

**Foxton Primary School
Full Governing Body
17th March 2022 at 6.30pm**

Present: Janet Muir (Headteacher), Lisa Murphy, John Carter, Anna Caroe (Chair), Chris Grey, Laura Moran, Cary Francis, Lynne Brooks, Joseph Sherry

Apologies:

In attendance: George Hayes (Clerk), Stephen Atkinson (for Agenda Item 9 only)

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all attendees to the meeting

2. Apologies

No apologies had been received for the meeting.

It was confirmed that since the time of the last meeting, Stephen Atkinson will only attend to present information pertinent to his role within school.

It was also acknowledged that Euridce Baptista had resigned from the Governing Body since the time of the last meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

Chris Grey declared an interest in relation to Agenda Item 4 and would leave the meeting for consideration of this item.

There were no other Declarations of Interest.

4. Election of Co-Opted Governor

Chris Grey introduced himself, his background and experience. Mr Grey is interested in joining the Governing Body as a co-opted governor.

Chris Grey temporarily left the meeting.

Governors discussed capacity, given Mr Grey's role as a Headteacher at another local school, but it was confirmed that some other work commitments had not come to fruition which enabled Mr Grey's capacity to actively contribute towards the role of governor.

Mr Grey's nomination was proposed by John Carter and seconded by Joseph Sherry.

Following a vote, Mr Chris Grey was duly appointed as a co-opted governor, with effect from 17th March 2022.

Mr Grey was welcomed back into the meeting and informed of his appointment.

ACTION: School office to administrate email set up and DBS check.

5. Minutes from the previous meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated in advance for governor's consideration.

These were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting held on 27th January 2022.

Governors agreed that once signed, these would be uploaded to the website to publicise the work of the Governing Body and promote accessibility with this work.

ACTION: HT to upload non-confidential minutes to the website and LB will check that these are non-confidential matters only.

6. Matters Arising

The Action Log was updated as follows;

Action	Progress Update
Joseph Sherry to locate the Code of Conduct and new governors to sign	This had been shared, but is awaiting signature of the new governors.
Stephen Atkinson to set up GovernorHub logins and Foxton email addresses for new governors.	Complete.
Future agenda item about which committee personnel sits within	On agenda.
Chair to set up DoodlePoll to coordinate preferred meeting dates	Meeting dates for the Spring Term are confirmed. Summer Term meeting dates are to be confirmed in this meeting.
All governors to share a Pen Portrait with the Chair	Mostly complete. Reminder to those who are yet to respond.
Chair and HT to follow up clerking discussions	On agenda – but ongoing.
Business Committee to progress SFVS completion	Complete.
All governors to consider finance associate membership potential candidates.	Agreed to remove this from actions
New governors to complete Skills Audit.	Struggled to find Skills Audit. Clerk to share NGA Skills Audit with all governors to complete. Agenda Item at the next meeting.
Strategy Committee to progress a Governor Monitoring Form	On agenda.
Teachers to contact link governors to confirm Spring HT2 monitoring visits	Complete. All arrange, with JS to follow up in Summer HT1
Laura Moran and Lisa Murphy to confirm and hold Salaries Committee	Complete
HT and Joseph Sherry to progress Pupil Premium and Covid-19 Catch Up Funding Reports	In progress (carry forward)
Headteacher to check with LA about new Governor DBS check suitability	Complete

Chair to upload training grid to GovernorHub	Complete, but on agenda.
Lynne Brooks to follow up with potential finance expertise	Ongoing

7. Chair's Business

GovernorHub

Since the last meeting, the Chair has become more familiar with GovernorHub. The Chair suggested how people can edit documents if required using this platform, to avoid using two different systems – GovernorHub will be the sole system moving forward.

The Chair has set up an electronic filing system, so all monitoring reports should be uploaded to GovernorHub moving forward, as this becomes the centralised storage system.

It was noted that documents for Headteacher Appraisal can't currently be uploaded due to the confidentiality.

ACTION: Chair to restrict access to the Headteacher Appraisal Folder.

