



Newnham Croft Primary School

Meeting of the Full Governing Body held on Wednesday 9 February 2022 at 6pm via Zoom

Governors present: Dani Redhead (Chair – DR); Andy Matthews (Headteacher – AM); Lucy Nethsingha (LN - *to item 10*); Edward Ferguson (EF); Hugh Clough (HC); Keren Sayir-Uziyel (KSU); Jason Palmer (JP); Simon Hill (SH); Matt Day (MD); Eleanor Toye Scott (ETS); David Carmona (DC); Aleks Jach (AJ); Ave Wrigley (AV – *from item 4*)

Also in attendance: Helen Bracey (Clerk - HB)

The meeting was quorate.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed members. Apologies were received from Shantha Baalham (SB) and George Hayes.

2. Declarations of interest relating to items on the agenda

None declared.

3. Co-option of new governor

A brief resume of Mr Ave Wrigley (AW) had been previously circulated to members. The Clerk invited members to vote to co-opt AW. LN nominated him, seconded by DR and members voted unanimously to co-opt AW to the Governing Body. AW was subsequently invited to join the meeting.

4. Update on Clerk Vacancy

The post for a Clerk to Governors between 3 schools (NC, Morley and Park Street) has been advertised, with a closing date of 1 March. The outgoing Clerk was thanked for her work over the past 5 years.

5. Review and acceptance of the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2021

The minutes were accepted as a true record, to be signed by the Chair in due course.

6. Matters arising and review of actions from the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2021

- F0610:02 – Closed
- F0610:03 – Closed
- F0610:04 – Closed
- F0112:01 – Closed
- F0112:02 – Closed
- F0112:03 – Closed
- F0112:04 – Ongoing – AM to continue to seek example SDPs from other schools.
- F0112:05 – Closed

- F0112:06 – Ongoing
- F0112:07 – Closed

7. Governance documents 2021/22

- Renewal of membership for KSU – parent membership due to run out in March. MD proposed to co-opt her, seconded by DR and agreed unanimously. (KSU was not present during the vote).
- Renewal of membership for Associate Member MS – KSU proposed to re-elect MS to the Teaching and Learning Committee, seconded to ETS and agreed unanimously.
- Renewal of membership for Associate Member NW – JP proposed to re-elect NW to the Eco and Premises Committee, seconded to KSU and agreed unanimously.
- Governor training – members were thanked for their engagement with training. All members have attended Safeguarding training. Members were asked to commit to at least one training course per term. MD is coordinating this area.
- Monitoring visits – 18 monitoring visits have been undertaken to date, with more scheduled for the remaining academic year.
- Leadership and Management review update – the LA advisors are clear that governors have made good strides in, for example, talking with increased confidence about their roles, being more strategically focused and holding school leaders to account. The Chair noted the importance of members having a shared understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and pulling in the same direction.

8. Reports from Committees

- Eco and Premises – *minutes of the last meeting had been circulated.* Areas highlighted: replacement boiler in the Community Room; some leaks in the school roof have been repaired but to be aware that the roof is not in great condition.
- Personnel and Finance – *draft minutes of the last meeting had been circulated.* The Committee Terms of Reference has been re-written – members unanimously voted to accept the document. The draft SFVS had been circulated and was approved unanimously by members; the Finance Officer will submit the document.
- Teaching and Learning – *minutes of the last meeting to be circulated in readiness for the next FGB.*

9. Headteacher's Written Report (previously circulated)

The following points/questions were raised:

Leadership and Management

In terms of communication to Governors, SLT and the rest of the school, a governor asked how this area for improvement was developing. AM said the new SLT formation was in its early stages, and that with the increased number of monitoring visits, there was improved communication between link governors and subject leaders. The Deputy Head noted that there is still some concern amongst staff about the organisation of communication, with a recent example being that some staff were not aware of the changes to SLT.

Questions were raised about how communication will continue to be improved and the redrafting of the DH's job description. EF responded that he and AM need to think about who is in charge of sharing information. EF said that the job description is slightly complicated as it covers almost everything, and some he has seen are all encompassing, whilst others are equally vague. The role will incorporate the SENCo responsibility.

Staffing

- It was noted that staff wellbeing is a priority for governors to be aware of.
- The Chair expressed her gratitude to JT for taking the initiative to conduct a staff survey.
- A governing body staff survey will be conducted again. During their monitoring visits, Governors were requested to ask staff about communication in school.
- AM noted that JT had shared the survey results and action plan with staff. She has received lots of suggestions. This will be discussed at PFC.

