Park Grove Primary Academy

LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on
Tuesday 23rd January 2018 at 6pm

Present:	Mr David Hare (Chair)	Miss Jo Sawyer (Headteacher)
	Mr Nick Moss	Mrs Liz Martindale
	Mr Paul Feldman	Mr Richard Romaniak
In Attendance:	Mr Iain Tessier (Governor Support Officer and Clerk)	

1. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

1.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Kelly McDonald, Sheila Davitt and Vicky Hearson.

1.2 The Chair revisited the issue of the role of LGBs in light of recent discussions and following the circulation of certain papers from EBOR covering this subject. Later in the meeting he wanted to explore governors' views.

1.3 The Chair reported that Ed Lott who attended our last meeting as an observer, had been invited to stand for co-option on to the board but had declined. Mr Lott had made it clear that his views were at odds with the current academy/free school agenda and the EBOR model in general. He did not feel that he could commit to the role of governor given his position. A brief discussion followed.

1.4 There were no declarations of interest.

2. Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair

2.1 David Hare was happy to seek re-election as Chair of the board. There were no other nominations.
Resolved:
David Hare was duly re-elected as Chair of the board for a period of two years.

2.2 Richard Romaniak was happy to seek re-election as Vice Chair of the board. There were no other nominations.
Resolved:
Richard Romaniak was duly re-elected as Vice Chair of the board for a period of two years.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting – 28th November 2017
Previously distributed.

3.1 **Resolved**:
Governors agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 28th November 2017 were a true and accurate record of that meeting. The Chair was duly authorised to sign the minutes.

4. Actions and Matters Arising

4.1 Action 1 – governors had read EBORs report on the role of LGBs.
Action 2 – governors had read the revised SDP.
Action 3 – the Chair to check with Mrs Hearson about ASP logins. **Action DH**
Action 4 – site management arrangements had now been confirmed.
Action 5 – The Trust's auditors, Mazaars, had been invited to the MAT Finance meeting on 19th February to clarify their role as auditors of the Wakefield Trust who went into receivership in mid 2017. They would be challenged over whether they could or should have done more to highlight or prevent the issues that led to that Trust's collapse. The Chair said that he would feed back on that meeting in March. **Action DH**
Action 6 – the evacuation and lockdown procedure had been circulated.

not form judgements. The governor said that the terminology was poor across the board and hard to understand at times. The presentation also needed attention. The Headteacher apologised for the issues with the OTrack system.

5.8 **The Chair directed the Curriculum Group to monitor progress within years 5 and 6 and challenge SLT on whether interventions were being effective**. He suggested the group should follow the attainment and progress of 2 to 3 children with a view to ascertaining learning issues, how they are resolved and as a result, the effectiveness of planned inventions. Whilst the cause for concern in those year groups was not unexpected, governors still needed to keep an eye on this issue. The Chair also noted that outcomes for disadvantaged children were a mixed picture, as noted in the data commentary. This was also an area that the Curriculum Group would, no doubt, be exploring.

5.9 The Chair asked if the issues with OTrack etc were a problem for staff. The Headteacher did not believe so. The tracking side of things was fine and the academy was actually doing a better job of tracking, with a more joined up approach between the various phases than had previously been the case. The teacher's own tracking and assessment paperwork was very thorough. The end reporting to SLT and governors was where the issues lay. Mrs Martindale believed that the academy had some work to do to better evaluate interventions – although no children were 'missed' as had been the problem in the past.

6. 2017/18 Ways of Working – Sub Committee Updates

6.1 Curriculum Group

Mr Moss had discussed the issues with data and had commented on the difficulties with seeing the data presented in different ways from cycle to cycle as assessment systems kept evolving. The group was yet to finalise its Terms of Reference and Mr Moss hoped to be able to meet with Mrs McDonald and Ms Davitt to look at this and address some of the areas of concern. He would at the same time discuss the Chair's request detailed in paragraph 5.8 above. Mr Moss felt that the group had to develop a way of documenting what was being done succinctly and in a way that got the key messages over to the rest of the board.

