

MINUTES



Noadswood

BOARD: General Purposes Committee

SCHOOL: Noadswood School

DATE: Thursday 15th October 2020

TIME: 18:30hrs – 21:00hrs

VENUE: Remotely – via Teams

ATTENDED:	Tim Sunderland (TS) Chair Blake (CB) Catherine Langdon (CL) Kathryn Marshall (KM) Neil Cotton (NC) Elaine Huttly Sarah Staley	Chair of Committee Member – Appointed Governor /Academy Trust Member Chairman / Member – Appointed Governor Head Teacher Governor Member – Appointed Governor Staff Governor School Business Manager (joined the meeting at 7.15pm)
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ATTENDING: Louise Instone *Clerk*

The Code of Conduct for Governors requires governors to be honest and open with regard to conflicts of interest (either real or perceived). Governors must not use their position for personal gain in business, political or social relationships. Therefore, a governor who has, or may be perceived to have, such a personal interest in a particular matter under consideration should declare that interest, withdraw from all discussions relating to it and take no part in any vote on such matter.

Items marked * are those in which a majority of Governors may have an interest because of some shared attribute. When considering these items, Governors should aim to achieve a balanced view, paying particular attention to the sources of information and advice, and remind themselves of their duties as governors and to act in the public interest.

Item	
1	Welcome and Apologies: TS welcomed those present.
2	Procedural items: 2.1 Apologies for absence There were no apologies 2.2 Confirmation of Quorum The meeting was quorate throughout the whole meeting. 2.3 Declarations of interest No pecuniary or personal interests were advised for any agenda item for this meeting
3	Any Other Business: To consider any urgent items of business that need to be added as AOB for the end of the meeting. There was no other urgent business to be added.
4	Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting on 23 rd June 2020 were approved by CB and CL.
5	Matters Arising from the Minutes: CB advised that it was mentioned that the Capital budget should be presented at the GPC but he noticed it isn't an agenda item. KM confirmed it was mentioned in the BM report and Internal Audit report update.



6	<p>Correspondence:</p> <p>To note any correspondence received by the Trust /Chair. There was no correspondence to bring to the meeting.</p>
7	<p>Safeguarding/Child Protection/Covid 19 Risk Management. To note any matters for the Committee to be aware of.</p> <p>KM explained that since the last time Governors were together Noadswood have had one further case of Covid 19. This broke on Saturday morning and there are now about 50 students in year 10 self-isolating and a further 2 colleagues. We followed the Public Health England guidance to the letter. Teachers are teaching students in the classroom and remotely at home. KM expressed her thanks to staff. CL explained that, as a parent, the way the situation was handled has been pretty good, the communication and teaching being beamed in to the year 10s self-isolating has worked really well. KM got message to parents asap.</p>
8	<p>Terms of Reference: GPC and Audit Committee</p> <p>TS explained that, in his experience, the current examples of ToRs were complicated. TS proposed to work with CL looking at a few examples and combining them together to put together some new ToRs. TS advised that once he has a draft version it will be sent round and he will take on board the feedback and put a proposal together for the next meeting. CL agreed that was fine we could use it as a template to put something together for the Audit committee at the beginning of November so we can go to the Audit Committee with a draft. CB asked if TS had seen the current ToRs as a starting point. KM confirmed they were with the FGB papers on the Governor Hub. TS confirmed he read the audit ones and asked if there was a GPC one. It was confirmed there was. TS explained that they must be fit for purpose. CB expressed concern that there were some checks in the ToR's that he didn't think we have been doing. CL was concerned that some of the ToR's looked over complicated and committee members may not understand what is going on, some simplification and clarity is needed to have an overview of what we need to be doing. KM sent through some other good examples that were more concise. CL explained that using what TS has, those examples and what we currently have we can come to something sensible and clear. TS explained that as we don't have an accountant on the committee we need to make sure the internal audit covers everything needed. We have a system/check list for everything to be updated every year. We need to make sure we use the Internal Audit to tell us where the gap is and then you close the gap so it doesn't happen again.</p> <p>CB explained we have only recently contracted the internal audit out, in the past we have had an accountant on the GB but we no longer do. TS agreed that contracting the internal audit out was the right thing. TS asked whether everyone was happy with the process. CB & EH agreed it was a good way forward.</p>
9	<p>Business Manager's Report</p> <p>Premises / Health & Safety SS confirmed documents will have been received for information review, she was happy to answer questions but needed approval and volunteers for a few things.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Energy Contract: SS advised school have received quotes for energy for the next 3 years supply which needs approval. Quote received from Deals for Schools and a broker. SS recommended School goes with the broker then whoever is the cheapest supplier from the broker on the day. SS suggested going for a 3 year fixed deal which would mean the unit price would stay the same. Question CB is that buying and selling re our solar. SS confirmed this is our cost for consumption and that we don't sell our solar energy, we get an income from it. SS explained if we go for a shorter period the prices may go up. CB enquired as to whether we get a better price for a longer term? SS explained it is actually slightly more but that is because we hope this will be a good deal to secure we expect to have a lower price for longer. SS recommended stay with Zenergi compared with YPO who are the branch used by Deals for Schools. Secure a 36 month contract for both gas and electricity zenergi are the broker they will run a comparison and let me know who is



