

MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Monday 14 December 2009, 19.30hrs



Present: Ysanne Austin, Stephen Burton (Headteacher), Steve Clarke, John Elliott, Janie Jones, Lisa Kennedy, Ankit Mathur, Carlos Montes, Ian Lewin (Chair), Karen Watson.

In attendance: Emma Faid (Clerk), Nina Gane.

0. Welcome & introductions

0.1. The Chair welcomed Karen Watson, elected as a staff governor earlier in the term, to her first full meeting of the Governing Body, and those present introduced themselves to Karen.

1. Apologies for absence

1.1. Apologies were received and accepted from Matthew Borg, Paul Jobson, Ian Nimmo-Smith and Ruth Sapsed.

2. Declarations of Interest & Register of Pecuniary Interests

2.1. The Clerk declared an interest in agenda item 15, and that she would need to leave the room whilst this item was discussed.

2.2. The Clerk confirmed that she had received forms from all governors bar one, and that she would follow this up with the governor concerned.

Action: Clerk

3. Minutes of previous meeting (7 September 2009)

3.1. The minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting on 7 September 2009 were approved, and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising

4.1. Item 6.1 (Education Portal/Governors' Extranet): The Chair reported that the Clerk had been to see a system already in place at another school, which provided both a web-based Governors' Extranet, and a secure remote login to the school network. The technicalities of replicating a similar system at MRPS would be progressed further next term. Noted also that the LA now required all LA/school staff to use CCC/school email addresses and not personal ones, for communication, and this was strongly recommended for governors also. Noted also that all governors were already provided with a secure web-based email through the Education Portal, although only a few governors were currently using this at present.

Actions: Chair/Headteacher/Clerk

4.2. Item 6.3 (removal of Science SATs): The Headteacher confirmed that Science SATs had definitely removed for next summer. There was however a possibility that MRPS could be involved in a new pilot providing external verification; more detail to follow in February 2010.

4.3. Item 7.2.1 (Headteacher's Performance Review): The Chair confirmed that Ian Nimmo-Smith had agreed to act as chair of the panel. The action was now on INS to arrange the first review meeting with the panel.

Action: INS

4.4. Item 13.1.1 (flowers for Zest): as Ruth Sapsed was not present at the meeting, Lisa Kennedy

agreed to check with Ruth that she had now been reimbursed by all governors, for the flowers Ruth had purchased for Zest.

Action: LK

4.5. All other actions were agreed as either completed, or covered elsewhere on the agenda.

5. Constitutional Matters

5.1. The Chair reminded governors that the Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Delegation Decision Planner and Terms of Reference for the two committees, had been circulated in advance with the papers for the meeting.

5.2. After a short discussion all five documents were approved without changes. Governors to sign their copy of the Code of Conduct, and pass to the Clerk.

Action: All Governors

6. Review catering arrangements and proposed price increase

6.1. The Chair reported that a governor review (thanks noted to CM and LK for this) was conducted after half term, and Peter Sulston had also been involved. Aspens had reported that with current meal numbers the service was running at a loss, and had mooted various options for rectifying the situation, including a possible price increase in January and/or a lump sum subsidy from school. The issue had been debated at some length at the last meeting of the Resources Committee, and the proposal put forward for consideration by the Full Governing Body was a price increase of 10p from January 2010, a subsidy of £1k payable now, and a potential second subsidy at Easter. A letter had also been sent to parents advising them of the potential price increase, and inviting them to give feedback on the catering arrangements to governors. Noted also that the catering contract, once signed by Aspens, provided for a 4-month notice period.

6.2. The Chair then provided a précis of the various emails and personal feedback provided by parents. The importance of engaging children in the school meals was also discussed, and the need for effective marketing of the meals to children by Aspens. Agreed that the catering sub-committee should work with Aspens on increasing numbers/engaging children/effective marketing; Matthew Borg had offered to join the committee to help with the marketing/engagement of the children, and Nina Gane agreed to assist also. Catering committee to review meal numbers regularly, and report back to the next Resources Committee meeting on progress.

