

BRINE LEAS SCHOOL

An Academy

Local Governing Board Meeting

Held on Wednesday 12th July 2017 at 3.45 pm

MINUTES – PART 1

Present:	Ms K Batten	(KBN)	Appointed Governor
	Mrs A Beecher	(ABR)	Elected Staff Governor
	Mr A Cliffe	(ACE)	Headteacher Governor
	Mr T Court	(TC)	Appointed Governor
	Mrs M Hennessy Jones	(MHJ)	Appointed Governor
	Dr K Jones	(KJ)	Elected Parent Governor
	Mrs S Okell	(SO)	Appointed Governor
	Mrs S Turner	(ST)	Elected Parent Governor

In Attendance: Mr C Barker (item 1 only), Mr P Barton (Item 1 only), Miss A Bates (Item 1 only), Ms J Bavin (Item 1 only), Miss E Bentley (Item 1 only), Mrs K Bradshaw (Business Manager), Mr D Cole (Deputy Headteacher), Mrs G Josephs (Item 1 only), Miss C Lewis (item 1 only), Mr S Donald (Item 1 only), Mrs E Fletcher (Clerk), Mrs S O'Neill (Item 1 only), Mr R Oakes (Item 1 only) Mrs E Parkes (Item 1 only), Mrs A Sharman (Item 1 only) and Mr P Whitehead (Item 1 only)

Vision (discussed out of order)

ST welcomed HOCA's and Heads of Department for the 'Vision' session and explained that this was the first time this session has taken place and forms part of the new schedule of meetings for governors.

ST shared that from September, BLS became part of Brine MAT and with this came some separation of duties and responsibilities. ST explained that the role of the LGB remains strategic but can now focus more on the school and its performance. The LGB can look at areas that it can be more useful to staff and support how the school runs.

ST highlighted that the purpose of this session was to look together at where we want to be in 5 years' time, how to get there and how governors can support this.

[The meeting then split up into mixed working parties to undertake the visioning exercise].

After the visioning exercise was completed, ST and ACE thanked HOCA's and SLT members that contributed to the session.

Governors shared that they found the session useful and highlighted several areas in which the governors can look to make some changes.

Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr A Martin. Governors decided to accept this apology.

Absence without apologies was noted in respect of Mr T Marsden and Cllr A Moran.

Outcome: Governors accepted apologies from Mr A Martin.

Declaration of Interests

One declaration of interest was made by Mrs S Okell who informed governors that, since the last meeting, she had been appointed as Safeguarding link governor at another secondary school in the local area.

Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 24th May 2017 were provided prior to the meeting and were put forward for approval as a true and accurate record of the meeting. All governors present approved the minutes.

Outcome: Governors accepted the minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 24th May 2017 as a true and accurate record

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 24th May 2017 that were not already covered with the agenda for this meeting.

Governor Vision

- ACE shared that the Whole School SDP is being presented at this meeting but he envisages that this document will change over the summer once the information from the vision session is shared.
- It was suggested that governors look for common areas arising from the session with staff and construct a vision statement. Following this, devise a strategy and divide this into strands.
- Governors highlighted that they valued working with the HOCA's and queried if this will become an annual process? It was agreed that governors need to ensure that, the process is seen to be transparent and staff involved know what strands governors are taking and what they are doing. It was agreed that this process would be done annually.
- ACE shared that behind the SDP there are lots of other developments; therefore, the SDP needs to be at least partly in place to enable the other plans to be produced. It was felt that the SDP does not need to be written by ACE alone.
- It was highlighted that the October meeting will be about finalising the outcomes from July meeting.

- ACE felt the information from this evening needs to be processed in order to make an initial draft of an SDP as this needs to be in place for September. This could be shared with governors for comments. The elements relating to governance perhaps should be written by governors.
- It was highlighted that some elements from the vision sessions will not be in the SDP; some elements will feature further down the line in departmental plans.
- It was agreed that a working group will meet to discuss the vision exercise, look towards putting together the aim – vision, strategy, plan. The School then has to create the plan with the small steps to get there. Governors will work towards a vision and value statement/plan for approval in October. The working party will identify anything that is for significant concern/for action now or in the future. Once this has been done, it can be shared with governors and staff involved. It will highlight where there are weaknesses.
- Governors felt that the current SDP can still be shared with staff; this is with the caveat that governors are looking at the vision and this may impact on the SDP.
- ACE shared that targets for staff will be drawn up in September/October and therefore he needs sight of the outcome of the governor working group to ensure his focus is appropriate.

