asked if LH is confident that this will be caught up by the end of the academic year.*
 - LH explained how it will not be. The training still needs rescheduling. This will be carried forward to next year.
- *Governors asked how the embedding of RSHE is developing.*
 - LH explained how it was started by the lead teacher at the beginning of this year, then carried on by a supply teacher during the lead teacher's long-term absence. The gaps are being filled in now that the lead teacher is back in school.
 - First aid has not been covered in RSHE, ideas are being looked at.
 - RSHE will be embedded over the next year.
- *Governors asked about the timescale for the work on the MUGA.*
 - LH explained how the groundworks were scheduled to take place over Easter but had to be postponed due to the company being unable to source the equipment and materials needed for current jobs during lockdown, which then meant that those early works were postponed, having a knock-on effect as to the date that ours would go ahead.
 - The groundworks are now due to take place during the summer holiday. The resurfacing will take place in summer 2022.
 - *Governors asked if the struggle to get quotes mentioned at a prior meeting was for this resurfacing work.*
 - LH explained that the struggle to get quotes was for the groundworks. Quotes for the resurfacing work have not been gathered yet.
- *Governors asked when the new SDP would be ready.*
 - LH explained that it will be ready in the Autumn term. It will be with staff, to amend, next half term. However, this coincides with report writing, and LH wants to keep pressure to a minimum. The SDP will be ready in October, however drafts can be shared earlier.
- *Governors stated how they would appreciate receiving a draft SDP sooner than October.*

7.8 Self-evaluation

- TN circulated answers to the questions and asked for any comments.
- It is encouraging to see how many of the points raised are already covered.
- Concerns include:
 - analysing the chairs performance - we do not currently do this. Governors were asked to think about how we could do this.

- supporting individual governors - the term appraisal is used but it was noted how this is not appropriate to use on volunteers. The idea of an annual catch-up with the chair was tabled.
- succession planning - this is difficult with a small board. TN will bring a proposal to FGB8.
- Ideas, thoughts and questions were encouraged and governors were asked to direct them to TN.
- The importance of the handover process was discussed. A governor described a term-long handover and how helpful this was.

ACTION: TN to bring a succession planning proposal to FGB8.

7.9 Meeting Dates

- These will be discussed and proposed in June.
- The clerk asked if we are keeping the 2 'empty' FGBs in the cycle. Governors explained that we are due to the increasing size of the agendas. It gives us the option to spread items over more than one meeting.

ACTION: LH and TN to set dates for next year's meetings.

7.10 Staffing Structure

- Governors can only ratify, but ultimately it is LHs decision as an operational matter.
- Potential new pupils with EHCPs could necessitate recruiting more 1:1 TA's.
- There is a lack of general TA's. There is one in Foxcubs and one in Otters. All other TAs are 1:1.
- Currently, there is no change to the staffing structure.

7.11 Electrical Repair

- An email was circulated to all governors detailing an electrical fault and a quote for the repairs. Offline governor approval was sought. All governors agreed via email.
- The school could not find 3 quotes as required. This was explained to governors in the email. This is an ongoing issue in all areas. COVID is partly to blame.
- The electrical repair was officially approved by ALL.

STATUTORY REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

7.12 GDPR

- The school continues to be compliant.
- All GDPR policies were updated in the Spring term.
- There have been no flags or issues from the Data Protection Officer (DPO).
- There is GDPR training for all school staff tomorrow.

7.13 Safeguarding

- This was covered in item 7.4.4.

7.14 Swimming Pool Committee

- The Swimming Pool Committee has met.
- 2021 opening proposal is ongoing.
- Qualified lifeguards are required and teacher training needs completing.

- The COVID risk assessment needs updating to address the swimming pool reopening.
- Updates to the risk assessments and procedures have been discussed with the chair of the swimming pool committee. The swimming pool was last open in summer 2019.
- COSHH materials need logging and adding to the swimming pool risk assessment.
- The Lettings Policy needs updating to merge the swimming pool with the school premises. COVID rules will also need addressing.
- The insurance company stated that the pool was not covered during the summer holidays. However, DCC have stated that it will be covered if the Risk Assessment is approved. LH has this is writing.
- Chairs action will be used to approve the risk assessment if there are no appropriate governor meetings prior to the potential reopening date.
- The risk assessments get harder each year. We are one of the last schools in the area to still have a pool.
- It is hoped that all children will get to use the swimming pool before the end of the summer term.

7.15 Training

7.15.1 Health and Safety Trained Governors

- The health and safety audit flagged a lack of health and safety trained governors.
- The health and safety auditor stated that the health and safety governor needs to walk through the fire risk assessment. The auditor has offered to join him for this.
- RD is booked to attend Health and Safety Training.

7.15.2 Training Activities

- Governors were again reminded about sending certificates to MH.
- Governors were informed of the array of training available online. The Babcock Governor Briefings were recommended. Governors were also signposted to the Babcock Q Cards.
- It has been flagged that we need more governors trained to Safeguarding Level 3. KT has safeguarding level 3 and will need a refresher during the autumn term. EB has safeguarding level 2. Safeguarding level 3 used to be a 2 day course. The refresher was a virtual course over 2 mornings. It was agreed that EB will upgrade to Level 3. MB offered to do Safeguarding level 3 if EB cannot.
- BW has attended her Induction for New Governor Training.
- MB attended Governing HR in Your Setting; and Governing the Finances.
- MH is to attend GDPR update training tomorrow.

7.16 Policies and Procedures

7.16.1 Anti-bullying Policy (T&L)

- There are no changes to this policy.

7.16.2 RE Policy (T&L)

- *Governors asked if the teachers are all ready and aware of the new policy.*
 - LH explained how it has been through staff meetings and has been fitted into the annual plan.

7.16.3 Sex & Relationships Policy (T&L)

- This has been superseded by the RSHE policy.

7.16.4 Disciplinary Policy

- One minor change - inclusion of accessibility statement added to procedure flow chart.

7.16.5 Redundancy Policy

- There are no changes to this policy.

7.16.6 Staff Grievance Policy;

- One minor change - inclusion of accessibility information on page 2.

7.16.7 Attendance Policy

- This policy is not due for review until June. Carried forward.

7.16.1 Anti-bullying Policy (T&L); 7.16.2 RE Policy (T&L); 7.16.4 Disciplinary Policy; 7.16.5 Redundancy Policy; 7.16.6 Staff Grievance Policy

- Policies proposed by KT. Seconded by EB. Agreed by ALL.

ACTION: 1. MB to send updated policies to MH.

2. MH to move Attendance Policy to FGB8 in the annual cycle.

COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNICATION

7.17 Bow Times/Staff

- None.
- Unconfirmed minutes will be circulated to staff.

7.18 Website

- Agreed policies.

AOB Governor Resignation

- AJ has formally resigned, effective at the end of this academic year.

ACTION: TN and LH to discuss governor recruitment.

7.19 Date of the next FGB meeting is Tuesday 8th June 2021 at 6pm, via ZOOM.

- Following the scheduled easing of COVID restrictions on 17.05.21, the RES and T&L committees will be able to meet at school, numbers permitting.