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| Minutes for Meeting of the **Full Governing Body** of  **Ladysmith Federation** | | | | | |
| Date / Time | 19th May 2021 17:30 | | Location | Video Conferencing | |
| **Attendees** | **Initials** |  | **Attendees** | **Initials** |  |
| Amy Grashoff (Co-Chair) | AG | Parent Governor | Mark Wilkinson | MW | Headteacher (LJS) |
| Karen Bates (Co-Chair) | KB | Co-opted Governor | James Hewlett | JH | Co-opted Governor |
| Alex Banks | AB | Co-opted Governor | Robert Boyd | RB | Co-opted Governor |
| Jill Green (arrived 18:15) | JG | Co-opted Governor | Sarah John | SJ | Staff Governor |
| Greg Hawkins (Vice Chair) | GH | Co-opted Governor | Tom Butcher | TB | Co-opted Governor |
| Sarah Melhuish | SM | Co-opted Governor | Andy Thornhill | AT | Co-opted Governor |
| Emma Brennan | EB | Co-opted Governor |  |  |  |
| **Present** | | | | | |
| Jo Gawler-Collins | JGC | Clerk to Governors | Lorraine Carter (left 18:10) | LC | Federation Business Manager |
| **Apologies** | **Initials** |  |  |  |  |
| Robert Boyd | RB | Co-opted Governor |  |  |  |

**The Meeting was quorate.**

| **Ref** | **Discussion, Action or Decision** |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Apologies for Absence** |
|  | JG said she would be late.  Apologies not received from RB.  **Approved: Apologies and absence approved by Governors** |
|  | **Declaration of Pecuniary Interests invited and declared** |
|  | No interests declared |
|  | **Governing Body Reconstitution**  **Need to reaffirm chair and vice chair roles with gov body**  **Need to appoint JG as LA governor which is now approved by DCC** |
|  | AG informed governors that HM and SJ have resigned as governors.  JGC asked governors if they had seen the Instrument of Government dated 5th May which was circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting. Governors confirmed they had.    **Approved: Governors voted to approve the Instrument of Government dated 5th May**  **Approved: Governors voted to approve JG being LA Governor which has now been approved by DCC.**  JGC asked KB and AG whether they would be happy to continue as Co-Chairs until the FGB meeting in September. AG asked whether any other governor would like to stand as Chair either now or in the future. AG said that she and KB agreed to be Co-Chairs for a limited period of time and would welcome other governors who would consider standing as Chair in the future.  Action point: Governors who are interested in becoming Chair or Co-Chair please get in touch with AG or KB for an informal chat.  Action point: Succession planning to be an agenda item at the next FGB.  **Approved: Governors voted to approve KB and AG as Co-Chairs until the September FGB Meeting – date to be confirmed.**  JGC asked GH whether he would like to continue as Vice Chair. GH confirmed he would be happy to stand.  **Approved: Governors voted to approve GH as Vice Chair until the September FGB Meeting – date to be confirmed.**  JGC suggested that in future governors may wish to reduce the number of co-opted governors on the Governing Body because there is still a relatively high number.  Action point: JGC to find out if there is a recommended number of co-opted governors for the governing body.  AB informed governors that he is resigning as governor at the end of this academic year.  JGC pointed out that as well as a staff governor vacancy in light of SJ’s resignation, there is still a parent governor vacancy.  Action point: JGC to forward to MW the parent template letter and the staff template letter to circulate to parents and staff respectively to seek potential new governors.  Action required: GH to review the skills audit info in light of the two resignations to find out whether there will be any specific skills that the Governing Body now needs to seek so that this can be included in the parent letter. |
|  | **Covid-19 – Standing Item Guidance for Full Opening Working Group** |
|  | There were no further updates for this agenda item. |
|  | **Finance and Resources – Standing Item** |
|  | **Approve LINS (Ladysmith Infant and Nursery School) and LJS (Ladysmith Junior School) 2021 / 22 Budgets**  **LINS**  LC informed governors that the deficit is lower than predicted due to the Sports Grant being applied.  TB had submitted questions prior to the meeting which MW suggested would be useful to cover now:  **The % staff spend to total budget expenditure in both budgets still appear to be quite high (81% LINS and 79% LJS) when compared to local benchmarks using the .gov tool. Looking back to last-year's budgets I note that they are consistent - is there a particular reason why these would be a bit higher than average?**  MW said that LINS will include five months of staff prior to the restructure, meaning a greater amount of TA (Teaching Assistant) hours. MW said that both schools have a high number of teachers on UPS (Upper Pay Scale) salaries in comparison with other similar schools.  **Do we have a sense of how the proportion of budget spent on leadership compares to any other schools?**  MW said that the Leadership team was benchmarked against other executive head models when the governing body was looking at options for the schools upon the resignation of LINS Headteacher.  MW said that the model that was approved by FIPS (Financial Intervention Panel, Schools) and is in line with the schools that they were compared with.  AT asked whether FIPS will write off the deficit net or take account of what is in the deficit i.e. will the income of the Sports Grant be lost because the deficit is artificially lower, or can FIPS add the Sports Grant back in.  MW said that either FIPS will write off the budget or LJS will write this off when the budgets are combined.  MW said that there is an in year saving of £5,000 so shows a realistic budget which should work in LINS’ favour.  AG asked why the 24 / 25 spend of LJS is higher than LINS. LC said that the predicted budgets this far in the future are not accurate at this stage.  AG thanked LC for her hard work.  **LJS**  LC said that this budget is looking very healthy.  **Approved: Governors voted to approve the LJS and LINS budgets 2021 / 22.**  LC said that AT had asked some questions prior to the meeting which are covered by MW in the Headteacher’s Report. AT said that the SFVS seems very positive.  AT said that the energy costs seemed high, was this due to LINS being an old building? MW said that there are some issues with heaters which are running very high energy. LC said that there had been a boiler which had to be left on constantly. MW said that LINS has 52 toilets and there is constantly running water filling tanks for some of these. MW said that the Site Manager is currently undertaking a water management plan.  TB pointed out that on the LINS dashboard the teaching spend is the lowest of the equivalent schools. MW said there are fewer UPS teaching staff at LINS. The teaching costs are lower but the support costs are high.  **Approved: Governors voted to approve the LJS and LINS SFVS (Schools Financial Value Statement)**  AG referred to the Services to Schools information which was circulated prior to the meeting. AG explained that this has been approved via ‘Chairs Action’ prior to this meeting to meet the deadline. AG asked governors for any questions regarding the Services to Schools information.  LC had made savings of £10,000 overall from these services.  JH asked for clarification about the broadband provider which is not featured on the Services to Schools information. LC explained that this document was for purchasing from Devon County Council only.  LC explained that LINS broadband will start to use LJS’s broadband which is faster and more secure within the next month. This will include for telephone calls also. LC said this should make huge savings.  JH asked how the broadband provider is chosen. LC said that LJS went into a 5-year contract in 2017 when the school was built. The schools will follow due process when this needs to be renewed to find the best deal.  **Approved: Governors ratified Services to Schools which had been approved using ‘Chairs Action’.**  LC left the meeting. |
|  | **Teaching and Learning – standing item** |
|  | AG asked if the school is compliant with the Equality Act. MW there is both an equality statement on the school website and an Equality Policy so are compliant. |
|  | **SIP (School Improvement Plan)** |
|  | MW said that there is an update on the SIP in the Headteacher’s Report. MW said the SIP will need to be updated so that it is ready for September.  AB said that he had met with MW to go through the SIP. AB said the SIP had been BRAG rated since the last FGB. AB said they have talked about picking out the priorities for the remaining part of the year for where the focus needs to be. AB had asked some questions which have been included in the Headteacher’s Report. MW said he has subsequently met with the various people discussed and collated the information which forms part of the Headteacher Report.  AB will BRAG rate the SIP again and ask questions to ascertain governor priorities for next year.  Action required: AB to BRAG rate the SIP prior to the next FGB on Monday 28th June. |
|  | **Matters Arising** |
|  | * **FGB 08.03.21** * **Matters Arising**   4. LC to provide modelled budgets to governors. JGC reported that LC had sent this out to governors after the last FGB.  9. JGC to clarify procedures around parent elections. JGC covered during agenda item 3. |
|  | **Headteacher’s Report** |