Outcome: A governor working group will work on the information provided in the 'Vision' session and present information to ACE and the rest of the governors.

School Development Plan (SDP) and Self Evaluation Summary (SES)

SES

- A copy of the draft SES sent out prior to the meeting and ACE highlighted that there has not been a lot of changes since the last version presented to governors.
- It was highlighted that information about results etc. is not known yet and this will result in significant changes.
- Some governors felt that the link governor role wasn't particularly defined; they should be a champion for their area. In addition, it was felt that there was no consistency across what link governors do. It was agreed that link governor roles need to be reviewed. It was suggested that the Clerk could start next year making appointments to ensure that meetings take place. It was felt that half termly meetings is a huge commitment and some areas may not need as much involvement as others. Governors were asked to consider if they were equipped to advise professionals on their areas. ACE shared that a governor would be able to identify concerns in results at their first link meeting and ask for the strategy around improvement; at second meeting they could check on the progress of their work towards improvement etc. It was agreed that a framework for link governors needs to be in place; reports should be reviewed by governors to look for areas of concern and celebration. Governance needs to be included in the SES with a note to say that the role of link governor will be reviewed. The governor vision and values also needs to be included.

Outcome: The SES to be updated to include governor vision and values.

Outcome: Governors to review link governor roles and revisit the link governor framework

SDP

- A copy of the SDP was shared prior to the meeting.

- It was agreed that a section on governance is to be included. This can include information from the vision session.
- ST suggested that the MAT and the LGB need separate sections. ACE shared that governors are included in several sections throughout the document but agreed that these elements could feature in an LGB section also.
- ACE shared that the leadership team would welcome more governor challenge.
- ACE shared that the school will need to include a section on compliance with May 2018 Data Protection Act and there may be some queries in relation to safeguarding issues linked with this.
- A governor queried whether the SDP should include tracking the number of high achieving PP students. ACE shared that this is included in the document under 'establish a culture of academic rigour for all'.
- ACE shared that his aim is to expose all students to a wide range of experiences rather than copy a grammar style education for high achievers. Governors accepted that students were entitled to a breadth in their curriculum offer. ACE shared that a barrier to this is money; the school may not be able to continue to offer this. It was suggested that leadership and governors need to have an agreement on what subjects are non-negotiable.
- Governors questioned whether the school is producing children ready for the world of work? Is Critical Thinking included in the curriculum? ACE shared that it is included in the T&L plan.
- Governors queried how many students are involved in the House System at the moment? ACE shared that data can be made available on this and this is a focus for ABR next year. The target is to focus on getting Year 7 to buy into the system and getting more staff involvement. Governors asked what their role was in this and ACE shared that link governors can get involved in events that fall within their link area. ACE highlighted that there are measurable targets linked to the House system around attendance and behavior and another focus will be to look at which disadvantaged students take part in House events.

Both the SDP and SES were accepted based on amendments discussed and subject to further approval after the vision process has been completed and the results have been released.

Key SLT Areas of Focus

- Documents from members of the Leadership team were provided prior to the meeting and it was highlighted that these show the areas that are sitting behind the SDP.
- Leadership plan to start producing their plans around these areas, taking into account the information from tonight. These will form the basis of the plans that are brought to committees and will be ragged throughout the year.

Governance – Measuring Value

- It was highlighted that information on this will come out of the Vision process; governors need to challenge themselves to ensure that there is an impact.
- It was also agreed that staff need to know what governors can offer in terms of skills, knowledge and experience so that suggestions for potential support can be made.

- ACE shared that governors have been significant in Ofsted and this has been valuable and can be evidenced. In addition ACE shared that governors on various panels and some have been involved in significantly complex situations. This support has been welcomed and valued.
- It was agreed that it is difficult to balance support and challenge, but that there was a lot more value that can be added.