	<p>the cheapest supplier on the day. TS and CB approved the use of Zenergy. SS will email round a document to be signed to confirm approval for the audit trail.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> SS explained she needed a volunteer of the Health and Safety Committee which she would like to get up and running. KM explained that PT has been working with JY and herself on our Covid Risk assessment and he said he would do that. CL explained that LT has agreed to support the Gym Committee. <p>TS asked regarding major projects when what the articles say about the process and delegation. For example £45,000 and £100,000 is it 3 bids and signed off by a trustee? Specifically regarding the School House refurb and toilets. SS confirmed Governors committee for anything over £15,000 and up to £25,000 2 Governors can sign it off and over that the whole GP committee. TS asked what about procurement would that be 3 bids all opened on the say day? SS gave an example of the school house, our Project Management company come in and do an estimate and if decided to go with it they would put it out to tender and we would get like for like quotes.</p> <p>Finance Report: KM explained there has been a lot of absence within our finance team and new appointments. The first monthly monitoring meeting is 27th October we are confident to be back on track from then on. KM has completed her narrative and all the schooling on every monthly document so we have caught up a lot. You will be able to look at p1 27th October. KM asked for any questions? CL asked DFC where that is at as it is linked into the SIF. KM confirmed again they are determined not going to use any capital funding until it is right, after their next meeting it should be put right.</p>
10	<p>Internal Scrutineer's Report</p> <p>KM prepared and sent for this meeting an update and actions on every medium and high level recommendation that was in the first internal audit process so we can give an accurate update & timeline.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of the Capital Budget – There has been an issue between Sarah Staley and Caris Mckinley and Sam Lock in terms reconciling the SIF reconciliation regarding the capital budget being issued and this has yet to be resolved. A meeting is scheduled in w/c 26th October for Sam to visit to work with the Finance Manager and SS to resolve the issues and they can then be issued on 9th November. KM wasn't sure why it had become so complicated to resolve. KM had a meeting with HWB who went through the return but he wasn't able to explain why those last bits of the SIFs money reconciled. CB asked for confirmation that the SIF funding was the funding we received for the heating project the science block? KM confirmed it was and the anomalies are with the heating block. Inventory SS explained there wasn't a stock check last year so she got one started, each dept will go through the items on the inventory and confirm if it is still in place, if it's not and if they have got anything new. SS will go through the results and chase, make any adjustments, make a disposals list if necessary, with a limit of £1,000 for KM to sign off. We still get a headteacher sign off even if it is £0 so we have a record. Will make sure it is complete by the end of November and then kept up to date. New assets are added so will work with RJ to develop a process for this. By the time of the audit we will be much further along. KM confirmed the need to have the headteacher sign off done before the audit. Deadline has been set of November 16th of the stock take. CB is this items that go on our capital register SS explained the Capital list and Inventory list are two separate things. Inventory items are £200 and over, Capital items are £1,000 and over. CB asked



it is a demonstration that we are trying to track the assets that we have and the money we spend? SS agreed yes where they are and that we still have them.

3. **Disclosure of staff trustee salaries** - Sam Lock recommended this be addressed quickly. KM's salary is published and always has been. A former staff Trustee was worried about this and their salary wasn't published. We currently have 2 Trustees on the GB now and we need to decide how we go forward. We are supposed to publish the salaries of Staff Trustees and currently only KM's is. EH confirmed she was happy for hers to be published. CL to ask AD if he is OK to have his salary published. TS was concerned with GDPR and if a member said no we would have to respect that. KM thought there was a possibility that we could publish the salary and the post but exclude staff names. CB was concerned that if a staff member said no we can't publish it. CL reflected that if AD was happy we didn't have a problem. TS advised the fines for getting personal information wrong are too big and that legal advice should be sort. Their permission should be documented and signed. KM confirmed she is meeting Victoria Blake at Stone King who are our legal team, she will speak to her and report back.
4. **Declaration of interest forms** – KM explained when the audit was done 2 Governor forms were missing and the SLT had never been asked, SLT's are complete and with LI. LI to make sure all Governors have completed either a form or directly on Governor Hub. TS suggested that someone should be responsible at the start of a new term and year to update what needs updating. They should have a list of procedures to follow and it won't fail. There won't be anything amiss for the auditors to find. KM explained they are looking at job evaluation of the admin team to a line better the roles that they have got in terms of what we needs. Regarding the trust work our Clerk used to do this. TS explained they reduced the number of policies his school uses to a minimum. LI to send a deadline to Governors to ensure forms are in well before 7th December.
5. **Governance information on the website** – includes policies and documents. DC and KM are migrating all the correct information. The aim is to be able to confirm that is complete at 9th November meeting and new website pages will be ready for viewing. Trustees then to have a look and check. The difficulties have been merging 2 systems, information on the website and on the Frog portal.
6. **Risk Register** SS – suggest timeline
 - End of next week allocated all the items to individuals with KM then checking through it, making sure the right person is looking at each item and it is a fair balance - circulate that to the various people involved including governors.
 - Deadline for first draft – 13th Nov deadline to fill in the cells and discuss with each other.
 - Final draft for discussion 27th November to discuss with KM.

