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Little Paxton School Governing Body

Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Governing Body held on Monday 24th April 2017 at 6.30pm

Present:

Penny Conway	Authority Governor	Oliver Poulain	Parent Governor
Neil Donoghue	Co-opted Governor	James Purser	Co-opted Governor
Richard Fairburn	Parent Governor	Natasha Stott	Staff Governor
Diane Hawkes	Staff Governor/HT	Paul Warmington	Parent Governor
Graham Hiom	Co-opted Governor		
Rebekah Jenkins	Associate Governor	In attendance:	
Mike Kendall	Co-opted Governor	Alison Gatward (Clerk)	
Tracey Locke	Co-opted Governor	Julie Zausmer (Clerk)	

1. **Apologies for absence**

Received and accepted from:

Ellen Barrett	Co-opted Governor
Gemma Manning	Parent Governor
David Jones	Parent Governor
Maria Button	Co-opted Member

The Chair reported that G Manning had had a conversation with her about reducing her time commitment to the Governing Body for a while because of her increased responsibilities elsewhere. This was agreed and will be reviewed at the end of this term.

2. **Declaration of Interests** – no changes declared.

3. **Co-opted governor** – Chair welcomed James Purser a new co-opted governor. Julie Zausmer was welcomed as new clerk.

4. **Minutes of the last FGB meeting (13.3.17) & matters arising**

Amend typo to Rebekah and add in Natasha Stott as attending.

Minutes approved.

RJ did designated person training.

PC still to action follow-up letter to parents.

Governors asked if the child who had been excluded had now been re-integrated.

The Head confirmed that he had and that he has support during the morning. She said there is an improvement to the situation.

5. Minutes of the Committees Evening (27.3.17) & matters arising

S&B QU: have the concerns over decor and fixtures and fittings in the new build been resolved? The Head reported that everything is now checked off which is working well. Fire drill - in the process of purchasing the walkie talkies for use during fire evacuations.

Finance – G Hiom met with M Parnham, the School Finance Secretary, on 29/3/17; he reported that all items reviewed were in order. SFVS has been submitted.

ACTION: *Copy of updated documents to be forwarded to clerk.*

Personnel – M Kendal and T Locke met to discuss the role of chair of personnel which T Locke is considering standing for when M Kendall ceases to be a governor at the end of this term.

M Kendall had received feedback from other parties interested as to why they did not apply for the clerk's position. Several other potential applicants were also CAM clerks who usually only attend FGB meetings and did not want a role which involved clerking all meetings.

Governor engagement with staff - DH to follow up with staff to see what interest. Staff are looking for an opportunity for staff to meet with the governors. Governors want to show that they are interested in staff well-being.

ACTION: *Add to next personnel meeting agenda.*

QU: Have proposed roles for September been discussed with staff? Everyone knows their role for September. Everyone has accepted these new positions. QU: do any staff need additional training to take on new roles? Support will be given where required.

6. Head's Report including:

School Development Plan (includes SEF and TOP)

Staff Update, including training

Pupil numbers update

Premises Update (including the progress with new build – meeting held with developers on 19.4.17)

Finance update – annual SFVS submission

PPP Partnership

Updates since the report was written: The Head reported that Matthew Hall had been appointed as a teacher for September 2017. He is currently in school as a student teacher has a great relationship with the staff team. QU: can you explain why there is a waiting list for admission when there is more space available in school? Admissions have decided to keep open places for the second round of offers. Allocations for the second round will be made on May 19th, this will then pick up any extra catchment children before allocating to children on the waiting list. We are confident that places will be filled and the school may receive extra funding. QU: Is this an automatic trigger for extra funding? It is at the discretion of county and school will follow up if the numbers reach the trigger point.

QU: is there an update on the child with SEN? No decision as yet about whether he will attend LP or be offered a place elsewhere, but one is expected soon. School will make any necessary arrangements or adjustments if he is placed at LP.

QU: has data from the spring term been analysed yet? We will review data and analyse it together in a forthcoming staff meeting.

Building work continued over the holiday, including the bank holidays to ensure that the internal work was completed before school re-opened. This has created a good new open space outside Kestrel classroom.

Resurfacing the playground was not part of the building tender. They took photos of the playground before the work commenced. In order to site the sewage and drainage they had to dig a big trench around the playground. Therefore, they will now have to resurface the whole playground. **QU:** will this will then cover the courts and the markings on the playground? - they have agreed to re-mark the courts. **QU:** What if they only do the bits they have damaged rather than the whole playground? Then school will then look to complete the work.

They are looking at a finish date of the end of June for the new build, at this point they may get rid of the mobile and begin the work on the existing building. They are unable to crane the mobile over inhabited part of the building so it may be that for that period some class rooms can be relocated. It would be better to have the mobile moved ahead of the summer holidays to allow work to progress. There is still some work to be done in the main school. School will look to be flexible to let them get as far ahead as possible before the school holidays.

