

17 March 2018

Minutes of the Looe Community Academy Local Governing Committee Monday 12 March 2018

Present:

Ed Gilbert
Lorna Ingham
Kathy Isles
Heather Jenkins (Headteacher)
Marilyn Lewis
Penny Prisk (Vice Chair of Governors)

Apologies:

Sue Gavin
Tina Vasey

Absent:

Sheila Brock
Marie Long (Chair of Governors)

In attendance:

Steve Green (Business Manager and acting Clerk)
Kate Jackman (acting Deputy Headteacher)
Richard Newton-Chance (SMART Trust Board Chair)

Governor challenge is shown in bold type

The meeting started at 1645

1. Welcome - in the absence of the Chair of Governors, the meeting was chaired by the Vice Chair of Governors, Penny Prisk, who welcomed the local governors and attendees, including Richard Newton-Chance, the SMART Trust Board Chair and link Director for LCA.
2. Evacuation procedure was explained.
3. Appointment of Clerk - Steve Green was appointed temporary Clerk. The role of permanent Clerk would be advertised in conjunction with Dobwalls Primary School.
4. Declaration of business or pecuniary interests - Heather Jenkins and Ed Gilbert declared their interests in this meeting as members of staff
5. Apologies for absence were received from Sue Gavin and Tina Vasey. Sheila Brock and Marie Long were absent.
6. Approval of Minutes of LGC Meetings held on 29 Jan and 26 Feb 18. The minutes were approved with one minor change to Section 7 of 29 Jan 18, where Kate Jackman would be arranging training rather than delivering the training, as originally minuted.
7. Matters arising not on this agenda:
 - a. 29 Jan 18 actions:
 1. *The Headteacher will prepare a key facts sheet to email to governors. Carried over.*

Action: Headteacher
 2. *It was agreed that the figures in the table required re-working and the Headteacher confirmed that she will do this alongside the two staff governors. Carried over.*

Action: Headteacher

3. *Governors asked for the education and employment figures to be published on the school's website. Carried over.*

Action: Headteacher

4. *Attendance will be discussed at the next LGC meeting and this needs to be added to the agenda. Carried over.*

Action: Headteacher

5. *The Behaviour Policy will need to come to a future LGC meeting for discussion and agreement by governors. Carried over.*

Action: Headteacher

6. *Mrs Iles will find out the stage the SMART HR policies are at, and who has been consulted, and the Headteacher will speak to Mr Buckley regarding the other SMART policies and report back. See section 12 below - complete.*

7. *Mrs Vasey would meet with the Business Manager regarding health and safety. Availability for meeting requested by Business Manager but with no response to date.*

Action: Tina Vasey

8. *Mrs Brock had prepared a report on Community and will email it to governors. Carried over.*

Action: Sheila Brock

9. *The two Staff Governor nominations of Sue Gavin and Ed Gilbert are forwarded to the Trust Board for appointment. Action complete.*

10. *There will be a check on the SCR as well as a safeguarding visit. Action complete.*

Kate Jackman joined the meeting at 1700

b. 26 Feb 18 actions:

1. *The Headteacher was tasked with reviewing the curriculum offer and reporting options and impacts to governors for decision at the next LGC. Carried over.*

Action: Headteacher

2. *It was agreed that areas of support staff activity would also be examined, including the deployment of technicians and revised cleaning routines. Carried over.*

Action: Headteacher

3. *The Headteacher was tasked with seeking volunteers for early release to identify savings options from the staff budget. Action modified following discussion with SMART CEO - teaching staff only made aware of ongoing financial pressures. Inform support staff.*

Action: Headteacher

4. *The Business Manager was tasked with assessing the likelihood of maternity and long-term illness costs and including these issues in the next budget review. Action complete.*

5. *It was agreed that the Academy should proactively promote its success stories in the press and on social media in an attempt to secure additional students. Ongoing.*

Action: Lorna Ingham

6. *Propose additional LGC dates and email to governors. Carried over.*

Action: Headteacher

8. SMART update presentation by Chair of the Trust Board - local governors were apprised of the Trust Board Chair's vision and values in taking SMART forward:

Following an introduction, the Chair of the Trust Board explained the MAT's *raison d'être*, which places great emphasis on being a geographical family of schools.

The educational purposes were explained, including being a learning organisation (in both senses), bringing about change based on evidence, being honest about issues and providing time for training and development.

The MAT was also seen as a vehicle for development, to provide opportunities across the MAT.

Financially the MAT would bring about efficiencies and economies of scale, including educational efficiencies.

The Trust Board maintained learning and teaching as its core business. It was the single employer and believed in delegation based on earned autonomy. Effective intelligence was paramount to operate the MAT effectively and key to that were the KPIs and the vital information the Board would gain from a well prepared Headteacher's report.

Local governance was essential in providing challenge and holding to account as well as working effectively with the Trust Board.

Expansion would be carefully considered and must fit with the ethos and values of SMART, be financially and operationally effective and the MAT must have the heft to work more widely.

The Chair of the Trust Board explained the aims of better knitting, with the MAT leadership team being key through a shared responsibility for all children in all schools. Multi-function appointments would achieve the operational knitting and a single, shared information system and architecture that served students, parents/carers, staff, governors and Directors would help to unite the MAT. Link meetings with Directors and local governors supported this aim, and LGCs were advised to include in their minutes any issues that they wanted to bring to the attention of the Trust Board.

Action: Clerk (complete - see section 16 below)

These aims would be pursued until we are a family on an organic and human scale that provides the best quality educational experience for South East Cornwall.

Local governors shared their concerns about finance and asked how the MAT might assist. The Chair of the Trust Board confirmed that while autonomy was earned, it was the responsibility of LGCs working with Headteachers to take the tough local decisions to achieve a balanced budget and that it was not acceptable to simply accept overspends that had a cumulative impact across future years. LGCs need to focus on their core purpose and encourage other authorities to live up to their responsibilities and fund their own core purposes.

DfE comparative figures from the Consistent Financial Reporting process were now available for maintained schools of similar characteristics to LCA; a copy would be forwarded.

Action: Chair of the Trust Board

The Chair thanked the Chair of the Trust Board for the informative presentation and discussion.

Richard Newton-Chance left the meeting at 1810

9. SEF and School Development Plan monitoring - Elements of self-evaluation were contained in the Headteacher's Report. Local governors were reminded of their individual responsibility to monitor against their allocated section of the LCA Development Plan and were welcome to contact the Headteacher to arrange visits and to request the necessary supporting data.

Action: All local governors

10. Headteacher's Report incorporating CSA Report and Annual Staffing and HR Report:

The Headteacher apologised for not completing the Headteacher's Report and for not circulating any information in advance of the meeting and talked the LGC through some of the key points:

Bullying - not yet defined, so data is likely to be lacking (only 8 instances) - need to work on definitions.

Action: Headteacher

S157 - Tier 2 safeguarding training provided in Dec 17 - catch up training, including for local governors, arranged for 20 Mar 18 at 1530.

Action: All local governors

S157 - Tier 3 safeguarding training undertaken by 2 staff in Mar 18.

S157 - local governors need to monitor each aspect of the S157 on a systematic and regular basis.

Action: Safeguarding governor

More Able - celebrate achievements in press.

Action: Lorna Ingham

The CSA report was reviewed, with key variations in both directions highlighted accordingly.

Clarification was sought as to what "enquiry" meant and it was advised that this is metacognition.

It was asked what makes a difference to learning and it was advised that lead learners in the classroom were having impact along with taking self-responsibility for learning and the need-to-knows.

The acting Deputy Headteacher celebrated the SMART learning day and reported how positive the feedback was for Looe staff engaged in delivering CPD on the day.

Local governors were advised on dedicated improvement and reflection time (DIRT) and the use of purple pens by all students to annotate their work.

It was asked how many of the Pupil Premium students were boys - the information was not readily available and will be provided.

Action: Headteacher

A full update on the current financial position was provided in the Business Manager's written update. There was only time for a short discussion and given the importance and urgency to resolve the budget position, it was agreed to arrange a separate finance-focussed LGC meeting.

It was suggested that the Trust Board should consider staff absence insurance for whole of SMART.

11. Safeguarding - certain aspects were already covered above.

The acting Deputy Headteacher updated the meeting on the gapped Family Support Manager post and the absence of support for the Designated Safeguarding Lead in delivering effective safeguarding.

Local governors were updated on the number of cases over the past few months, including an analysis by category of the types of incident. **It was asked what the instance of hate crime related to** - the incident in question related to an uninformed SEN student.

Students had an assembly led by the police on e-safety, including sexting.

There had been 3 governor visits.

The use of taxis would be reviewed.

There was feedback from one serious case review relating to attendance that has prompted a review of our own procedures.

12. Policies for review - SMART-wide draft policies that had been approved by the Trust Board had been circulated to local governors in an email from Headteacher dated 28 Feb 18. Local governors were asked to submit comments to the Company Secretary by 13 Mar 18:

Financial Scheme of Delegation, Reserves and Investment, Donations, Counter Theft, Fraud and Corruption, Charging and Remissions, Financial Regulations and Procedures, Redundancy and Redeployment, Freedom of Information Act, Governors' Visits, Governor/Director Acceptable Use

Local governors were advised that any SMART-wide policy previously approved by the Trust Board was available on the SMART website - a link had been emailed.

13. Governor feedback and skills audit:

- a. SMART Day Monday 19 February 2018 - those local governors that attended were positive about the event, though an area for improvement for future events would be to provide more relevant opportunities for non-teaching staff.
- b. Monitoring visits and training - the safeguarding governor had undertaken training and had made a visit last term and 2 visits this term, including a review of the single central record of recruitment checks.
- c. Skills audit - local governors were given and asked to complete the NGA proforma and return it to the Clerk by 23 Mar 18; copy has been sent to those local governors not present.

Action: All local governors

14. Report from the Chair - there was none

15. Confirm dates and times of future meetings:

Monday 21 May 2018 at 1630 in the Library
Monday 2 July 2018 at 1630 in the Library

Action: All local governors

As there was insufficient time to cover finance in the necessary depth at this meeting, the Headteacher undertook to arrange an additional finance-focused LGC in the next few weeks.

Action: Headteacher

16. Items for the Trust Board:

- a. Consider staff absence insurance for whole of SMART.
- b. SMART Day - future events - provide more relevant opportunities for non-teaching staff.

17. Matters arising not on this agenda:

From LGC 29 Jan 18:

1. The Headteacher will prepare a key facts sheet to email to governors.

Action: Headteacher

2. It was agreed that the figures in the table required re-working and the Headteacher confirmed that she will do this alongside the two staff governors.

Action: Headteacher

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Action: Tina Vasey

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Action: Sheila Brock

From LGC 26 Feb 18:

8. The Headteacher was tasked with reviewing the curriculum offer and reporting options and impacts to governors for decision at the next LGC.

Action: Headteacher

9. It was agreed that areas of support staff activity would also be examined, including the deployment of technicians and revised cleaning routines.

Action: Headteacher

10. The Headteacher was tasked with ensuring that support staff were also made aware of ongoing financial pressures.

Action: Headteacher

11. It was agreed that the Academy should proactively promote its success stories in the press and on social media in an attempt to secure additional students.

Action: Lorna Ingham

12. Propose additional LGC dates and email to governors.

Action: Headteacher

From LGC 16 Mar 18:

13. Forward DfE comparative figures from the Consistent Financial Reporting process.

Action: Chair of the Trust Board

14. Monitor pro-actively against individually allocated section of the LCA Development Plan.

Action: All local governors

15. Define bullying definitions.

Action: Headteacher

16. All local governors must ensure they remain in date by attending Tier 2 safeguarding training - catch up training, if required, arranged for 20 Mar 18 at 1530.

Action: All local governors

17. Local governors to monitor each aspect of the S157 on a systematic and regular basis.
Action: Safeguarding governor
18. Celebrate achievements of More Able students in the press.
Action: Lorna Ingham
19. Report to LGC how many of the Pupil Premium students are boys.
Action: Headteacher
20. Local governors to complete and return skills to the Clerk by 23 Mar 18.
Action: All local governors
21. Note dates and times of future meetings.
Action: All local governors
22. Arrange an additional finance-focused LGC in Mar/Apr 18.
Action: Headteacher

Prepared by:

**Steve Green CMgr FCMI
Business Manager and acting Clerk to the LCA LGC**