

HOMEWOOD COLLEGE
GOVERNING BODY
MINUTES

Meeting of:	Full Governing Body
Date/Time:	20 th March 2023 4pm
Location:	Virtual – MS Teams
Distribution:	FGB and Website
Quorum:	For decisions to be binding for Homewood College at least half the number of governors in office are required to be present. The meeting was quorate throughout.
Present:	Governors (voting) Jo Adams (JA) Luke Burstow (LB) Co-Chair and Chair of this meeting Rachel Carter (RC) Nick Dry (ND) Linda Newman (LN) Pam Ridgwell (PR) Sue Shanks (SS) 4.12 to 5 pm Rosalind Turner (RT) but tech issues Ruth Turner-Murell (RTM) – from 4.14 pm Other Janet Johnson (JJ) Clerk
Apologies:	Kasie Jeewon (KJ) - accepted

No.	Agenda papers (all circulated 7 days before and accepted unless stated)
2.1	Minutes 20.2.23
2.2	Ofsted Report 8.2.23 (Confidential)
7	Headteacher report spring 2023 (late paper)
7	LA safeguarding report (Tabled)
6.1	Budget monitoring summary January 23 (late paper)
6.3	Draft 3 year budget summary (late paper)
8	Disciplinary procedure
8	Staff code of conduct
8	Grievance policy
8	Designated teacher policy
8	Statement of behaviour principles (previously circulated)

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	DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS	ACTIONS
1.	PROCEDURAL MATTERS	
	1.1 Consideration of apologies	

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	<p>Apologies were considered.</p> <p>1.2 Consideration of interests No new interests were declared when invited. No withdrawals from discussion or voting were anticipated other than staff during discussion about an individual member of staff's pay.</p> <p>1.3 Membership matters There were no particular matters.</p> <p>1.4 Recommendations from any governor training attended. The governor conference had been attended by LN SS RTM JJ ND and RC and the presentation papers would be circulated to all. Its focus had been on pupil premium/disadvantaged pupils. Mark Rowlands had been the guest speaker and all had found the conference illuminating and useful. SS arrived.</p>
2	<p>LAST MEETING</p> <p>2.1 Minutes No queries were raised re the minutes of the last meeting and they were approved accordingly.</p> <p>2.2 Matters arising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LN and LB had met with RT and LB had spoken with ND. No further training had been identified for these already experienced new governors.• LB and ND had visited PR and the School Business Manager at the school to work on finance.• LN and RT were working on staff absence issues. <p>RTM arrived 4.14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LB informed recruitment to a vacant post in finance would commence. There had been some delays relating to finance. The local authority was fully aware of the delays and the financial position. They were in agreement with a delay in the submission to them of the SFVS (School Financial Value Standard).
3	<p>STRATEGIC DIRECTION</p> <p>LB gave an update.</p> <p>3.1 Ofsted The letter from Ofsted following the inspection on 8.2.23 was accepted. It reflected the feedback received and discussed at the previous meeting. The governing body and PR were working hard to bring about the changes needed.</p> <p>3.2 Academisation order Governors aware the Sabden Trust had pulled out of the academisation. There had been no feedback from the RSC (Regional Schools Commissioner) regarding the next steps and the local authority had said they had no specific information regarding that or the reasons for the withdrawal. It was possibly an issue with governance within Sabden rather than the perception of Homewood and they shared the same financial concerns about Homewood as the governing body. There were few academies involved with SEMH provision. If the school improved there was a process for removal of the academy order.</p> <p>3.3 Vision Governors agreed there was now a need to change their strategy to now encompass the longer term. A lengthy discussion followed relating to the ambition, the vision, of the</p>

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governing body for the school and some of the challenges it faced.

3.3.1 Comments included:

- The desire for the school to stabilize, improve and be a Good school.
- There were important issues to be resolved, including finance, premises and the need for a primary SEMH provision.
- The belief the local authority was now more minded to have a longer term view and welcomed having an SEMH provision.
- Procuring provision from elsewhere would be more expensive than resolving issues at Homewood.
- Proceeding as a standalone school may well not be possible and options for partners should be considered. The current reputation of Homewood was a barrier.
- Homewood could deliver with adequate funding and changes to structure.
- Feedback from a parent was that it was a fantastic school.
- There was a need to ensure pupils had the support they needed.
- There was a need to address educational disadvantage.
- Agencies praised the school for how they work with them.
- The current SEN review offered an opportunity to influence thinking.
- The need to consider the particular context of Homewood i.e. with all pupils coming from the same area, bringing in their issues from outside, no transition from a primary SEMH and that a lot of pupils did not and would never attend.
- A governor could provide examples of successful models and PR had been considering having both an onsite and offsite offer.

3.3.2 In discussion, governors agreed that the way forward was to be proactive and to have input from PR and the staff. Firstly to meet as a governing body and agree the vision, mission statement and come up with a full array of options and then a review with the local authority to be facilitated by a disinterested party. Matters of urgency were agreed to be headteacher arrangements and staffing structure. These would be discussed later in the meeting.

PR added that some work on the vision was already underway. Staff had already started work and would continue on the next inset day. It would be ongoing as there was a need to change our behaviour system.

Actions – LN and LB to discuss further with a view to working with PR and the GB to take this forward with the local authority.
PR would let governors know the dates of after school discussions with staff relating to the vision when it would be useful for them to attend.

4 GOVERNOR REPORTS

4.1 Chairs Report

LB gave a verbal update.