Action Plan Update

The Chair has RAG rated updates on the action plan. This demonstrates that most aspects have been started, with some where good progress has been made. Comments made in blue typeface denote the recent progress updates.

Business Plan Development / Governance at Foxton Document

The Chair had taken the pre-existing business plan on GovernorHub (which outlined statutory requirements but was not personalised to the school) and has considered how to make this a more evidence-led document which provides an overview for a full year of governance expectations.

The Chair confirmed that the updated document remains in draft and governors were welcome to provide feedback on this collaborative document, as well as additional context from those longer-serving members who bring more school-specific experience.

In discussions with staff, the preference is for January and June Governor Monitoring visits as the regular schedule. The document will ensure that statutory requirements are fulfilled, but it is recognised that further work is required (particularly those areas highlighted in Red and Yellow).

ACTION: All governors to provide feedback on the business plan document to the Chair of Governors.

Structure of Committees and Summer Term Dates

The Chair feels that the current structure of governance includes a lot of meetings and could potentially be operated more efficiently.

The Chair proposed to absorb the Strategy Committee into the Full Governing Body, leaving half-termly FGB meetings and termly Business Committee meetings.

Joseph Sherry suggested for the Business Committee to be renamed “Finance, Premises and Personnel” committee to provide a more precise scope. This was agreed.

With regard to assessments, attainment and progress data – it was proposed for a data group to meet on a termly basis to consider data. Lisa Murphy and John Carter agreed to lead this committee and other governors were welcome to contact the Chair to express their interest in joining this group.

ACTION: Governors to express interest in joining the Data Panel.

It was confirmed that the next meeting of the Finance Committee was scheduled for 23rd June 2022. This was beyond the budget setting deadline, which is required by no later than 5th May 2022.

It was suggested that one governor attend the budget build meeting alongside the LA Finance Officer, School Finance Officer and Headteacher on 25th April. Chris Grey volunteered to attend this meeting, the outcomes of which will then progress to the FGB for approval and submission.

LAIG Feedback

Overall feedback was that the first LAIG was a positive and supportive meeting that was clear about the new Headteacher’s impact.

The five points summarised from the LAIG meeting were as follows;

- The LAIG recognises the very positive start from the new Headteacher and Chair of Governors who are already having an impact
- The LAIG is pleased to hear that the safeguarding concerns were identified and acted on with urgency; this will continue to be an area of focus for the time being
- The school has completed a lot of work on pulling together pupil data, there now needs to be a greater focus and shared understanding of the tracking of children’s progress
- The wider curriculum has clear areas for development to ensure consistency of action plans and leadership
- The new Chair of Governors has been proactive in creating an effective business plan which provides the Governing Body with a coherent and strategic model for development and succession.

Link Governor Roles

Link Governor roles and responsibilities have been allocated as follows;

Maths and Computing: John Carter

English and Humanities: Cary Francis

SEND, PHSE, RE, Interventions and Catch Up: Joseph Sherry

Assessment and Data: John Carter and Lisa Murphy

Curriculum: All link governors

Governance: All governors

Safeguarding, Children in Care and Music: Laura Moran

Leadership and Management: Link Governors and the Headteacher

Wellbeing: Anna Caroe

Community Cohesion and Pupil Wellbeing: Anna Caroe

Art and DT: Lisa Murphy

ACTION: Children In Care Training Link to be shared with Laura Moran to complete

PREVENT Training Checklist

The school office should be able to confirm who has recently completed training.

ACTION: All governors to share PREVENT training certificates with the school office, who will then ensure that these are uploaded to the Single Central Record.

Vacancies/Governor Recruitment Update

After the recruitment of Chris Grey as a co-opted governor, there was a parent governor vacancy remaining. Lisa Murphy volunteered to coordinate the parent governor election process.

ACTION: Clerk to share LA guidance on parent governor recruitment with Lisa Murphy to progress the publication and election process as required.

