



Yvonne Hilditch Chancery MAT [85] 08 November 2021

Excalibur FGB Pt 1 Minutes 14/06/2021

► Virtual ► Monday, June 14, 2021 ► 17:30 ► Chair: Sarah Sproston ► Clerk: Sue Lambeth

DRAFT: The minutes are currently unconfirmed.

Governors Attending: >Juliet Jones, Gill Burgess, Kate Jepson, Jo Bain, Anna McArdle, Gail Whittingham, Michael Cross, Sarah Sproston

Governors Apologies: >Rachel Hackney, Simon Cotterill

Non Governors Attending: >Sue Lambeth, Yvonne Hilditch

Non Governors Apologies: >

Agenda Item 1 ► Welcome, Apologies and AOB

The meeting was quorate and started at 17.34.

The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting.

MINUTE

Apologies from Rachel Hackney and Simon Cotterill were accepted.

Items of other Part One business requested: Approval to proceed with quotations for the replacement of the fort and for new lighting. (YH)

Agenda Item 2 ► Declarations of Interest

MINUTE

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 were declared.

Agenda Item 3 ► Membership

A letter advertising the Parent Governor vacancy had gone out with a return date of Monday 21st June. An election would take place if necessary. The re-appointment of Rachel Hackney as a Co-opted Governor from 4th July would be ratified by the Chancery Directors at their meeting in July.

There were no vacancies currently.

MINUTE

No Associate Governors were appointed.

There were no terms of office to expire before the next meeting.

GB advised that a further meeting with the Chair of Chancery Directors and the CEO was scheduled for June 22nd at which the attendance of a director at LGB meetings would be discussed.

Agenda Item 4 ► Chairs Action

MINUTE

The Chair confirmed that no actions had been taken on behalf of the LGB since the last meeting.

AM arrived at the meeting at 17.39.

Agenda Item 5 ► Part One minutes of the previous meeting, matters arising and actions

The Part One minutes of the Summer 1 LGB meeting on 26th April 2021 were reviewed, agreed to be an accurate account and would be signed off by the Chair.

There were no matters arising.

MINUTE

- Actions from the previous meeting were updated and the following points were highlighted.
- SS would send information on the checking of the single central record to GW on 15th June.
- SS agreed to set up a safeguarding audit with GW as soon as possible.
- The audit of the effectiveness of the LGB had now been replaced by the discussion of the Ofsted 20 questions for governors.
- SC had met with school link staff and a report was included in this meeting.
- RH would report back on contact with school link staff at the next LGB meeting.

Agenda Item 6 ► Finance

MINUTE

Governors had received and reviewed the latest finance reports and recommendations on Trust Governor prior to the meeting. YH apologised for the lateness of the report which was due to the new budgeting software.

YH highlighted the following points from the documents:

Section 2 – Financial Position

- The latest financial forecast showed an annual deficit of £5,839 from an original deficit budget forecast position of £16,655, this was an increase in funds in the year by £10,816. The deficit would be covered by reserves.
- There had been a £1,000 increase in Caretaker Supplies to match actual spend, a considerable amount of which related to items such as increased cleaning supplies e.g. paper towel use due to the additional amount of handwashing.
- There had been a £1,500 increase in IT Support for the new Broadband contract for 100GB line which would support learning in the classroom. A new wireless system would be in place throughout school at a cost of £4995. It should arrive in July and fitted over the summer.
- The £1,000 increase in course fees matched actual spend and was mostly for online courses. No travel costs had been incurred.

YH confirmed that overall the school was in a good position, and all overspends were explainable.

Section 4 – Forward Projection

This showed the school to be a going concern as there were sufficient bought forward funds for the school to pay its obligations for payroll and trade creditors to August 2025.

YH clarified the income and expenditure and the assumptions made.

