



Bishopswood School

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Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting

Monday 16th January 2023

5.00pm held virtually using Microsoft Teams

Item No.		Action
	<p>Present: Priya Bhagrath (PB, Headteacher) Kristine Hicks (KH, Parent Governor) Alan McPherson (AM, Community Governor) Mark Winch (MW, Community Governor, Chair of Governors)</p> <p>Also in Attendance: Lorraine Green (LG, Deputy Headteacher) Tom Pegler (TP, Chief Executive Officer, Propeller Academy Trust) David Stevinson (DS, Interim Deputy Headteacher) [arrived during item 5] Helen Roberts (Clerk to Governors)</p> <p>It was acknowledged that the meeting did not meet the requirements for being quorate when considering the Terms of Reference. It was agreed that as the Governing Board is having to be built from scratch that TP would speak to fellow Directors to agree an amendment to the quorate requirements and that this would be agreed from the date of academisation. <i>Post meeting - the Board of Directors for the Trust agreed that a quorum of 4 would be acceptable until 6 Governors were recruited.*</i></p>	
1.	<p>Attendance and apologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW started the meeting shortly after 5pm. He welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the newly formed governing body. Introductions were made. - There were no apologies to record. - PB joined the meeting during this item. 	
2.	<p>Declaration of pecuniary or other interests, confirmations that GovernorHub annual declarations have been completed by all new governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The governors and attendees confirmed there were no interests to declare in relation to the meeting agenda. - MW asked HR to update GovernorHub to enable governing board members to confirm their annual declarations, and to electronically demonstrate/sign acceptance of the Code of Conduct and other key items. ACTION. 	HR
3.	<p>Items from the Chair and Correspondence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW took the opportunity to explain that this evening's meeting agenda had a focus on governance matters to support the newly formed governing body and the associated administration. - MW noted that the previous Interim Executive Board meeting, of which he was a member, was held on the 19th December 2022, he confirmed that during that meeting the board members had followed a standard agenda and fulfilled the necessary statutory obligations. The current meeting was ten working days after that meeting and therefore the school had not been asked to provide updated written reports to support the meeting. 	

Signed by Chair..... Date.....

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW confirmed that the meeting would follow a standard agenda template from the second spring term meeting. 	
4.	<p>Governor Administration and Core Responsibilities: <i>(see attached paper)</i></p> <p>a. Approve Trust Terms of Reference for LGBs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The governors and attendees discussed the Terms of Reference and the quorum as outlined in the document. They understood the challenges with recruitment to a new board. TP agreed to go back to the Trust board with a proposal for an amendment to the Terms of Reference. ACTION.* - The governors approved the Terms of Reference. <p>b. Approve and sign up to NGA Model Governor Code of Conduct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW presented the Code of Conduct and recommended it to the governing board. - The governors were encouraged to read and understand the document and sign off that they had using GovernorHub. ACTION - The governing body approved the Code of Conduct. <p>c. Approve Governing Body Work Programme 2022-23:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW confirmed that PB and TP had given their input. PB reminded the governors that the school had checked that the pupil attainment reports/data drops aligned with the work programme. - Q: Governors identified that the work programme was written for a full academic year and asked if approval was being sought for the following academic year? A: MW explained that the governors were being asked to approve the programme for the current spring term 2, and summer terms 1 and 2 in the programme. - The governing body approved the Work Programme. <p>d. Approve Link Governor Roles (including appointing a named Safeguarding/SEND/Whistleblowing governor) and Governor Monitoring Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The following priority link governor roles were agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Safeguarding = Mark Winch o Whistleblowing = March Winch o SEN = Mark Winch - The governing body agreed that with the current small number of governors, it would be prudent to combine some of the link roles listed in the proposal document. - MW agreed to revisit the proposal but did note that he felt combining roles may place much of a burden on newer governors. - Q: Given the stage at which the school was, governors asked if there was a need for a compliance/policies link role? A: MW observed that as a member of the Interim Executive Board he was able to reassure the new governors that a lot of work had been completed around compliance. He noted that he expected the annual governing board work programme to pick up statutory items for consideration and assurance. <p>e. Approve Governor Visit Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q: Governors asked TP if this policy should be standard across the Trust? A: TP agreed that this was the aim and the Trust wanted to work on and agree the best policy. - Governors understood that it was important to have something in place immediately. - The governing body approved the policy. <p>f. Governor Recruitment Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW provided a recruitment update. - The governors agreed that they would like to see the staff governor election move forwards. They noted that a further parent election would be welcomed soon as well. - The governors discussed the school's location, the local community, and agreed that forging links would be a positive step forward. - With reference to the parent governor vacancy the governors suggested and agreed that a brief preparatory note should be added to the school's newsletter, with a full letter to parents/carers explaining the benefits of being a parent governor be produced by MW noting his experiences and reflections of undertaking this role at another school. ACTION <p>g. Clerk's Update:</p>	<p>TP</p> <p>All Governors</p> <p>MW</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HR will circulate a guide to help the new governors navigate GovernorHub. This will support them to book training and complete their declarations and confirmations. ACTION. - MW took the opportunity to remind the governors that they had access to The Key via GovernorHub and highlighted this useful resource. 	HR
5.	<p>Leadership and Management: <i>(see attached paper)</i></p> <p>a. Strategic Risk Register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW explained that this document had been updated post-academisation. He explained that this document would not feature as a separate agenda item but will be used alongside to make sure agendas are focussed on the strategic risks the school faces. - Q: A query was raised about the revisions, and about the assessment risk on page 3. A: MW confirmed that he was keeping a record of the document versions to evidence the journey of the school. He understood the updates suggested to the assessment risk and agreed to make amendments. - [DS joined the meeting at this point, 5.40pm]. - The governing body discussed the potential teacher strike action. They agreed there was a need to understand the likely impact of this on the school to better understand the risk posed. - The governors discussed the Secondary School Site risk on page 2. A small amendment to remove from the title a reference to the memo of understanding was agreed. <p>b. Health & Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB confirmed that the school was awaiting a Health & Safety Audit. This was a follow up audit by OCC (Oxfordshire County Council). Governors requested the date for the audit to be shared and MW said as link governor for this area her would try and attend the audit visit. TP explained that the Trust planned to organise a further review with a different external provider. - PB informed the governors about a Health & Safety issue regarding medications and how it had been necessary for the school to review its approach. She gave more detail. The governors understood the situation and expressed concern. PB reassured them that things had already improved, and she explained the work to refine communication and operation of the school nurse. She acknowledged that the leadership team also needed to follow up on items raised more effectively. - Q: Governors asked if there was a difference in provision across the primary and secondary school sites? A: PB stated that because of inexperienced staff the issues were across both sites and noted the importance of the nursing support being consistent in both settings. - Q: Governors asked if the school had escalated the issue to the nursing team? A: PB noted that a conversation had taken place. TP explained the challenges being faced by the provider of the nursing staff with recruitment and reported that the school expected more senior support to be forthcoming. <p>c. Approve all Propeller Academy Trust statutory/mandatory policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Q: With reference to the mandatory Propeller Trust policies, governors asked how to manage and review those policies, and whether the school website was up to date. A: TP agreed to provide a definitive list of central policies. ACTION. - Q: Governors asked what the training process was for PB, DS, and LG to understand the policy changes and ensure they were embedded with all staff? A: TP emphasised that policies had been under review since April 2022 to bring them in line with the Trust. He noted that some policies would be 'local' and more specific to the school. - Governors understood and asked the school to demonstrate how staff were informed about policy changes moving forwards and if policies were model OCC policies for example. <p>d. Safeguarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DS provided an update and summary. - PB reiterated the support added to classrooms regarding administering of medications and DS noted that extra visual checks had been added to classrooms. 	TP