It was noted that the governing body would welcome more people as Associate Governors who can form part of the longer-term succession planning. A note had recently been published in the village magazine promoting these opportunities.

Stakeholder Engagement – Survey Results

This item was deferred until a future meeting.

School Vision

This item was deferred until a future meeting.

SA Role/Invite

It was noted that Stephen Atkinson had previously been Staff Governor, until such time that he became Interim Headteacher during the Autumn Term. Lynne Brooks has since become the Staff Governor.

The Chair has discussed the role with Mr Atkinson, who has concluded that he feels it best not to attend all meetings, other than reporting on particular aspects of his role and responsibilities.

Longstanding governors explained that being part of the Governing Body was originally part of Stephen's professional development plans. It was noted that this may still be appropriate on specific occasions, aligned with particular performance management objectives.

ACTION: HT and CoG to discuss SA role/responsibilities with the School Improvement Advisor.

Clerking Update

It was agreed that this had been covered in the action log update.

Website Biographies

Governors were reminded that website biographies were still outstanding for some members.

Chair's Action (Pay Award)

The Chair updated that she had used Chair's Action in relation to Teaching Assistant pay awards, due to the associated time pressures. The pay award was the recommendation of the Local Authority and appears to have been followed in other schools.

8. Headteacher's Business

Headteacher Report

The Headteacher's Report had been circulated in advance for governors' consideration.

The Headteacher updated that;

- 4 more children have joined the school since February, with two more potentially awaiting admissions allocation
- The school office has suffered with Covid absence, which has impacted upon the ability to breakdown attendance data as previously promised. This will be progressed
- Safeguarding is now included within the report with an overview of the tiers of involvement for different children within school.

- School Performance information was presented at the LAIG and the Headteacher has since added more specific data analysis regarding Pupil Premium and SEND children.
- The school is benefitting from an increasing number of visitors and is beginning to look at external visits (e.g. visiting Church after the Easter holiday).
- The Spanish Teacher, who comes from a nearby secondary school has mentioned that there is uncertainty about this provision being provided in the longer term.

Question: Is the arrangement for MFL paid for?

Response: Yes – arrangements have been in place and paid for through Melbourn Village College.

Question: Does the school have a contingency plan to cover MFL?

Response: This potential concern has only arisen recently and the school is yet to receive a formal notification. The Headteacher will contact the teacher to find out more information and consider options moving forward.

Governors discussed whether potential changes to MFL support may lead to needing to change the approach of MFL teaching and learning within feeder primary schools to align to secondary school approach. It was noted that whilst a number of pupils do go to Melbourn, Sawston is also becoming increasingly popular.

ACTION: Headteacher to gather further information and provide update at future meeting / via the MFL link governor (CF).

School Development Plan

The format of the School Development Plan has changed as previously agreed, including discussion with the School Improvement Advisor and John Carter, which had suggested tighter timescales. Attendance has also been added to the pupils section.

The school is currently receiving a lot of intensive support, so the School Development Plan is closely linked to this to ensure alignment.

Question: Could a section be added for staff notes to identify progress and update on outcomes / evaluations?

Response: Yes – this will also help to contribute towards the development of the SEF as a live document.

Governors noted the significant amount of work included within the plan but commended the Headteacher on looking to make progress within these areas.

Monitoring Update

The school is currently benefitting from weekly visits from the school's English Advisor who has been supportive and helpful. There is a different focus for each visit that has included joint observations, planning, observing phonics and reading.

The school's English Lead has then since led staff meetings, with a particular focus on planning and guided reading. The action plan has been updated at the end of each visit, with the most recent visit looking at the English Policy.

In addition, Tom Oakley the school's Maths Advisor has visited and undertaken a learning walk and observations. Future visits are planned to include reviewing the action plan and providing more detail to focus attention towards improvements.

Guidance for Safer Working Practices

Governors noted this updated guidance. The main changes had been highlighted. Governors and staff formally noted receiving this updated document.

9. Safeguarding

Stephen Atkinson joined the meeting at this point.

