



Excalibur FGB Pt 1 Minutes 26/09/2022

▶ The School ▶ Monday, September 26, 2022 ▶ 17:30 ▶ Chair: Jo Bain ▶ Clerk: Sue Lambeth

FINAL: The minutes are confirmed and locked.

Governors Attending: > Governors: Juliet Jones, Gail Whittingham, Jo Bain, Kate Jepson, Philip Yeomans, Rachel Hackney, Anna McArdle

Governors Apologies: > Elizabeth Martindale (Link Director), Simon Cotterill, Michael Cross, Michelle Goodrich,

Non Governors Attending: > Sue Lambeth, Yvonne Hilditch,

Non Governors Apologies: > Prospective Governor: Serena Hallam

Agenda Item 1 ▶ Welcome, Apologies and Any Other Business Items

The meeting was quorate and started at 17.33.

MINUTE

The Clerk welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly Serena Hallam, a manager in the Child Protection Team based in Crewe, who was interested in becoming a member of the Excalibur LGB. Introductions were made.

Apologies received from Rev Michelle Goodrich, Simon Cotterill and Mike Cross were accepted.

No additional items of Part One business were requested.

DECISION

Accepted

Agenda Item 2 ▶ Compliance matters

Conflicts of interest

There were no potential pecuniary interests or conflicts of interest between an individual and the governing board as a whole in connection with the business to be discussed during the meeting.

Membership

There were no terms of office due to expire before the Autumn 2 meeting.

Recruitment letters for a new Parent Governor had been sent out to parents on September 16th with a deadline 30th.

The appointment of Serena Hallam, a prospective Co-opted Governor, was agreed by the LGB.

MINUTE

Gill Burgess had submitted her resignation from the LGB with effect from 6th September 2022. However, after consideration Gill had requested to re-join. **Governors agreed the re-appointment of Gill Burgess to Excalibur LGB.**

The Head requested, and governors agreed, that a Chair of Governors be elected at this meeting. JJ advised the need to re-set the expectations of both governors and the Chair. Elizabeth Martindale was now the Chancery Link Director for Excalibur, would attend some meetings and would review the effectiveness of the LGB in order to ensure that it was fulfilling its core purpose of increasing the outcomes of the pupils and working in their best interests. Pupils had to be the focus. JJ shared details of the important functions, responsibilities and expectations of both governors and the Chair of the LGB, one of which would be representation of the board on Chancery MAT Chairs Committee. The meeting discussed the importance of working together and sharing the workload with co-ordination from the Chair.

Outstanding Trust Governor Compliance

The following governors were requested to update profiles on TTG as a matter of great urgency: SC, MC, MG, AM.

Chair's Action

The LGB agreed to delegate the power to act on behalf of the LGB to the Chair, and in the absence of the Chair to the Vice Chair. The Chair advised that no action had been taken on behalf of the LGB since the previous meeting.

DECISION

Governors agreed the re-appointment of Gill Burgess to Excalibur LGB.

The Head requested, and governors agreed, that a Chair of Governors be elected at this meeting.

Agenda Item 3 ▶ Appointment of Chair & Vice Chair

Two nominations for Chair were received:

- * Jo Bain, nominated by KJ and seconded by AM and
- * Gail Whittingham, nominated by PY and second by YH.

MINUTE

After a ballot, **Jo Bain was duly elected as Chair of Excalibur LGB for the academic year 2022-23.**

Gail Whittingham, nominated by JB and seconded by RH was duly elected as an interim Vice Chair of Excalibur LGB for the academic year 2022-23 to be reviewed at Autumn 2 LGB meeting.

DECISION

Jo Bain was duly elected as Chair of Excalibur LGB for the academic year 2022-23.

Gail Whittingham, nominated by JB and seconded by RH was duly elected as an interim Vice Chair of Excalibur LGB for the academic year 2022-23 to be reviewed at Autumn 2 LGB meeting.

Agenda Item 4 ▶ Minutes of the previous meeting, matters arising and actions

MINUTE

The Part One minutes of the Summer 2 LGB meeting on 14th June 2022 were reviewed, agreed to be an accurate account and would be signed off by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

The Action Log from the Summer 2 LGB meeting was reviewed and updated on TTG. The following items were highlighted:

- * A meeting would be scheduled for governors to discuss the SSDP in detail.
- * Alsager Town Council had been unable to provide funding for the vestibule or perimeter fencing. However, local property developers working on the warehouses had contributed £1700 and other building sites had provided resources.

The minutes of the Pt1 Spring and Summer 2022 Directors' meetings were acknowledged.

