

MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Monday 15 March 2010, 19.30hrs



Present: Ysanne Austin, Stephen Burton (Headteacher), Janie Jones, Lisa Kennedy, Ian Lewin (Chair), Ankit Mathur, Carlos Montes, Ruth Sapsed & Karen Watson.

In attendance: Emma Faid (Clerk), Nina Gane, representatives from Aspens (item 2 only).

1. Apologies for absence

- 1.1. Apologies were received and accepted from Matthew Borg, Steve Clarke, John Elliott, Paul Jobson and Ian Nimmo-Smith.

2. Update on Catering Arrangements

- 2.1. The Chair welcomed John & Amanda from Aspens to the meeting. On behalf of Aspens, John identified two key issues to discuss; Governors' views re quality of food/service provided, and financials.
- 2.2. Noted that Peter Sulston had completed his second audit, and the report was with Governors. Many of the initial issues encountered at the start of the year had now been resolved, and Aspens appreciated that a change in school caterers was never an easy issue for primary school parents. On behalf of the Governing Body, the Chair expressed broad satisfaction with the quality of food/service. Noted also that the School Council had conducted a review, which had also resulted in positive feedback.
- 2.3. Regarding the financials, Aspens reported a recent increase in "pay on the day" cash sales. The service remained viable for Aspens taking into the recent price increase and the subsidy for the current year agreed by the Governing Body, but this was not really sustainable in the longer term. Additionally plate counts in the dining room had identified up to 30 extra meals actually served, compared to those booked/paid for on the day.
- 2.4. Aspens further reported that a minority of parents were slow payers and so an element of debt collection/chasing was required. That plus the extra 30-odd meals being served were the two key financial issues from Aspens perspective. For this reason, they had suggested the possibility of introducing a dinner register. After a short discussion, it was agreed that (i) dinner numbers would be taken daily as part of registration, and (ii) that periodic spot checks would be carried out by the school some lunchtimes, which should help identify any discrepancies. The Headteacher undertook to communicate this to the staff team.
Action: Headteacher
- 2.5. One Governor enquired whether Aspens could offer an online form for parents to complete with their bookings for each half term. John and Amanda advised that the Aspens website was currently being updated; and that they would look into this to see if an online booking/payment facility could be incorporated. Agreed also to communicate to parents (via ParentMail?) that their preferred payment was electronic, and that payment by cheque was in the process of being withdrawn.
Action: Aspens/Headteacher
- 2.6. Note also year 2 of the contract should present fewer issues, given that both the initial logistical issues and the one-off setup costs (uniforms, CRB checks, recruitment etc) would not be repeated. Aspens agreed to provide a summary of the year 1 setup costs to the Governing Body, for their information.
Action: Aspens
- 2.7. Regarding the ongoing discussion re VAT (previously discussed at the February meeting of the Resources Committee), it was agreed that the status quo regarding VAT accounting would continue, unless Aspens decided they wished to change. Noted that any change in VAT accounting would be cash neutral in Aspen's accounts.
- 2.8. On behalf of the Governing Body, the Chair formally thanked Aspens for their attendance and for the information/suggestions they had brought before the Governing Body.

[The representatives from Aspens left the meeting at this point.]

- 2.9. The Chair proposed that the second half of the subsidy be paid to Aspens, but that this was subject to the daily registers and periodic spot checks being introduced. More robust and transparent accounting procedures as outlined above, to be in place for year 2. Agreed unanimously.
- 2.10. Following a short discussion of Peter Sulston's report, it was agreed not to use his consultancy services for a further visit, but that the reviews would be conducted by the Governing Body, using the same format as that followed by Mr Sulston.

[Ysanne Austin joined the meeting at this point.]

3. Declarations of Interest/Register of Pecuniary Interests

- 3.1. Nina Gane declared an interest in agenda item 7 (Deputy Headteacher appointment).
- 3.2. With regard to outstanding returns, the Clerk advised that she had now received all pecuniary interests declarations bar one, which was being followed up with the Governor concerned. A few Code of Conduct returns were also outstanding, and again she was continuing to follow these up with the Governors concerned.

