

Fulfen Primary School

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in a virtual setting on Tuesday 30 March, 2021 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Mr. Middleton (Chair), Mrs. Davies (Headteacher), Mrs. Connock,
Mr. Holmes, Ms. Mason, Mrs. Poxon, Mrs. Tranter, Mrs. Ballett,
Miss. Green

Mr. Davies (Clerk to the Governors)
Mrs. Hawkins (School Business Manager)
Mrs. Waterhouse (Staff)
Mrs. Scott (Staff)

1 Welcome and Introductions:

The meeting started later than usual as a result of Governors receiving a CPD input around online safety. The training session had been organised by Mrs. Tranter and both parents and Governors were given an opportunity to engage with this area of school life, particularly given the obvious Safeguarding implications.

Governors were welcomed to tonight's Spring Term 2 full Governing Board meeting by the Chair. Meetings continue in a virtual setting as a result of the pandemic and restrictions on visitors coming onto the School site. It is hoped that with the School on the roadmap out of lockdown, the opportunity for members to meet in a face to face setting will come sooner rather than later, as will the opportunity to undertake a range of Link Governor engagement activities. Documentation had been uploaded to the Hub and the Chair/Headteacher had ensured the agenda remained strategic and purposeful. Staff members had been invited to tonight's meeting to discuss Fulfen Club and how this provision is set to develop over the course of the next couple of years. This item was moved to the start of the agenda.

The meeting was quorate.

2 Apologies:

Resolved: That apologies for absence be received and accepted from Mrs Lerner, Ms. Burley, Mrs. Lightfoot and Mrs. Witcomb. A number of members had not received the link to tonight's meeting – an issue that will be rectified for the Summer Term 1 meeting.

Resolved: That the Headteacher ensure all Governors receive the necessary link for future meetings. Posting a link on the noticeboard in the Hub may be the best way for Governors to receive this important update.

Governors are reminded that any Governor who does not participate in full Governing Board meetings for more than six months without their apologies being accepted by the Governing Board are automatically disqualified.

3 Confidentiality:

Governors were reminded that all discussions that take place at this meeting should remain confidential to the meeting.

4 Declarations of Interest:

No declarations of interest were made by Governors in respect of any specific items appearing on tonight's agenda.

In addition, it was confirmed all Governors had been sent the necessary pro-formas to declare any business/pecuniary interests. If any forms remain outstanding, they need to be returned to Mrs. Steele at the first possible opportunity.

Resolved: That Governors action this outstanding request so the School website can reflect the most up to date and accurate information.

5 Code of Conduct:

The Code of Conduct was referenced in the Autumn Term 1 minutes. There was no action for Governors to take other than to confirm they will continue to abide by the protocols listed in this document.

6 Fulfen Club Presentation:

The first part of the meeting was dedicated to an update on Fulfen Club, delivered by Mrs. Waterhouse and Mrs. Scott. It was clear from the outset that both individuals are extremely passionate of the offer that is made available through this before and after school provision and whilst the pandemic has had a significant impact on this setting, staff remain committed to its long-term success and prosperity. For those individuals who are linked to Fulfen Club, they understand the benefits that this provision brings children at the start and end of the School day and want to build on the successes that have been secured to date. As Mrs. Waterhouse explained at the start of the presentation, the ethos of Fulfen Club is to deliver purposeful activities to pupils which are fun/play based and encourage children to take up new hobbies and interests.

Mrs. Waterhouse began by explaining the current set up of the Club including how staff are appropriately vetted to work in the setting, the fact staff are currently undertaking lateral flow testing, the space that has been available to the Club to run the provision during lockdown 3 and the lack of sufficient space to store the equipment and material between club sessions. There was also some commentary on the impact of the pandemic on the finances of this extended provision which has been extremely challenging and needs to be addressed, both in terms of bringing the growing deficit under control and ensuring the staffing resource remains fit for purpose given future projections of numbers that might be looking to access the setting now the whole School population is back in school.

To ensure Governors could understand the direction of travel that Mrs. Waterhouse and her staff are looking to take in the setting, future plans were shared at this point in the meeting. Ultimately, from a business continuity perspective, the current status quo cannot be maintained as the financial outlook needs to improve and quickly. Costs need to be reduced on the one hand whilst, on the other, the provision needs to be marketed as proactively as possible to ensure numbers grow and remain buoyant in the mid to long-term.

