



Newstead Wood School Part A Minutes of Local Governing Body meeting Held at the school on Tuesday 7th March 2023 at 6.30pm

Naureen Khalid (NK)	Appointed Governor, Chair	Present	
Jonathon Capon (JC)	Appointed Governor		Apologies
Ade Fasusi (AF)	Appointed Governor	Present	
Sol Ako-Otchere (SO)	Appointed Governor		Apologies
Steve Penny (SP)	Appointed Governor, Vice-Chair	Present	
Eileen Xiaoyu Zhang (EXZ)	Parent Governor	Present	
Jenny Wilkins (JW)	Appointed Governor		Apologies

In attendance:

Alan Blount (AB)	-	Headteacher
Helene Le Roux (HLR)	-	Deputy Headteacher
Sarah Sword (SS)	-	Deputy Headteacher
Claire Viner (CV)	-	School Business Manager
Elaine Cooper (EC)	-	Octavo Clerk

AGENDA ITEM	MINUTES	ACTION NO:
1.	Welcome and Apologies for Absence The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees. Apologies had been received from JC, SO, JW which were accepted. The meeting was confirmed to be quorate.	
2.	Declarations of Interest There were no new declarations of interest.	
3.	Governing Board Business <u>Board Membership</u> There was nothing to note. <u>Governor Training</u> EXZ had attended two training sessions – Exclusion Panel and Complaints Panel training. NK had attended training on Ofsted reviews at Connect Trust. SP had attended Safeguarding training through his employment. <u>Update from the Chair</u> There were no updates from the Chair.	
4.	Minutes of the previous meeting The Part A minutes from the meeting held on 24 th January 2023 were AGREED to be a true and accurate record of the meeting.	

	There were no matters arising from the minutes.	
5.	<p>Finance and Audit</p> <p><i>CV had circulated the monthly accounts in advance of the meeting and provided governors with a budget summary at the meeting.</i></p> <p>CV explained that to produce the budget she had made assumptions, this was due to no guidance being given regarding funding. Prior to the meeting she had received the awaited guidance which was in line with the assumptions that she had made. CV highlighted that there would be no deficit budget and the carry forward would be positive for the next five years.</p> <p>CV highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital would be the same for next year. • Slight rise in the charges for central office • Pay roll remained stable and there were a few vacancies within the budget. • 2% GAG funding which totalled £154K. <p>CV told governors that the school had not been provided with the energy costs, but the Trust had bought an energy contract.</p> <p>CV explained that the school had a lot of building projects planned for the Summer. The Sixth Form block would be refurbished. There would be additional Science rooms in huts. CV noted that there were plans for a new performing arts block which had gone out to tender and the school were awaiting estimates, she said that this work would not be started until after the Summer. The school was currently being redecorated and they were purchasing new furniture. CV said that the school were also looking to build a new sports hall and were awaiting the designs for this.</p> <p>The Headteacher highlighted the in year surplus forecast for the next five years with the school receiving 2% GAG funding. He said that the deadline to submit this budget was 17th March, and that the Trust would review the pooled/Trust wide budgets on 21st March. AB confirmed that the school would be putting in a balanced budget for five years and that the school would not have any fluctuations in numbers.</p> <p><i>Q. Regarding the energy pricing, how good or bad is this looking?</i></p> <p>CV said that the Trust had already paid for energy for ¾ of the year and the price was secured for the rest of the year.</p> <p><i>Q. The Trust are setting revised minimum spend and sensible actions to achieve it – what does this relate to?</i></p> <p>CV explained that this does not refer to Newstead, but if the budget was going into deficit this would be related to sensible actions the school should take to achieve the minimum spend.</p> <p><i>Q. Will the unfunded teacher's pay rise affect the budget?</i></p> <p>CV explained that she had budgeted for a 5% pay increase.</p> <p><i>Q. What if the pay increase goes to 12% as it has in Scotland?</i></p> <p>CV said that she had budgeted for this and that the school were in a good financial situation which meant that the school was not subject to the same</p>	