QU: will school's ICT requirements be addressed adequately? The list was agreed with some additional items, including upgrades to the wifi network and a new telephone system with further extensions. The mobiles had two new interactive boards at the beginning of the year these will be relocated into the main school.

QU: Has the re-siting of the exit button been successful? The button is above pupils' reach and has prevented children letting themselves out. **QU:** is this an exit that would be used in an emergency? It is not a designated exit. If there was a regular wheel chair user then this may have to be changed.

The Head also reported that, in addition, one of the boilers - the older one, has been replaced as part of the building project.

7. Report of meeting with School's Finance Adviser (29/3/17)

– to agree 2017/2018 budget.

Initial thoughts and questions about the budget were discussed at the Finance meeting held on 27/3/17. Following a meeting of the Chair of Finance, the Chair of Governors and the Head with the School's Financial Advisor, firm proposals for the budget were available at this meeting for ratification by the Full Governing Body. This budget is set for the coming financial year. The aim is to spend the money funded each year; funds have been built up over the last couple of years to allow for the growth to two form entry. This year we knew we would spend more than

funded and so reduce our reserves. Throughout the year we anticipated the reserves would be about £130,000 and this year's budget shows it to be about £112,000. There is £1.1 million funding for the coming year – more funding than last year because of additional pupils. Once funding is confirmed each line of the budget is reviewed. We anticipate spending £105,000 over the funding amount. **QU:** if there is more funding this year how come still an overspend? Not all classes are full so the budget we have been allocated this year (which is calculated on a per pupil basis) does not fully fund for the number of classes we are running. The main difference last year was the changes to the National Insurance, living wage and pension changes. These are changes which will continue to have an impact. 90% of all spending is on staff. Review the TA hours per class room (excluding for statements or EHCPs) about 20 hours, average is 15 hours. TA hours are still high but short term this is what is required and is not changed. Currently 97% of the allocated budget will be spent on staff (additional spending is from our carry forward) **QU:** Is this for all staff? This is across all staff, there are two classes with 23 children and maternity cover for a full time teacher and full time TA. All of which impacts on the level of spend. In the short term there is no an issue because we have reserves: for 2018/19 with reserve, known funding and growth funding this should be ok. The following year 2019/20 may be more of a challenge. If all of our classes had an optimum number of pupils then we will have significantly more funding than we currently have. We will take the opportunity to fill the classes where we can. The optimum (in order to break even financially) is 27 children per class. **QU:** Will this change for the foundation years when there are two classes? This will work through the school as the two form entry works through the school. TA hours will also be reduced as a percentage as the school grows over time. Will need to continue to stay close to the numbers, there is nothing to influence further on the budget at this stage. **QU:** do you feel the investment in the TAs is worth it? Without the TAs it would not be possible to sustain the quality of teaching. If this is true now then it remains true in the future. The main aim would be to have TAs each morning. The level of TA support is not going to go down in the future? Rather than employing new TAs look to support new classes from existing TA hours. There is probably more than we need at the moment. Historically we have had mixed year classes which can increase the range within the class. With two classes in each year group children can be taught in appropriate groupings. We achieve outstanding results because of the investment in teachers and TAs. Unless we are able to fill in the gaps with additional children there would need to be some hard choices made in terms of spend on TAs' hours. We need to see an increase pupil numbers to enable us to invest in support. Looking at TA deployment from September, because there are two classes in each year group, a TA can run an intervention across the year group and therefore support two classes at once. This will help when the ratio per class reduces. **QU:** Do staff feel that they are able to ask for further TA support? There is an open dialogue with the staff and we adapt as necessary during the school year. Look to use TAs to

cover with existing hours. Financial advisor has commented that we have a strong position with our finances and we are in a good place. The budget was set line by line and did not need to be trimmed after each spend was allocated. **QU:** Closing balance of £6,314 which is a big drop from the opening balance, what if we had an unexpected spend requirement? Would the council help with emergency funding? It would be possible to take a loan from County if required. Cost saving measures could be implemented at the beginning of the year should an unexpected cost arise. **QU:** Should we be mindful of all the new elements in the school as they will likely all need to be replaced at a similar time? This is something we need to bear in mind for the future. **QU:** were all these buildings funded outside of the normal budget? Yes, all developments built from separate funds. **QU:** there was a fund promised for consequential improvement, what will this be spent on? The builders have begun to use the pot of money - this has been used to replace the boiler and the external doors. Governors unanimously ratified the budget and signed it. Governors thanked GH for his work on this.

