

BASSINGBOURN VILLAGE COLLEGE

Minutes of the Local Governing Body meeting held on 13th December 2017

Present:

Chris Roope (CR) (Chair)	Stephen Morris (SM)
Peter Bolton (PB)	Ken Murphy (KM)
Alison Butterworth (AB)	Vickey Poulter (VP)
Duncan Cooper (DC)	Simon Saggars (SSag)
Rachel Dix-Pincott (RD-P)	Sue Speller (SSp)
Jess Lievesley (JL)	

In attendance: Jo Hubbard, ALT (JH)
Minutes: Hilary Forrester (Clerk)

	ACTION
<p>1. Apologies and welcome.</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from Dushy Chetty. Governors welcomed Jo Hubbard, the Group reporting accountant at Anglian Learning. There were no declarations of interests.</p>	
<p>2. Finance reports</p> <p>Jo Hubbard introduced the finance reports. Governors were informed that the MAT schools were all moving over to a new finance package called Safer Education. The package was tailored to suit each school and would enable more standardised accounting once the primary schools join the MAT. All the information had been downloaded from Sage, and some final adjustments were being made to customise the reports. The accounts for 2017 had been signed off and the EFSA submission was in progress.</p> <p>Governors asked questions: Q: Has the change-over to the new system gone smoothly? A: Yes, as we are going from one version of Sage to another there is minimum training required. We have built spreadsheets to ensure that the reports capture the right information. The main difficulty was in standardising the accounting lines so that they are comparable across the schools. The new system will give more detailed information and enable closer tracking. Q: Have we filled the accountancy vacancy? A: Three individuals were interviewed on Friday, the position was offered, but the candidate turned it down. We will re-advertise and consider agencies in the New Year. The position is being covered by someone from the Trust. Q: Have you managed to standardise the accounting lines across the schools? A: Yes. There will be a few discrepancies initially because the budgets were done a while back, but they will become more comparable going forward.</p> <p>The Group Financial Report 31 August 2017 showed the year end position. The variance in the capital funding relates to the SIF funding project for the roofing, which is ongoing. Not all the cash had been received at year end, but the total had to be included, as well as the expenses up to the point of progression. It was noted that there was no budget for income from the boiler project and there were some extra intercompany recharges. School funding, e.g. for trips was showing as a large variance because there was no budget number at this stage. Overall, BVC figures were as expected at year end. The main variance was in the income streams, which is a positive position.</p> <p>The Year to Date Actual was estimated as coming in on budget. Q: How frequently would governors see reports such as this? A: The Trust will report once a term and meet with the Principals. If anything is identified as a concern, it would be flagged straight away.</p>	

<p>The Period 2 Report showed actual figures for year to date. The pro rata figures identified any variances more clearly and these should improve during the year. JH explained that School Salaries was showing as under budget but did not yet take account of appraisal outcomes.</p> <p>Reserves showed that at year end the unrestricted reserves were large and did not comply with the Trust Reserves Policy, however, this policy was being revised. The sale of the Caretaker's house would boost reserves. DC noted that for Item 7 (SIF applications), it was recommended that schools make a contribution to the first bid in order to demonstrate commitment to the project and improve success rates. The college would be contributing £60,000 which represented 10% for electrical work, replacement windows/doors in the Art block, and the roof. The college would receive a loan from the MAT to underwrite the £60,000. There were no further questions. Governors thanked JH.</p> <p>JL arrived and introductions were done.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes of last meeting/matters arising and staff questionnaire</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting on 23rd November 2017 were approved and signed.</p> <p><u>Link governor visits:</u> There was one governor visit report outstanding. <u>Governors' meal:</u> Arranged for 16th January.</p> <p><u>Staff questionnaire</u> Papers were circulated prior to the meeting. SM outlined the process. The 30% response rate was lower than hoped for, but feedback was mostly constructive. Governors considered the findings.</p> <p>DC noted that staff would receive the report in January and a voluntary staff meeting would be scheduled to discuss the findings. Governors were concerned that it was important to find out why there was a low response rate. It was agreed that the final report should mention the discussion governors had had about this. PB and RD-P (staff governors) suggested that some staff were unhappy about how their comments had been represented in the feedback last time. However, a longer document with more detail might make the responses identifiable. The purpose of the survey was to look for trends, but the final report needed to make it clear that the free text comments had also been considered. There was discussion about how the information would be presented to staff and how future questionnaires could be improved.</p> <p>Action: The report should include full information (anonymised as appropriate) on the responses received rather than a summarised version, the process and the percentage of staff who responded.</p>	SM
<p>4. Parental communication</p> <p>SSag led the discussion about facilitating a way for parents to raise concerns anonymously. This topic had been raised at the previous LGB meeting. SSag reported that some parents thought that communication could be improved, but the Parents' Form had been unsuccessful. SSag had looked at what other schools do, and one idea was to have a parent representative for each year group who collected comments from parents and fed them back via the parent governors. The parent governors would then meet with SLT and discuss any issues raised. SM clarified that parent governors did not have to be representative of all parents because they were elected by the parent body.</p> <p>Governors felt that anonymous comments were difficult to address and that it was important to have a threshold for people to decide whether an issue was important enough to make a complaint in person. The role of governors was to direct parents to the correct person in school</p>	

