



WEST OXFORD C P SCHOOL

Ferry Hinksey Road
OXFORD
OX2 0BY

Tel: 01865 248862

Fax: 01865 203555

E-mail: headteacher.2533@west-oxford.oxon.sch.uk

Website: www.westoxfordschool.co.uk

ARE - THINK - INSPIRE - ACHIEVE

leadteacher: Clare Bladen BA(Hons) PGCE, NPQH

MINUTES OF THE EXTRA FULL GOVERNORS' MEETING HELD AT SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 19th MAY 2016 AT 5.30pm

NB: this copy of the minutes is for publication to the wider school community and excludes confidential sections relating to named individuals which are for circulation only to members of the FGB.

1.0 Present: Joey Potgieter ~ co opted governor **JP** (chair) **AR**, Clare Bladen (headteacher) **CB**, Andrew Roland ~ parent governor **AR**, Jenny Crewe ~ co opted governor **JC**, Colin Cook ~LA governor **CC**, Susanna Pressel ~ LA governor **SP**, Claudi Thomas (associate governor without voting rights on FGB) **CT** Rachel Goode ~ co opted governor **RG**, **PS** Ben Selby ~ parent governor **BS**

In attendance: Ursula Irvine, clerk, **UI**

Apologies from: Rebecca Huxley ~ LA governor **RH**, Kelly Faye ~ parent governor **KF**

2.0 Procedural Items

- 2.1 The meeting was quorate.
- 2.2 There were no declarations of interest.

The purpose of the meeting was to give FGB the opportunity to understand and discuss the circumstances of, and reasons for, Peter Smith (PS)'s resignation and to agree plans going forward for recruitment of a new Deputy Head and an announcement to parents.

3.0 PS resignation

PS resigned on Monday 9th May and will leave the school at the end of this academic year. He is moving to a job as a KS1 class teacher, with no Deputy Head responsibilities, in a small village school where he knows the Head Teacher.

He had previously indicated to CB that he was considering applying for this job and from that point until he made his final decision to resign, there had been many conversations with him, variously involving CB, JP, RH and BS with a view to understanding why he was thinking about leaving WOCPS and to explore whether anything could be done to persuade him to stay. In particular, various hypothetical scenarios were discussed, and tested within the budget for 2016/17. (CONFIDENTIAL SECTION EXCLUDED) PS had been happy to engage in these discussions and did not rush to a decision, but ultimately

he had very much liked the new school when he attended for interview and nothing that WOCPS was able to offer or suggest was sufficient to persuade him to stay.

4.0 Feedback from PS as to reasons for leaving

PS had been candid with CB and JP as to his reasons for leaving and these were explained in some detail to FGB by both JP and CB, and discussed.

(CONFIDENTIAL SECTION EXCLUDED)

It was acknowledged by all that it was a great shame that PS had decided to leave. He is very well liked and regarded. CB had found him to be an excellent deputy in a very demanding role and had formed a very high regard for him through their close working relationship. Governors noted how very well and helpfully PS had contributed to governors' meetings within which, by the nature of their role, governors are required to pursue lines of scrutiny and challenge.

(CONFIDENTIAL SECTION EXCLUDED)

5.0 Acting Deputy Head

It is currently uncertain whether there will be a period following the start of the next academic year when the school will be without a deputy head, and if so how long this may last.

Unfortunately, it is late to be advertising for such a role. Most senior appointments for the coming year will already have been made. Teachers need to give at least a half term's notice of resignation, making the end of May the deadline for recruitments commencing in September of teachers who are currently working and have not already given notice. Depending upon the applications received, and whether or not a further recruitment round needs to be undertaken, there may be a gap to fill until the Autumn half term or even January 2017.

CB had considered asking one of the SLT to step up temporarily, but was aware of the pressures they are already under and is also reluctant to disrupt now well established and understood roles within the SLT. She hoped that it may be possible to make do without a Deputy, if there is a gap before a new appointment takes effect, but potentially she would at least arrange for a member of the SLT to act as a first port of call should issues ever arise in CB's absence from school. The cost of appointing an interim deputy supply teacher would be prohibitive.

It was agreed by all to be essential to get the new Deputy appointment right and to avoid making an appointment under pressure or in a hurry, and to wait, if necessary, for the right candidate to be found.

6.0 Recruitment of new Deputy Head

CB suggested that rather than making the NPQ for Headship "desirable", it would be wise to make this qualification and an aspiration for headship "essential" in the job criteria. She felt that the Deputy Head role is inherently tough given the need to combine leadership responsibility with responsibility for a class. PS had not envisaged going on to be a Head Teacher. CB wondered whether having this goal in sight was perhaps necessary to help people put up and persevere with the challenges of being a Deputy.

It was acknowledged that ideally the roles of Deputy and Year 6 teacher would not be combined given the dual pressures of these roles. However, this may not be avoidable, unless there is a successful application for the Deputy role from an existing member of staff.

In any event there is a need for a replacement KS2 class teacher. The likely allocation of teachers to Years within KS2 was discussed. (CONFIDENTIAL SECTION EXCLUDED)

It was queried whether the number of responsibilities PS had had was typical for a Deputy role. In particular, the question was raised as to how to avoid the pressures experienced by PS getting too much for his replacement.

CB had prepared a first draft of the Deputy Head job advertisement, job specification and job description and **RG** agreed to review these. Dates for the recruitment process were discussed.

RG queried whether CB had any other additional requirements or changes to the role beyond those already mentioned. CB said that she was considering adjusting some of the lines of reporting within the school such that she may take back from the Deputy, responsibility for managing and dealing with appraisals for senior teaching staff. It is envisaged that SEN income and thus the current SENCO role will reduce next year, with that member of staff increasing aspects of their non SENCO duties, and the Deputy may take over from them responsibility for managing the TAs and their appraisals. CB will take advice from HR about this.

It was agreed that **RG** and **JP** will both be involved with the recruitment process on behalf of the board of governors. In addition, as with PS' appointment, it is envisaged that an external adviser from the teaching profession will be involved - **CB** will ask one of the Partnership Head Teachers to attend the interview (but not also the lesson observations). There will be a short listing process if lots of applications are received. (Last time, CB said that there were just 5 applications and 4 interviews.)

7.0 Communication with Parents

The timing and content of the announcement concerning PS's departure were discussed and it was agreed that this would be made without delay, early the following week, before the job advertisement is placed. Whilst ideally, it would be helpful to be able to present a clear succession plan within the announcement it was uncertain how long this would take to finalise. By far the best and strongest approach was to be open about PS's departure, to ensure that the news reaches parents and children from the school rather than through rumours, and to be clear that a plan is in place for recruiting a replacement. People will be sad and concerned to hear of PS's resignation and may be worried about the current uncertainties for September, but there would also be concern if it appeared that a replacement had been recruited in undue haste or if it was felt that the school was trying to delay communicating the news.

CB will ask PS to draft a letter to parents about his departure.

(CONFIDENTIAL SECTION EXCLUDED)

Holding this additional FGB meeting was agreed to have been helpful. The meeting ended at 6.30pm

8.0 Next Meeting: FGB4 - Thursday 23rd June 5.30pm