|  | Governors had submitted questions prior to the meeting as follows:  **EB Question**  **The infant school staff absence is much higher than the juniors. Can you please confirm the types of absences, specifically whether a majority have been due to stress/mental health, and whether much of this can be attributed to the restructure/new leadership worries etc. Also, does it look as though this is now improving?**  MW said that attendance is now improving. MW ran through reasons for sickness which are not directly related to the restructure. MW said that although no absence is quoted as being attributed to the restructure, it doesn’t mean this couldn’t be an underlying reason. MW said that on the ‘Back to Work’ form there is a question regarding stress at work. If people indicate this as a reason then there a risk assessment is undertaken.  EB asked whether there could be culture of feeling unable to disclose mental health and wellbeing. MW said this has been a reason for some staff sickness previously and believes staff are very open around this area.  SJ said that she agrees that staff are open around this and are very supportive of each other and would approach leadership if they felt this was necessary.  MW said that the absence currently for LINS is fairly in line with LJS absence figures. MW said currently one of the common absence reasons is after a COVID immunisation.  **TB Questions:**  **How are pupil attendance figures holding up since the start of Summer Term? Are they back in line with expectations since all the pupils have been back on site?**  MW said that attendance for the summer term show an improving picture.  **AT Questions**  **P9 early help/lead prof/ TAF seems to have increased especially at LJS?**  MW said that the level of input from external services are constantly diminishing, Early help is often introduced and directed by Social Services which is then solely delivered by school. MW said that MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) is under pressure and the expectations for schools are increasing.  AT asked how this evolving situation will be managed. MW said that he believes there is a strong structure in place now.  **P10 LINs disadvantaged students has nearly doubled?**  MW said that this has increased through the pandemic which has affected people’s circumstances and subsequently the number of pupils eligible to claim Pupil Premium. In addition, previously this figure did not previously include the Nursery.  **Reduced deficit at LINS due to early recognition of income (if I understood correctly); how does this effect the write off request? Will we essentially lose the income for next year?**  MW said that the early recognition on income, Sports Grant and COVID Catch-up funding came in late March instead of April. This would normally be considered income received in advance, therefore reduced the deficit for 20-21.  MW said that the 2021 - 22 projected deficit shows an in-year surplus and this is a positive effect toward the chances of the deficit being written off. Early recognition of staffing implications on 2021 - 22 budget and action to restructure to improve the situation is seen as positive.  **LINS SFVS shows teaching staff very low vs support staff very high: how much of this is due to the age of the children vs the comparison? Will it change following restructure? Is it OK?**  This was covered in agenda item 4. The SFVS is based on 2019 – 20 data and so this is historical and will balance out more after the restructure.  The SFVS is usually due in March but was given more time this year as increased workload due to the pandemic.  **LINS SFVS - energy, highest 10%?**  This was covered in agenda item 5 but the following will have a positive impact on the utility bills:   * Change in nursery building * Heating update in year 2 * Changes to hot water supply in year 2 * Toilet refits * Water management issues   **H&S report - Water - are there costs we need to anticipate?**  MW said that there will be costs to ensure that LINS is up to date with the works. Some of the works can be completed by the Site Manager at minimal cost. The main costs will be remedying the hot water issues in the toilets. One of these has been completed already.  **AB Question**  **Could you say something about how and why you and the team have identified these areas please? Are these the building blocks for bigger strategic outcomes? How will we measure success at the end of the year?**  MW talked to DB and NW:  **LINS**  Quality of Education – Self Evaluation focus   * Book looks will take place regularly * Drop-ins will focus on the quality of the interactions and feedback given to children   MW said that there appears to have been a lack of self-evaluation through COVID and the last available SEF (Self-Evaluation Form) is November 2019. It is important for SLT (Senior Leadership Team) to understand the current picture of teaching and learning provision and pupil outcomes. Once this is achieved, an up to date SEF can be written and the SIP will follow.  Personal Development   * The outdoor environment is organised to promote independence   MW said that this is teacher led and is something that reception have been developing. It was felt by SLT that this should continue as it is a vital part of Early Years provision.  Early Years   * Practitioners to receive ongoing (weekly) CPD relating to quality interactions   Getting ready for the implementation of the new EYFS framework in September. Staff will attend / have attended training on the new statutory framework but ongoing input is need.  **LJS**  MW said that there will be Quality of Education – assessment focus     * Ensure exemplary curriculum planning, delivery and assessment practice is shared across the school * Frequent moderation within year groups, wider school and by coordinators. Sharing of work to ensure all teachers have the same high expectations and are helping children to achieve and maintain these – PDMs / PPA   Leadership and Management   * Subject coordination, including action plans and files, are up to date and used as working documents to support the implementation of our curriculum statement.   MW said that all of the above are clearly linked. It was felt that with the disruption of the last year, curriculum remains the main area of focus to move the junior school forward. These targets will continue to the next improvement plan but we are taking the opportunity to start these actions now. |
|  | **Skills Audit** |
|  | GW said that the skills audit of the Governing Body shows that the level of required skills is looking positive; and the level of financial expertise has improved since last year’s skills audit. GH said it was completed before the recent governor resignations so the findings may have altered slightly. |
|  | **Review term dates and approve Inset and Occasional Days** |
|  | This is deferred to the next FGB Meeting.  Action required: JGC to include on the next FGB Agenda |
|  | **Governor Reports** |
|  | There were three governor reports forwarded prior to this meeting.  AG said that she has had a safeguarding meeting this half term and will forward her report after this meeting. MW said that there was a recent safeguarding audit which was very positive. |
|  | **Agree Dates for Next Year’s FGB Meetings** |
|  | JGC circulated the proposed meetings prior to this meeting based on the current year’s meetings. AG suggested pushing the FGB in September 2021 by a week 29th due to the later start in term this year. AG asked if the subsequent meetings in the autumn term could be moved on a week.  AG asked if safeguarding training for governors can be covered again prior to an FGB early next academic year.  Action required: JGC to make alterations and circulate at the next FGB.  Action required: Safeguarding training for governors will be scheduled prior to an FGB meeting early next academic year |
|  | **Headteacher Performance Management Process** |
|  | SM said that objectives were set and JG and SM will be meeting again in early June and MW will be preparing some information for this. JG said that in light of HM’s resignation means there are currently two governors undertaking this. |
|  | **Final FGB Meeting Minutes 08.03.21** |
|  | **Approved: Governors approved the FGB Meeting Minutes from 8th March 2021.** |
|  | **Governor Training** |
|  | JGC has attended a recent Clerk’s Briefing. JGC informed governors that there is a recommendation for a governor to attend a Governors Briefing available on Tuesday 8th 2-3.30pm and Thursday 24th June 6-7.30pm.  Action required: JGC to forward more detail about the Governor Briefings asap after the meeting.  AT said that the Finance Training on 24th March which a number of governors attended was very useful. AT said there were a couple of things regarding re-organising the output of the budgets which AT will action.  Action required: AT to action his recommendations from the Finance Training.  SM said it was very useful for someone who is not experienced in finance. JG, TB and KB confirmed this training had been very useful.  JGC said that there is a recording of the training which is available on the Teams calendar from 24th March. |
|  | **Policies** |
|  | **Ladysmith Federation Staff Leave and Absence Policy** |
|  | SM asked for recommendations as follows for the headteacher to be able to sanction a staff absence:  Seeking approval for a leave of absence – 5 days  Scheduled days for interview – unlimited days  **Approved: Governors voted to approve the Ladysmith Federation Staff Leave and Absence Policy including the changes tabled at the meeting.** |
|  | **LINS Finance Policy Appendix A** |
|  | This had been updated to reflect staffing changes.  **Approved: Governors voted to approve the LINS Finance Policy Appendix A.** |
|  | **Date of next meeting:**  **FGB (Resources and Finances) Monday 28th June 2021 @ 5.30pm via video conference** |
|  | AG asked if governors might be prepared to meet in person for the next FGB. The venue will be confirmed nearer the time; and if the meeting is to be in person then remote access to the meeting will be a possibility.  AG thanked SJ for all her efforts in the past two years as the staff governor.  EB said that the school uniform policy is currently gendered and asked if this could be amended.  Action required: School uniform requirements will be amended to be gender neutral. |
|  | **Meeting Closed at 19:00** |

Signed………………………………………………….. Dated…………………