Mrs. Waterhouse explained what action will be taken around staffing levels that through a strategy of not replacing departed staff and reducing hours will result in a significant saving. There was confirmation that the design of the registration form template will be revisited to ensure it is easier for parents to complete. Research has been carried out into the costs of the provision and whilst the prices charged by Fulfen Club are extremely competitive the current 10% sibling discount will be withdrawn. The actual offer of sessions and timings has been reviewed (based on feedback from parents) and from April a new framework for the provision will go live which will increase the number of sessions on offer and introduce more

flexibility into the system. There was also confirmation that from September the Club will have a permanent home which will assist set up arrangements at the start and end of the School day as well as streamlining drop off and pick up points. Finally, a purposeful storage space will be made available to club staff so equipment and materials can be easily stored and there are also plans to make as much use of the outdoor spaces as possible to deliver a series of engaging and motivating activities for pupils.

These were the main areas highlighted and should prove to be a powerful combination in terms of reducing costs, increasing revenue and making the offer as attractive as possible for Fulfen families. Mrs. Waterhouse with her staff are determined to make a success of this extended provision and with the enthusiasm and passion behind the vision as well as support from the SLT and Governors, there is no reason why the Club cannot be a viable and sustainable entity in the years to come. To consolidate this point, the presentation concluded with a video which showcased the benefits of Fulfen Club including the happy, smiling faces of children and the range of activities on offer.

At this point in the meeting, Governors put forward a number of notable challenges in relation to the presentation they had received.

Governor Challenge: Governors felt the fact staff had contacted parents to find out their future requirements in relation to the setting and the fact local pricing structures had been investigated were testament to the level of due diligence that is being exercised in this area. Such focus will lead to better decisions which can only be good news for the future of the provision.

Governor Challenge: Governors focused on the financials, notably whether there will be any redundancy costs from the staffing decisions as well as how long it will take for the current deficit to be overturned.

The Headteacher confirmed the situation surrounding redundancy costs (which are not likely to be significant) and it was confirmed that the Manager of the Fulfen Club, with the support of the School Business Manager, is looking at a three year model for delivering profitability in the setting. The situation may improve quicker than this but will inevitably depend on 'bums on seats' and getting the sessions full on a sustained basis. A variety of scenarios had been factored into this financial modelling and the standpoint has been very much a cautious one, based on a worst-case scenario.

Governor Challenge: Governors felt the video shared at the end of the presentation was a natural marketing tool and suggested it should be made available to as many customers as possible.

Mrs. Waterhouse confirmed she was more than happy to take this action once any relevant GDPR/data protection issues have been addressed.

Governor Challenge: Governors challenged about the marketing activity that is planned to raise the profile of the setting now the School is back to full capacity.

It was confirmed various initiatives are planned including a banner at the top of the School, posters and information on noticeboards around the School, the increased use of social media to promote the provision on offer, the targeting of new starters to drum up interest when they first arrive at Fulfen and, finally, getting the pupils who use Fulfen Club to act as ambassadors for the extended offer. Governors felt these combined actions would be an effective strategy in giving Fulfen Club every chance of being successful.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked whether the Manager of Fulfen Club had a 'Plan B' if what was proposed at tonight's meeting failed.

It was confirmed that all current energies have been invested in the proposal shared at tonight's meeting which is prudent and cautious. Of course, if it becomes apparent that the plan needs to flex to ensure success then this action will be taken – only time will tell.

Governor Challenge: Governors asked whether there are plans to expand the Club provision beyond Fulfen pupils.

Governors were informed there are no plans to take this action at the present time although this option will be left open – to be reconsidered at a later date if needed.

Governor Challenge: Governors challenged about the need to regularly tap into the views, both of those parents who currently use the provision and those who do not. This will ensure the offer remains current/authentic as it evolves to meet the needs of local families – particularly given the impact of the pandemic on daily working life.

This comment was noted for future action.

Overall, it was clear that a significant amount of thinking and due diligence have been applied to this new direction of travel for Fulfen Club. Both Mrs. Waterhouse and Mrs. Scott were thanked for delivering tonight's presentation and members look forward to hearing about how the plans for Fulfen Club roll out in the coming months/years.

Resolved: That Mrs. Waterhouse and Mrs. Scott be thanked for their verbal update. Both staff gave their leave of absence at this point in the meeting.

7 Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday 26 January, 2021 (including Confidential Appendix) be approved as an accurate and true record.

Resolved: That the Minutes, Agenda and all reports and other papers considered at the meeting be made available for inspection.