The school was forecast to be at a breakeven position at the end of 2021/22, with a small profit at the end of 2022/23, followed by a £19k loss and a £46k loss, all of which were still within reserves. The forecast deficit at the end of 2025/26 would cut into reserves by £22k. However, at this point there was no concern. The figures shared were a worst case scenario with staff moving through salary bands and no replacement of departing staff with less expensive ones.

YH directed governors to Appendix B, C and D for greater detail and advised that the forecasts were for information and only the budget required approval.

Details of the forecast 4.8% top slice from the general General Annual Grant (GAG) funding were included and pupil numbers were static, with 30 children in each class allowing for the gain of a further 2 pupils in each. There had never been any problems with recruitment, and Year 3 had 2 pupils ready to start. The total number of 32 pupils was never exceeded to avoid the impact on classes and staff, and also fitted with the ICT suite of 16 computers

Devolved Funding Capital (DFC) income £6400 per year was forecast and spending was based on this. £16k was to be spent on the fort.

Section 5 – Other activities in school

YH confirmed that the use of GAG funding by other activities such as out of hours provision and holiday club was not permissible. Out of hours provision was forecast a profit of £21k, £13k of which had already been achieved. £2.5k profit from holiday club was forecast.

Section 6 – Ring fenced funding

Pupil Premium 2019/20

The 2019/20 plan for the £17,080 spend was on the school website. The 2019/20 actual full spend of the £25,345 was on the school website together with the impact statement.

Sports Premium 2019/20

The 2019/20 plan for the £17,760 spend was on the school website. The 2019/20 actual full spend of the £11,701 was on the school website together with the impact statement.

Pupil Premium 2020/21

The 2020/21 plan for the £22,185 pupil premium spend was on the school website. The spend so far in the current year was explained in the document.

Sports Premium 2020/21

The 2020/21 plan for this year's funding of £17,760 and the £6,059 unspent in 2019/20 was on the school website. The spend so far in the current year was explained in the document and some of the remaining funding would be spent on the annual Sports Week.

Covid19 Catch-up

The 2020/21 plan for the funding of £17,120 was on the school website and the current forecast showed a deficit of £520.

Friends of Excalibur

Accounts were shared which included an amount of £979 plus the bought forward figure.

Section 8 – Business Risks for the school

YH explained the risks to the school detailed in the report which included:

the new funding formula together with increase in pay costs, increases in employer pension costs and non-pay inflation. cost implications due to Covid19 e.g. increased cost of extra PPE, first aid supplies, individual pupil stationery supplies, cleaning materials, hand washing and sanitising materials and increased supply costs to cover the self-isolation of staff.

Section 9 - Summary and Conclusion

YH confirmed that the current projection had taken into account all the known factors affecting the budget and identified the committed costs as they currently stood and included income only where it was considered certain to be received.

Section 10 – Recommendations

Governors noted:

- the report
- the profit from other activities
- the spend of ring-fenced grants
- the business risks
- the going concern of the school

Governors noted and approved:

- The virements presented

Governors reviewed and approved:

- The Budget for 2021/22 and 4 year forecast

Governors thanked YH for her report.

KJ had submitted questions to YH in advance of the meeting.

Finance Subgroup

Further to the previous discussion at the last LGB meeting YH had consulted the CEO and confirmed that a dashboard would be provided and the LGB would be made aware of how the budget was formed and virements and forward movement.

This could be done in two ways: either through training events or the creation of a finance committee to bring information to the LGB.

Governors agreed the need for basic finance training for everyone and then the formation of a committee formed with KJ as chair.

The meeting discussed the re-establishment of a Teaching and Learning (T&L) Committee which was permissible under the LGB Terms of Reference in order to allow deeper governor conversation and understanding. **MC agreed to be chair of T&L sub-committee.**

The proposed structure would then be two committees and one LGB each term.

ACTION: To discuss the proposal for committees / LGB meetings for 2021/22 at the forthcoming meeting with LG and RC. (GB/RB)

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DECISION

Governors noted and approved: The virements presented

Governors reviewed and approved: The Budget for 2021/22 and 4 year forecast

Governors agreed the need for basic finance training for everyone and then the formation of a committee formed with KJ as chair.