Action: Clerk

4. Minutes of previous meeting (14 December 2009)

- 4.1. The minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting on 14 December 2009 were approved, and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. Matters Arising

- 5.1. Item 4.1 (Education Portal/Governors Extranet): carried forward to the next meeting.
Action: Chair, Clerk
- 5.2. Item 4.3 (Headteacher's Performance Review): confirmed that a date had now been set for the mid-term review.
- 5.3. Item 10.2.1 Review Committee: the Headteacher advised that a date had now been set for the performance management review which had been delayed due to the postholder's illness. The Clerk confirmed that a supplementary meeting of the Review Performance would then be required to receive/implement the school's recommendations as presented by the Headteacher.
Action: Headteacher, Review Committee
- 5.4. Item 10.3.1 Governor Visit: The Curriculum Chair reminded Governors who had participated in the last visit re Extended Services but had not yet sent in their reports, to send these to him ASAP.
Action: Extended Services visit participants
- 5.5. Item 13.1.1 (Governor Training): The Chair took the opportunity to remind all Governors to notify him of any Governing Body training they attended, so that he could update his database.
Action: All Governors
- 5.6. Item 13.2 (Whole GB training): Noted that a topic and date still needed to be set for the current academic year. After a short discussion a topic of monitoring the school development plan was agreed, and the Chair confirmed that he would contact Governor Services to discuss possible dates/arrangements etc
Action: Chair

- 5.7. Item 15.2 (Clerking Arrangements/Subscription to Camclerks): To be covered at the May Resources/FGB meeting.
Action: Chair, Clerk

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

6. Headteacher's Report

- 6.1. The Headteacher introduced his report, previously circulated with the papers for the meeting. The report included termly information on looked after children, exclusions, and racist

incidents, the details of which were duly noted by Governors.

6.2. A date needed to be set for the cross-sectional meeting to progress the school Vision; 8.30am on Friday 26 March proposed. The Headteacher also confirmed that a revised date had now been set for the review of his performance management targets.

6.3. INSET days for 2010/11 (including both those set by the LA and those set by the school) were proposed as 1 September, 4 October, 4 January, 5 January, 8 April and 24 June. The Headteacher confirmed that these were similar to the dates for 2009/10.

6.4. The school was continuing to build links with Chesterton Community College, including joint funding bids. Noted that the Headteacher of Chesterton wished to talk to MRPS Governors about Chesterton's Trust School application, and it was agreed to invite Mark Patterson to a future Resources Committee meeting.

Action: Headteacher, Chair

6.5. Following the impending retirement of the school finance secretary, the Headteacher tabled a paper summarising options for recruiting to the role, taking into account the need to provide cover for financial tasks in the postholder's absence, and to provide opportunities for other school office staff to extend their skills. After a short discussion on the options, Governors expressed a preference for Option 2, and mandated the Headteacher to take this forward and to report back to a future meeting of the Governing Body.

Action: Headteacher

6.6. On behalf of the Governing Body, the Chair thanked the Headteacher for his comprehensive report, and congratulated him on securing the 2-year funding package to support children struggling with reading.

7. Arrangements for Deputy Headteacher appointment

7.1. Agreed to take this item at the end of the meeting, and Nina could then leave beforehand.

8. Monitoring of School Development Plan

8.1. The Headteacher summarised the work currently ongoing, which could also be seen on the SDP planner on the staffroom wall. Noted that Flower was working on a system of RAG indicators to include in a future report to Governors. Finally, noted that a schedule of Governors linked to the various SDP priorities had now been developed by the Curriculum Chair.

8.2. Noted that the Governor Visit for the following term would focus on Overseas Links, and that the whole GB training evening would also focus on monitoring the school development plan (see minute 5.6 above).

9. Chair's Report

9.1. The Chair advised Governors that he had received an informal (ie stage 1) complaint, which had been addressed and resolved. He had been asked by the LA to remind all Governors of the importance of ensuring emails sent by Governors in their official capacity needed to be clear and unambiguous.

9.2. The Chair concluded by confirmed that all other items he had wished to mention, were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

10. Timetable/arrangements for approval of 2010/11 budget

10.1. The timetable and arrangements for the approval of the 2010/11 budget were confirmed, with budget approval by the Full Governing Body scheduled for Monday, 10 May 2010. The Chair confirmed that he would meet as usual with the Headteacher and the SFA, to work on the detail, prior to the 10 May meeting.

