

## **Minutes of the Joint Local Board meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

Christian Malford Monday, July 10, 2017 7.00. Chair: Claire Kennedy. Clerk: Samantha Forrest

Governors Attending: Andrea Kaye, Rich Jefferson, Nick Jarman, Heather Lee, Shirley Palmer, Jill Rowe, Claire Kennedy, Debbie Luter, Paula Jenkins, Evelyn Bone, Elaine Naughton, Julia Harle.

Governors' Apologies: David Stokes

Non Governors Attending: Samantha Forrest, Linda O'Grady.

### **AGENDA ITEM Opening prayer**

MINUTE EB said a prayer to open proceedings.

### **AGENDA ITEM Welcome and apologies**

MINUTE The Chair greeted members and extended a welcome to Linda O'Grady, who was attending the meeting as an 'observer' with a view to joining the JLB as community member for Christian Malford. This would fill the vacancy created by the transfer of Acorns to the school, which meant that PJ would become staff and could no longer continue on the JLB as community member. Introductions were made by all members for Linda's benefit. Apologies had been received from David Stokes and were sanctioned by the JLB.

### **AGENDA ITEM Declaration of interests**

MINUTE No interests were declared pertinent to this agenda or as an update to the declarations previously made.

### **AGENDA ITEM Minutes of the previous meetings**

MINUTE The minutes of the JLB meeting held on 15 May and the special meeting held on 19 June were agreed as a true and accurate record of those meetings and signed off.

### **AGENDA ITEM Matters arising from the minutes and not covered later in the agenda**

MINUTE The Chair referred members to the agenda paper summarising matters arising from the minutes of 15 May that were not covered later in the agenda. Further updates were given on a few of the items. CK confirmed that Seagry pre-school had transferred on 1 June and that the transfer agreement had been signed by the other two pre-schools and awaited DfE approval. A working group, comprising CK, JR and the co-opted member from each pre-school had held its first meeting to smooth the transfer process. The JLB still had a vacancy for a foundation member, preferably to represent Corston and Rodbourne. HL said she had asked the relevant PCC on two occasions but no candidate had come forward. It was agreed that another avenue would now be pursued, namely that JH could become foundation governor and a new candidate for Seagry community member be sought. Both approaches would be tried for the time being, although no change in JH's role would be made unless or until a suitable replacement for her as community member had been found. A further matter arising was that of attendance. As well as advice from Wiltshire Council, JR had received a copy of a draft policy from Chippenham town schools and will review to confirm whether the DBAT Attendance Policy (level 2) would need to be amended to take account of the latest advice and definitions.

ACTION JR to advise of any changes needed to the DBAT Attendance Policy in the light of the latest advice from Wiltshire Council.

**AGENDA ITEM Feedback from members of the month**

MINUTE EB was the member of the month for July and reported back on activities so far. She had checked the Local Board email addresses (no messages had been received) and had discussed the drafting of the English/literacy policy with the staff subject leader. She confirmed that this work was underway, involving all the relevant staff, and would be completed in time for the policy to be put to the JLB meeting in September. The Chair asked that all members ensure that they were aware of the member of the month rota and check with the Clerk if unsure of 'their month'.

ACTION English/literacy policy to be put to the JLB meeting in September for approval.

All members to ensure they know their place in the 'member of the month' schedule

**AGENDA ITEM Feedback from the open days**

MINUTE Each school had held an open afternoon in June. A short paper on the experience at SWP had been produced; the Chair invited verbal feedback on the other two. AK said that the open afternoon at CM had been well attended by both existing parents and prospective parents and that it had been a positive occasion overall. EE said that, although the open afternoon at Seagry had been less well attended, it had succeeded in raising the school's profile locally and at least one prospective pupil had converted to a new pupil from September. JR added that this translated to much healthier numbers on roll for both September and for the following year. The Chair thanked all involved in making the open afternoons a success.

**AGENDA ITEM Feedback from recent exit interview**

MINUTE EB reported back on the exit interview that she had held with a member of staff due to leave at the end of the current term. She explained that the staff member had decided to leave the teaching profession, with work/life balance being one of the issues. EB acknowledged the work that was being done by the SLT to address the issue of work/life balance amongst the teaching staff. She undertook to write up a summary of the interview and circulate it to members. NJ asked about the level of staff turnover in general in the schools. JR replied that this was low overall, with many of the staff having long service at their school. AK added that even a low staff turnover had a higher impact than it would at larger schools, due to the staff numbers at our three schools.

