

Minutes

Meeting of Diggle School Governing Body

Wednesday 9 May 2018
at the school
at 4.00pm

Present:	Mr Michael Rea	Co-opted Governor (Chair)
	Mrs Marian Faulkner	Co-opted Governor
	Mrs Christine Tuckey	Co-opted Governor
	Mr David Hampson	Foundation Governor
	Mrs Sarah Newton	Headteacher
	Mr Chris Sleight	Local Authority Governor (Vice-Chair)
	Ms Rachel Russell	Parent Governor
	Ms Ruth Topham	Parent Governor
	Miss Jane Spivey	Staff Governor

Also Present: Mr Peter Grubb Clerk to the Governing Body

Prior to the start of the meeting the Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

1 REVIEW OF OFSTED REPORT WITH STAFF

(Governors were joined for this item by members of the school staff)

A copy of the OFSTED Inspection Report carried out on 27 and 28 March 2018 had been provided to governors and members of staff who broke into small mixed groups to discuss the process and findings.

After lengthy and detailed discussions the Chair thanked the staff for their input. He complemented everyone on a fantastic report which suggested only minor areas for improvement, both of which were already in hand. He also paid tribute to the Headteacher for her excellent work which had contributed greatly to the findings and to governors whose hard work and involvement in the school was acknowledged.

RESOLVED: that governors' appreciation for the efforts of everyone in the school be placed on record.

(School staff left the meeting at this point).

2 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Chair informed governors that items 2, 3 and 4 had been placed on the agenda by the Local Authority (LA) and, whilst he understood the reasoning behind this which had originated as a suggestion to ensure that a Chair and Vice-Chair were in position for the start of a new school year, a suggestion that he himself supported. The change of timetable for these matters had not, however, been discussed by the Governing Body and should not be taken at this meeting. As there was a further meeting scheduled before the end of the Summer 2018 term he proposed that the suggestion be adopted and the matter be deferred until the next meeting.

- RESOLVED:**
- (i) that the Chair and Vice-Chair be elected annually at the final meeting of the governing body in the Summer term and to take up post at the commencement of the next school year; and
 - (ii) that items 2, 3 and 4 be deferred to the next meeting.

ACTION: Governor Support Service

3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

See item 2 above.

4 APPOINTMENT OF CLERK TO THE GOVERNING BODY

See item 2 above.

5 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mr Christopher Ryan and Mr Michael Hawes.

5.2 The governing body gave consent to the governors who had apologised for their absence.

6 REGISTER OF BUSINESS, PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

Governors were requested to declare any business, pecuniary or personal interests and submit forms to the Head teacher so that the 'Register of Declaration of Interest' can be updated and also uploaded on to the school website.

Governors can access the forms which are located on the governors website at: <http://www.oldham.gov.uk/governorsdocuments>

No declarations were made.

7 MINUTES

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the following amendments:

7.1 Minute 1 (Apologies) Apologies had been received from Mr Chris Speight and consent given to the absence.

ACTION: Governor Support Service

8 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

9 **GOVERNOR RECRUITMENT AND VACANCIES**

9.1 **Governor Recruitment**

Governors welcomed Mrs Ruth Topham to her first meeting as a newly elected Parent Governor.

Governors noted that many parents seemed to believe that the Leadership of the school rested solely with the Headteacher and proposed that they start a regular (half termly) column in the school newsletter to inform parents of the work done by governors.

RESOLVED: that a regular column be produced for the newsletter.

ACTION: Chair/All Governors

9.2 **Governor Vacancies**

There are currently no governor vacancies to advertise.

9.3 **Associate Governor**

The Chair reported that Mr Michael Yarwood had stood down as he did not feel able to give the amount of time necessary to undertake all of the duties of a full member of the governing body. He had, however, indicated that he would be prepared to continue in some role to give what support he could to the governing body. As he had excellent communication skills which had been of great value to the governing body in the past the Chair proposed that he be appointed Associate Governor so that he could continue to make those skills available to the school.