A copy of the Minutes will be retained for audit purposes and signed by Mr. Middleton via electronic or hard copy signature.

Resolved: That Mr. Middleton add his signature to the ratified minutes.

8 Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting:

The Clerk had generated an action matrix to the January minutes. The following update can be reported:

Minute	Update
4	The Headteacher had uploaded the Nursery presentation to Governor Hub.
5	The School now has a plan for how the information on Get Information About Schools (GIAS)/Governor Hub can be aligned.
5	Membership issues were discussed as a separate agenda item at tonight's meeting.
5	The Clerk/Vice-Chair have been in discussion about a number of governance-related matters. A plan of action has been agreed.
6	The Headteacher has published the November minutes.
6	The Chair has added his signature to the ratified minutes.
7	The Link Governor matrix was referenced later in the meeting.
8	Both reports highlighted were added to Governor Hub.
9	Mrs. Poxon has been providing financial support to the School.

9	A financial report was uploaded to Governor Hub in advance of tonight's meeting.
10	Mrs. Tranter confirmed she had sought the support of Governors as needed in relation to home deliveries.
11	The Vice-Chair confirmed she is still missing one or two returns from Governors (i.e. photos, skills audits, etc.) This position will be resolved in advance of the Summer Term 1 meeting. Resolved: That the Vice-Chair follow up on any outstanding returns.
11	The Clerk confirmed the action matrix was uploaded to Governor Hub.
CA	It was reported the actions in the Confidential Appendix have been progressed.

9 Membership Updates:

A number of membership issues were shared with Governors as follows:

1.1

The terms of office for a number of Governors are set to expire in the coming months. In relation to these forthcoming vacancies it was agreed Ms. Mason would be appointed as an Associate Member once her term of office expires. This will allow Ms. Mason to continue to support the School and Governing Board without the challenges that come with having to attend each meeting.

1.2

A nomination was put to the Board to co-opt Mr. Holmes and Mrs. Ballett onto the Board when their terms of office expire. Both individuals have done a great deal to support governance at the School and these nominations were unanimously accepted by all members.

1.3

It was confirmed that the appointment of Mrs. Larner as Local Authority (LA) Governor has been actioned. This information is now showing on Governor Hub.

Resolved: That the Clerk share these membership updates with Entrust. The School website, GIAS and Governor Hub will need to be updated to reflect these changes.

10 Chair's and Vice-Chair's Actions:

The Chair confirmed he had taken the following action on behalf of the Governors since the last meeting:

- Approved the SLT applying for SALIX funding to improve the lighting on the School site. For Governors benefit, it was confirmed that SALIX Finance provides interest-free Government funding to the public sector to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and lower energy bills. The School will need to pay the loan back over an extended time period, but it makes absolute financial sense to take advantage of this opportunity.

The Vice-Chair confirmed no such action had been taken.

11 Link Governor Engagement:

Some time was spent discussing Link Governor engagement activities. Mrs. Poxon has generated three finance-related reports since the last meeting to capture outcomes of visits to the School on 07.12.20, 05.03.21 and 19.03.21. The opportunity was taken to thank Mrs. Poxon for everything she is doing in this area to ensure the necessary due diligence and external validation is being exercised in relation to the School finances.

Governor Challenge: Governors did challenge at this point over the SLT's expectation when it comes to Link Governor engagement in school.

It was confirmed when school life returns to some kind of normality that Governors should aim to carry out some form of engagement in their area at least once a term with a report to be written up post visit. It was noted that some newly appointed Governors do need to be assigned Link Governor areas on the matrix – a matter the Chair/Vice-Chair will discuss outside of tonight's meeting.

Resolved: That the Chair/Vice-Chair progress this matter.

It was also agreed that there are some statutory areas that require regular monitoring (potentially more than once a term). One such area is Safeguarding and it was agreed Mr. Holmes/Mrs. Tranter would look to organise an engagement session outside of tonight's forum.

Resolved: That Mr. Holmes/Mrs. Tranter progress this action.

12 Headteacher's Report:

The Headteacher's Report had been shared with Governors in advance of tonight's meeting. The following summary points were noted:

1.1

Attendance was identified as a positive indicator for the period 08.03.21-29.03.21 at 97.13%. Governors should note this figure does not include covid-related absence which is recorded with a separate code on the Register. There was also an update on the number of positive covid cases since the School reopened on 8 March.

1.2

A SEND update was provided. Significant work has been invested in generating EHCP's which take a considerable amount of time and effort to apply for which is so critical in supporting the needs of this vulnerable cohort. The School has a number of applications underway and is awaiting the outcome of others submitted.

