



SUTTON BENDER C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL
 40 Chestnut Road, Sutton Benger, Chippenham, Wiltshire SN15 4RP

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR FULL GOVERNING BODY ('FGB')
 MEETING (TERM 5) HELD ON**

Thursday 25 May, 2017
 8.30pm – 9.45pm
 AT SUTTON BENDER PRIMARY SCHOOL

Members Present	Initial	Position
James Passmore	JP	Governor (Parent) – Co-Chair of Governors
Katie Brown	KB	Governor (Foundation) – Co-Chair of Governors
Ursula Scott	US	Governor (Staff) – Executive Head
Louise Pitman-Jones	LPJ	Governor (Staff) – Associate Head
Daisy Broomfield	DB	Governor (LA) – Chair of Teaching & Learning
Joan Cocker	JC	Governor (Foundation) – Chair of Ethos
Alison Love	AL	Governor (Foundation)
Daniel Robertson	DR	Governor (Foundation)
Tom Whittingham	TW	Governor (Foundation) – Vice Chair of Governors
Melanie Knight	MK	Governor (Parent)

Members Absent	Initial	Position
Rebecca Dennis	RD	Governor (Foundation)

In Attendance (non-voting)	Initial	Position
Simon James	Clerk	Clerk to the Governing Body

Distribution of Minutes to:
 Governing Body, Governors' Admin Folder FOUR (Vol II);
 Governors 'Minutes' page on School website;
 Governor Portal.

Key:
 Key Decisions and Actions agreed at this meeting in **bold**.

Governor Questions are highlighted in **blue font**.

The meeting was quorate.

FGB Chair – Mr James Passmore (deciding vote)

**The meeting opened at 8.30pm, following the
 staff & governors development planning meeting.**

SECTION ONE
PART A – STANDARD ITEMS

[01] Opening Prayer	Action:
[01] The meeting began with a prayer led by AL.	
[02] Welcome, Introductions and Apologies for Absence	Action:
<p>[01] JP greeted all governors to the FGB and thanked US and TW for the staff/governor planning sessions that they had led earlier. JP apologised in advance for the shortened agenda, but that given time pressure he would like to speed through the necessary transactional business to allow for some essential time to discuss the current position with academisation, DBAT and governors thoughts around this and our planned next steps/decisions.</p> <p>[02] JP confirmed that RD would not be attending the meeting - this absence was noted and accepted by the governors.</p>	
[03] Register of Business Interests, Code of Conduct, and Disqualification Declaration	Action:
[01] Governors present confirmed that they had no business interests to declare against any items on the agenda.	
[04] Governing Body Membership	Action:
<p>Membership Changes</p> <p>[01] Clerk confirmed that the T&L committee chair appointment, and the term of office for the chair of the Strategic Partnership Working Group, will expire in June prior to the FGB on July 13.</p> <p>[A] Re-Election of T&L Committee Chair</p> <p>[02] DB stated that unless another governor would wish to put themselves forward she would be happy to stay in the role of committee chair for T&L. No other nominations received. JP proposed re-appointment of DB as T&L Chair for a further 12 month term. JC seconded proposal.</p> <p>[03] A VOTE WAS TAKEN, and there was unanimous approval from those eligible to vote. DB duly elected for a further 12 month term of office, effective May 25, 2017, to expire no earlier than May 24, 2018 (RESOLVED).</p> <p>[B] Re-Election of Strategic Partnership Working Group ('SPWG')</p> <p>[04] JP led a general discussion on the importance on this working group, especially with current ongoing academisation/DBAT discussions, and that whilst it was acknowledged that its terms of reference needed a refocus, it still had a vital role to play.</p> <p>[05] TW noted that he would be happy to stay in the role of committee chair for SPWG. No other nominations received. JP proposed re-appointment of TW as SPWG Chair for a further 12 month term. KB seconded proposal.</p> <p>[06] A VOTE WAS TAKEN, and there was unanimous approval from those eligible to vote. TW duly elected for a further 12 month term of office, effective May 25, 2017, to expire no earlier than May 24, 2018 (RESOLVED).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Clerk (website)</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Clerk (website)</i></p>