Update

Mr Atkinson led governors through the Basic Level Awareness Safeguarding Training that he had undertaken with the Local Authority. This provided updates to statutory guidance and how the school's approach has continued to develop. The safeguarding action plan remains in progress and is RAG rated to demonstrate the progress that the school has made since the time of the LA safeguarding review.

ACTION: Laura Moran to receive a copy of the school's safeguarding action plan.

Question: Where is the school in the cycle of needing external safeguarding training?

Response: The Local Authority advises three yearly externally facilitated training. The school will undertake this training from an external facilitator on 6th June 2022 INSET day.

Governors thanked Mr Atkinson for his attendance and presentation. Stephen Atkinson left the meeting at this point.

Monitoring Visit

It was confirmed that governor safeguarding monitoring is taking place on a half-termly basis, including checks of the Single Central Record.

10. Business Committee Update

The Committee Chair updated that the most recent committee meeting had included;

- Meeting the school's new finance officer, who provided updates on the current cashflow situation and different cost centres.
- Financial Benchmarking data was provided that demonstrated that the school's year on year carry forward appears to compare well with other local similar sized primary schools
- The school's current budget forecasts a £23k carry forward, in contrast to the original plans which had anticipated a more negative outturn at this point of the year.
- Next year, the school would have lower numbers coming into EYFS and higher numbers leaving in Year 6. Governors recognised that this would present potential challenges in the 2023-24 financial year.

Question: Is any of the £23k carry forward ringfenced funding e.g. Catch Up, Pupil Premium or PE Sport Grant?

Response: This can be followed up at the next meeting to ensure that the school understand the committed and uncommitted carry forward position.

Buildings and Pre-School

With regard to the pre-school, there remains ongoing discussions regarding the potential for a permanent building.

The Local Authority are engaged in meetings alongside the Pre School Manager and Chair. These discussions are currently looking at different options, including the potential for a permanent building, rather than a mobile unit, in order to provide a longer-term solution.

Governors discussed whether the building would then become hired by the pre-school or whether the school would take on full governance of the provision. It was confirmed that discussions remain at the preliminary stages, with no clear defined timescales as yet.

Governors discussed and confirmed that they agreed they were content with the pre-school moving onto the school site and looked forward to receiving different financial operating models to consider how this would be best operated in the future.

Question: Who is leading on the financial modelling exercises?

Response: The local authority are leading the project, including feasibility and signposting towards other LA teams as required.

Governors recognised the importance of securing this provision as part of the school's longer term improvements and sustainability, as well as wraparound care possibilities. Governors noted the importance of having a pre-school provision to serve the village community.

SFVS

The completion of the Schools Financial Value Standard was concluded at the Business Committee. It was confirmed that this would be circulated outside the meeting for approval.

ACTION: Joseph Sherry to circulate completed SFVS for consideration/approval outside of the meeting.

11. Strategy Committee Update

Minutes of the Strategy Committee meeting have been uploaded to GovernorHub.

The committee would like to extend thanks to various staff members for the amount of work that had been undertaken working with the English Advisor, on a SATs club and School Development planning. It was confirmed that the Headteacher extended thanks as appropriate to colleagues.

A conversation was held regarding how the Headteacher and Senior Teacher had to respond to a leak in school beyond ordinary expectations and that this should be recognised via time off in lieu or time working from home.

12. Governor Monitoring

Monitoring Form

A model monitoring form had been circulated by John Carter. Since this, the Headteacher has added a section related to pupil voice to ensure that this is consistently captured.

Lisa Murphy committed to uploading OFSTED related questions which governors may wish to use as part of their monitoring

Governors agreed to adding a further section to ensure that it can include a clear link to the relevant School Development Plan priority.

With the minor amendments as outlined, governors approved for this to be the monitoring form to be consistently used for all monitoring activity, apart from safeguarding which already has a consistent format.

Governors were asked to ensure that the monitoring log was updated to ensure clear oversight of all monitoring activity in one centralised place.

Cary Francis left the meeting at this point.