	<p>volatilities as other schools. She explained that the sixth form was full, and the school was oversubscribed in Year 7, which results in a strong financial position.</p> <p><i>Q. Can you explain why the other non-staffing costs will go down over time?</i> CV said that as the school is investing in the premises, the condition of the premises would improve which would mean that less money would need to be spent on repairs and maintenance in the future.</p> <p><i>Q. The budget doesn't include any change in numbers?</i> CV explained that there were no plans to increase pupil numbers and the school was fully staffed. She said that the curriculum would stay the same and the sixth form would keep the same numbers. CV said that there was a payroll contingency in the budget which included leaving vacancies in staffing so if there was any long-term sickness the school would have budgeted to pay for this with agency staff.</p> <p><i>Q. Do you have a preferred agency for teachers?</i> AB said that they would use whichever agency had a teacher available.</p> <p><i>Q. What sort of agency cover do you use?</i> AB explained that the school used generic cover for looking after classes but if the absence was planned or longer term then they would try and get a teacher of that subject. He said that sometimes it was difficult to rely on supply teachers because they did not have the same loyalty as permanent staff.</p> <p><i>Q. Is there any alternative to using agency staff?</i> AB said that the school would use internal teachers to cover some absences, some teachers who had experience in other subjects would be happy to cover.</p> <p><i>Q. Do we use DfE to advertise teaching vacancies?</i> AB explained that the school were happier using TES because they had always used this, he said that they would look to use the DfE website, but the school hadn't had the capacity to start using it.</p> <p>DECISION: Governors agreed to approve the Draft Budget.</p> <p><u>Pupil Premium</u> AB stated that there had been no change in pupil premium.</p> <p><i>Q. Are there any more pupil premium children who will be joining in Year 7?</i> AB said that there were six places offered in Year 7. The school were reviewing the reasoning behind those who applied and were offered a place but decided not to accept the place – he said that one girl had applied and was offered a place but lived a long way away. AB suggested that if this was the reason behind some pupils not accepting places then maybe we would need to look at whether pupil premium grant could be used for transport.</p>	
6.	<p>Premises and Risk</p> <p>CV reported that the school had two CAPEX requests with the Trust between now and the summer, she would obtain three quotes for each project. CV explained that the school were looking to upgrade the lighting in the hall.</p> <p>CV informed governors that the school were not going to have any lettings in the Summer holidays due to the amount of work being carried out at the school.</p> <p><i>Q. Are the summer lettings with the regular people who use the school?</i></p>	

	<p>CV said that the gymnastics club who always use the school will still be able to use it in the summer holidays but that would only be one day every two weeks. She said that the people who use the music facilities will also be able to use the school.</p> <p>NK commented that the refurbishment of the library was looking very good and urged governors to go and see the changes, she reported that it was well used by the school.</p> <p><u>Health and Safety</u></p> <p>The Headteacher informed governors that there would be a Health and Safety report produced following a meeting next Thursday and he would circulate this.</p> <p>ACTION: AB to circulate Health and Safety report to governors.</p> <p><u>Risk Assessment</u></p> <p>Nothing had been added to the risk assessment.</p> <p>The Chair thanked CV for all her hard work.</p> <p><i>CV left the meeting at 7.05pm.</i></p>	2
7.	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <p><i>The report was circulated in advance of the meeting and questions from Governors invited:</i></p> <p><i>Q. Could you provide us with an update on staffing vacancies and the challenges the school is facing?</i></p> <p>AB said that there was no change since the report. He said that the government were missing targets on ITT recruitment. He explained that the recruitment pool was mixed and there were limited numbers of high-quality teachers available. AB stated that there were teachers striking and these were tough times. He explained that the school would be fully staffed, and he would make appointments, he said that he was recruiting at the right time, and it was important to offer early and be bold in the appointments. AB said that there were challenges and explained that there were large numbers of vacancies across the board. He said that it was good to appoint trainee teachers. AB explained that the school is often aware if people may be considering moving and he pre-empts this and advertises the position before they resign. AB said that when people resign, he will talk to them to find out the reason, he highlighted the need to work with people who are leaving.</p> <p><i>Q. Does the school do exit interviews?</i></p> <p>AB said that these are carried out by HR and the school receives generic feedback.</p> <p><i>Q. Could this be shared with governors?</i></p> <p>AB said that he would need to see what they received but it is good to understand why people are leaving and it is good to record this. He said he would share this with governors at the end of the academic year as appropriate.</p> <p><i>Q. Impact and CPD – what is the most popular CPD?</i></p> <p>The Headteacher responded that he felt that the most popular CPD was where teachers visited other schools to witness things in action. It is good to be in a Trust so that this can be facilitated.</p>	

Q. Do many external teachers come to Newstead?

AB said they do, and they are not just teachers from the Trust they come from the Grammar Schools Network and NPQH.

Q. How many pupils are taking A level Engineering?

Six pupils, it had not been very popular.

Q. In your report it mentioned that some schools make lower offers based on passing an 'aptitude test' in a different area, such as sport or music – what would this look like?