Action: Catering Committee (incl MB & NG)

6.3. Following a lengthy discussion, governors voted on the proposal to increase prices by 10p with effect from January 2010, plus provide a subsidy of £1k to Aspens now. A detailed review would then be carried out at the Resources Committee meeting on 22 February 2010, then taken to the meeting of the Full Governing Body on 15 March 2010. Proposal carried, with 9 in favour, and 1 against.

7. Approval of School Development Plan

7.1. The Headteacher introduced the draft School Development Plan, previously circulated with the papers for the meeting. This provided for a 2-year plan, costed at £19k if all items went ahead. Some indications were also given for year 3. Spend in previous years had run at approximately £9k per annum, so this plan was on line with spend in previous years. There was some scope to reduce costs if needed to balance the budget, but some items would have to be deleted from the plan as a result. He then responded to questions from a number of governors, on various items included in the plan.

- 7.2. In conclusion, the Headteacher advised that some areas of the SDP still needed further development, but this would be done at the INSET day on 4 January. Additionally Flower was helping with introducing a RAG traffic light system, which would help identify progress in completing the plan, and flag up any areas where progress was delayed. A list of governors assigned to specific areas of the SDP was being developed– Carlos Montes to circulate to all governors.

Action: Curriculum Chair

- 7.3. On behalf of the Governing Body, the Chair thanked Stephen Burton and the staff team for all their hard work in compiling the SDP as it stood at present, and looked forward to receiving further updates.

8. Headteacher's Report

- 8.1. The Headteacher introduced his report, which had been circulated to all governors in advance of the meeting. He reminded governors of the INSET day on 4 January, which would look at the future vision for MRPS, and hoped that as many governors as possible would be able to participate in the day. All staff at school had been invited to the event, plus governors and the PTA committee, with catering by Aspens
- 8.2. The Headteacher also advised, that MRPS had been picked at random for an OFSTED inspection on Art, which would take place on 7 January 2010. The inspector would spend time with Stephen and with the subject leader, and observe Art teaching in school, and then produce a short report grading the school's performance in this area. He would report back to governors, once the inspection had taken place. One governor queried if the short reports on thematic inspections were published, and the Clerk confirmed that as with full inspections, reports on thematic inspections were published on the OFSTED website once finalised.
- 8.3. Finally, the Headteacher reported that the SIP, Barry Dowler, has been in to set targets with himself and Nina Gane; a more detailed document would follow in due course. He also advised governors, that the 1 to 1 tuition previously reported to the Governing Body, would be starting after the Christmas break.

9. Chair's Report

- 9.1. The Chair advised that he had no specific items to report, as everything he wished to mention was covered elsewhere on the agenda.

10. Committee Matters

10.1. Resources Committee

- 10.1.1. On behalf of the Resources Committee, the Chair advised governors that the current forecast outturn was for a surplus of approximately £15k. He also drew governors' attention to the H&S report from Paul Jobson, circulated with the papers for the meeting. Governors minuted their thanks to Paul Jobson for this, and agreed the suggested actions should be reviewed at the next meeting of the Resources Committee.

Action: Resources Committee

10.2. Review Committee

- 10.2.1. Noted that the work of the Review Committee had been completed for the year, with the exception of one performance review which had been delayed due to illness. The Headteacher reported on his plans to complete this review early in the spring term, and undertook to advise YA (as Chair of Review Committee) and the Clerk, with regards to arranging a meeting of the Review Committee to receive the school's recommendations.

Action: Headteacher

10.3. Curriculum Committee (inc Governor Visits)

10.3.1. CM reported that the two main items of work for this committee at present, were the provision of school meals (as discussed at item 6 above), and also governor visits. A very interesting and informative visit had just been completed on Extended Services; and he reminded all governors that had participated in this to write up their reports and send to him, so that these could be collated, agreed with the Headteacher, and then discussed at the next meeting of the Curriculum Committee.