Those governors who had already undertaken monitoring activity provided updates in relation to their particular visits, findings and next steps.

13. Equality and Diversity

Equality and Diversity objectives are required to be set every four years at minimum and reviewed annually. A current version could not be found, so two governors are

required to focus upon developing this area of work. Progress was required before the next Full Governing Body meeting.

Joseph Sherry and Laura Moran volunteered to lead on this area of work alongside the Headteacher, supported by resources and information shared by the Chair.

ACTION: Joseph Sherry and Laura Moran to progress developing the school's equality and diversity objectives.

14. Policies

It was noted that the nominated Policy Review Governor had read and commented on all policies presented. The policy review schedule is now in place and has automated formulas to provide a rolling programme of updates.

ACTION: Lisa Murphy and the Headteacher to discuss policies for the next meeting.

Grievance

This is a new policy, as any previous versions couldn't be located.

This is a model policy, based upon the school's retained HR consultant.

The policy was approved.

Safeguarding

There was some uncertainty when the policy was last updated and some further updates have been required to include usage of MyConcern.

This was approved with the amendments as outlined at the meeting.

Pay

After consideration, the policy was approved.

Looked After Children

After consideration, the policy was approved.

Complaints

Governors were informed that this policy is up to date and includes all necessary information.

Question: Is the school adopting Stage 3 face-to-face panel meetings together? The current version presents options, rather than the school's approach

Response: The Headteacher will define the preferred approach for Foxton and the Chair or Policy Review governor would then approve this detail.

ACTION: Headteacher to update on the choice/way forward regarding stage 3 complaints process for approval of this particular detail by the Chair or Policy Review Governor.

Policy Review Schedule

It was confirmed that this was now published on GovernorHub for all governors' oversight.

15. Governor Professional Development

GovernorHub Training Log

The Governing Body had previously discussed using a training log, however now understands that GovernorHub provides this functionality that then automatically provides a training overview report. Governors were informed of the need to ensure that all of their training is recorded on GovernorHub.

ACTION: Chair to liaise with GH to ensure shared GovernorHub access.

OFSTED Training

Local Authority training for OFSTED readiness appears to be quite full.

It was agreed for the Area Lead Governance Advisor to provide bespoke OFSTED Training for the Full Governing Body during the Summer Term.

ACTION: George Hayes to coordinate OFSTED readiness training arrangements.

16. Teacher and Headteacher Wellbeing

The Chair highlighted that there was nothing concerning arising from the staff survey outcomes. The Headteacher recognised that all staff have a lot of work on, especially English and Maths Leads, alongside LA support and engagement.

Lynne Brooks updated that it has been really positive and beneficial to have Local Authority support, but that this has created a lot of actions to follow up. There remains a team spirit, but staff are increasingly tired as the end of term approaches.

Lynne Brooks asked about whether a finance update could be provided to staff to provide some assurances regarding the school's financial situation and sustainability, as this was often a cause of staff concerns. It was agreed for the Business Committee Chair, Chair of Governors and Headteacher to discuss this further outside the meeting.

ACTION: JS / Chair / HT to discuss how best to update staff regarding the school's financial situation / sustainability to ensure this is both appropriate and timely.

17. Friends of Foxton

The Headteacher updated that the Friends had met recently and agreed funding for the coaches for forthcoming residential visits and summer term educational visits. The group is looking for volunteers to reignite the Summer Fete and have recently launched an Easter Egg competition.

18. Pupil Voice

Whilst it was recognised that aspects of this had been captured through parts of other monitoring activity, this has not yet been an explicit area of focus as yet.

19. Any Other Business

Governors were updated that Joseph Sherry was leading upon thanks being shared to David Chilton, the previous Chair of Governors, in recognition of his work and contribution to the school.

Governors suggested that parental engagement forms part of the next FGB agenda.

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 5th May 2022. Governors were asked to plan for this to be in person, with the potential to start the meeting earlier than usual to accommodate an opportunity to meet with staff before the start of the meeting.

Signed as an accurate record: Alaee Chair, 12.5.22