

Dove House School Board of Trustees

Minutes of Meeting Tuesday 13th October 2020

Present:	Category:
Juliet Annesley-Gamester (JAG)	Parent Trustee
Kevin Barwick (KB)	Community Trustee
Sian Butler (SB) Items 1-6	Community Trustee
Dave Dupont (DD)	Acting Headteacher
Andrea Francis (AF)	Community Trustee
Lisa Goodall (LG) (Chair)	Parent Trustee
Ollie Killinger (OK)	Community Trustee
Emma Layzell (EL)	Co-opted Trustee
Debbie McLatch (DM) Items 5-13	Community Trustee
Kate Need (KN) Items 6-13	Co-opted Trustee
Ryan Williams (RW)	Staff Trustee
Apologies:	
Neil Plant (NP)	Co-opted Trustee
In Attendance:	
Jayne Humphrey (JH)	Governance Lead
Karen Ollive (KO) Items 1-5	Assistant Headteacher

1. Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed trustees to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Neil Plant. Sian Butler advised trustees that she could attend until 5.45 pm.

The meeting was quorate. It was noted that agenda item papers had been provided in advance of the meeting.

2. Pecuniary Interests

No interests were declared in the agenda items. Trustees confirmed that they did not have any new declarations to make.

3. Approval of Minutes

Trustees agreed that the minutes of the meeting of the 15th September 2020 were a true and accurate record and these will be signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

No	Action	Update
<p>10/12/19 Action 7 Item 7</p>	<p>Growing Basingstoke: Karen Ollive to ascertain whether the volunteer DHSA link club members have been through the induction process and signed the code of conduct from the volunteer policy. Email response agreed.</p> <p>The trustees had been provided with a full update from the HR Officer which outlined that the process was not in place at all. The trustees asked that the matter stays on the Action Tracker until the school can confirm that the volunteer policy and process is in place and completed.</p> <p>15/9/20: The HR Officer advised that it is not yet complete but is working on it. Action to be carried forward. DA – HR Officer</p>	<p>Still in progress. Item carried forward.</p>
<p>14/7/20 Action 1 Item 5</p>	<p>DD to liaise with the DSL to see if the online safety audit could be completed as requested before the next audit.</p> <p>15/9/20: The Acting Headteacher advised that this will not be completed by the time of the next audit. The Governance Lead was asked to request a progress update and timescale from the DSL. JH</p>	<p>Update included in upcoming agenda item. The online audit is to be included in the 20-21 safeguarding action plan. No further action.</p>
<p>14/7/20 Action 2 Item 6</p>	<p>The Governance Lead was asked to approach the SCITT for the data behind trainees leaving the programme and then forward the information to the trustees</p> <p>15/9/20: Request sent to the SCITT -on diary to 30th of September. JH</p>	<p>This was sent to trustees. No further action</p>
<p>14/7/20 Action 7 Item 7</p>	<p>The Acting Headteacher will organise the amendment of the staffing structure chart in line with the noted amendments</p> <p>15/9/20: The Acting Headteacher advised it is being prepared by the HR Officer. It was agreed that the Governance Lead would email this out to the Board. JH</p>	<p>This was sent to trustees . The Governance Lead advised that she is awaiting approvals. No further action</p>

