



**Minutes of a Meeting of the Full Governing Body of Woodfield Community Primary School
Held virtually, 22 July 2021, 6.00pm**

Present: Jo Marwood (JM) – Acting Head of School
Bridget Tayan (BT) - Joint Chair
Paul Haslam (PH) – Joint Chair
Jan Tringham (JT)
Victoria Lack (VL)
Martin Deacon (MD)
Saskia Boardman (SB)
Jonathan Spruce (JS)
Sarah Watson (SW)

In attendance: Amanda Newbold (AN) - Assistant Director Education and Skills
Karen Butler (KB) – Senior Education Advisor
Chris Walker (CW) - Clerk

Apologies: Mathew Atkinson – Acting Executive Head Teacher
Stacey Watson

Governing Body functions:

Ensuring the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school are clearly defined

Ensuring that the Headteacher performs their responsibilities for the educational performance of the school

Ensuring the sound and proper and efficient use of the school's financial resources

No.	Agenda Item	Part 'A' – Procedural	Action
1	Welcome and Introductions	<p>PH welcomed everyone and thanked all present for being able to attend this extra meeting.</p> <p>PH informed governors that both he and SW had been able to attend the Y6 leavers assembly earlier in the morning. It had been a fabulous occasion and well-received by the pupils and parents. PH had used the opportunity to thank all staff, on behalf of the governing body, for their hard work and dedication during the challenging times over the last 12 months.</p> <p>PH talked through the purpose of the agenda as outlined at item 1 on the agenda itself. The focus of the agenda was to address governance and school improvement. The Governor Action Plan had been updated further but this version had not yet been circulated to governors.</p> <p>Three additional items had been added to the agenda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication - Correspondence - LA Update - AN would be joining the meeting at the end. <p>PH reported that the work on changing the speed limit to 20mph outside the school would begin in August.</p>	
2	Apologies	<p>MA had sent his apologies in advance of the meeting, which were consented to. SW was unable to attend the meeting. Both JT and JS were not present at the start of the meeting. JS had notified the meeting that he would be late.</p>	
3	Identification of confidential items	<p>To be considered as the meeting progressed although it was likely that the LA Update item would be confidential. PH thanked those governors who had identified items to be considered confidential.</p>	