ACTION To set up a meeting with governors to discuss the SSDP. (JB)

Agenda Item 5 ▶ **Scheme of Delegation/Terms of Reference**

Governors noted the Scheme of Delegation document which incorporated the LGB Terms of Reference, and which had been available to Governors on TTG prior to the meeting.

MINUTE

Governors were requested to read the document, if they had not already done so, in order to assist with the LGB perspective within the trust and accountability.

DECISION

Governors noted the Scheme of Delegation document which incorporated the LGB Terms of Reference, and which had been available to Governors on TTG prior to the meeting.

Agenda Item 6 ▶ **Finance**

Governors were requested to read and ensure their understanding of the Academy Trust Handbook 2022 available on Trust Governor.

Latest Management Accounts

The July accounts were available on TTG. The end of year figures at 31st August 2022 now showed a £10k surplus, which was a positive outcome due to the savings on insurance for employee sickness which had not been purchased on Chancery Directors' recommendation. Cover was provided from staff within the school.

The September accounts would be available by mid-October when a comparison of actuals and forecast would be presented to Directors. The figures would include staff salary increases which had previously not been finalised and YH and JJ would discuss. The overall result would be a currently unknown deficit. A change of budgeting software would allow a budgeting forecast.

Abbreviated balance sheet

The school had net current assets of £173k. The amount owed by the trust of £89k had now been reduced by the receipt of two payments and now stood at £30k at the end of year. The cashflow balance was kept at £120k to ensure all salaries could be paid

MINUTE

YH confirmed that Excalibur School was a going concern.

Benchmarking information 2020/21

Directors had considered the benchmarking report prior to approving the school's budget.

Section 1 - Top areas for investigations showed one area of investigation identified from 2021 as utilities. However, since this time new windows had been installed and new lighting fitted throughout. Water and sewerage were the issues which were due to the area covered by the building and the resultant high wastewater costs. Better deals would be explored.

Section 2 - Further areas for investigation included non-education support staff, due to the split of the cost of the MAT central team across the schools, administrated supplies & premises, due to the employment of a Site Manager rather than Site Maintenance Manager. Spending on educational supplies and IT were included in the report as spending was under the median. YH advised that Excalibur put greater funding into staffing than educational supplies, and spending on IT came from capital funding.

YH requested governors submit any further questions.

Q: What is the amount of the anticipated deficit for 2022-23?

A: This is currently unknown. However, the school has a carry forward of £90k plus £10k from the previous year. Increases in salaries might be funded by the government as had previously been the case, and the ceiling on utility costs could have positive impact.

Q: As Sports Funding spending in the year exceeded the income, where does the extra amount come from?

A: The funding was £17k overspent and was balanced from General Annual Grant (GAG) funding. This is also the case with Pupil Premium (PP) funding expenditure. Details of the Sports Funding spend was uploaded to the website before the end of July 2022. The new PP new template now included a three year programme due to the basis being Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) research.

CHALLENGE

Q: How does 3-year PP strategy work, if the number of pupils decreases?

A: It is a rolling programme.

Q: At point 1.1 on the management accounts for July Non-staffing costs actual to date are £249,695 but in Appendix A they are £227,842. All the other figures tracked back. What is the difference due to please as it makes a difference to the surplus to date?

A: The £249,695 is the actual expenses of £227,841.59 plus commitments (orders not invoiced at 31/7/2022) of £21,853.50 which totals £249,695.09.

Agenda Item 7 ▶ **Headteacher Update**

MINUTE

A full report would be provided at the Autumn 2 LGB meeting.

JJ reported that an Ofsted visit was imminent and a discussion on maximum governor availability to attend one 15 minute meeting at a set time took place was discussed. The Chair would be contacted when the call was received. The format of the Ofsted notification of visit which would give information including the deep dives to be carried out was explained. The inspection would be a Section 5 inspection over two days. Excalibur was currently graded outstanding.

The Chair pointed out the importance of all governors completing the document 'Questions Ofsted might ask' attached to the meeting.

Attendance was currently very good at 98%. JJ received a weekly report on group vulnerability and those pupils with less than 90% attendance which allowed identification of pupils. Currently two pupils had 70% attendance due to holidays. All concerns were flagged up on CPOMS.

Strategic School Development Plan (SSDP)

This was made up of four sections in line with the four Ofsted areas. Separate to this the LGB were requested to create an action plan for themselves.

Quality of Education

Some Key Stage (KS2) data had dipped to the national average in the previous year, and as a result the four priorities were maths (mental maths and manipulative maths), grammar (spelling), writing and ensuring the progression of knowledge and skills documents in foundation subjects were embedded in classroom practice and developing the use of assessment in all foundation subjects. A new spelling scheme Pathways to Spell had been purchased. It was important that the curriculum was not narrowed, and Foundation Subject Leaders would continue to present to governors at meetings.