MC agreed to be chair of T&L sub-committee.

CHALLENGE

Q: I know the school is showing as a going concern in the forecasts but is there a plan on how to tackle the predicted divergence of income to costs given the current funding model?

A: The year where the expenditure is in excess of income the school is to use its reserves. The 2024/25 shows a deficit reserve position which will need to be address over the next year to ensure that the three year forecast next year does not show negative reserves.

Q: I can see you've highlighted it as an issue in your report but I wondered if there was already a plan in place. Also, for my curiosity what is the committed building maintenance project please?

A: The commitment showing on Building Maintenance of £56,000 is for the capital CIF building project for the replacement windows and the invoice will be moved to capital when processed.

Q: What is the item in the April management accounts of £50k for maintenance?

A: This relates to the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bid for replacement windows. School capital expenditure will be £26.5k

Q: Are staff pay increases built in?

A: Yes, on the basis of 2% for teachers from September 2021 and 2% (min of 1.5%) for non-teaching staff from April 2022.

Agenda Item 7 ▶ Headteacher Report

The report had been made available to governors prior to the meeting on Trust Governor and JJ highlighted the following points:

- Attendance at 94.97% was lower than this time last year. Three pupils had low attendance with one on 22% who was accessing part-time provision, and one on 57%. School was in contact with the families and the attendance of the latter had increased recently. A breakdown by group was available in the report.
- Details of the Staffing structure and Senior Leadership Team were included.
- The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) schedule included a considerable amount of online learning and the focus was on upskilling teachers.
- The focus on staff wellbeing continued and details of staff absence since the previous report were shared.
- A Maths update was included together with a report from SC, Maths Link Governor, who had visited the school and met with AM. The update included details of how consistency was to be achieved and the next steps.
- Governors were referred to the English update in the document and also the report from JB the Link Governor. Reading, writing and also developing a love of reading were foci.
- Summer term data collection was underway and would be collated by 2nd July.
- Transition arrangements were discussed both for pupils moving to high school and those moving classrooms in school. Meetings with Alsager High School had taken place to support transition, although the 22nd June day visit was unlikely. There would be no Teddy Bears Picnic this year; however, entry for September would be phased over four half days. New parent meetings would not take place face-to-face but a pack including a video and signposts to the website would be sent out and parents would be contacted by phone. Move up afternoon would take place for classes in school. However, teachers would move classrooms rather than pupils.
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) data looked extremely good, and JJ confirmed that Seesaw and parental engagement had worked well during lockdown. The next steps to be taken were highlighted.
- A Special Needs and Disability (SEND) update was included. Significant areas of concern had been identified after the departure of the previous SENCO. JJ thanked GW, JB and the two SEND school staff for their work and confirmed that from September the school would be able to move forwards.
- Under the area of Personal development, steps had been put in place to ensure pupils had not been disadvantaged, and core and other values were being covered in assemblies.
- Relationships Education (RSE) had been embedded and the scheme was ready for September, with some of the work already done this year.
- School residentials were not possible for this year; however, Year 6 had been to Astbury for water sports. Planning for September was underway although was dependent upon Cheshire East (CE) and further developments in the national guidance.
- A rag-rated Strategic School Development Plan (SSDP) had been included in the report plus the latest Self Evaluation Form in order to provide an overview of school strengths and next steps.
- Priorities for the summer term were being addressed, including early reading and phonics, and reading and Maths together with wellbeing.
- Leadership meetings across Chancery Trust where standards and expectations were set out continued, as did coaching.
- JJ had met with GW to discuss safeguarding and GW's suggested extra items had been included in the report.
- The annual Health & Safety (H&S) report from YH and the Site Manager had been attached to the report, as was JB's visit report.
- Pictures were shared with governors.

Governors were recommended to read the SEF carefully as it was an important document and contained the school core values and ethos. Governors were requested to read and reflect upon the LGB statements to ensure governors were in agreement.