15/9/20 Action 1 Item 5	Appointment of trustee: The Governance Lead will advise Sian of her appointment and begin her induction process. JH	Completed. No further action
15/9/20 Action 2 Item 6	Agreement of Committees and Link Roles: The Chair and Governance Lead will explore options in conjunction with the Acting Headteacher and report back to the Board. LG/JH/DD	The Chair advised that she , the acting Headteacher and Governance Lead had a brief discussion and will aim to bring a proposal to the next meeting. Item carried forward.
15/9/20 Action 3 Item 10	Trustee Code of Conduct: All trustees to confirm the electronic declaration on Governor Hub by the end of the September. All	Completed. No further action
15/9/20 Action 4 Item 11	Trustee Visit Policy: All trustees to confirm the electronic declaration on Governor Hub by the end of the September. All	Completed. No further action
15/9/20 Action 5 Item 13	Skills Audit: Any outstanding skills audits should be sent to the Governance Lead by the 18 th of September. All	Completed. No further action
15/9/20 Action 6 Item 14	Exam Results: The Headteacher will send the full results breakdown to trustees when it is available, via email. DD	The full breakdown was sent to trustees. No further action
15/9/20 Action 7 Item 17	Risk Register: Governance Lead to amend 1.3 as requested 3X3=9 and include the reason on the document. JH	Completed. No further action
15/9/20 Action 8 Item 18	BCP: Governance Lead to complete further contact details if available. JH	Completed. No further action
15/9/20 Action 9 Item 18	BCP: The Acting Headteacher will undertake a "test" of the BCP with the SLT. DD	The acting Headteacher advised that the SLT had run through the BCPO and were happy with actions to be taken. Completed. No further action
15/9/20 Action 10 Item 19	Consideration of the Appraisals Option for the Privett Centre: The Finance & Resources Director will obtain advice from a property expert which includes the disposal	Action with RM to progress. Item carried forward.

	mechanisms for the Privett Centre. Quotes for the action will be sourced and delivered to the Finance, Resources & Audit committee. RM	
15/9/20 Action 11 Item 21	Any Other Business: The Governance Lead will advise Hampshire Governor Services of the Board's decision to move to an online training session later in the term. JH	Completed. No further action

Debbie McLatch joined the meeting at 5.08 pm

5. Safeguarding

a) Safeguarding Report October 2020

Karen Ollive gave an update to several items contained within the report:

- The police case that was ongoing for an ex pupil has now been completed.
- The issue with the driver has been followed up by Wokingham Transport and the driver is now acting appropriately and safely.
- All staff have now received safeguarding training whether for the first time or as a refresher. Most staff have also completed the online Keeping Children Safe in Education before the upcoming deadline.

Q: Have you found differences in safeguarding because of pupils being at home more and staff working from home, due to the COVID pandemic?

A: No, we haven't although I'm aware that some schools have reported an increase in safeguarding incidents. Staff were contacting pupils and their families at least weekly which helped as anything was dealt with very quickly and referrals made appropriately. The only area where we have seen a slight increase is with domestic abuse incidents, where there have been three incidents. Children's Services meetings continued as normal via online platforms and we had better attendance from parents for virtual meetings, which was positive.

Q: Has the transport situation settled down now?

A: It has been a challenge because of the number of buses arriving as well as a full-size coach. Becky Wilson has worked hard to organise a system and get a good routine in place and this is working effectively.

b) Safeguarding Audit Review & Approval

The school has received an extension to the submission date and the audit will be uploaded once it has been approved by the Board.

KO highlighted the following:

- The online safety audit has been carried over from last year.
- More staff have been Safer Recruitment trained.
- The school need to review the recruitment practices to ensure compliance with Safer Recruitment.
- The school need to update policies and documents with staff changes
- The new leader at Post 16 has highlighted some practices that need to be reviewed and amended.
- The school needs to consider how to monitor staff adherence to policies as recent changes have highlighted that some staff have not always followed these. We must think about how we can check understanding and compliance.
- Staff have been given Data Protection training.

Q: Will the workload be shared amongst the deputy DSLs?

A: Yes, it will be and I will report back regularly on the progress of the audit action plan.

Q: Is there anything that you consider to be a high risk or high priority in the audit?

A: Not really, as we're very compliant on most things. We've always had good safeguarding practices in school but some minor changes need to be made. I need to become more familiar with online safeguarding practices to ensure we are all safe. This can be a difficult area as we also rely on parents to take responsibility to monitor their child's internet usage.

Q: Have you been provided with some administration help?

A: Yes, some help has been given and the school will be looking at further areas where the administration team can assist.

The trustees approved the safeguarding audit.

c) Child Protection Policy Review

The Chair advised that the school have used a model policy from Hampshire Safeguarding and the school have contextualised local risks. **The trustees approved the policy.**

Karen Ollive left the meeting at 5.34 pm

6. School Improvement Plan Discussion & Approval

The Chair briefly explained the purpose of the School Improvement Plan to the trustees.