- LN and LB continued to have regular discussions with the local authority whose time was currently taken up with other matters, including elections.
- Feedback was awaited from a parent questionnaire.
- LN and LB had spoken to Regan Delf and Mark Storey and requested assistance with HR at the school and in establishing a clear financial support for the school, including the staff structure.

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5	<p>FINANCE – COMPLIANCE SFVS for approval The local authority was aware of the financial and compliance situation and had agreed a delay in submission. This item was deferred.</p>
6	<p>FINANCE</p> <p>Budget monitoring and planning</p> <p>6.1 As at the end of January the forecasted outturn was £351k deficit. Years 1, 2 and 3 forecasted deficits in the draft budget were: £640k, £817k and £1m respectively.</p> <p>6.2 LB gave further information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Under the Council’s rules such a large deficit could only be approved at high level. The deficit was at director level at the moment. Some would need to be written off but they would then not have to fund an ongoing deficit but put it on a sufficiently stable position to enable delivery of provision. Approval of this and next year’s deficit was likely but not imminent.• Much of the budget is taken up by external provision, non-permanent staff, agency costs and funding long term absence cover.• We are funded as an onsite learning environment yet there are £100k pa offsite provision costs.• The local authority may look at increasing the PAN (published admission number).• The teacher pay issue remained unresolved and the GMB union was balloting non-teaching staff. <p>Are they increasing the top-up in line with the cost of living? PR, it is 50 places from September23 with a base value of £10k and top-up of £16120. This will increase top up by 1.8% with effect from April. Governors noted this was neither in line with increases in inflation nor staff costs.</p> <p>6.3 LB reported feeling more comfortable with the deficit as we know how it arose. It was not just poor management. There was poor recording of expenditure but the expenditure had been justified. The school was facing the same needs next year.</p> <div data-bbox="204 1391 1206 1525" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #ffffcc; padding: 5px;"><p>ACTION LB ND to continue working with PR and the school business manager and to stick to the budget. Ongoing LB ND – ensure correct information is received monthly and is understood.</p></div> <p>6.4 Items for approval or action taken under delegated authority for ratification PR and JA withdrew 5.00 pm.</p> <p>PR’s contract was due to expire at Easter. Governors considered LB’s recommendation to extend the contract until Christmas 2023. Chairs considered the current salary was appropriate to carry on as before but without increase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ The extension of the headteacher’s contract till Christmas 2023, with no increase in salary, was approved. <p>PR returned 5.09 pm</p>
7	<p>HEADTEACHER REPORT</p>

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7.1 School improvement - Governor visits.

Governors discussed which visits should be undertaken, bearing in mind school improvement foci and other areas useful to PR.

JA returned 5.12 pm

The new governors would visit the school if they had not already and governors were requested to email LB and LN if they were interested in being the literacy link. PR thought it would be useful to follow up on items from the staff survey, to challenge re data generally and also attend the reward meetings and trips. Governors recalled there was a governor visiting policy, that written reports following a visit were needed and that visiting in pairs with a discussion with the headteacher in the end worked well.

ACTION

Governors to contact LB/LN if interested in being the literacy link

7.2 Headteacher report

7.2.1 PR gave further information and took questions.

- The stage 1 complaint was from the autumn term
- The spring 1 data had been prepared for Ofsted
- There were two new pupils on the 'sight and sound' tracker.
- Attendance remained at around 55%. For the first time some pupils had achieved 100% which was very encouraging.
- There was now a vacancy for admin officer/finance support. The backlog of work had been cleared.
- Staff days lost due to absence had reduced to 170 from 291 in autumn.
- Teacher appraisals had been completed. Teaching assistant appraisals had not yet been done.
- The safeguarding report stated a third of staff did not feel safe at work but that was an improvement.
- Getting parents to come to the school was hard, particularly for meetings for internet safety etc. They will be invited to the end of term award assembly.
- Continued professional development has continued but we are now at the end of that budget. There has been a lot of staff training and staff opportunities. We buy into iHASCO training.
- The majority of staff remained resilient. Some find the increasing demands of improving provision a challenge.

7.2.2 **How are the behaviour issues? The numbers of suspensions feel high.** The police have attended and also DASH (mental health support). It was all one pupil and we are expecting it to reduce as we dealt with it in autumn 2. Support was provided for affected staff. There have been a few suspensions today and the updated data will be sent to you. Ofsted commented on the suspensions as did the safeguarding review and also about the importance of the return to school procedure. There have been no 5+ suspensions in spring 2. We involved the police as the racial incidents had reached a high level.

Around staff appraisal, do you have a system for appraising non teaching staff? Yes.

How do you monitor pupil progress? How do governors monitor? We are only just in the position where we have a reasonable system in place. I could only report from exams at the end of the last academic year. This year at the end of summer 1 there will be more concrete data.

There were no further questions.

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8	<p>POLICIES/DOCUMENTS</p> <p>8.1 PR confirmed the Discipline, Conduct and Grievance policies were the current local authority model policies agreed with the unions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ The Discipline, Conduct and Grievance policies were approved as presented. They would be reviewed in three years or earlier if the local authority made amendments. <p>8.2 The unchanged behaviour principles written statement was noted.</p> <p>8.3 The supporting pupils with medical conditions policy would be drawn up by PR and provided to governors.</p>
9	<p>CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS (if any)</p> <p>There were no confidential items. There being no further business, the meeting closed 5.43</p>

The minutes were approved at the full governing body meeting 9.5.23