1.3

A CPD update was provided. The CPD is targeted at improving professional practice in the classroom and staff have really benefited from this training input.

1.4

Subject leadership is taking on a critical importance in the School given the focus on curriculum intent and the recovery curriculum. A new action plan is in place to co-ordinate effort, a new Marking Policy is being produced and job descriptions for the SLT have been clarified and handed out. Link Governors who have responsibility for curriculum engagement were pleased to hear of the progress that has been made in this area.

1.5

A well-being update was provided - such a crucial area for staff/pupils in these challenging and extra-ordinary times. The SLT does a lot of good work in this area and some of the recent initiatives were shared.

1.6

Governors were made aware that the School's current covid risk assessment is kept under regular review and updated as necessary. This action is taken to ensure the document reflects the latest government advice and guidance as the SLT looks to keep the School community as safe as is practically possible from the harmful pandemic.

1.7

A brief overview of assessment practices was shared, both in terms of how the School is looking to access where children are at with their learning but also to respond to any pastoral needs that emerge in the coming weeks/months. Pupil progress meetings will ensure a holistic package of support can be built around each child and any catch up funding will be used to plug gaps and support the recovery curriculum as necessary.

1.8

Finally, there was an update on healthy eating initiatives that are being rolled out in school, confirmation that the SRE Policy will be shared with parents/children for consultation and an update on how a serious Safeguarding matter was dealt with. Without going into the specifics of the incident, staff should be commended for the way they have dealt with the reported episode, particularly the support that was put in place for pupils.

Resolved: That the Headteacher be thanked for her verbal and informative update.

13 Financial Update:

This was the point in the meeting when a financial update was provided – **see Confidential Appendix.**

14 Any Other Business:

There were two items of additional business that were raised at this point in the meeting:

1.1

Section 3.1 of the Governor Information Pack outlines an important update linked to the School Pay Policy and Appraisal Policy. These policies need to be formally ratified by the Governing Board and it was agreed that a check will be carried out to determine whether these policies (or equivalent) need to be brought to the Governing Board for formal ratification in the Summer Term 1 meeting.

Resolved: That the Headteacher/Chair determine an appropriate course of action on these points.

1.2

Mrs. Poxon explained to Governors that it might be easier for them to understand the financials if they equated the Budget with the number of pupils on roll for which funding has been received. If the School is carrying more pupils than it has allocated funding, then the budget is likely to be overspent and vice versa. Governors thanked Mrs. Poxon for this insight.

15 Confidentiality:

Governors were asked to identify if there were any items/materials, which needed to be excluded from any Agenda, Minutes, reports or other papers discussed at the meeting, which would normally be made available for inspection following the meeting.

Governors were also asked to identify any items included on the Agenda, which require recording in a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes.

Resolved: That it be identified that the following item be included as a Confidential Appendix to the Minutes:

- Minute 13.

There were no further items/materials identified for exclusion.

16 Dates and Times of Future Meetings:

The dates for meetings for 2020-21 have already been finalised. These can be confirmed as follows:

Term	Date and Time
Summer Term 1	25.05.21 at 6.15 p.m.
Summer Term 2	06.07.21 at 6.15 p.m.

All that was left to do was to thank the SLT and whole school community for the way it continues to meet the challenges of the on-going pandemic. There is no doubt the last 12 months have been difficult but as the School follows the roadmap out of lockdown, it is hoped that some sense of normality will return.

The meeting was brought to a close by the Chair.

Chair

Date

Fulfen Primary School

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Board held in a virtual setting on
Tuesday 30 March, 2021 at 7.00 p.m.**

Action Matrix

Minute	Owner	Action Required	Action Update
2	HT	Ensure all Governors receive link to next Governing Board meeting.	
4	Governors	Return any outstanding pro-formas linked to business/pecuniary interests.	
7	HT	Publish February minutes.	
7	Chair	Sign ratified minutes.	
8	Vice-Chair	Follow up any outstanding returns – i.e. skills audits, photos.	
9	Chair	Share membership updates with Entrust.	
11	Chair/Vice-Chair	Assign Governors to matrix where needed.	
11	Mr. Holmes/ Mrs. Tranter	Organise Link Governor engagement session around Safeguarding.	
14	Chair/HT	Determine whether any action needed in relation to ratification of Pay/Appraisal Policies.	

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 25 May, 2021 at 6.15 p.m.

Absent Governors to be informed.