The acting Headteacher advised the Board that the document had been amended by the SLT, using the draft that was completed by the previous Headteacher. The acting Headteacher advised that the school's core purpose remains the same:

- To continue its pursuit of academic excellence.
- To aid personal development so that students grow into well rounded young adults and are able to live as independently as possible.

The school had identified four priorities:

1. Ensure all Dove House School Academy students leave with the ability to be confident and successful communicators who can interact appropriately with others around them in order to reach their individual goals and outcomes in adulthood.
2. To effectively support the mental health and well-being of students and staff.
3. To provide the best educational experiences possible, both classroom based and remotely, to support the life chances of DHSAs students.
4. To improve the support functions of the school so that they are compliant, efficient and effective.

The trustees agreed with the priorities set.

The acting Headteacher invited questions:

Q: What drove the priorities that have been chosen?

A: Input from the Senior Leadership Team, Faculty Reviews, Observations, and the Ofsted Report

Q: Are the objectives the same each year?

A: Not always, although some priorities may take longer than a year to implement so might span two SIPs

Q: It wasn't clear in the document how the plan will be monitored and by who. How will it be used?

A: The document permeates everything that goes on in the school and goes back to the SLT, who will RAG rate the progress made.

The Governance Lead was asked to explain the process of the SIP. She advised trustees that usually the document would be a collaborative discussion between the Board and the SLT in the summer term and then the draft document is discussed and approved in the early autumn. Following that, it is then for the SLT and the Board to effectively monitor it.

The Governance Lead suggested that trustees use the resources available on The Key to gain knowledge about the SIP process as it offers example SIPs as well as information about the process.

Sian Butler left the meeting at 5.45 pm

There was a discussion regarding the layout of the School Improvement Plan document which included:

- Whether each objective could include specific actions?
- Being clear about who is responsible for each action.
- Whether there are success criterion included and identified milestones towards these?
- The use of a system to regularly assess the milestones, such as a termly red/amber/green (RAG) assessment system?
- The use of realistic and measurable timescales for achievement.
- Whether any cost/resource implications should be included?
- That the language of the document could be tied into the new common education inspection framework.
- Whether it was a common document that all schools used.

Kate Need joined the meeting at 5.51 pm

The Board discussed whether the SIP could be left until a new Headteacher can be recruited and a consensus formed that this would not be appropriate. The school could not be sure that a Headteacher will be appointed and if so, whether they would be in a position to immediately amend the SIP.

The Trustees raised a concern that the document may not support the SLT and school as it appears onerous, particularly in light of the current COVID circumstances. KN explained that the recent Headteacher performance management process had highlighted that it was important for trustees to have a flexible approach towards the SIP implementation and that the Board should work with the Headteacher to keep reprioritising. The external adviser had suggested a pared down document for this year.

The Governance Lead advised trustees that the document had already been circulated to staff and that some performance management targets may have been set and agreed using these priorities. Should the priorities change significantly this could cause an issue for performance management reviews. The trustees reiterated that they did not intend for the priorities to change, but the breadth of the actions reduced to key ones.

It was agreed that the acting Headteacher would review the document to simplify it, and incorporate the suggestions discussed. The SIP will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action 1: The Acting Headteacher will review and simplify the SIP before bringing it back for discussion and approval at the next Board meeting.

7. School Self Evaluation Form (SEF) Review

The Chair advised trustees that the School SEF does not need to be in any particular format nor approved. She advised that Ofsted look at the SEF to ensure that the school are able to evaluate their performance accurately.

The Chair said she recognised Dove House from reading the SEF and how pleased she was that it highlighted the positive things that the school does and the excellent education it provides. She read out part of the section relating to governance and said that she hoped that the Board could recognise itself from the description. The acting Headteacher invited questions:

Q: Page 7 of the SEF describes what Dove House offers its Post 16 learners through the supported internships. Have the internships been impacted by COVID?

A: All of the employers who offer internships for our students have responded to say they cannot currently accept our pupils. I will be meeting Kate Read tomorrow so we can discuss alternatives that could be offered.