RESOLVED: that Mr Yarwood be appointed Associate Governor.

ACTION: Chair/Headteacher/Governor Support Service

10 **HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

The Headteacher's Report had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Main points referred to:

10.1 **Electronic Communications**

Governor Challenge/Support: Governors queried the circulation of documentation via First Class which was difficult to access and counter-intuitive to use.

Whilst all recognised the need for a secure email system they asked if either an alternative could be found or training supplied. Governors also asked for guidance on downloading and storing documentation under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

The Headteacher agreed to research these points.

ACTION: Headteacher

10.2 School Security

Governor Challenge/Support: A governor noted that some parents were resentful that access to school was not as easy as it had been in the past. After discussion governors agreed that Safeguarding and GDPR dictated that the school could not operate an open door policy and that teachers and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) were available to meet with parents. Governors fully supported the position taken in restricting access to the school and asked that the messages about access be reinforced and reminders issued to parents about ensuring that the school is notified in advance of anyone who was not on the “pick-up list” collecting children.

ACTION: Headteacher

10.3 Admissions

Admission numbers for 2018/2019 were reduced and that this would adversely affect funding.

RESOLVED: that the Headteacher be thanked for her report.

11 MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Health and Safety Governor had been unable to complete the recently scheduled walk-around due to an injury. There were no issues in school. The recent Fire-Risk Assessment had been clear. The Health and Safety advisor from the Local Authority (LA) was scheduled to visit in the coming half term.

RESOLVED: that governors were satisfied that their obligations were being met.

12 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

12.1 Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee

The Committee had met earlier that afternoon and the Chair made a verbal report.

Main points referred to:

12.1.1 Budget

Admissions for next year were expected to be 17 and this would have an impact on funding.

Income for this financial year was projected to be £975K which would produce an expected surplus of £15K; this would fall to £948K the following year with a potential deficit of £27.9K followed by a potential deficit of £65K+ in the year after. The Committee were working through the budgets to identify savings; these would include working with the Dovestone Learning Partnership (DLP). They were also awaiting replies to a number of Education Health Care (EHC) Plans recently submitted. The ideal solution, as discussed earlier, would be to increase school admissions.

Governor Challenge/Support: A governor asked if there were any proposals to reduce staffing numbers. The chair replied that there were no such proposals as every effort was being made to identify savings in other areas.

Governor Challenge/Support: Governors asked if the school made sufficient efforts to publicise itself. A number of options for increasing publicity about the school were discussed including holding open evenings for prospective parents who could not visit the school during school hours. A further proposal was that a video highlighting school life be produced for publication on the website.

RESOLVED: that the recommendations be agreed.

ACTION: Finance Committee/Headteacher/Business Manager

12.1.2 **Benchmarking**

The Committee had reviewed benchmarking data and was pleased to report that these indicated that the school's finances were being correctly managed.

12.1.3 **Portacabin**

Following a survey the proposal is now to refurbish the existing structure which is sound. Once the plans are agreed it is proposed to go to tender with the aim to complete the works over the Summer 2018.

It is also proposed to seek external funding and a volunteer to research and prepare bids was required. Mrs Topham volunteered.

RESOLVED: that the recommendations be agreed.

ACTION: Finance Committee/Headteacher/Business Manager/
Ms Topham

12.1.4 **Finance Policy**

The Business Manager had drafted a revised Finance Policy which the Committee recommended to governors, subject to some minor amendments.

It was noted that Mrs Whitehead be commended for her work in preparing the budget projections and drafting the revised Finance Policy.

RESOLVED: that the policy be agreed.

ACTION: Headteacher/Business Manager

13 LOCAL AUTHORITY ITEM FOR ACTION

13.1 Looked After Children (LAC)

Governors were made aware of and asked to read the updated statutory guidance for Looked After Children (LAC).

Governors were asked to ensure that all policies and processes are in place to ensure that the school is statutory compliant.