CPD, training and LA support

A governor enquired whether staff are happy with the LA support they are being given. AM responded that the response is mixed, with most staff happy with the detailed, practical support but some more challenged and pressured, particularly in maths. One governor noted that the once over the initial challenge, the EY team had found the support helpful. EF said that overall, the specific subject area advisers had been well received, particularly the maths adviser with problem solving/reasoning, evidencing in books, development of working walls. The English subject leaders felt well supported too. Staff felt reassured that they are not alone – this had been highlighted during a SL briefing, where teachers from other schools had expressed their concerns about the reasoning/problem solving area of the curriculum.

A governor asked whether the same processes could be applied to other subjects such as History or Geography. AM responded that the basics of the format could be used across all curriculum areas, but that the school should be focusing on subject areas that most need it at the moment. He said that in time, all subjects will be brought up to standard, and that no schools will have all subjects fully developed yet.

A governor asked where the best place to look to get a shared view of the school. AM responded that ultimately the SEF will be the best place, but that it is currently in an early stage. The top of the SDP lists the 7 areas being work on, which also links to monitoring visits. A governor commented that he found the SEF contained too much information, saying he would prefer a single page summary sheet. AM will look at developing such a summary for governors.

Action F0902:01 – AM to develop a summary sheet from the SEF for governors

School Finance/Funding

A governor enquired whether there was any projection of fuel costs, given the price rises. AM responded that fuel costs had been over budgeted a little last year and that the school is on a fixed rate tariff with ESPO.

A governor enquired about the financial impact of the PAN reduction, and whether the reduction is unanimously supported by staff. AM said the school hope to be £25000 better off by reducing the PAN, with the additional potential to raise money by letting the spare classroom for after school care. EF reported that staff were happy with the proposal.

Governors voted to recommend the PAN reduction to the LA, with 12 in favour and 1 abstention.

Action F0902:02 – AM to communicate to the Local Authority the Governors' recommendation to reduce the school PAN

PP and SP update

Sports Premium spending is moving away from the running track proposal and staff are looking at alternative ideas.

Pupil Survey results

A governor noted that children in KS2 did not have as positive an experience as KS1 children, asking how this might be explained. AM responded that anecdotally, KS1 children seem to like school more, but that this is something the school must be mindful of. A governor suggested asking the children this question.

A governor noted that in KS1, 4.5% of children said they felt unsafe in school. AM said that some children had mentioned Covid, and that a more detailed report would be discussed at TLC.

A governor asked whether it might be relevant to put the survey results on the website. AM agreed that it would be good to put up the headlines.

10. PAN reduction

Responses from the schools' financial adviser and CC Admissions team had been previously circulated. Discussion as above.

11. SEF

AM explained that the drafting of the SEF gives everyone the opportunity to have a coordinated view of where the school is at and to build up an evidence base for justifying why the school is 'good', based on the new Ofsted framework. The document currently contains a lot of detail, but the plan is to streamline it.

A governor enquired whether each section is written by the subject leader or the SLT? AM responded that the subject specific sections should be the ownership of the SL, though SLT will have a view that might add to it. Other sections such as personal development have yet to be fleshed out by SLT. The phrase 'cultural capital' is becoming important in the new Ofsted framework, and refers to instilling cultural reference to children to help them become modern citizens in the modern world, so the school needs to reflect what it is doing in the arts to prepare them.

12. SDP 2021/22

The SDP had been previously circulated. No questions were raised.

13. Discussion about the proposed development of Owlstone Croft

Deferred to the end of the meeting.

14. Policies for Review: none for this meeting.

15. Any other business

On behalf of the governing body, the Chair extended congratulations to EF and KH on their forthcoming wedding, adding that a card and gift would be given to them at school.

Owlstone Croft discussion

A lengthy discussion ensued, with questions raised such as: whether a formal response should come from the school; whether the school should be represented at a planning meeting; whether to engage with Queen's College before the planning application is submitted; whether the school should stand alone or as part of the wider community. Governors agreed to delegate the drafting of an objection from the school to a sub-committee comprised of HC, DC, MD, JP and AM, chaired by JP.

The meeting closed at 8.14pm, but members were invited to stay on for a continued unminuted discussion about the Owlstone development.

ACTION LOG:

Action ref	Action	Owner	Deadline	Status
F0112:04	AM to forward other examples of SDPs to Governors.	AM	March 2022	Ongoing
F0112:06	AM to arrange a meeting with the Bursar of Queen's College to discuss the proposed Owlstone Croft development.	AM/DR/JP	Dec/Jan 2021/22	closed
F0902:01	AM to develop a summary sheet from the SEF for governors	AM	March 2022	Open
F0902:02	AM to communicate to the Local Authority the Governors' recommendation to reduce the school PAN	AM	Feb 2022	Open

Signed: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____