Action: Chair

11. Update on preparation for FMSiS accreditation

11.1. The Headteacher provided a brief summary of the pre-inspection meeting he had had with Ray Byford from the LA.

- 11.2. As required by the FMSiS standard, the Terms of Reference for the Resources Committee were duly endorsed and accepted by the Full Governing Body.
- 11.3. The Headteacher asked the Clerk to provide the following documents for inclusion in the school's FMSiS portfolio of evidence:-
- Resources Committee Terms of Reference for 2009/10, as endorsed by the current meeting.
 - Confirmation of when the 2009/10 budget was approved, and that it was submitted to the LA by the due date.
 - A copy of the Clerk's job description (noted that as a Camclerk, the Clerk worked to a standard job description devised by Governor Services and based on the DCSF's national job description for Clerks).

The Clerk confirmed that she would forward these as requested, and was on hand to provide any further information/documents if required by the FMSiS assessors.

Action: Clerk

- 11.4. After a short discussion, Governors approved the draft Recruitment & Selection Policy, noting that this was based on the model policy provided by the school's personnel provider, EPM. The Headteacher confirmed that he would send an electronic copy of the Policy to the Clerk, for her central records.

Action: Headteacher

- 11.5. The Headteacher noted that following the information he received at his meeting with Ray Byford, there were some additional policies and documents requiring the Governing Body's formal endorsement/approval. The Clerk recommended that an additional meeting be convened prior to the FMSiS assessment for this purpose, and said that she would assist the Headteacher in arranging the additional meeting and circulating the papers in support of this.

Action: Headteacher, Clerk

[Carlos Montes left the meeting at this point.]

12. Committee Matters

12.1. Resources Committee

- 12.1.1. Draft minutes of the recent meeting on 22/02/10 already circulated; no further items to report to Full Governors on this occasion.

12.2. Curriculum & Community Committee

- 12.2.1. Draft minutes of the meeting of 01/03/10 to be circulated shortly; no further items to report to Full Governors on this occasion.

Action: Curriculum Chair, Clerk

13. Training Report

13.1. Review recent training attended by Governors

- 13.1.1. Already covered under Matters Arising (item 5.5 above).

13.2. Planning the next Governor/Staff training evening

- 13.2.1. Already covered under Matters Arising (item 5.6 above).

13.3. Update on the Spring Term Governor Briefing

- 13.3.1. Lisa Kennedy reported on the Spring Term Governor briefing she had attended, and commented that she had found the meeting extremely useful and informative. Agreed to append a précis of the issues covered to the minutes of this meeting.

- 13.4. Agree a Governor to attend the Summer Term Governor Briefing

13.4.1. The Chair asked for a volunteer to attend the Summer Term Governor Briefing (Wednesday 5 May at Cottenham VC); Governors to advise the Chair if they were able to attend. The Clerk advised that although booking was not essential, it would be appreciated if those planning to attend contacted Governor Services in advance, so that they had an indication of the likely number of attendees anticipated.

Action: All Governors

14. Policy review schedule - update

14.1. Carried forward to the next meeting.

Action: Chair, Clerk

15. Completion of current year's School Profile, also School Brochure

15.1. A copy of the current draft had been circulated by the Headteacher prior to the meeting. After a short discussion this was approved by Governors, and the Headteacher was mandated to précis as required and upload to the DCSF website. A copy of the final version would be circulated to Governors with the minutes of the current meeting.

Action: Headteacher, Clerk

16. Any Other Business

16.1. None on this occasion.

[Nina Gane left the meeting at this point].

17. Arrangements for Deputy Headteacher appointment

17.1. The Headteacher advised Governors that the post had been advertised in Times and on the EPM website. So far four candidates had made informal visits to the school. The closing date for applications was 19 March 2010, with shortlisting on 23 March 2010.

17.2. An Appointment Panel (SB, IL, CM, YA & LK) had been formed at the Resources Committee meeting on 22 February 2010. The detailed programme for the interview day would depend on the number of candidates shortlisted. Governors duly approved the above process as outlined by the Headteacher. [Post meeting note: an additional meeting of the Full Governing Body would take place on March 30th, for the purpose of receiving the Appointment Panel's recommendation and making an appointment.]

18. Date of next meeting

18.1. Monday 10 May 2010, at 7.30pm in the staff room (joint FGB/Resources meeting, for budget approval).

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

Approved by the Governing Body on 10 May 2010