Behaviour and attitudes

After careful consideration of the behaviour guidance from the government received in July, the Behaviour Policy had been amended. The Excalibur Code had been introduced which gave a positive slant and was embedded in classrooms and on the website. This supported class teachers with a clear procedure which was consistently applied. Governors would need to be aware off-rolling in order to discuss any pupils who had moved from the school with inspectors.

Personal development

The key change was that school was required to teach pupils about protected characteristics as detailed in the Equality Act 2010, namely race, religion, sexual orientation, gender re-alignment, all of which were covered in the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum and health education. Due to its lack of diversity it was felt that the school should do more, and as a result a 'no outsiders' approach was being adopted which included books and a programme for LGBT+ and disabilities. Training was scheduled at The Berkeley on 2nd November. Many of the books were already in the library, and there was a very considerable amount of diversity in library books and assemblies.

Governors felt that the outdoor area was now excellent with more equipment to be installed. Incidents of behaviour outside had now reduced, and a plan for the fort space to include posts with platforms, small play equipment, dressing up and games was in place. Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) enabled children to manage their own risk after training and with increased supervision. A caravan, shed or a bus to be used as a library was also being sought.

Leadership & Management

This area was self-explanatory.

Governors agreed the Strategic School Development Plan for 2022-23.

Self Evaluation Form (SEF)

The SEF summary document had been added to the meeting pack, and governors were directed to read it carefully.

Details of the school staffing structure were also attached to the meeting pack.

DECISION Governors agreed the Strategic School Development Plan for 2022-23.

Agenda Item 8 ▶ **Chancery Updates**

Chancery working parties on various topics were being set up and governors would be invited to join. Governors were requested to complete the visit report form available on the system after coming into school.

MINUTE Governors' attention was drawn to the Chancery Board summary attached to the meeting pack.

'In a Nutshell' report

An overview of each Chancery school was being put together for directors. This was a snapshot of the position of the school and included areas such as summer data, 3-year trend, local context vision, values, development plan and three greatest strengths and vulnerabilities.

Agenda Item 9 ▶ **Health and Safety**

here were no urgent H&S issues and no H&S documents received since last meeting.

The H&S report from Every was constantly updated by the Site Manager with tasks set up for completion. Ground maintenance visits would be added.

MINUTE There had been no H&S visit by H&S Link Governor this term. The H&S visit by Jenny Whiston (Trust Compliance and Governance Officer) had highlighted only minor aspects. The risk assessment document would be expanded further for the new playground space.

Update on the condition of the school building

A CIF bid had been requested in order to attend to the roof, and bid writers were to visit to look at the roof and the height of the perimeter fence.

Agenda Item 10 ▶ **Safeguarding**

The safeguarding link governor GW had visited on 26th September and confirmed that the Single Central Record (SCR) was up-to-date and would be checked each meeting. A meeting had taken place with the children of the school safeguarding team, who were preparing a video for the website. Behaviour incidents were now recorded on the Child Protections Online Management System (CPOMS).

MINUTE

JJ and all staff had completed safeguarding refresher training on 21st September, and JJ would run a virtual training session for all governors. Level one training was available from Cheshire East.

ACTION To investigate safeguarding training for governors either face to face or online on Every. (JJ)

Agenda Item 11 ▶ **Reports from Governors with Specific Responsibilities**

Governor Responsibilities 2022/23

Statutory Link Governors
Safeguarding / PP - Gail Whittingham / Serena Hallam
SEND - Gail Whittingham
Governor development/ training - Jo Bain
Health & Safety - Kate Jepson

MINUTE

EYFS - Rachel Hackney
English - Gill Burgess
Maths - Simon Cotterill
Foundation Subjects -Michelle Goodrich
Science / IT - Phil Yeomans
Mental health/wellbeing - Gail Whittingham
PE - Mike Cross

There were no reports for this meeting.

Agenda Item 12 ▶ **LGB Self evaluation and training**

MINUTE The meeting discussed Questions 1 - 7 of the NGA 16 questions for governors and agreed their RAG rating as follows:
Local governing board structure and practice

1. Governance culture

The LGB is a committed team, is well led and acts professionally.

Amber

Evidence: Some established members with some new governors. Meetings are mostly well attended and are always quorate.

Targets: To undertake further training and more visits to school.

2. People

There is a role description for LGB members which is used to recruit new and diverse board members with the right skills and who reflect our local community.

Green

Evidence: Role descriptions are in place and used. Governors selected according to skills identified from the annual audit.

Targets: None

3. Size

The LGB is the right size for carrying out its role.