Governors agreed that JJ's report showed the huge amount of work going on in the school and offered their congratulations to the staff for their hard work in keeping school going. Pupils were visibly happy and there was evidence of good work in books.

CHALLENGE Would the fact that children would not be allowed to look into their new classrooms be detrimental for some pupils?

A: Pupils will be able to look but not sit inside due to sanitising requirements. However, this could be done on an individual basis for vulnerable pupils but not for whole classes.

Agenda Item 8 ▶ Health and Safety

Urgent H&S issues

There were no urgent issues.

H&S documents received since the previous meeting

The H&S review had been circulated and governors commented positively on the fact that there was only one action which had been incorporated into an action plan. The new software would ensure compliance.

Implementation of the Every Compliance System

MINUTE JB confirmed that the school was compliant and the new software would be up and running within a few weeks which would cover policies, risk assessments and other H&S areas. A central trust team had been set up to establish which aspects would be covered by schools and which by Chancery Trust. School policies would be added and school must decide what else will be required to ensure compliance e.g. a schedule of tasks for the Site Manager.

Health and Safety Link Governor Visit Feedback

JB reported there were no issues. The fort was now out of action. Governors were made aware of the overlap between premises and safeguarding safety, and agreed that all aspects would be covered by a combination of GW and JB.

CHALLENGE Q: Are there Mental Health first aiders in school?

A: Yes.

Agenda Item 9 ▶ Safeguarding

Safeguarding issues

All safeguarding matters were included in the Headteacher's report and there was nothing else to add.

Safeguarding discussions GW and JJ

A report would be provided by GW who requested that JJ provided governors with more information about work behind the scenes e.g. actions of pupils and steps taken to deal with them.

MINUTE Safeguarding Audit

This was discussed under item 5 of the meeting.

Single Central Record (SCR) compliance report

One piece of evidence was awaited on identity. All items with ticks were reflected in either a Human Resources (HR) or volunteer file or director file in case of audit.

CHALLENGE Q: What is the meaning of the term not school ready?

A: This means that not all contact details, training and induction are complete.

Agenda Item 10 ▶ **Chancery Trust**Update from Chair and HT / Questions for the Board of Directors or Central Team

As previously discussed, a meeting was scheduled for 22nd June with the CEO and Chair of Chancery Trust Board of Directors. GB gave an update and highlighted the following:

- MINUTE**
- The previous meeting had discussed Chancery in relation to the schools and LGBs.
 - Information was shared and questions and concerns around communication and achievement were expressed.
 - Excalibur governors had expressed a lack of a sense of belonging to the trust and had questioned what the school was getting out of being part of Chancery. As a result, a further meeting had been scheduled.
 - GB felt it had been a good opportunity to share governor feelings, and it was clear that LG had very high view of the school.
 - GB expressed the view that governors felt they wanted school to get everything possible for their pupils and JJ confirmed that there were very tangible benefits in areas such as Finance and T&L.
 - The LGB felt to be a disempowered entity and there was a greater need to work together to get a sense of direction.

Agenda Item 11 ▶ **Governor Development and Training**Training Liaison Governor update

SC had taken on this role and would provide an update at the next meeting.

Governor training since the previous meeting

JB had completed H&S and SEND training.

- MINUTE**
- Ofsted 20 Questions for Governors
Governors were requested to use the document to complete the annual governor review.

Chancery Trust Annual Governor Review

Governors were requested to email the completed document to GB by 30th June.

Governors identified that the SSDP had a governor section which needed to be reviewed, rag-rated and updated for September. Answers from the annual governors' review could then feed in to the SSDP. It was felt that one-to-one meetings would be a good idea.

- ACTION** Email a word version of the Governor Annual Review to governors for return to Gill Burgess by end of June. (Clerk)

Agenda Item 12 ▶ **Reports from Governors with Specific Responsibilities**

Governors agreed that the format of the visit record form was very good and a number of visits had taken place.

Maths, English, SEN and H&S reports were available on TTG.