4	Identification of urgent other business (AOB)	None JS joined the meeting at 6.12pm	
5	To remind governors of the need to declare interests, pecuniary or non-pecuniary.	JM declared an interest in any discussions which related to the Priestley Academy Trust as employees of that organisation. JS had recorded his role as a governor at Willow Tree on his register of business interest form.	
6	To approve the minutes of the meeting on 11 May and 15 June 2021.	The minutes were approved as an accurate record to be signed by one of the Chairs once able to do so.	
		BUSINESS OF THE MEETING	
7	To receive and note the Governance Review Report	The Governance Review Report had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. Questions were invited. The Report was noted.	
8	To receive and note the provisional Ofsted Report	The provisional Ofsted Report had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. Questions were invited. PH confirmed that the final report had not yet been received. The Report was noted.	
9	Governor Action Plan	The Governor Action Plan had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. At this point in the meeting BT made an announcement to governors. Following a lot of hard thinking BT had decided to resign as both joint-chair and as a governor with immediate effect. BT outlined her reasons in reaching this decision which included:	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Both she and the current membership of the governing body did not have sufficient expertise and experience to be able to drive the school forward as required;- There were currently no vacancies on the board and in order to free up a place to enable an experienced person of the right calibre to join, BT felt it her duty to step aside in the best interests of the school;- BT had discussed her position with the LA who had informed her that they had 3 suitable governors who they would be able to place on the governing board should places become available.- BT confirmed that she would continue to support the school as a volunteer- BT asked if any other governors felt the same way. <p>JT joined the meeting at 6.19pm</p> <p>PH reminded governors that it was possible to co-opted additional (Associate) governors for a fixed time period to support the governing body on specific projects. PH had managed to source an experienced governor for potential future consideration by the governing body.</p> <p>MD thanked BT for all her work as both a Chair and governor and notified governors that he too had tendered his resignation in a written letter to the clerk. The clerk had agreed to read out the letter at the correspondence section of the agenda.</p> <p>KB thanked both MD and BT for all their hard work and contribution to both the governing body and the school.</p> <p>PH thanked BT and MD for all their support and hard work in support of the governing body and the school.</p> <p>VL was concerned about how impartial the 3 potentially new governors would be if appointed via the LA. Would it not be better to either retain or recruit people with knowledge of the school rather than bring in new people at this time? The priority should be to try and ensure stability.</p>	
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		<p>BT reported that the 3 people in question had volunteered to help the school and did not have any allegiance to the LA.</p> <p>KB reminded governors that the clear conclusion in both the HMI’s Report and the Governance Review was that governance at the school was ineffective.</p> <p>In discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- VL accepted that there were issues regarding the effectiveness of the governing body but that this was as a result of the way the governing body had been managed by the Chair and not down to the ineffectiveness of the governors themselves. In addition, the LA had previously provided additional capacity on the governing body with the appointments of MD and SB.- The governing body did have the necessary skills but the system did not allow them to apply them. Opinions were ignored and agenda items not included despite requests from governors. A number of governors had wanted to pursue Academisation but this had not been allowed by the leadership of the governing body.- Governors had not been given a chance to make informed decisions. <p>KB reminded governors that the governing body had been assessed as ineffective (by the DfE) over 18 months previously and had therefore had time to improve but had not done so. The issue of Academisation was outside the hands of the governing body – the RSC had ultimately been unable to find a sponsor.</p> <p>PH agreed that changes needed to be made but did not want to respond to the specific comments made by VL. PH explained that significant amount of work had been undertaken to address the governance issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- An Action Plan had been drafted and link responsibilities were to be assigned at this meeting- A support system had been built into the plan that would enable governors to pair up and share experience- Training opportunities had been put in place to ensure all governors had access to any training they might need.	
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		<p>the governing body had not been able to focus enough time on function two – holding the headteacher to account. It is important that any assessment of governance is mindful of this context. The SLT have been successful in delivering the necessary improvements in teaching and learning and quality of education and there is now, arguably, some stability across each of the 3 core functions.</p> <p>PH agreed with this summary and added that a further context was having to address the challenges presented by the pandemic.</p> <p>Discussion about leadership</p> <p>MD was concerned that the governing body was being held back by a Chair who had imposed a presidential style during his tenure of office. There needed to be an immediate change and not more of the same to achieve the level of progress required.</p> <p>PH reported that he had always operated with the school’s best interests at heart. The priority was the survival of the school and he would do whatever it took to ensure this.</p> <p>MD asked PH to reflect on his position and to consider that he might be more of an obstacle than a solution. MD did not question the commitment of PH but his style and approach. MD noted that the use of joint chairs was not effective in his opinion.</p> <p>JS did not agree with the points raised by MD and noted that there would be an election for Chair and Vice-Chair at the September meeting. Governors would be able to vote and also consider the structure of the leadership of the governing body going forward (i.e. whether or not to have joint-chairs etc)</p> <p>Governors agreed to defer the discussion of the Action Plan to a future meeting.</p> <p>Governors agreed to consider separating Objective Two into two separate objectives as they were quite different and required different skill sets of governors. (Educational Standards and Financial Performance)</p>	
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10	Training	<p>Governors had been reminded of their log in details for Educare in advance of the meeting and a link to the site was included in the agenda. Additional training notes would be provided on the newly created Governor Portal</p>	
11	Skills Audit	<p>The 2019 NGA Skills Audit had been circulated to governors in advance of the meeting. Governors were asked to complete and return to the clerk as soon as possible.</p>	

12	Communication	Governors agreed that PH should draft two letters on behalf of the governing body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One to thank parents for their support over the past 12 months - One to thank staff for their support over the past 12 months 	PH
13	Correspondence	<p>AN joined the meeting at 7.13pm The Clerk read out the letter of resignation from MD. The Clerk notified governors that he had also received a letter of resignation from SB.</p> <p>SB confirmed, at the meeting, that she had written to the clerk to notify him of her resignation. SB informed governors that she had waited until the end of this meeting to confirm the resignation as she had wanted to assess whether or not the Chair had reflected on his position. In her view, the Chair had had opportunity to reflect on his position during the meeting but had chosen not to do so. Therefore her resignation was confirmed.</p> <p>SB wanted to assure governors that she believed that she did have the skills and experience to be able to support the governing body in delivering the required improvements. She was committed to improvement but believed that the governing body was no longer constructive and therefore had no alternative but to resign.</p> <p>In discussion: JT was sad and disappointed to lose both MD and SB and felt that both had a lot to offer the governing body. SB and MD stated that they would both have supported JT as Chair. JT confirmed that she would not be standing as Chair. PH confirmed that he believed that SB did have the right skills to support the governing body and was sad to see that she was leaving.</p>	
14	LA Update	A separate confidential minute has been prepared for this item.	
15	AOB	None	

Signed:

Position:

Date: