

**Minutes of the Governing Body Meeting for Alfreton Park School held on
Tuesday 25th April 2023 at Alfreton Park School**

Present: Mrs J O'Donnell – Headteacher (HT)
Ms Charlotte Young – Acting Deputy Headteacher (ADHT)
Mr J Glasby – Chair (Chair)
Mrs F Franklin (FF)
Mr W Jowett (WJ)
Mr R Sowter (RSo)
Mrs R Spray (RSp)
Mrs C Higgins (CH)
Mrs S Allen (SA)

In attendance: Mrs C Hughes – Clerk
Ms R Dallman – School Business Manager (SBM)

Meeting opened at 10:11am

22/62 Apologies

Apologies received from Becky Wells and Sue Norton were accepted by the Chair. CH joining late due to technical issues.

22/63 Declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest in any items on the agenda.

22/64 Agree any other urgent business

'Approve audited private school funds' will be on Summer 1 agenda. The SBM explained that the Finance Director from A1 Communications has agreed to do this.

The Chair expressed thanks for the reports being available to Governors in good time for the meeting.

The Governors discussed the best options for documenting questions that were asked prior to the meeting, and it was decided that the Clerk would add in the questions and answers to the relevant item on the agenda.

22/65 Minutes of the Full Governors Meeting held on 7th February 2023 – to agree accuracy

The minutes of the meeting were accepted as a true record of the meeting and signed by the chair.

22/66 Matters arising from the minutes

- Clerk to populate training on GovernorHub – **completed.**
- SBM to arrange for infection control report for the pool – **completed.**
- Lockdown and fire evacuation – **completed.**
- SBM to arrange H&S committee – **The SBM explained that there was not going to be a committee but that there is now an H&S email account. The SBM will ensure that everyone will receive emails received from the account.**

Carla joined the meeting via MS Teams at 10:17.

- Add staff attendance to HT report – **completed.**
- School Development Plan (SDP) to be uploaded to GovernorHub – **completed. The HT offered the option of doing a one-page overview with areas of development however it was agreed that she should highlight the updates each time. The Chair commented that it's not easy to see how far you a long with progress and the HT agreed to add a rating. The Chair informed the board that the Governing board strategic aims are no longer on top of the agenda as they've been worked into the SDP.**
- General absence form on LOA and flexible working policy – **completed.**
- School to investigate DCC school improvement package – **completed & initiated. The HT's performance management has been signed off.**
- Clerk to update governor terms of office – **completed.**
- Clerk to add webinars to GovernorHub – **completed.**

Action: HT to highlight updates on the next SDP and add a rating.

22/67 Standing item - HT report & School Development Plan update

The Chair invited questions on the previously circulated HT report and School Development Plan.

It was agreed that the report and plan was self-explanatory.

Q: Has the sewage system issue had been resolved?

A: Yes, the pump and a filter are now in place and will be monitored. There have been no issues over the last month. The fix has not been at extra cost to the school other than the costs incurred due to the call outs.

Chair Q: Is school happy for the build to be signed off tomorrow by DCC?

A: Unresolved issues on the snagging list will not be signed off, such as landscaping and issues with the doors. The Chair expressed the importance of school being happy with everything before it is signed off.

The HT updated Governors on pupil work experience, specifically the 'Pop-up Café' which was brilliant. £47.11 was raised in total on its first day of trading, £16.71 of which in tips, £30.70 in sales. School will be adding a card payment facility and advertisement banners to attract attention. The Café will operate twice a week for now and when pupils have finished their other work experience placements this will increase.

Governor Q: With regards to the urn and electrics from a health & safety perspective - are they waterproof? Is there an extension lead that could cause a trip hazard?

A: Richard has ensured the electrics are waterproof and that there is no trip hazard. Food stuff's being sold are individually wrapped.

The HT explained that Jeanette had emailed the Town Council about it but has not received a reply as yet, however the café is on school premises not the park. We will wait and see if we need to contact Amber Valley Council after we hear from the Town Council.

Discussions were held about the future of the Deer Shed Café and a company called Arden Coffee based in Clay Cross. There could be potential for them to provide equipment and training for pupils. The HT & SBM will be visiting them in the future.

The chair thanked the HT for such an explanatory report.

Questions asked prior to the meeting via GovernorHub:

Behaviour and Attitude - What support for positive behaviour support were DCC providing and how is it reducing. What are the implications? Is there a cost saving and if so is it worth the saving?

A - DCC have always provided Proact Scipr UK Instructor Training and subsequent refresher training. I managed to get trained a couple of years ago online so we now have four trained instructors who can deliver introductory and foundation training to new and existing staff. All of us are now due our instructor refresher training and have been unsuccessful in getting this from DCC due to lack of resources. After speaking to other local special schools, they are in a similar position. Ashgate Croft have a little longer before theirs runs out, so we are able to buy their services to update our staff this year. Unfortunately there isn't a cost saving - the implications are that we may need to look at moving to another approach such as Team Teach, which would mean retraining instructors and retraining all staff despite approaches being

very similar as you know! Emma was in touch with DCC regarding this before she started her maternity leave and I will continue this.

SDP - thank you to the leadership team for this, I found it an interesting read and that it was easy to flow the progress you are making towards it. I'm very pleased to see that we are to become a Trauma Informed School. Are the leadership team happy with the progress being made on the plan?

HT - Thank you for your comments. As a leadership team we are very pleased with the progress being made on the SDP - we have actioned all feedback from the Ofsted inspection and whilst we know we are never truly 'finished' in education, we are now in a position with most of the feedback where we can monitor, evaluate the impact and review to make improvements.

One area that is a little more challenging is developing teacher subject knowledge. In the current financial landscape, rather than sending teachers on paid training courses by external providers we are having to be more creative with the resources we already have. We have ensured that we allocate what we can to training in the budget for the coming year so that this objective can be met.

22/68 Standing item - Safeguarding

The HT confirmed that she had emailed FF, the Safeguarding Governor, all of the actions that have occurred since the last meeting. FF had one question which has now been resolved, which was as follows:

Governor Q: Is the reason one child is increasing their hours in school due to medical improvement?

A: Yes. School has a GP letter covering his part-time timetable.

The HT informed governors that she delivered an interim half hour safeguarding session to staff that morning.

22/69 Standing item – Health & Safety

The Chair thanked WJ for doing a health & safety walk round and asked if everyone had read the report.

Chair Q: Concerned that the Pool Manager has not had infection control training?

A: The SBM assured him that she is going to source training, however CY believes that staff did do some infection control training on Flick during the Covid pandemic.

Chair Q: The Infection Control Audit shows that the pool doesn't have relevant contact numbers.

A: The SBM assured the Governors that the telephone numbers are in the pool office and will update the audit.

Governor Q: There is a defibrillator at the pool, is there also one in school?

A: Yes – it is located in the Nurse’s office. Staff were trained on using it during the one day first aid training in January.

Chair Q: With regards to the lockdown, although operational, concern was expressed that it needs to be improved upon.

A: The SBM had met with Dave Newbury last Thursday who assured them that they cannot plan for every eventuality, and that some situations will have to rely on common sense at the time, making judgement calls were needed. The SBM said that the staff not hearing the announcement was because she hadn’t put enough announcements out so these are lessons learned. Staff will become more familiar with the procedure the more they do the drills. Another one will be done this term. They will also recap the procedure staff briefings and ensure staff have fully read it.

Governor Q: Is there a link to pool in the event of a lockdown?

A: Staff need to take radios with them and ensure they are turned on, but school is looking into options to improve. Not every eventuality can be facilitated. The main points are that it is ok to telephone the pool in the majority of situations and school and the pool can communicate between each other. If going into a real lockdown the announcements will end with ‘this is not a drill’. To confirm, if a pupil refuses to move in practice they wouldn’t be forced to move, but in a real-life situation they would.

CY informed the governors that there are 8 paediatric first aiders in school, 3 in each of the classes that have reception children. When reception age pupils are off site a trained paediatric first aider will be with them. The statutory ratio in class is one trained first aider to 8 pupils. Forest School sessions include a paediatric first aider.

Governor/Chair Q: How often does this training need to take place and is there a first aider at the pool?

A: Every 3 years. The Pool Manager has had first aid training, as has Michelle who covers for him (plus lifeguard training). There are only roughly 10 members of staff in school that haven’t been first-aid trained.

Governor Q: The animal risk assessment needs updating. Are you happy to have them on the premises if it’s not finalised?

A: HT will follow this up.

Action: HT to follow up on the animal risk assessment.

22/70 Standing item – GDPR

The GDPR report had been uploaded to GovernorHub prior to the meeting. The SBM spoke of the number of incidents of homework diaries going home with the wrong pupil. She advised that the DPO has suggested school use a digital homework diary, which the SLT team are looking into,

firstly on Dojo. The HT believes that of the 4 that don't currently access Dojo, 3 of them will. There could be the option of a paper version for such a small number.

Governor Q: Will this be more time consuming for staff?

A: CC believes it will be a better process. Already doing Class Dojo anyway so writing in diaries is doubling work. It also wouldn't have to be done prior to the pupils leaving school for the day.

The chair believes that the school should do what works best for the school.

22/71 Traded Services Decisions

Officially ratified. Governors had approved the traded services decisions prior to the meeting via GovernorHub.

22/72 Standing item – Finances: including Annex 1 & 5, and ratify budget

The SBM ran through the finances that had been uploaded to GovernorHub for Governors to read prior to the meeting.

The SBM spoke of the unexpected reading of an old electricity meter that was shared between the 3 sites of the park, which now had to be paid, with the cost being split 3 ways.

School had budgeted for staffing absence as a replacement solution to the previous Absence Insurance which was no longer cost effective, and an additional 14k for agency staff which will probably not be used.

Governor Q: Can this be a cushion if needed?

A: No, there will not be any cushion.

A governor noted that the normal average staff absences equated to a fifth of staffing off sick at any one time.

The Special Needs financial funding for the pay increase for last year is included. But don't know what the funding for the 2nd increase is yet. A governor commented that with regard to funding for pay increases all that had happened for this second increase is that we had "kicked the can down the road!!". Credit was expressed to the SBM and SLT for the work they've done in redefining certain roles to increase the cost effectiveness of the support staff without it having any effect on the pupils.

The Chair referred to the projections for future years section of the budget letter, which hasn't been on previous letters and noted concern about how to rectify that now, when the income and expenditure is such an unknown.

The finance Governor pointed out that although extra pupils have been forecast there is no practical solution to manage extra pupils when the established maximum of pupils in the current premises is 130 pupils. It was agreed that knowing how long these things take 2024 is not that far away.

The chair requested that this discussion be parked for now but asked that the SLT continue to communicate with DCC on the Deer Shed project.

The Chair expressed thanks to the SLT for their work on ensuring that the school's finances were in the best position possible.

The Governing board all showed approval for the Annex 1 and Annex 5 which were duly signed by the Chair.

The Chair invited questions to the SBM on the Benchmarking Report which was uploaded to GovernorHub prior to the meeting.

Governors remarked that the staffing information was interesting. SLT did notice that whilst fewer support staff per pupil were at Alfreton Park compared to the benchmarked schools, Alfreton Park were paying more for those staff. It was agreed that having LSA's and HPCA's rather than all Grade 8 TA's will look a lot better. It was noted that SLT have endeavoured to make this a natural progression. The Chair commented that the Grade 8 TA role is a well-qualified position and as such the status is appropriate, and should not be taken for granted. SLT hope that having more grade 5 positions will mean that the TA's will be able to step up, support the Teachers more and that the grade 5 positions will have career progression to TA role's when opportunities are available. CY confirmed that she had made clear the different job roles in a recent Teachers meeting, and that good questions were asked.

The HT informed that DfE pick the schools to be benchmarked and it's a mix of maintained schools and academies.

Questions asked and answered on GovernorHub prior to the meeting.

Financial benchmarking typo 'elf-assessment'

Clerk - will correct.

22/73 Standing item – Personnel Report

The personal report was uploaded to GovernorHub prior to the meeting.

Governor Q: Are all items on the personnel report included in the budget?

A: The SBM confirmed that they are.

22/74 Policies to be approved

The following policies were shared with governors on GovernorHub prior to the meeting.

- Display Screen Equipment
- Minibus & People Carrier Driver Policy
- Privacy Policy – Pupils & Family
- First Aid Policy
- Hydrotherapy Pool Policy

All governors approved the above policies.

Questions asked and answered on GovernorHub prior to the meeting:

Display screen policy

Talks about risk assessment for carrying & theft. Have these been put in place? Also it's originally from 1992 regulations so are they now not light enough to need a carrying risk assessment?

A - I don't think we need to do a manual handling RA for carrying laptops.

ALP policy but continually refers to "council" and also the footers are not APC"

SBM - refers to the council as the council is the employer.

Clerk - Will look at footer and correct if needed.

Minibus policy

T p7 typo 'hires' not hire / 8 in 'responsibility' / Section 3.4 no 'p' in pupils / page 9.11 final paragraph not complete.

Clerk - Will make corrections.

Has there ever been any trial run through on how you would evacuate the minibus using empty wheelchairs / staff volunteers? Just so staff could consider/reflect what may needed should it ever occur.

SBM - I don't think one has ever been carried out. Worth considering, I will arrange this.

Privacy policy

review date June 2023 – is that correct?

SBM - Yes because our DPO will renew the body of the policy in June, the update is for the changes to the data map.

First aid policy

is there a defibrillator in school? Could section 4 be written to APS situation.

The footer also says 2019 so is that also the latest version?

Clerk - I have added in the following sentence to the Defibrillator section: 'The majority of staff at APS attended a one-day first aid at work training course in January 2023. This covered how to use a defibrillator and potential consequences of defibrillator operation. The Defibrillator at APS is kept in the Nurse's office.' The footer 2019 version will be corrected.

APS policy but continually refers to "council" and also the footers not APS.

Clerk - not sure if someone has already noticed and corrected, but council only mentioned once, which is accurate as it's a DCC school. The footers are APS.

Pool policy

should we have read the operations guide with this to make more sense/clarity of it?

SBM - I can send them but these are more operational not strategic.

Action: Run through of minibus evacuation to be arranged.

22/75 Website compliance

The HT informed Governors that she has been going through the website and updating any areas that need to be changed.

Chair Q: How will you having a rolling plan?

A: The HT explained that it will always need updating as things change. School Council will be checked by Wendy, Family Support will be Sharon, Curriculum will be Charlotte. A lot will be HT. CH and Richard Harris will have access to edit the website also.

The Clerk confirmed that the Governor page on the website was up to date.

22/76 Data collection & analysis

Governors commented that each time they see this the quality of the data is an improvement, and that it answers questions even before they are asked.

Congratulations were offered to Emma Durham and CY.

A governor commented on Apple class being removed and CY explained that this was because the Teacher went off earlier than unexpected so the staffing was unsettled in class. Although the new Teacher started in February, she wasn't able to assess and finalise.

Governor Q: Where has Maple gone?

A: Maple is now called Blossom.

The Chair exclaimed that he found the results most encouraging that there isn't the usual spring term drop off. CY explained that she would expect it to get better as the year goes on and that Autumn term normally shows a drop.

CY would like to see 70-80% for future years and sees no reason why that's not achievable. Lots of work has been done over the last year on

ILP's, and in the past Teachers haven't been entirely comfortable to say pupils have achieved and were over cautious. They are much more comfortable now. The practice of the Teachers on support plans is good. Some classes 'Larch' was much less but teacher was over cautious at saying that they've achieved targets. More comfortable the second time around. The difference in the practice of the teachers on support plans is good and they are trusting their instincts a bit more.

Governor Q: Regarding moderation, is that all internal?

A: CY explained that since the Covid pandemic it hasn't been possible to have external moderation. The HT has raised it in a Special Heads who will put it to their Deputy's and agreed that there should be external validation. CY explained the downside to external moderation is that they aren't as aware of the systems in school and tend to trust the judgement of the Teacher, whereas in school they are better able to moderate.

Governor Q: Are governors BW and SA able to come in and moderate?

A: No, it's not appropriate for governors to do that. It would be beneficial to have regular arrangements with a cluster of schools who could understand the way each other work and the ILP system. The HT noted that Ofsted did go through the ILP data and were happy.

Pathway analysis – is a new addition which is also informative. SA and BW have arranged to come into school and spend time with CY to ensure accuracy and relevance of each sector of the report.

22/77 Interim HT Performance Management

WJ, SA and CH have met with the HT to agree targets. The previous assessor has signed off on the targets.

The targets are:

1. Policy review cycle
2. Financial awareness
3. Options for academisation and what's available

The Chair asked if these could be sent out and the HT agreed.

Action: HT to send out targets.

22/78 Any other urgent business

The SLT and Governors discussed the official school opening on the 19th May.

The meeting closed at 11:22.

Next meeting at 10am on the 6th June to be chaired by WJ.