Q: The SEF shows that two students in 2019/20 did not go into college or training due to complex behavioural issues. What was the transition for these students and on reflection was Dove House the right setting for them?

A: One pupil was a looked after child whose behaviour badly deteriorated at the end of years 10 and into year 11, partly due to anxiety about the next steps for him. Dove House was the only stability he had and therefore we managed the situation as best we could. The other pupil has been offered a place at a specialist college facility in Wales and his parents are considering this. The Local Authority are working closely with the family.

Dove House was the right school for them when they arrived but towards the end of their time with us, their behaviour had significantly deteriorated and we managed it as well as we could. I think that in past years we have taken some pupils who have more complex needs than we are equipped for, but this year the cohorts' needs are educational and emotional rather than behavioural.

Q: Do we still have a responsibility for the two students that have transitioned in ensuring that we track their placement?

A: Yes, we do but at the moment the Local Authority are struggling to find colleges, even nationwide, that will suit their needs.

Q: Where does the responsibility fall to ensure that there is a clear long-term financial model, which is mentioned on page 15 of the SEF.

A: This starts with the SLT in ensuring we are fully funded for students who have complex needs. We have become much better at this over the last year and KO ensures that we now receive all funding that is required to provide the services that students need.

8. Data Protection Audit

The trustees reviewed the audit, noting that there are two "red" areas:

- data sharing with third parties
- record retention and disposal

The Governance Lead had produced an action plan outlining target dates as suggested by Judicium Education. She advised that the timescales quoted are unrealistic for two of the actions:

- to dispose and destroy ex-pupil and ex-personnel information
- to review and purge unnecessary electronic files

The Governance Lead advised that:

- the audit action plan shows that some actions have been completed already.
- training has been given to staff and is currently being followed up with online learning.
- in her view a culture change is required which must be led by the SLT as the school had not engaged with the introduction of GDPR and continued as before.
- that the disposal of unnecessary personal information is a huge task which could not be achieved within a month, but the process has started with a review of archived material.
- during the lock down period the Governance Lead offered "1-1" appointments for staff to go through their electronic records with her and this was successful.

The Chair noted that the report quotes many items as "working towards" and asked what support was needed. The Governance Lead advised that she was working with the acting Headteacher to consider what may be needed.

9. Governance

a) Chair's Notes

The Chair advised trustees that she will provide updates for each meeting so they are aware of meetings/items that she undertakes on behalf of the Board. The contents were noted.

b) Approval of Committee Structure

Trustees **approved** the appointment of Emma Layzell to the Pay & Personnel committee.

c) Skills Audit Discussion

- The completed skills audit included the new trustees and trustees noted that there were two areas that were highlighted as scoring 2 (RAG rated amber). These were:

- Experience of financial planning, monitoring, decision making and compliance in the school sector
- Experience of HR policy and processes in the school sector

The Governance Lead noted that both of these skills were assessed more highly for the same question when asked as non-school specific. She noted that within the Board there is an accountant, a trustee with educational finance experience and an HR manager.

The Governance Lead asked the Board to consider whether they would want to include the finance and HR courses that are specific for academies, to be included within the training expectation of induction.

The trustees **agreed** that the Finance in Academies and Personnel in Academies courses be included within induction training. Trustees also agreed that this should be retrospective and any trustees that haven't undertaken the courses should do so.

ACTION 2: All trustees will check their training records and book on to the appropriate courses, if they have not already done so.

10. Headteacher Recruitment Update

The Chair updated trustees further to her recent correspondence about the Headteacher recruitment. She explained that the Headteacher assessment days were postponed at very short notice because the Educational Adviser did not want to come on site due to COVID concerns. This affected the timetable of activities and the recruitment panel therefore took the decision to reschedule.

The assessment days are now set for the 21st and 22nd of October and the recruitment panel are being supported by a different Educational Adviser, Naomi Carter. The Chair advised that Naomi is providing guidance regarding the tasks and the recruitment panel are confident that the process will be robust.

11. Policy Reviews

a) Complaints Policy

The Governance Lead advised that this is a model policy provided by the DfE. **The policy was approved.**

b) Finance Policy

The policy was approved

c) Accounting Policy

KB noted that there may be a change required after the annual audit relating to the paragraph entitled "going concern". **The policy was approved.**

d) Risk Management Policy

The first paragraph had been amended to strengthen its wording. **The policy was approved.**

e) BASCITT Quality Assurance Policy

The trustees noted that the policy was lengthy and therefore not an “easy read”. The Governance Lead advised that she is working with the SCITT Programme Director to make amendments but more work needs to be done to simplify documents. **The policy was approved.**

12. Staffing Proposal

The Headteacher invited questions regarding the proposal:

Q: Do you have an idea of the cost of a remote learning platform?

A: The cost is small because we are intending to use Microsoft Teams. It is included as part of our licensing agreement through Hampshire IT. Our remote learning lead is investigating a grant that may be available through the DfE.

Q: Will there be any requirement by the DfE to return any unspent funds?

A: No, there are no plans to clawback funds. The school will have to justify its spend and trustees will have to review the impact of the spend.

Q: Does the school have estimates for ongoing costs that COVID is causing, for items such as enhanced cleaning.

A: No, we haven't got specific costings but the new COVID cleaner is already included in our budget. There hasn't been any information about whether any funds will be released for additional cleaning or health & safety measures.

Q: Why does the school consider this is the best use of funding and what else was considered?

A: The SLT discussed the option of recruiting new staff rather than appointing from within. We decided that the best option for our students was to use existing staff who are known to them.

Q: If lockdown is put in place you suggest that the member of staff will work the system and deliver to staff. Will they need to be at the higher level to do this or could they drop back to their pre-existing role?

A: We have the budget for this and I want to encourage the best LSAs to apply for this. They would support the remote learning lead if we went into lockdown.

The proposal was approved by a majority vote.

Ryan Williams left the meeting at 6.52 pm.

13. Confidential Staffing Item

This was recorded under a separate confidential minute.

14. Any Other Business

KB asked if there could be a standing agenda item for committee reports at future meetings. The Chair advised that this was usually included but because of the very full agenda it had been deferred until the next meeting.

There was a brief discussion about how the agenda item had worked previously where committee minutes were included and questions could be raised. It was agreed that it would continue in this way without the need for a report as well.

The meeting closed at 7.05 pm

Signed.....

Dated.....

**Summary of Actions from:
Meeting of Tuesday 13th October 2020**

No	Action	Update
10/12/19 Action 7 Item 7	Growing Basingstoke: Karen Ollive to ascertain whether the volunteer DHSA link club members have been through the induction process and signed the code of conduct from the volunteer policy. Email response agreed. The trustees had been provided with a full update from the HR Officer which outlined that the process was not in place at all. The trustees asked that the matter stays on the Action Tracker until the school can confirm that the volunteer policy and process is in place and completed. 15/9/20: The HR Officer advised that it is not yet complete but is working on it. Action to be carried forward. 13/10/20: Item still in progress	DA – HR Officer
15/9/20 Action 2 Item 6	Agreement of Committees and Link Roles: The Chair and Governance Lead will explore options in conjunction with the Acting Headteacher and report back to the Board. 13/10/20: The Chair advised that she , the acting Headteacher and Governance Lead had a brief discussion and will aim to bring a proposal to the next meeting. Item carried forward to 8/12/20 meeting	LG/JH/DD
15/9/20 Action 10 Item 19	Consideration of the Appraisals Option for the Privett Centre: The Finance & Resources Director will obtain advice from a property expert which includes the disposal mechanisms for the Privett Centre. Quotes for the action will be sourced and delivered to the Finance, Resources & Audit committee. 13/10/20: Action with RM to progress. Item carried forward to 8/12/20 meeting	RM
13/10/20 Action 1 Item 6	SIP: The Acting Headteacher will review and simplify the SIP before bringing it back for discussion and approval at the next Board meeting. Item carried forward to 8/12/20 meeting	DD
13/10/20 Action 2 Item 9c	Skills Audit: All trustees to check their training records and undertake the appropriate courses.	All