ACTION EB to produce a written record of the exit interview and make available to JLB members.

**AGENDA ITEM Feedback from FFT training event**

MINUTE SP fed back on the recent DBAT training event on the use of the Fisher Family Trust Aspire dashboard, which had been attended by four JLB members. On the running of the course, those who had attended agreed that there had been a great deal of information to take in and that insufficient papers had been provided for all the delegates. SP felt that the session had been useful overall and that the dashboard had good mileage for our schools and the JLB, especially because it could be accessed at different levels. For example, governors could access data at a high level (where pupils could not be identified), while the schools could use the data in more depth. The system also allowed a school to identify the previous schools attended by new pupils and to see their prior attainment and achievement.

SP felt that the main benefit of the system for the JLB lay in the set of suggested questions that members could use to support and challenge the schools, which could prove powerful. With the demise of RASIEonline, this dashboard would become more important for the schools and the JLB. RJ liked the aspect of the system that pointed out which items were statistically significant. JR said that one disadvantage of FFT was that, because it didn't reflect the situation where cohorts were very small, it could not be used to create targets for our schools. The training session had generated a good discussion between the four members who had attended. AK confirmed that staff training on this was due to take place later in the week.

#### **AGENDA ITEM Results of skills audit**

**MINUTE** SF had put together a paper setting out the results of the 2017 Skills Audit and the main strengths and weaknesses that the audit had revealed. First, it was disappointing that only seven members had completed the Skills Audit, so the analysis could be based only on those returns and did not necessarily reflect the capabilities and competencies of the JLB as a whole.

This was the first time that this exercise had been carried out on The Trust Governor and SF pointed out that the list of areas for members to rate their level of knowledge, skills and experience differed from those used in previous years, which had been tailored to local circumstances. This meant that few comparisons could be made with the results for previous years, but this would be tracked year on year going forward. SF referred members to the gap analysis and highlighted the key points. The greatest strengths among the respondent base were in performance management, recruitment, personnel management, self-evaluation, leadership, mentoring and governance. The audit had also shown that the JLB had strong skills and experience in financial management, budget planning, targeting and problem-solving. Knowledge of the schools and the communities was strong. SF explained that the weaker areas related mainly to specific professions and were not core competencies for governors. Other than those areas, procurement was still an area of fairly low experience, although the Clerk had a background in public procurement and that expertise was available to the JLB as required. Similarly, legal services were available via DBAT and other professional services could be accessed by co-opting a suitable governor or by buying them in for specific projects, as appropriate.

Respondents had indicated in the audit subjects in which they had particular skills and/or interest. As in previous years, this information would be used when reviewing the allocation of link members to topics/subjects to ensure the best fit. The results of the Skills Audit would also be used when recruiting new governors, to ensure that an appropriate skills mix was retained on the JLB and any gaps filled, where possible; the gap analysis in particular would inform the training plan going forward.

The Chair asked that those members who had not completed the audit do so as soon as possible so that action could be based on the full picture. SF explained that the Skills Audit would no longer be an annual exercise on the part of members. Instead, she asked that members update their entries on a regular basis. A snapshot of the current picture would then be taken once a year and reported back, with any necessary follow-up action points being taken from that report.

**ACTION** All members to complete Skills Audit.

CK/SF to ensure that gap analysis is used to inform recruitment of governors, review of link membership and training plan.

#### **AGENDA ITEM To note results of the parent surveys**

MINUTE CK reminded members that the survey had been conducted in June amongst parents of all three schools and commented on the good response rate across the three and the generally positive responses. She was particularly pleased by the very high percentage of parents would recommend their child's school to another parent. The percentages for this were higher than they had been the previous year and she extended thanks to all staff and governors who had helped to make a positive difference over the last year.

