



## Little Paxton School Governing Body

### **Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at 7:15 pm**

**Present:**

Ellen Barrett (EB)            Diane Hawkes (DH)  
P Conway (PC)                Tracey Locke (Chair) (TL)  
Neil Donoghue (ND)

**1. Apologies were received and accepted from:** David Jones

**Absent:** Gemma Manning

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

**3. Staff recruitment** (this item was taken early to enable a joint discussion with the Personnel Committee)

Background:

The school has been gradually increasing the number of classes over the last few years so as to move to a 2 form entry school (that is 2 classes in each year group). This is with the agreement of the LA in order to meet local need as further building development increases the number of children seeking places at Little Paxton School.

There are currently 13 classes running (2 for each year group except the current Y6). The ideal would be to open the 14th class in September 2018, however there may not be sufficient funds to do this. Schools receive most of their funding on a per pupil basis; also funding lags behind changes in pupil numbers – funding is based on pupil numbers on census day in the previous school year.

About half of the current 13 classes are running below the average “break even” point (that is where funding for pupil numbers covers the cost of running the class – 26 or 27 pupils).

This has been possible through prudent use of funds in the past to hold back sufficient to be able to cover the costs.

Discussion:

It is not yet clear that there will be sufficient numbers entering the reception classes next year to ensure that there is enough funding to support the 14th class at the moment. There is also some concern that a local multi academy trust may be acting over zealously in an attempt to attract pupils to its schools (which, if true, could impact negatively on our pupil intake numbers).

The HT presented and talked through with governors 4 possible scenarios for the class and staffing structures for September 2018. This included measures to cover a maternity leave. The merits and drawbacks (both educationally and financially) of each of these were discussed. Governors agreed that the Chair of Finance, the Chair of Governors and the HT

should discuss all the options with the School's Finance Adviser, looking particularly at the on-going implications if the reception intake in September 2018 is lower than previously expected. It was agreed that, if it seems to be financially viable, the HT should advertise for one permanent class-teacher post and one temporary class-teacher post on a fixed term contract (to cover a maternity leave) from September 2018. This would be the preferred option as it would enable 14 classes to run next year with the least alternation to existing staffing. Alternatively it might be possible to recruit one permanent class-teacher post and one temporary part-time class-teacher post on a fixed term contract (to cover a maternity leave, the remainder being covered by re-assigning existing staff from other duties) from September 2018. If neither option looks unsustainable the issue will be discussed again at the FGB on 12/3/18.

**4. Minutes of last meeting (6/11/18) and matters arising**

The minutes were agreed at the full Governing Body meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

**Actions update:**

T Locke	✓	To review Equality Policy and objectives and present to the FGB in December
Personnel Committee	✓	To bring suggested amendments to the Personnel Committee ToRs to the FGB meeting in December
Head	On going	To discuss possible well-being plans and objectives with the Chair of Governors
E Barrett and T Locke	In hand	To arrange governor visit to look at the developing role of the middle leaders

**5. Staff update**

There is a confidential minute

**6. Support Staff review**

Governors had decided that, following the building extension and subsequent expansion of pupil numbers, it would be advisable to carry out a review of the support staff structure – what roles we currently have and whether the current job descriptions cover the new requirements of the enlarged school. The HT explained to the Committee that she had distributed questionnaires to all the non-classroom based support staff last term asking for these to be returned by 5/1/18. The questionnaire was relatively short – simply asking staff how their working time is currently used and what, if any, pressure points there were and what they felt were requirements going forward. The Office Staff, the Inclusion Worker and the Site Officer were all included in this first stage of the review. There was a significant delay in the return from one member of staff (due to sickness and also to requiring a replacement questionnaire) such that the last questionnaire had only been returned that morning.

It was already clear last term that the Office staff were overstretched and as a result an apprentice was taken on. The HT reported that this is working out really well and the

apprentice has been able to take responsibility for a number of routine tasks leaving the other office staff enough time to cover their other duties.

It was agreed that the Chair of Personnel will meet with the HT on 8/2/18 to analyse three questionnaires and formulate possible plans for a new support staff structure to bring to a future meeting.