The new DfE statutory guidance is located here:

Promoting the Education of Looked After Children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-the-education-of-looked-after-children>

The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked after Children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/designated-teacher-for-looked-after-children>

RESOLVED: that governors familiarise themselves with the revised guidance.

ACTION: All Governors

14 LOCAL AUTHORITY ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

14.1 Schools Forum

Governors were asked to receive and note the summary papers outlining discussions held at the meetings of the Schools Forum held during last term on 16 January 2018 and 27 February 2018.

Main points referred to:

RESOLVED: that the information be received and noted.

15 SCHOOL WEBSITE COMPLIANCE

Governors were reminded of the importance that their school website is kept up-to-date to meet all statutory and Ofsted requirements. This includes all SEND information displayed on the school website where the information must be up to date and easy to access and navigate by parents.

RESOLVED: that the Headteacher confirmed that the school's website is compliant.

16 CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

16.1 Report from the Chair of Governors

Governors were requested to read the full PowerPoint report (presentation and key documents) on the Oldham governors webpage: www.oldham.gov.uk/chairsofgovernors

16.2 Chairs Briefing Meeting

Date and Time: Monday 14 May 2018 at the Civic Centre (Lees Suite) - 6.00-8.30pm (5.30 - 6.00pm networking and light refreshments).

The Chair/Vice-Chair were requested to book a place on the next Chairs briefing using the online booking on system: <http://www.oldham.gov.uk/governortrainingprogramme>

ACTION: Chair/Vice Chair

17 LINK GOVERNOR

17.1 Report from the Link Governor

There was no report available from the Link governor and governors were requested to read the full PowerPoint report (presentation and key documents) on the Oldham governors webpage: www.oldham.gov.uk/linkgovernor

ACTION: All Governors

17.2 Link Governor Network Meeting

The next Link Governor Network Meeting is being held at the Honeywell Centre on Monday 18 June 2018 at 5.30pm (refreshments and networking) meeting 6.00pm - 7.30pm.

Link governors were requested to book on by using the following link: www.oldham.gov.uk/governortrainingprogramme

ACTION: Link Governor

18 GOVERNOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

18.1 Governor Annual Self-Review

Governors were asked to consider carrying out an annual self-review. A sample self-review document had been provided by the LA for adaptation by the governing body. This can be found on the governors website: www.oldham.gov.uk/governordocuments

Governors were advised to consider three individual key targets for the coming year.

ACTION: All Governors

18.2 Additional Governor Training

Governors were requested to update and share details of any additional training they have completed. This is training that has not been provided by Oldham's Governor Support Service and they must also list any online/webinar training completed.

No additional training was reported.

Governors were reminded to book online Local Authority training:
www.oldham.gov.uk/governortrainingprogramme

ACTION: All Governors

18.3 Opportunity Area Funded Governance Training

Governors were reminded that the Local Authority and the Oldham Opportunity Area are strongly recommending that governing bodies access the new funded training opportunities that are being offered by a variety of providers for Oldham School Governing Bodies, Local Governing Bodies and Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) Boards.

The Department for Education is providing two **funded training programmes** to improve the effectiveness of school governance which include:

Governance Leadership Development Programme (for those in Governance Leadership Roles, such as Chairs, Vice-Chairs or Committee Chairs). This programme aims to develop the skills and effectiveness of governors in maintained schools and academies.

Governance Clerking Development Programme (for all School, Academy or Trust Board Clerks, including new Clerks, who are currently supporting one or more Boards). This programme aims to support governance Clerks to provide professional quality clerking, ensuring the efficient and effective functioning of Governing Boards.

The programme also provides sustainable and relevant peer-to-peer support networks, enabling encouragement, support and the sharing of good practice.

Additional information is available at:
OpportunityAreas.OLDHAM@education.gov.uk

RESOLVED: that the information be noted

18.4 Oldham Governor Service Training Programme

Governors were reminded that the LA Governor Training Programme is updated regularly and that all governors are encouraged to book online for the LA governor training at:
www.oldham.gov.uk/governortrainingprogramme

Governors asked if training on General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) was available for all governors.