CK had prepared a summary of results for each school that would also be posted on the websites and sent to parents as an insert to the final edition of Local Board Update of the year. This showed areas for improvement for each school, as put forward by respondents. These, and any other areas identified in the full report, would be reflected in the School Development Plan for 2017-18. She also asked that the committee Chairs extract the relevant action points for their committee from the full report and take those forward. The JLB noted the results of the parent survey for each school and would take this forward as discussed. EN raised the issue of Parent View and commented that very few parents had filled in that survey in recent times. The JLB agreed to encourage more parents to post their responses in the autumn. JR confirmed that the means to do so would be available on site for parents during the autumn open days, should they wish to use that opportunity.

ACTION Committee Chairs to extract key relevant points from the full report and action them.

Parent View to be highlighted via a number of avenues in the autumn (CK/JR).

#### **AGENDA ITEM Questions arising from committee meeting minutes**

MINUTE SP fed back some key points from the C&S Committee meeting held on 7 July. First, the committee had acknowledged the contribution made by outgoing member PJ and the impact that she had had, particularly in developing a closer relationship between the pre-school and school at Christian Malford to the benefit of children in both settings and in their transition. Secondly, the committee had acknowledged the support given by our SEND specialists to another DBAT academy: Tadpole Farm Academy. That school had recently been inspected by Ofsted, when the provision map, to which our SEND staff had inputted, had been highly praised. Tadpole Farm Academy had acknowledged the support received, as had DBAT, and the C&S Committee had sent its thanks to both EE and LH. A meeting between the SENCOs, JR and SP has been scheduled for 11th September. The minutes of the committee meeting were available on The Trust Governor.

The S&P Committee had met on 27 June and the minutes were also available on the system. No questions or issues were raised.

The Resources Committee had not met since the previous JLB meeting.

#### **AGENDA ITEM Executive Principal's report**

MINUTE JR highlighted some of the key points in her written report. This included pupil attendance figures for the academic year (up to 23 June). This showed the percentage of both authorised and unauthorised absences for each school over the year to that date.

JR went on to say that the numbers on roll were subject to frequent change currently but that the trend was upwards for September for two of the schools. She was particularly pleased with the expected NOR for Seagry from September, which was 41, and acknowledged the effort that had been made by EE in this respect. Members were impressed by the turnaround from the situation faced 12 months before when

the viability of the school going forward looked in doubt. EN suggested that the JLB take some time to reflect on the action that had been taken to increase the NoR, to identify the success factors for each school and to learn lessons that could perhaps be applied across the three schools. The JLB agreed to revisit the SWOT analysis undertaken by the Strategy Group in November and to build on and extend this, with particular focus on the opportunities for attracting more pupils to the schools. This would be an item on the JLB meeting in September.

JR also said that she was keeping DBAT informed of the numbers on roll going forward at CM, as it was possible that an additional class would be added if the educational need could be shown. From the schools' perspective, the level of admin support relative to the NoR was also important.

**ACTION** SWOT analysis to be included in the JLB meeting agenda for September.

#### **AGENDA ITEM School Development Plans**

**MINUTE** JR had updated the SDP to reflect the position towards the end of the academic year. The actions were RAG rated for each whole term and showed that the majority of target areas and actions had been achieved or were on track. Only two points relating to the pre-schools remained 'red' but that was because they could not be completed until the transfers had formally taken place.

JR particularly commented on the target to fully implement 'no levels' assessment and the work that had been put into achieving this. The new Pupil Profiles had been key to this success and enabled progress to be demonstrated where this could not be shown in the figures, due to the small cohorts.

The JLB went on to look ahead to the 2017/18 SDP. JR explained that DBAT had introduced a new process for the next year, whereby the completion of the self-evaluation review in the new format would populate the SDP. Target areas for the following year were expected to include: reasoning (in Maths); assessment (with more emphasis on professional judgement by staff); and Writing (looking at the whole approach to Talk for Writing); and homework and home learning (how this is developed across the three schools). There would also be a review of subject leadership across the staff, a look at the deployment of Teaching Assistants across the three schools, a review of admin support and an aim to develop a Forest School approach or similar. A draft of the 2017/18 SDP would be brought to the JLB meeting in September.