Green

Evidence: The board is an appropriate size.

Targets: To maintain the current size of board and ensure all required skills are covered.

4. Governance professional

The trust employs a dedicated governance professional who provides advice and guidance to our LGB.

Green

Evidence: Qualified and supportive clerk and Trust Compliance Lead in post and readily available to provide advice and guidance.

Targets: None

5. Guidance documents

There is a range of trust-specific documents - including a scheme of delegation - that explains our role and helps us to fulfil it.

Green

Evidence: A Clear Trust Scheme of Designation and Terms of Reference are in place. These are reviewed annually and discussed at meetings.

Target: None

6. Induction and ongoing development

There is quality induction for new governors and a culture of ongoing governance training and development.

Amber

Evidence: Induction is undertaken by the Chair / Clerk in line with trust guidelines and quality training is available, but governors are not always aware. Support for new governors is provided by more experienced members.

Targets: Greater circulation and participation in training after the induction process.

7. Communication

Our LGB is able to communicate effectively with the trust board and the trust's executive leader.

Amber

Evidence: Chairs' meetings and other meetings take place termly with the Governance Lead and CEO and a Link Director attends LGB meetings.

Targets: To invite the CEO to attend an LGB meeting.

NGA Governor Skills Audit (summer 2022)

The outcome of the governor skills audit would be added to the meeting pack on TTG.

Governor Training Requirements and opportunities

The Chair would contact governors regarding training requirements and opportunities by email, and everyone was urged to consider attending the CE Governor Conference 14th October 2022

There were no Governor Training Reports for this meeting.

Recording of Training on TTG

Governors were requested to record all training on TTG and contact the clerk for guidance if required.

Agenda Item 13 ▶ **School Improvement Partner/External Adviser**

MINUTE

School Improvement Partner 2022/23

JJ advised that Louise Gohr, CEO, would continue as the SIP, with her first visit taking place on 7th October. There were no SIP reports for this meeting.

Agenda Item 14 ▶ **School Policies**

Policies for review and approval

The meeting **reviewed and approved** the following policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child on Child Abuse Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Looked After Children Policy

MINUTE

The meeting noted the following MAT policies relating to Excalibur School approved by the Directors up to 21st September 2022:

- * Reserves and Investment Policy
- * Gifts, Hospitality and Anti-Bribery Policy
- * Lettings Policy
- * Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- * Tendering and Procurement Policy
- * Conflict of Interest Policy
- * Gender reassignment Policy

DECISION

Governors reviewed and approved the following policies: Behaviour Policy, Child on Child Abuse Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Looked After Children Policy

Agenda Item 15 ▶ **Director of Children's Services Report Autumn 2022**

MINUTE

The report was not currently available, and discussion would be added to the agenda of the Autumn 2 meeting.

Agenda Item 16 ▶ **Educational Visits**

Visits and plans for 2022/23

- * A 2-night trip to Robin Wood in November for Year 6.
- * Standing Bowers for Year 4
- * Fox Hollows residential for Year 2 pupils.

MINUTE

Governors received confirmation that appropriate risk assessments would be completed and would go to LA.

The LGB discussed the possibility of parent financial difficulties around trips, in response to which staff were aiming to keep visits relatively local. Costs, particularly those relating to the use of coaches, were kept low. It was agreed that greater notice to parents would be given, and details of plans would be included in the termly newsletter with an estimate of cost. A small amount of Friends of Excalibur (FoE) funds were still available. Parents were helping with fundraising although FoE was no longer in existence. A list of parents available to help with activities such as bake sales, discos, film nights and Xmas Fayre was now in existence.

ACTION

To investigate the re-establishment of FoE. (GW)

Agenda Item 17 ▶ **Meetings**

MINUTE

The Autumn 2 Excalibur LGB meeting was scheduled for Monday 21st November 2022 at 17.30.

Agenda Item 18 ▶ **Any Other Business**

MINUTE

There was no further business to be discussed.

Agenda Item 19 ▶ **Impact Statement**

Impact of this meeting on the pupils of Excalibur School

* Governors roles were assigned, and visits would be scheduled in order to give the LGB a full understanding of the life of the school.

MINUTE

* Understanding of Scheme of Delegation gave governors a greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities to support the development of the children and the school.

* Governors had identified where the LGB needed to improve from the NGA questions and actions would be taken.

* Governors had a greater understanding of the SSDP and the areas of focus for improvement had been highlighted.

AM and YH left and the Part One meeting closed at 19.39.

Governor Agreed Actions set during this meeting: 0

Excalibur LGB Autumn 1 2022 Pt1 *dated: 26/09/2022*

Minutes approved by Jo Bain