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW confirmed that he would carry out a Safeguarding link governor visit, and TP suggested that a representative from LADO (local authority designated officer) team was invited to attend alongside. This was deemed a good idea and asked TP to contact the ESAT team. ACTION. <p>e. Staff Forum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The governors discussed the proposal for a staff forum. They considered this in light of the high level of change management in place at the moment. - Some concern was expressed about the arrangement of representatives as outlined in the proposal, the governors agreed that this needed careful thought and consideration. - The governors strongly believed it was an important area of focus and they resolved to look at alternative means of communication outside of the meeting. TP, MW, PB and AM to meet and discuss. ACTION. - The group considered the areas of focus within the school, for example mental health and wellbeing, and recognised this as a valuable way to communicate with and support staff. <p>f. Vision values and strategic aims project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW gave a brief update on the work needed to set a new vision, values and strategic aims for the school. This was seen as a key task for the Governing Board for the rest of the academic year. This would be explored further at a meeting of the new governors and Headteacher in the next two weeks. <p>g. Headteacher report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB provided an update. She included a staffing summary which explained how vacancies were being managed and the potential for some agency staff to transfer to permanent contracts. - Q: Governors asked if those individuals were good quality staff members, what the cost implications were, and what vacancies would remain? A: PB emphasised they were good quality, she explained how the notice period worked and that there would be a minimal fee to release the candidates, and she informed governors that four or five vacancies would remain. - Q: Governors asked what other routes the school was exploring to fill those vacancies? A: PB confirmed adverts were out and recognised that the school needed a strategy regarding how to manage support staff vacancies. - The governors considered the focus on the recruitment and retention strategy and how this should link to the Trust's emerging strategy and that needed to be explored. - PB reminded the governors that the assistant headteacher vacancy was advertised with a closing date 23rd January. She commented that several good candidates had applied. - Q: Governors recognised this positive development. They asked if the school would be able to manage the induction process effectively for multiple new staff members? A: PB felt confident that the school was in a position to do this successfully and reminded the governors that DS was supporting the school until Easter. She noted that she and LG had booked out time to look at the curriculum work and they will maximise their time effectively and efficiently. - Q: Governors asked if the changes would be communicated to parents? A: PB agreed they would. She explained that the school needed to wait for references to be returned and DBS checks to be completed before any announcements were made. - The governors thanked the leaders for all the work they were doing. 	<p>TP</p> <p>PB,AM TP,MW</p>
6.	<p>School events and notices this term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PB shared the date for parents evening and noted that parents were being encouraged to attend in person with virtual meetings available if required. The governors discussed having a presence at that event and agreed this was a good way to engage with parents. 	
7.	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MW will share proposed dates as soon as possible. 	

Signed by Chair..... Date.....

	Attached papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agenda Item 4a – LGB Terms of Reference - Agenda Item 4b - Bishopswood School Governor Code of Conduct 2022-23 - Agenda Item 4c - DRAFT Governing Board Work Schedule - Agenda Item 4d - Proposed Link Governor Roles DRAFT v2 - Agenda Item 4e - Governor Visits Policy Jan 23 - Agenda Item 5a - Bishopswood Strategic Risk Register Updated 09-01-23 - Agenda Item 5e - Staff Forum ToR DRAFT 	
	*Addendum: <i>After the meeting TP asked the Propeller Trust board to approve the provision of special dispensation/permission for the Bishopswood LGB to be quorate with 4 governors until they have 6 or more on their board for the current academic year, and this was agreed.</i>	

Signed by Chair..... Date.....