**ACTION:** TL to meet with HT on 8/2/18

#### **7. Skills Audit of Governors**

Prior to the meeting the Chair had supplied the Chair of Personnel with a number of documents including examples of governor skills audits and the Competency Framework for Governance produced by the DfE. The Chair of Personnel said that, having looked at all the documents, she recommended that the Governing Body use a Governor Skills Audit developed by Gloucestershire CC. The committee reviewed this audit and all agreed it was suitable for our purposes.

**ACTION:** TL to distribute the agreed a Governor Skills Audit to all governors.

#### **8. Update on Well Being Project**

Governors had agreed that the school should undertake a well-being project and further agreed with the SLT that it would be most effective if the school worked towards the well-being award.

The SLT reviewed the online questionnaire that is available and felt that it did not cover all the areas the school is interested in sufficient depth. It was decided that it would be more effective to begin with a staff meeting where teachers discussed what they understood by the term “well-being”, what aspects they were most concerned about and what this means in the work-place. A variety of activities were used to stimulate discussion after which staff were asked the record: What affects well-being in the work-place? What are the significant personal factors that can impact on well-being at work? They were also asked to note any ideas for the future and what they would like to come out of the project. The SENCo will organize a similar exercise with the TAs and support staff. The SLT will then consider how to involve pupils in the project and suitable ways to engage children in thinking about well-being and how to achieve it.

#### **9. Proposed governor visits**

- **Development of Middle Leaders**

This Monitoring visit will be done by EB and TL and is scheduled for after half term. The HT reported that of the 4 staff on the NPGML course 2 had completed and submitted all their work, the other 2 are scheduled to complete at Easter.

**QU:** Can we see the success criteria or aims of the course? Yes, but from a school perspective it would be more interesting to look at the impact on the school. EB and TL will meet with all 4 staff to discuss their assessment of the course and its impact on their roles at school.

**QU:** Would governors be able to see the work that these staff have submitted as part of their course? That would be up to the individuals, but the HT felt it should be possible.

The Chair reminded the HT that she had asked to see anonymised PM objectives to monitor how these supported the overall objectives for school development. This can be done at their meeting on 8/2/18.

- **Communications and Engagement (including well-being project)**

This visit is scheduled for the summer term. It will be discussed at the next Personnel meeting

**ACTION:** HT and Chair to review anonymised PM objectives

**ACTION:** add discussion about Well-Being monitoring visit to next agenda

**10. Update on progress in recruitment of Clerk**

An advert has appeared in the PE19 magazine from which there has already been one enquiry. The advert will appear in the next edition of the Villager magazine and will also be put on the EPM website.

**QU:** What if these don't generate suitable applicants? We will advertise more widely in the village (although we recognise that recruiting a village resident as a Clerk can put them in a difficult position) and possibly in other local magazines.

**QU:** Could one of the office staff fulfill the role? Yes, although it could put them in a very difficult position at times. It might be better to enquire if office staff at other nearby schools might be interested in the post.

**11. AOB**

Visiting staff from China who had taken part in the Maths Mastery project had asked if Little Paxton School would be prepared to sign a Memorandum of Friendly Cooperation with their school in Shanghai. The Committee agreed to this in principle and asked the HT and the CoG to check the terms before signing it.

**ACTION:** HT and CoG to review Memorandum of Friendly Cooperation

**12. Date of next meeting: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at 7.30pm**

The meeting closed at 20:15

**AGREED ACTIONS**

Head	To discuss possible well-being plans and objectives with the Chair of Governors
Chair of Personnel	To meet with HT on 8/2/18 to analyse support staff questionnaires and so bring forward recommendations for a new support staff structure to bring to a future meeting.
Chair of Personnel	To distribute the agreed a Governor Skills Audit to all governors
HT/ Chair of Personnel	To review anonymised PM objectives to monitor how these supported the overall objectives for school development at their meeting on 8/2/18
Chair of Personnel	To add discussion about Well-Being monitoring visit to next agenda
HT/CoG	To review the Memorandum of Friendly Cooperation with the Shanghai School before signing it