6.2 Vulnerable Pupils Group

Mr Feldman said that the group had met twice and had reflected upon the revised SDP and what that meant in terms of their monitoring priorities etc. Mrs Martindale was taking them through three case studies (anonymised) and populating the studies with data as it became available. Another meeting was planned post half-term. The group was attempting to support certain compliance request from EBOR. Mr Feldman believed that it would be beneficial for governors to receive a paper outlining social conditions within the catchment area/local ward, as these had a bearing on what challenges the academy then faced in supporting many disadvantaged children. **Action PF**

6.3 Finance Group

Due to tight budget control, overseen by the Finance Group, the carry forward from the 2016/17 year was better than expected and thus the academy remained in a relatively healthy position financially. In terms of budget assumptions, the current staffing arrangements would remain in place with the Assistant Heads and Pupil Support Team both remaining out of class. A change would however, be required to accommodate the HT's maternity leave which would run from June 2018 to January 2019. The start budget would come to the May meeting for recommendation to the MAT board. The additional monies from the funding formula should help the academy offset rising costs but equally the board had to be ready to take action should the budget position begin to worsen.

6.4 The Chair asked that the Curriculum and Vulnerable Pupils groups submit a report outlining their progress to date for the March meeting. **Action Committees**

7. Proposed Interim Arrangements to Cover Headteacher Maternity Leave

7.1 Confidential minute.

13. Any Other Business

13.1 The Chair wanted to canvas governors and ascertain three things following the conversion to academy status within EBOR:

- Did governors understand their role and the overall role of the LGB?
- Did governors feel that they benefitted from receiving all of the scrutiny committee minutes and associated reports?
- Had EBOR changed the role of the governing board and what were governor feelings towards academy status and EBOR one year on?

Each governor was given the opportunity to outline their personal view.

13.1.1 All governors felt that they understood their role and that of the LGB. The focus remained to support school improvement and that didn't alter because they were now an academy or part of EBOR. Governors did not feel that they changed the way they approached the role of being a governor either. Newer governors noted that they could not comment on how things might have been before as they were not in post.

13.1.2 There were mixed responses when it came to the question of how beneficial MAT scrutiny committee minutes were. Some welcomed the minutes because it meant that they felt part of the whole and not sidelined from discussions. Others were more sceptical. They did not believe the scrutiny minutes helped them fulfil their own local role and were therefore a distraction. Governors did, however, want to see the main MAT board minutes – which should be visible on the EBOR website.

13.1.3 When it came to governor feelings about EBOR, three points in particular drew consensus. Firstly, the sense that things were slightly more homogenous under EBOR and this impacted on their identity. Secondly, that decisions taken centrally, of which there were seemingly many, impacted on local settings without there being a clear way in which LGBs could contribute to the decision making processes. Policy formulation and approval was a good example. Thirdly, that the pace of growth of EBOR was inevitably and as the finance position demonstrated, impacting on certain 'back office' functions.

13.1.4 A governor was also concerned about the number of things governors could not rely on at present: pupil data, management accounts, clear reporting of decision making although all of these issues are currently being addressed at MAT level.

13.2 The Headteacher reflected upon the fact that in recent years the governing body had been in the midst of big projects such as turning the school around ahead of OFSTED and moving towards academisation. The academy and the governors were not in the same place now so there was not that level and sense of urgency and that sometimes made people think things were a little flat when in fact they were just in a relatively quiet and settled period and there was nothing wrong with that.

13.3 The Chair welcomed governors' input and agreed with the views about the governor/LGB role and the scrutiny committee minutes – although he himself remained concerned that the amount of paper that now had to be reviewed before each meeting was an issue that could detract from the work of the sub-groups and thereby slow the tracking of school improvement.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Tuesday 13th March 2018 at 6pm

The meeting ended at 7.55pm.

13 3 18

Signed: (Chair) ***Date:***