<p>[C] Re-Appointment of Barry Worth (Associate Member)</p> <p><i>This minute should be read in conjunction with the approved VFM Meeting Minutes (May 15, 2017) issued via email to all governors from the Clerk on May 22, 2017@11.01.</i></p> <p>[07] JP stated that at the VFM meeting on May 15 the committee had approved the re-appointment of Barry Worth as Associate Member of the governing body, and that ratification would be sought at this meeting.</p> <p>[08] JP discussed Barry Worth's contribution to VFM and his wealth of experience and knowledge that he provided to the committee, proposing to the governing body a 12 month re-appointment as Associate Member (VFM). KB seconded proposal.</p> <p>[09] A VOTE WAS TAKEN, and there was unanimous approval from those eligible to vote. BW duly elected for a further 12 month term of office (RESOLVED).</p> <p><i>Clerks Update – Confirmation that the Clerk had issued an email to BW on May 19 to check as to whether he was happy to continue in the role of Associate Member (Finance) for a further 12 months. Upon BW's response (and if agreed), term of office will be effective from the date of notification.</i></p> <p><i>Clerks Update – Confirmation email from Miss Rebecca Dennis (@10.38 Fri 26/05/2017) providing formal notice of her resignation as a Foundation Governor from the Sutton Benger Governing Body, effective May 25, 2017.</i></p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>[05] Ratification of the Minutes of Previous FGB Meeting</p>	<p>Action:</p>
<p><i>This meeting minute should be read in conjunction with Enclosure E01A&B 'Approved Meeting Minutes from the FGB Meeting held on March 23, 2017'.</i></p> <p>[01] The Governing Body accepted the meeting minutes (Parts A (Public) and Part B (Confidential)) of the FGB held on March 23, 2017 as a true and accurate record, and this was signed by the Co-Chairs of Governors (RESOLVED).</p>	<p>Clerk (website)</p>

PART B – ACCOUNTABILITY AND MONITORING

<p>[06] Ratification or Notification of School Policies</p>	<p>Action:</p>
<p><i>This meeting minute should be read in conjunction with Enclosure's E4 to E08.</i></p> <p>[01] JP stated that he wished to park the annual review of the Instrument of Government until the full governing body meeting in July.</p> <p>[02] Clerk noted that this was an annual requirement i.e. to review the board structure and validate if fit for purpose.</p> <p>For Notification</p> <p>[2.1] Governors Allowances Policy – E04 [2.2] School Charging Policy – E05 [2.3] 2017 Online Safety Policy – E06 [2.4] Pupil Premium Strategy (2016-17) – E07 [2.5] Emergency Closure & Critical Incident & Continuity Plan – E08</p> <p>[03] All policies were duly noted by the meeting.</p>	

PART C – OTHER

<p>[07] Urgent Items not covered elsewhere</p>	<p>Action:</p>
<p>[A] VFM Meeting Minutes (May 15, 2017)</p> <p>[01] DR questioned, following his review of the latest set of VFM minutes, at</p>	

what point will the FGB will discuss and approve the financial budget template approved by the VFM committee on May 15.

[02] JP/US confirmed that sufficient time will be provided at the FGB in July to discuss (and ratify) both the 2017-18 Budget Template (Scenario 1) and the Consistent Financial Reporting (CFR) 2016-17 Report, which were approved by the VFM Committee on May 15.

[B] NGA Governing Body Skills Audit (May 2017)

[03] TW questioned as to where we were with analysis of the May 2017 skills audit following completion of individual skill sheets.

[04] Clerk confirmed that as of tonight only 50% of the governors had completed the skill sheet and submitted back to him in order for the results to be uploaded to the matrix.

[05] JP repeated his request for all governors to complete the latest NGA Governing Body Skills Audit (Enclosure E4 of the March 23 FGB) and requested the Clerk to issue latest version of the matrix to all governors for reference [ACTION POINT].

Clerk

[C] Staffing Update

[06] KB confirmed that Katie Spreadbury has a new teaching job at Cherhill Primary from September 2017 and that our recruitment process had started with shortlisting of candidates June 14, and interviews scheduled for June 21. KB asked that all governors interested in participating in the interviews to contact KB as soon as possible.