PAN

- ACE informed governors that he has been in discussion with the LA about funding linked to new build in the area. It was highlighted that this is connected to funding via Section 106 Agreements. Governors were informed that a lot of development has been done with no money attached to it, however there is a pot of money available for Nantwich schools. The figure that has been suggested for BLS is £1m.
- ACE informed governors that predicted student figures until 2023 have been shared and the outcome is that BLS needs to look to offer an additional number of spaces.
- Governors queried if the school was legally required to expand the school at the request of the LA. ACE shared that this isn't the case.
- ACE shared that both BLS and Malbank School agreed that the funding should be released by the LA sooner rather than later. ACE shared that he would like to produce a build that was ready for 2018 which would address the issues around the current Year 8 cohort which is exceptionally large. It was highlighted that, across the Year Groups, BLS is already 70 over PAN.
- Governors raised concern that if the school builds an extension, it will be required to admit more students and this will impact on other local schools.
- ACE shared his view that the school should not increase its PAN based on phase 1 of any additional build. It is recommended that the funding is received to meet current need and a phased increase in PAN should only be considered following the receipt of funding for phase 2.
- Governors queried whether the school can be forced to increase its PAN with it being an academy. ACE shared that it cannot be forced to do this and highlighted that there is capacity at Malbank for the predicted numbers up to 2020. These figures are yet to be confirmed.
- Governors queried whether the catchment area will be expected to change. ACE confirmed that it would not.
- Governors queried whether there is any agreement on utilising funds to preserve the curriculum? ACE shared that if we take 240/250 students in a Year Group, it gives 10 teaching groups and more flexibility.

Proposal: That governors agree to ACE continuing to be in discussion with the LA on the basis that i) phase 1 of funding will be used to meet the needs of children currently on roll, ii) that some funding from phase 2 is released in advance for the payment of feasibility studies, and iii) that consideration for an increased PAN is only considered once funding for phase 2 has been received. ACE shared that he needs to provide evidence to the LA that governors will not consider admitting additional children on the back of phase 1.

Outcome: Governors agreed with the proposal and confirmed that it would not consider increasing pupil numbers based on phase 1.

School Calendar

- Governors were informed that the proposed calendar does include a change to the February Inset – this is on the calendar for the Friday before February half term instead of the Monday following half term. ACE shared that this is largely around the fact that the NEP will not be having the usual inset and that the current dates mean children will miss three Mondays of the same week within the fortnightly timetable due to bank holidays around this time. This will have a significant impact on option lessons.
- ACE highlighted that by approving the calendar, governors are also approving the trips contained within it. It was confirmed that risk assessments and the Evolve process is used for all trips.

Outcome: Governors approved the school calendar including the change of Inset day and all trips contained within it, subject to correct risk assessment and trip approval processes being carried out.

Policy Approval

- A copy of the updated Safeguarding Policy was provided to governors prior to the meeting and a proposal made that this is accepted by governors. It was highlighted that the changes related to the change of the designated lead.

Outcome: Governors approved the updated Safeguarding Policy

- The updated ARR policy was provided to governors prior to the meeting and it was recommended that this approved by governors. Governors requested that a slight change to the wording in section 4 is made – to replace ‘some work will not be marked to the same standard’ with an alternative phrase that reflects some pieces will be marked with a light touch and some in more depth.

Outcome: Governors approved the updated ARR Policy subject to a change in wording in Section 4 as highlighted above.

Governance

- The Link Governor reports submitted were accepted.
- A Link Governor Framework is to be produced as already agreed.
- There have been no changes to membership since the previous meeting.
- ACE shared that the school has a charity called The Patrons’ Fund which has gone by the wayside recently. It was highlighted that funds from this charity are used for enrichment. ACE informed governors that he is looking to resurrect this and the constitution has space for two governors. Governors to let the Clerk know if they are interested in joining the group.

Dates of Future Meetings

The dates of future meetings were highlighted.

It was suggested that governors need to review the timing of July meeting with a view to following the same format as July 2017. It was agreed that the July 2018 meeting will start at 3.45 pm.

End of Meeting