SS explained there will still be a few items to tweak – this will include new items added by Sam Lock like the Covid risk and so on. CB agreed that was a sensible timeline and thought it was a great start but more to do which you have now fully explained how it will be completed. CB expressed this really has to be a corner stone for improvement plans, budgets across the school. When you look at this it does drive a number of things, 5 year budget plan, curriculum, marketing. It has got to be a key piece of leadership documentation. TS agreed but thought the strategy was as important. SS explained they want keep it simple as we have lots of documents that feed into it, bullet points and key discussion points. CB pointed out that the process is as valuable as the final document and as many people as you can should be



	<p>involved. KM we have never approached it as well as we are about to approach it, we have not divided it up and have a rich discussion about it, this is a step forward. We have done it to meet audit requirement, so this is an advance.</p> <p>7. Internal Scrutiny visits – Meeting agendas haven't been deviated from. KM asked TS once he has had a chance to look at the schedule of work please say if you feel different things would be appropriate. KM confirmed there are 3 visits in total. This report is from the first visit and the second visit is in November. KM has put together the previously internal scrutiny findings, the last one the Trustees did was 26th November 2018 prior to Sam's visit. They are all filed in the right place there is a big gap but we will write a narrative to cover this.</p> <p>8. Separation of Members- CL did a note all on 14th October and will follow that up.</p> <p>9. Governance Information. Uploads of documents, annual accounts, funding agreements, memorandum & articles of association and policies. CL sent KM a link for the Articles of Association. Pupil premium information will be up to date and confirmed on 9th November meeting.</p> <p>10. Staff trustees, not all boards have staff trustees due to a possible conflict of interest, we haven't had any issues, colleagues step out of the meeting if they need to. TS confirmed there must be representation for parents and staff so you haven't got a choice. CL asked whether we should be replacing staff trustees. CB confirmed we will have to change the articles which will need to do anyway when we split Trustees and members.</p>
11	<p>Monthly Financial Monitoring Schedule / scheduling of work from NGA workshop action plan KM reflected regarding the NGA workshop we did put into the finance BM report. KM wants to make sure agreed elements are looked at. When discussing future agendas, KM wants to not lose what was discussed and ensure this document is used when scheduling agenda items to include, challenging pupil numbers. TS explained all critical websites data and policies, driven by Academies Financial handbook, needs to have an owner and clear calendar to avoid out of date information on the school website. KM and LI to discuss each calendar of events for each committee with Jane.</p>
12	<p>Any Other Urgent Business (AOB):</p> <p>CB asked for an update on the marketing strategy. KM explained that a Marketing strategy meeting will be held tomorrow afternoon with the SLT team and LT so an update will follow in a future meeting.</p> <p>TS expressed concern about the timing of paperwork arriving for meetings. KM explained it has been a learning curve for the new Clerk working with the school and we now hope we have plans in place for Agenda's to be sent to the Chair of the Committee and KM two weeks before the meeting and the Agenda and papers should be on the Governor Hub a week before the meeting.</p>
	<p>Meeting Dates It was agreed that the next meeting will be on Thursday 14th January 2021 Monday 19th April 2021</p>
	<p>The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 19.45hrs</p>

Matters arising from the minutes of the -General Purposes Committee held on 15th October 2020

Item	Action	Actionee	Status
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MINUTES



Noadswood

8	Creation of new draft ToR's for the Audit & GPC to be emailed round to Governors for comment	TS/CL	
10.3	KM to speak to Victoria Blake re the legality of publishing staffs' salaries	KM	
10.4	LI to ensure all declarations of interest are on the Governor Hub asap	LI	
11	KM & LI to discuss the calendar of events for each committee	KM/LI	

Outstanding items:

Item	Responsible	Status

SIGNED BY:	
DATED:	