- MINUTE**
- MC thanked JJ for the opportunity to visit the school to film PE challenges in Years 4 and 6. Pupils engaged well, behaviour was excellent, and films would be shared with JJ and Dan Hancock and governors. Year 4 had many footballers particularly girls. Also a four-week course was to be provided for pupils with homework activities such as cooking a meal for a favourite sports person and designing a football / sports kit. Governor feedback would be welcomed. MC would be attending Sports Week and also praised the number of girls from Excalibur playing football in Alsager.

MC left the meeting at 18.50.

Agenda Item 13 ▶ **Cheshire East Director of Children's Services Report Summer 2021**

- MINUTE** The report had been available on TTG and governors confirmed that all recommendations were being addressed.

- CHALLENGE** **Q: Is SLA gold purchased for governors?**
A: Cheshire East Governor training was available for all governors.

Agenda Item 14 ▶ **School Policies**Policy Schedule

Governors had had sight of the policy schedule on TTG prior to the meeting.

- MINUTE** Art and Design Policy

Design and Technology Policy

Governors approved the Art and Design Policy and the Design and Technology Policy.

- DECISION** Governors approved the Art and Design Policy and the Design and Technology Policy.

Agenda Item 15 ▶ **Holiday dates 2022/23**

- MINUTE** Governors approved the Excalibur School holiday dates for 2022/23.

- DECISION** Governors approved the Excalibur School holiday dates for 2022/23.

Agenda Item 16 ▶ **Next meeting**

The dates of the Excalibur LGB meetings for 2021/22 were confirmed as:

- MINUTE**
- 20th September 2021
 - 29th November 2021
 - 17th January 2022
 - 21st March 2022
 - 9th May 2022
 - 27th June 2022

All dates were now available on Trust Governor.

Agenda Item 17 ▶ **Any Other Business**

- MINUTE** The Fort

The Site Manager, YH and JJ had designed the new fort which would require investment of £50k. Three quotes had been obtained as shown on TTG. The school recommendation was for the Caloo quotation at £43k which would involve a contribution of £16k from the school. A contact was recommended for free dismantling of the existing construction and site clearance.

Governors confirmed approval to proceed with the Caloo quotation for the replacement of the fort.

New lighting

The school wished to replace the existing fluorescent lighting throughout the school. The proposal from Superior Eco was explained by YH. A basic saving of £1800 over 5-years was expected. The cost to the school would be £19k to have all lights replaced with deposit of £4785 from

capital funding and a balance paid over 60 months. Approval from the DfE would be sought before proceeding. The monthly charge would be £239 which would be saved from the lighting expenditure currently.

Governors confirmed approval to proceed with the lighting proposal / quotation from Superior Eco. YH would refer back to governors to comply with financial procedures.

DECISION Governors confirmed approval to proceed with the Caloo quotation for the replacement of the fort.
Governors confirmed approval to proceed with the lighting proposal/quotation from Superior Eco.

CHALLENGE **Q: What does the Caloo quotation cover?**
A: It includes removal of the old fort, groundwork, building of the new area and new fencing around the it.
Q: Are the LED lights a better solution for epileptics? Does anyone in school struggle with LEDs?
A: Yes, they are a better solution and no one in school was known to have difficulties with LED lights.

Agenda Item 18 ▶ **Impact Statement**

- The meeting discussion around SEND gave governors reassurance that a plan was in place to close the gap for SEN pupils
- The curriculum area reports ensured that governors were aware of the work in the school and that the provision of each was of a very high standard.
- The detailed audit and H&S report from the link governor assured governors that the school was as safe as possible for the school community and visitors.
- The comprehensive report from the School Business Manager gave governors confidence that that school was a going concern and that school finances were in a good position.

MINUTE

The Part One meeting closed at 19.00.

Governor Agreed Actions set during this meeting: 0

Excalibur LGB Summer 2 2021 Pt1 *dated:* 14/06/2021
Minutes approved by Sue Lambeth