8. Academisation and joining or forming a multi academy trust.

This has been explored and as this is no longer a government priority we need to consider if we should progress this further and whether, if we did, it would be beneficial to the school. **QU:** Do we not want to hold back on this and settle in to being a larger school first? We have already done some ground work and could pick this up again later. **QU:** Have we had any more approaches from MATs or follow up from requests already made? No further correspondence has been received. **QU:** There will be a new free school coming to St Neots, when will this be? This has been granted, potentially for September 2018. They have to find their own site so there is a lot of work to be done in the meantime. Governors have agreed not to move forward with academisation at this time. There is still a possibility that if this starts to move again we could be 'forced' to join with other MATs. It could be possible to join with schools beyond St Neots. This will not be a standing agenda item but will be reviewed in 12 months time unless there are changed national directives.

9. Catering Provider

School has continued to work with Peter Sulston. CCS have been given notice that we would terminate at October half term. CCS have confirmed that they will leave the equipment in the school. They will be invited to tender for the work. Staff may "TUPE" across to the new provider, which will protect their existing employment rights. The kitchen staff have also been advised of the plan. CCS have now put in a new cook from an agency and then will employ her full time. Peter Sulston put out the invite for tenders on Friday. A timeline to handover has been set. **QU:** is the intention to have a set contract? It will be a 3 year contract and must be re-tendered after 5 years. Is there an inflationary increase in the contract? They have to submit a financial projection which Peter Sultan will help us to review and short list. **QU:** will

there be samples? Will use the school council to gain pupil input and will test some of the food. **QU:** Will it be better if the staff are the same? The staff have the skills but are restricted by the boundaries set by the current catering company. **QU:** how long have the staff done? Long enough to be Tupe-ed across. **QU:** Roughly how much is the contract worth? We pay CCS to provide the food but the other companies make their money on the cost of the meals to the children. This will save the school money. The cost to the children will not increase. **QU:** How many meals on average are provided?- about 1,000 meals a week. Further updates will follow.

10. Governor visits to school

Governors are encouraged to contact school to arrange a suitable time to carry out planned visits and to forward their reports to the appropriate committee.

Reason for Visit	When	Who	Report to
Impact of the building project on school life	Each Term	ND	S&B
Middle Leadership	Dec 16, Spring Term	MK, GH, EB	Per.
Social Capital Group	Termly	MB & EB	C&S
School Council/Governor Engagement with Pupils	Spring Term	MB & TL	FGB
Hand writing and spelling - report issued	AutumnTerm Summer Term	OP & PC	C&S
School PE and sport provision	Early 2017	OP & PW	C&S
Maths Mastery	Spring Term	EB & TL	C&S
Re-visit marking	Summer Term	DJ & MK	C&S
Outdoor Learning	Summer 2018	MK & GH	C&S

11. Governor Attendance at Parents Evenings

– to agree volunteers to attend the Open Evening later this term Tuesday 11th July 3.30 – 4.30pm and 5.30 – 6.30pm.

Parents will visit current class and the new classes. **QU:** do we want to use this to ask parents specific questions? The main interest will most probably be the new build. It will be best to have the extension open and take comments from people and answer

any questions they may have about the extension or the refurbishment of the existing buildings.

12. Annual Report to Parents – Governors agreed to the preparation of a written report for parents summarising our work over the year. The Chair will prepare this and Committee Chairs will offer input for the relevant sections.

ACTION: *P Conway will prepare a report and distribute to chairs of committees for checking.*

13. Governor Training

The CGS termly briefing for governors will be held at WGAS at 7pm on 11.5.17
New governor induction training on 16th May – newer governors have signed upto attend this session run by the Cambs LA Governance Team

14. Scheduled review of Policies

- Equality Information Statement - GM is working on this and will send comments through
- Child Protection Policy - needs to be reviewed annually. RJ updated from training that there are changes after Easter and an update will be issued. Wait until the end of the summer term. This can then be reviewed along with the audit.

ACTION: *RJ to advise when updates are available and bring the next FGB.*

15. Governing Body vacancies:

No current governor vacancies.

MK (a co-opted governor) has indicated his intention to step down at the end of the summer term. Succession plan for this committee is work in progress.

16. Correspondence received - none received

17. Any Other Business – Google drive is a challenge - feedback is that it is easier for the clerk but there are some issues for some governors not being able to open remotely. Governors can have access to the wifi at school for use during the meeting. It may be useful to spend some time in a meeting setting up accounts for governors and to help people to get the technology sorted as part of the mentoring process. What could be the alternative? This needs to be revisited.

QU: Is there any impact from the extension of the entitlement for childcare for eligible families? There is not a nursery class at the school - there is a pre-school provider on site. If the pre-school or Swifts out-of-school club don't meet the requirement for parents then they can approach the local authority to address this. This should be reviewed.

18. Dates of next meetings

Committees Evening has been arranged for 6.30pm 22nd May 2017 (NB: this is a change from the original date)

Curriculum Evening has been arranged for 6.30pm 12th June 2017

Full Governing Body has been arranged for 6.30pm 10th July 2017

Meeting closed 8:10pm