**ACTION** JR to draft 2017/18 SDP in time for JLB meeting in September.

#### **AGENDA ITEM SATs results**

**MINUTE** AK presented an overview of the SATs results. She explained that the tests had been based on the new national curriculum, which meant that there was an element of 'catch-up' amongst the current Year 6 pupils, who had not been subject to that curriculum throughout their school life. The results showed the percentage of pupils at each school achieving either the 'expected standard' or working at 'greater depth' in Reading, Writing and Maths. She explained that Writing had been measured by teacher assessment, which was subject to external moderation. Moderation had taken place across the three schools with external moderation at two of them. In all cases, the staff judgements had been accepted.

AK commented on the Maths results, which might look a little disappointing at first glance. However, she explained that the tests had been divided between arithmetic and reasoning and that, nationally, pupils had struggled more with the reasoning side, which skewed the overall results for Maths. That is why 'reasoning' would be a particular focus next year, as reflected in the SDP. JR added that the questions in the Maths papers were now ordered differently so that they no longer started with the easier aspects and built from there, an approach that some children found more challenging. AK also pointed out where

the starting points in some schools had been lower and where there had been relatively high mobility. This meant that there were some cases where pupils had not reached the age-related expectation but had made accelerated progress. Many children had received additional support, with intensive interventions being made where required. SP also commented that it could be demonstrated, at CM in particular, that the More Able pupils had been challenged. It was important to look at progress alongside attainment and to be able to show where the schools had made an impact. Members noted that there was an evidence base for this at our schools. SP made the point that it was important for all teaching staff to take some responsibility for the outputs of Year 6 pupils, a message that needed to be given across the schools. AK said that the use of the Pupil Profiles had been important in making teachers more accountable. Some members commented that feedback from the secondary schools was that Y7 pupils coming from our schools were generally 'secondary ready'. JH said that it would be helpful to get that in writing from one or more of the secondary schools, for possible use in marketing. The JLB thanked AK and her colleagues for all of their hard work and noted both the SATs results and the stories behind them.

**ACTION** JR/DL to seek letter from secondary schools about how 'secondary ready' our pupils were when starting secondary education.

#### **AGENDA ITEM To note the staffing structure for 2017/18**

**MINUTE** JR presented the staffing structure for 2017/18. This showed no major changes, although the final shape would depend on the future numbers on roll at each school. The forthcoming sabbatical of one member of staff had been covered and greater support had been included for a new pupil with an EHC (the latter being cost neutral). The JLB noted the staffing structure, which would be communicated to parents via the next Local Board Update.

#### **AGENDA ITEM To approve local policies**

**MINUTE** Three policies were presented. The first was the Able and Talented Policy, which had been reviewed by the C&S Committee. SP explained that the appendices were being checked through and might be subject to amendment. The E-Safety Policy had been re-drafted to make it more concise and to reduce risks for the schools and staff. The Complaints Policy had been reviewed and commented on by members of the Resources Committee. Safer Recruitment Policy had been reviewed and commented on by members of the Staffing and Pay committee. All four were approved and the websites and school office copies would be updated accordingly.

**ACTION** SF to post the policies on the websites and send to school admin officers.

**DECISION** The policies were approved.

#### **AGENDA ITEM Critical Incident Plans**

**MINUTE** In line with the DBAT Critical Incident Strategy already adopted, a Critical Incident Plan was being drafted for each site (to include the pre-school). These would be brought to the September meeting for approval.

**ACTION** JR to complete CI Plan for each site.

#### **AGENDA ITEM To approve DBAT policy**

MINUTE The Chair explained that DBAT had reviewed and updated its policy for the Election of Parent Members of the Local Board, the only substantive change being that parent members would cease to be on the Local Board when their child left the school. The policy was adopted by the JLB.

DECISION The Policy was adopted.

#### **AGENDA ITEM JLB self-evaluation and Annual Governance Statement**

MINUTE The Chair explained that she had completed the evaluation on The Trust Governor this time and presented an overview of the output. Overall, this showed that the JLB was performing well, although there were a few gaps and areas for improvement. One of these was in the school visits. Although these were being conducted by many on a regular basis, CK reminded members that all visits must be made, especially by the member of the month, and recorded, with links being made to the SDP wherever possible. SP said that she was planning to look through the visit reports for the last year over the summer and identify common themes. The self-evaluation would also link up with the evidence log (that would now be compiled on The Trust Governor by the Clerk). Both demonstrated good governance and would be shown to Ofsted on the next inspection visits. The Annual Governance Statement had been based partly on the outputs of this exercise and would be sent to parents in early July.