Action: All Governors

10.3.2. The Curriculum Committee had also reviewed at some length the Family Holidays policy developed by SNOTR, and this was now brought to the Full Governing Body for review and ratification. Governors voted unanimously to ratify the policy without changes.

11. **FMSiS**

11.1. The Headteacher provided a brief update on the work undertaken in school to prepare for FMSiS accreditation. He confirmed that the independent assessment of this, was scheduled for 31 March 2010. With some input from the Clerk (who had experience of FMSiS through being a governor at another school), he provided further information on the R15 Statement of Internal Control paper, circulated to all governors with the papers for the meeting.

11.1.1. In the absence of a visit from the LA's Internal Audit team (who no longer conduct whole school audits in Cambridgeshire), he explained that governors would need to carry out their own evaluation of the internal controls, before completing the Pre-Certification Checklist, and the Statement of Internal Control itself.

11.1.2. As Chair of Resources, Ian Lewin agreed to carry out the evaluation of controls, and Ankit Mathur agreed to assist him with this. The Clerk agreed to draw up a checklist of items for IL/Am to review, based on her experience of obtaining FMSiS accreditation at another school. The SIC + supporting checklist could then be reviewed in detail at Resources Committee in the spring term, then taken to the meeting of the Full Governing Body on 15 March 2010 for formal ratification.

Actions: Chair/AM, Clerk, Resources Committee

12. **WiFi in schools – re-affirm GB support of current policy**

12.1. Having noted the ongoing debate regarding WiFi in schools, Governors agreed it would be appropriate to review evidence and advice currently available, and decide whether to re-affirm support for the existing policy, or whether any change to this might be required.

12.2. After discussion (including advice noted from several sources including the Local Authority, the HPA, Becta and indeed parents and governors), governors voted unanimously to re-affirm their current policy without change. Thanks minuted to those governors who had assisted with the review and with obtaining professional advice.

13. **Training Report**

13.1. Review recent training attended by governors

13.1.1. As Link Governor for Training, the Chair reminded all governors to advise him of any training courses they attended, including induction training for new governors, so that he could update his records. The Chair recorded that he had completed the Local Authority's "Taking the Chair" course and AM recorded his completion of the governor's Induction course. KW noted she was also booked on the Induction course. The Chair strongly encouraged all governors to undertake relevant training and reminded them that the school had a subscription which

covered the cost of LA training.

Action: All Governors

13.2. Next governor/staff training evening

13.2.1. The Chair advised that he would circulate a list to all governors of the available courses, with a view to holding the selected course during the spring term.

Action: Chair

13.3. Agree a governor to attend the spring term governor briefing

13.3.1. Lisa Kennedy volunteered to attend the session at CPDC on Thursday 28 January 2010, and to report back to the Governing Body on the items covered.

Action: LK

14. Policy Review Schedule

14.1. Agreed to review this in detail at the next meeting – Chair to circulate a schedule of current policies to Governors at the start of next term.

Action: Chair

15. Review clerking arrangements and subscription to Camclerks agency

15.1. The Clerk declared a personal interest in this item, and left the meeting whilst governors discussed the governing body's current subscription to the LA's Camclerks agency, and whether the governing body would obtain better service and value for money, by employing a Clerk direct.

15.2. Once the discussion had been concluded, the Chair invited the Clerk to rejoin the meeting. A detailed discussion on the way forward would take place at the next meeting of the Resources Committee. A detailed paper summarising the advantages/disadvantages of the two systems, and the respective costs of the Camclerks subscription and employing a Clerk direct, would be prepared to inform the discussion.

Action: Chair/Resources Committee

16. Completion of current year's School Profile – update from Headteacher

16.1. Work ongoing; the Clerk advised on the weblink to locate the School Profile published in the previous school year, and confirmed she would provide assistance to the Headteacher as required, in completing and publishing the School Profile for the current academic year.

Action: Headteacher, Clerk

17. Any Other Business

17.1. None on this occasion.

18. Date of next meeting

18.1. Monday 15 March 2010, at 7.30pm in the staff room.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 21:45 hours.