ACTION: All Governors/Governor Support Service

18.5 Oldham Governor Facebook Group

Governors were reminded to consider joining the closed Facebook group that has been established by Oldham governors and lead by a National Leader in Governance (NLG) to offer support to Oldham governors. [Oldham Governor Facebook Group](#)

ACTION: All Governors

19 SCHOOL VISITS BY GOVERNORS

All governors are reminded of the importance of carrying out a school visit and to attend events and celebrations. Governors were reminded that they should always provide written feedback on their visit.

The record of visit should be filed in school in preparation for any inspections; this includes a visit to another school's governing body that a governor has completed.

Governors were reminded that they can access an *example* school visit form for governors to complete on the governors website at: <http://www.oldham.gov.uk/governordocuments>

RESOLVED: that the programme of visits by governors was working well as evidenced by the recent OFSTED inspection

ACTION: All Governors

20 GOVERNOR KEY DATES

Oldham Learning Festival 2018 - #OLF18

Governors were reminded that the Education and Early Years Service, in partnership with the Oldham Education Partnership and Oldham Opportunities Area, will be running the first ever Learning Festival from Monday 25 June to Friday 6 July 2018. Governors are being invited to participate.

The main events from the programme will be hosted at the Queen Elizabeth Hall with a range of fringe events taking place at other venues across the borough.

The Oldham Learning Festival focuses around the key themes of:

- Leadership
- Social mobility
- Reducing disadvantage
- Supporting mental health and wellbeing for all
- STEMfest.

The festival is free to attend and is aimed at school leaders, teachers, governors, council officers, third sector, voluntary sector and private business and, of course children, young people and families.

Governors are encouraged to find out more about the Oldham Learning Festival at: www.oldham.gov.uk/OLF

Governors were also invited to 'join in the conversation' on Twitter: [#OLF18](https://twitter.com/OLF18)

The Headteacher stressed the value of this event and drew governors' attention to the activities proposed, urging them to attend if possible.

ACTION: All Governors

21 DRILLS

21.1 Fire Drill

A fire drill had not yet taken place so far this term.

21.2 Critical Incident/Lock Down/In Drill

A date had been set for a drill.

22 SCHOOL LETTINGS

The following lettings had taken place:

Name of Organisation	Type of Letting	Date
Diggle Dandelions	Pre-school	Daily from 1 January 2018

23 CLERK UPDATE

There were no new updates from the Clerk.

23 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING/FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 4 July at 4.00pm.

24 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

24.1 Facebook Group for Friends of Diggle School (FODS)

A governor asked if a closed Facebook Group for FODS could be established to promote events at the school to the wider community. Some concern was expressed that this may become a channel for complaint and abuse but after discussion concerning administration of the group and privacy settings.

RESOLVED: that a group be established for a trial period

ACTION: Chair

24.2 Safeguarding Governor

RESOLVED: that Mrs Ruth Topham be appointed Safeguarding Governor

ACTION: Chair/Headteacher/Governor Support Service

24.3 General Data Protection Regulations

Arrangements for the implementation of the GDPR were well in hand via the DLP. Policies, privacy notices and contact forms were in place ready for implementation. However, the Headteacher drew governors' attention to the inadequacy of the current layout of the school office with regard to GDPR. As visitors to the school had to enter the school office to sign in, or to speak to staff it was possible that sensitive information may be visible, or sensitive conversations overheard unless great care was taken. A redesign of the office, with the provision of a discrete reception area was a priority.

RESOLVED: that a redesign of the school office be investigated.

ACTION: Finance and Premises Committee/Headteacher

25 CONFIDENTIALITY

There were no items of confidentiality.

(There being no further business, governors were thanked for their attendance and the meeting was declared closed at 5.56pm).

Signed: _____
Chair

Date: _____