<p>who could deal with the concern in accordance with the correct procedures. SSag noted that parents may have the same queries, but that the answers were not always communicated to all parents.</p> <p>Action: Consider putting an FAQ section on the website so that parents can see responses to previous queries that had been made to the school.</p>	DC
<p>5. Analyse School Performance (ASP) report</p> <p>VP informed governors that the ASP was the replacement for Raise Online. All governors had been sent logins. The data was currently unvalidated for the summer GCSE results. VP explained the checking process including the remarks in English which were not currently reflected in the data and other anomalies. VP explained that the Progress 8 score was +0.21, but with a wide confidence interval, which ultimately put BVC in the average bracket. If the validated confidence interval were to narrow by only 0.01 it could put the college above average. DC outlined the disadvantaged students' figure which compares disadvantaged with non-disadvantaged pupils, making the gap look larger because it is not comparing like with like.</p> <p>Q: What is our high prior attainment figure in English? A: For English the current figure may change. Validated data should be available for consideration in January.</p>	
<p>6. MAT data dashboard</p> <p>The MAT data dashboard was circulated for information. This showed how targets had been set across the MAT and enabled governors to compare BVC targets with those of other schools. FFT20 figures had been added as a benchmark to enable comparison with different schools. When the current Year 11 data is added (following validation), it would show trends over time.</p>	
<p>7. Curriculum and options</p> <p>VP explained the paper previously circulated. At the last meeting governors considered reducing the number of options to three and asked for more information about whether these should be run over a two or three year KS4. The paper set out the implications for curriculum planning and staffing and included staff comments. The final decision would be made at the January LGB.</p> <p>Q: I thought the current Year 9 were going to remain as four options? A: No they will do three options as agreed at the last meeting. DC explained the reasons behind the need for the changes. It was acknowledged that if the number of options was not reduced there would be a risk that fewer children would get the grades they needed. The staff and middle leaders had confirmed that the exams are very different from previous years and there was concern that disadvantaged children would struggle if the same process were to continue.</p> <p>The two key questions were whether to do (a) 3 or 4 options, and (b) options over a 2 or 3 year period. Governors supported 3 options for the benefit of student success rate. There was concern that Year 9 were expecting to do 4 options and such short notice of the change was not ideal.</p> <p>Governors discussed how the changes would be introduced and communicated to pupils and parents. It would be important to present the detail behind the decision as clearly as possible.</p> <p>Q: Should we mention the number of options that other schools have? A: Not at this stage.</p> <p>Action: DC to inform parents of pupils in Year 8 and 9 that the leadership team and the governors are considering moving to 3 options in Year 9 and that more information and a final decision would be made in the New Year.</p> <p>Action: Include "Options" item on the January LGB agenda.</p>	DC SS
<p>8. Music letter</p> <p>DC explained rationale behind the music letter and asked whether governors approved of the college approaching local businesses in return for advertising. DC noted that the letter would</p>	DC

<p>be targeted at specific companies. Governors considered how to judge the ethics behind the businesses who were contacted or others who might approach the college. It was suggested that a policy could be devised and checked by the Trust. Q: Is the funding/advertising going to be time limited? A: Yes – letter to be amended.</p> <p>The music letter was approved subject to the above change.</p> <p>SSp asked whether the EDCL would be offered for those who wanted to pay for it? DC informed governors that the only students currently taking the EDCL were those who had chosen it as part of their options. The course would only be available in the current form until November 2018, after which time the exam board would no longer be running it.</p> <p>Action: Consider offering ECDL as an extra course for parents to pay for.</p>	DC
<p>9. Year 10 English forecasts (VP)</p> <p>VP outlined data on English Language forecasts. Q: Is 4 still a pass this year? A: Yes, the 4+ should compare to the A-C. There was a question about the timing of the exams last year. Some pupils took the exam at a later time because there was no capacity in the hall for all the students to sit the exam at the same time. Those who sat the exam later, were provided with a revision session while they were waiting.</p>	
<p>10. Link Governor meetings</p> <p>Three reports had been sent in and there was one outstanding. Governors noted that the report template was helpful. There were no questions.</p>	
<p>11. SCR and safer recruitment checks (KM)</p> <p>KM had been into school to check the Single Central Record (SCR). It was agreed that governors should continue to take it in turns to carry out the checks in order to become familiar with the process. KM had found all files to be in order.</p> <p>Action: SM to do a governor rota for SCR checks.</p> <p>SM reported that he had attended the Safer Recruitment course. The paperwork was with SS for reference if needed.</p>	SM
<p>12. Maths staffing plan</p> <p>VP explained plans for the recruitment of a Head of Maths, teacher of maths, science teacher and someone with CAL responsibility. Advertisements would be placed from 8th- 22nd January for Head of Maths, with interviews taking place the following week. Start times would depend on the successful candidates. The closing date for applications for the teacher of maths was 24th January. An advert for the CAL post would be placed externally in January. A: Is there any thought about a Deputy Head of Maths? A: There is a cost implication, but we will see what comes from the recruitment. It could be considered for staff development.</p>	
<p>13. Termly briefing</p> <p>Governors noted the Termly Briefing for information. There were no questions.</p>	
<p>14. AOB</p> <p>SSp asked for more information in advance about guests attending LGB meetings.</p> <p>Action: Agendas to include some background information about individuals ‘in attendance’.</p>	SS

Meeting closed at 21:05

Chair