[D] Parent Questionnaire / Parent Forum / Parent View

[07] JC questioned US how well the 'parent questionnaire' had been received by the parents (and the level of response), and the level of support from parents in respect to last weeks parent workshop/forum.

[08] US/KB confirmed that the school had received 28 responses, which was 50% up on last year. KB continued that in general there had been a positive response from parents, which was also reflected in the discussions had at the parent forum on May 18. Subjects discussed included the national picture, building expansion, class sizes, funding and the school travel plan (road safety concerns).

[09] US continued that whilst there was a low attendance at the workshop/forum, this supported a view that currently parents do not have burning issues to flag with the school and its governors.

[10] KB noted that the subject of Parent Pay had been raised and the positive reaction received from parents to the new payment system.

[11] LJP confirmed that we had received c. 15 responses over the last 365 days in Parent View.

[E] Update on Academisation / Hobbes Alliance ('HA') / DBAT

[12] US provided an update to the governors on the schools interaction with HA and DBAT following the joint meeting at Minety on April 4, 2017.

[13] US confirmed that the structure of the evening had been a presentation followed by an opportunity for the schools to break-out and ask questions to individual DBAT representatives.

[14] US continued that since that meeting the schools (Headteacher's / Governing Chairs) had reconvened and reviewed jointly the feedback sheets completed by them following the meeting.

[15] US stated that the consensus of opinion from feedback was that whilst DBAT had presented a more professional image at the meeting, all schools came away with more questions and more worryingly in some cases had differing answers to the same questions asked. US recalled a conversation she had had with a number of DBAT representatives regarding the actual definition of a 'hub' and where three representatives from DNBAT were unable to answer categorically, deferring in order to gain clarification.

[16] US advised that the outcome from the feedback session was that we (HA) needed to meet again with DBAT and hone down where we were unclear on DBAT answers/position. US continued that she had been trying to fix a firm date but that this was not an easy task, but noted that it should be before the last week of term in order to continue momentum.

[17] US continued that the meeting did touch on the 'elephant in the room', the 'financials, but that the DBAT presentation dismissed the topic as non-negotiable. In summary US reiterated that the schools came away feeling slightly frustrated in that having received slightly different responses to the same questions schools still need a few pertinent questions answered.

[18] KB agreed, and stated that whilst DBAT came across stronger and more professional in their manner, due in part to new faces on the board, she did question how they would be able to continue to resource these much needed fact finding forums for schools as more seek to enquire as to the benefits of joining DBAT.

[19] JP noted KB's comments and agreed that this 'team' had been much more effective and had in many areas explained the provision of services provided by DBAT. That said, JP didn't feel as if DBAT fully understood the model that HA were putting forward i.e. that HA wished to play a leading part in any DBAT led hub i.e. a model which supports a 'lead school' with and mini-central admin team, and that therefore it was imperative that we need to reconvene with DBAT in order that both organisations can clarify any questions they have, and agree a mutually acceptable model. It is vital that a decision is made.

[20] JC questioned as to whether we ('HA') had/could make contact with other DBAT schools to obtain their view.

[21] KB confirmed that HA had undertaken a great deal of due diligence including talking to other schools who have joined DBAT – there are lots of different models, and this is in part due to the uniqueness of each school.

[22] TW noted that the 'hub' is a developing system and that no one has it cracked as yet. TW continued that from listening to the conversation he had three unanswered questions, questions which were fundamental to bring DBAT on-board:

Q1 – What is the uniqueness of HA?

Q2 – What is its (HA's) dynamic drive?

Q3 – Is it possible for schools to join DBAT in phases, not all 6/7 at once?

[23] TW added that he had suggested in previous meetings that HA needed to employ, on its behalf, an independent intermediary to manage this project and drive through any potential agreement with DBAT.

[24] DR questioned whether the school had any choice i.e. did we have to go with DBAT.

[25] TW confirmed that the decision has been made that we go with DBAT, but that still does not remove our ability to choose whether to move forward with them, and at what pace – what we are discussing here is whether this is the best outcome for the school.