ACTION CK to arrange for Annual Governance Statement to be sent to parents, with support from DL.

#### **AGENDA ITEM Local Board objectives for the current year**

MINUTE The JLB went through the objectives for the year to cite progress against them since the previous meeting and to determine how far they had been achieved overall as the academic year drew to a close.

On the first objective, one more SIAMS visit had taken place since the previous meeting and the last one was due. The output from the first inspection was positive and the areas identified for improvement had been actioned. Lessons learned had also been shared with the other schools. Over the year, a Worship Council had been established in each school which, more recently, had met with the Bishop. A new British Values Policy had also been drafted and approved.

On the second objective, members agreed that the three schools had worked well together over the year, to the benefit of both the children and staff. A number of examples were cited regarding the children: the booster classes, shared residential trips, the Worship Councils and sporting activities. On the staff side, shared expertise and moderation were key examples. The recent Understanding Christianity training course had been attended by both a Foundation governor and the RE subject leader and the learning had been shared amongst the teaching staff in all three schools. There were also several instances where JLB members had conducted a school visit at each of the schools, focusing on their link subject.

The third objective, involving extending the role of middle and senior leaders, was then discussed. Success in this area had been validated by the DBAT School Improvement Officer, who had seen a marked adjustment in the understanding of the Head of School role, which had benefitted the schools.

Much work towards the fourth objective, the shared governance for the pre-schools, had been undertaken over the last few months in particular. A representative from each pre-school had been co-opted, initially as committee members and a meeting of the working group had taken place to help

smooth the transfer process. To date, one pre-school had transferred and everything was in place for the remaining two transfers, with final approval awaited from the DfE.

The Chair invited members to suggest items that they would like to see included in the 2017/18 JLB objectives, which would be put to the September meeting. Suggestions included more widespread use of the FFT amongst governors to increase their understanding of pupil performance, more two-way communication with DBAT and a greater governor presence at visits made by the DBAT School Improvement Officer. The need to link governor activities more closely with the SDP was also emphasised. The link was already made on the visit forms but this could possibly be extended to other areas. JR made the point that the DBAT values had changed and that the JLB and the schools needed to look again at their visions and values to ensure alignment.

**ACTION** CK to draft 2017/18 JLB objectives for September.

#### **AGENDA ITEM Clerk's Update**

**MINUTE** The Clerk updated the JLB on a few items, the first being her work regarding the pre-schools' policies. So far, she had obtained a list of the current policies held by each of the pre-schools and checked through these to determine if all of the statutory policies for an EYFS setting were in place. She had also noted where the JLB had similar or equivalent policies for the schools in preparation for possible alignment in the future. SF outlined the next stages and said that she would be allocating the policies to the committees, as appropriate. It would then be for the committees to review their allocated policies and align them with the school ones where possible and desirable, according to a schedule that the Clerk would draw up. She would also work with the committees on this and advise them of any gaps or anomalies to be addressed during the review process.

The second item that the Clerk drew attention to was the next edition of Local Board Update, which was due to go out in the last week of term. She advised them of the topics to be covered and said she would be in touch with members, as appropriate, for information or articles.

Finally, she let members know that Lydiard Millicent Local Board was looking for a new governor with skills in communications and stakeholder management; if they knew of anyone who might be interested, she asked them to let her know.

#### **AGENDA ITEM To note JLB meeting dates for 2017/18**

**MINUTE** SF explained that she had put together a schedule of meeting dates from September, based on the current pattern and taking into account the term dates for 2017/18. She had also suggested meeting dates for each committee which fitted with the JLB meeting schedule. One member was not available for some committee meeting dates; the Chair would agree any alternative dates with committee members as appropriate. ~SF would circulate the JLB meeting dates by email to facilitate diary management. The next JLB meeting would be held on 25th September.

**ACTION** SF to circulate JLB meeting dates for 2017/18.

#### **AGENDA ITEM Closing prayer**

**MINUTE** EB said a prayer of thanks and blessing to close the meeting,

*Minutes approved by Claire Kennedy*