AB explained that there could be an entry criterion which involved the school reserving say ten places for students who show a high aptitude in something, there would be a test in this area to get a place. AB said that some schools use this to preserve something that is important to the local culture. AB said that this is something that could be considered and researched in the future.

Q. Following the refurbishment of the library, is this being frequently used?

AB highlighted that an official opening of the new library with 'thank you' reception for contributors was held on 2nd February and there had been two receptions for new Year 7 parents. The school had secured an extra £33K for the fundraising campaign and engaged more people onto the Fundraising Board along with some new volunteers.

Q. How does the modeller for the curriculum work?

AB explained that this was working well for the curriculum and allowed the school to plan the curriculum with the ability to constantly move everything around. He said that it aided the school in planning the curriculum with all the Year 9 options, and the Sixth Form numbers and offers made. AB highlighted that the school had tried to run A Level music, but the numbers had dropped to only one student.

Q. Do you think music will survive at Newstead?

The Headteacher commented that he wanted more Music on the curriculum. SS said that lots of pupils take part in music out of school.

Q. Is there any plan to change the Admissions Policy, for example, to increase the number of disadvantaged students within the school?

AB responded that there were no plans to fundamentally change the policy. It had been changed three years ago. He explained that these changes had to be planned two years before they happened. The school had made the change and it had a preferential test score for pupil premium children. He said that the school needed to understand why these pupils were not joining, and the school needed to communicate to them why grammar schools may be suitable for them. HLR said that the school would provide tutoring packages for these pupils and highlighted the need to 'sell the school' to pupil premium children through the outreach to local primary schools. She expressed that it was good to start early and change people's mindset in Year 4.

Q. Do we have intelligence of primary schools with high pupil premium?

The Headteacher responded that they were aware of some schools with high pupil premium, but the school needed to target these pupils and go into the schools to discover who had the ability.

	<p><i>Q. Under safeguarding update, there is a racist incident listed, how severe was this?</i> SS explained that a parent made a complaint about a member of staff.</p> <p><i>Q. Can you explain the two referrals to social care?</i> SS stated that referrals were on the rise, and these were students coming into Year 7.</p> <p><i>Q. Were admissions affected by COVID – in other schools there has been evidence of people moving out of London?</i> HLR said that there was a drop in 2021 which may have been a fall out from COVID with less people travelling distances to come to the school. She explained that last year, 2022 was a high-ranking year. She said that the current Year 7 were a very strong cohort. SS informed governors that some independent school pupils were applying, especially in the sixth form which could be due to the cost-of-living increases.</p> <p><u>Attendance</u> The Headteacher highlighted that between Christmas and February attendance was up by 5%. He said that he had sent out 786 ‘well done’ emails to students regarding attendance which had resulted in an improvement. AB said that the attendance rates were well above national. Parents were engaging more, and the school were sending out bi-weekly push notifications to inform parents of drops in attendance, the school were engaging pupils in attendance.</p> <p><i>Q. SAR and FOI requests – are the school seeing more of these?</i> SS said that they were receiving more, and some of these were very specific and difficult to produce. She said that some information requested was not held by the school but by the external services and so the request cannot be actioned due to data laws.</p> <p><i>Q. Year 11 offers, do you have information about how many students received offers from other sixth forms?</i> SS said this was very difficult to measure because girls will apply to lots of different sixth forms, receive offers and make their decision very late. AB said that roughly every child will receive one or two external offers. SS said that with the new improved sixth form block and improved uniform more students will be attracted to Newstead.</p> <p>The Headteacher confirmed that numbers were up, and the school were now improving the buildings. The school has offered ahead of other schools and pupils on the waiting list have been invited in on results day. The school are trying to encourage and support. SS said that it was important to get pupils who would join and remain at Newstead and not pupils who would join and drop out.</p>	
8.	<p>Risk Register There was nothing added to the Risk Register.</p>	
9.	<p>Confidential matters <i>There were no confidential matters.</i></p>	
10.	<p>Any other business There was none.</p>	

11.	The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 6.30pm. The meeting closed at 7.50pm	
-----	--	--

Action Points

Outstanding Actions and Actions arising from Newstead Wood Local Governing Body

No:	Action	By	When	Status
1	JA to add an item to the agenda for the next Education meeting to look at the report on the school vision and values.	JA	May	To remain open
2	AB to circulate Health and Safety report to governors	AB	ASAP	

Signed: _____ Print Name: _____
Chair of Governors

Date: _____