[26] TW stated that if the board agreed he would be willing to assist in the publication of an article publicising HA's collaborative approach, focusing on evidence to support partnerships, HA's uniqueness and drive – the purpose to engage with national partners and in doing so provide DBAT with a broader understanding of HA's aims

[27] JP thanked TW and suggested that promoting nationally what we (the School) and HA could offer could only be a good thing. JP continued that the longer we wait, pairing of other schools will have happened and the opportunity will have been lost – our unique *element i.e. self led collaborative structure with the ability to grow [the organisation] through trusted partnerships*, and the evidence that we have to date to show that such collaboration is working, needs to be broadcast.

[28] Meeting had a general discussion on 'self lead' and our inability (Sutton Benger) to join another diocese.

[29] AL commented that she felt muddled by the whole subject, and noted that whilst she had been involved in various 'DBAT' discussions over the last 6 months, we appeared to be no further forward (to closure), and that all she is hearing is conversations about conversations.

[30] AL questioned the board as to what is HA's strength as she didn't know. AL understood that Sutton Benger didn't want to just go it alone, and join DBAT, but she was unclear as to why not.

[31] JP noted that this was a valid question.

[32] US stated that the fundamental founding principle of HA is collaboration, and the ability to draw on partnerships to improve the learning of children, and to engage and support staff. US continued that the strength lies in this and in working together, schools within the alliance, have the ability to access data, engage in moderation/learning projects (ahead of other schools in DBAT) and can engage in peer reviews.

[33] AL asked whether DBAT were aware of this.

[34] US stated that we have tried telling them and that a summary paper has been produced.

[35] TW noted that it would make sense for DBAT to be provided with a paper which reaffirmed HA's principles (externally validated), and invite them to comment.

[36] KB agreed, but stated that the paper (to some degree) and the approach within it is dependent upon unanswered questions i.e. financials, and that is why it is imperative that follow up meeting is arranged.

[37] DR questioned, if DBAT are struggling to listen, whether we should consider publishing an article in a teaching magazine, promoting HA's principles and successes.

[38] TW agreed, and ironically, stated that he had recently been working with other groups like HA to support external validation of the impact of these collaborative partnerships.

<p>[39] MK noted the clear passion from the governing body to ensure the school made sure that it agreed the right model, and that maybe the way forward is to articulate this passion in some form of written document for DBAT to digest.</p> <p>[40] Meeting discussed the need to produce a more detailed paper, but that it was hoped that DBAT will agree to reconvene in the next few months in order that outstanding questions can be discussed and resolved.</p> <p>[41] TW asked when this meeting was scheduled.</p> <p>[42] US stated that the two dates put forward to DBAT were not convenient, and that she was continuing to discuss options. US noted that ironically DBAT were unable to make one of the dates as they were providing FFTAspire training to local boards, when the School was already undertaking this requirement. This is an example of where, under the proposed model, HA would ease the burden on DBAT's training resources, by providing this training directly via the hub).</p> <p>[43] TW stated that this is what we need to show to DBAT.</p> <p>[44] AL agreed, in that that if we have already completed this training, we need to explain to DBAT that we (HA) could support (or lead) other schools rather than them.</p> <p>[45] JP thanked all governors for their time and input into this discussion. It was useful conversation to have, and whilst you may feel that we had not moved forward, that by thrashing out the points and nailing down a follow up meeting we can present to DBAT that we are a great proposition.</p>	
<p>[08] Dates and Times of Future Meetings</p>	<p>Action:</p>
<p><i>This meeting minute should be read in conjunction with Enclosure's E3.</i></p> <p>[1] Confirmation that the next meeting will be on July 13, 2017 (7.00pm).</p> <p>2017/18 FGB Schedule</p> <p>[03] Clerk provided dates for FGB's in the next academic year 2017/18 and asked if governors were happy with dates.</p> <p>[04] Meeting agreed all dates are acceptable.</p>	<p><i>Clerk (website)</i></p>
<p>[09] Schools Confidential Section</p>	<p>Action:</p>
<p>None</p>	

Meeting adjourned at 9.45pm.

Signed for and on behalf of
THE GOVERNING BODY OF SUTTON BENDER C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Signature 

James Passmore, Co-Chair of the Governors

Date 13/7/17

Signature 

Katie Brown, Co-Chair of the Governors

Date 13/07/17

