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|  | **The Blue Tangerine Federation**  7.00pm Wednesday 23 May 2022 at The Collett School  Full Governing Body  **MINUTES** |
| Present: | Gareth Burger (GB), Poppy Choudhury (PC), Ian Dignum (ID, Chair of Governors), Nick Griffin (NG), Ebbah Kwambai (EK), Gemma Luke (GL),  Aurele Mes Boaye (AMB), Josh Pollard (JP), Andy Summerskill (AS) |
| Not Present: | Rachel Andrew (RA) Stephen Hoult-Allen (SHA, Executive Headteacher) Laura Lilley (LL) Parris Williams (PW) |
| In Attendance: | Gina Penning-Aris - Acting Head of School, FHEC  Jamie Caple – JC, Head of School, St Luke’s  Jenny Witter - JW, Head of School, Collett  Tracey Norris – HfL Clerk |

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| 1. | **To receive apologies and approve absences**  Ian Dignum (Chair of Governors) welcomed everyone to the meeting in particular, Gina Penning-Aris, Acting Head of School who was representing Forest House. Apologies for absence had been received from Parris Williams (associate governor), Rachel Andrew, Aurele Mes Boaye, Laura Lilley and Stephen Hoult-Allen. The meeting was quorate. |  |
| 2. | **Declarations of conflicts of interest**  Declarations of pecuniary interest were recorded on Governor Hub. There were none relevant for this meeting. |  |
| 3. | **To approve the minutes of the previous meeting**  The minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 March 2022 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and would be signed by the chair at the end of the meeting. Matters arising were considered:   1. Clerk to request DPO report for Summer 2: request made. C/f to next agenda. | FGB agenda |
| 4. | **Executive Headteacher’s Report**  SHA was attending the launch of the Blue Tangerine Garden at the Chelsea Flower Show and had sent his apologies. The following documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting:   * EHT report * Café farm project update * Pupil voice – St Lukes * Collett Head of school report * Risk register * Send4Change banding review report   The following comments/questions were raised:   * Q Did the additional £321,000 funding allocation (for St Luke’s) from HCC for 2022/23 equate to the new banding formula due in April 2023? It was not clear how HCC had come to the figure of £321,000. It had been explained to the school in a meeting with HCC representatives that they recognised that the school had been underfunded in the past and that additional income would be made available: £321,000. This had not yet been confirmed in writing. * HCC had also noted that Collett School had been over funded by £35,000. * The new funding formula was being created at the moment. * Forest House would be moving to Roman Fields in time for the new academic year. The process had not been handled well by HCC and the information flow to staff involved and the executive team has been poor. The process was being reviewed by SHA and AMB to ensure all necessary employment law had been correctly followed. The Chair confirmed that he would be writing to HCC regarding the letter that had been sent out signed on behalf of the governing body (without his knowledge). Meetings with the union representatives had been held this week as part of the TUPE process. * School expansion: HCC were keen for both schools to expand although nothing had as yet been received in writing. SLT would seek to ensure that the due consultation process was followed; i.e. school leaders to review pupil profile and individual needs before offering a place. * A suitable site at St Luke’s for a new mobile classroom needed to be agreed. Kier had conducted a site visit. * The Federation owned the land so any decision re the location/installation of a new classroom would need its approval. The executive team did not want the old base (from a previous mobile structure) to be used as this was not in a good position for the smooth flowing of pupils. * JC cited the difficulties in recruiting for the current staffing vacancies at St Luke’s; he was not sure that an expansion could be accommodated. * It was noted that the federation did support the principle of expanding each of the schools, it just needed to be done in consultation. * JW noted that the day-to-day relationship between the school and the SEND team was good. * Q What was the timeline for the proposed expansion? Unknown at this stage. All the above points had been raised with HCC at a previous meeting.   Collett Head of School report   * Q What can governors do to help improve the quality of teaching and learning at the school? JW welcomed governor visits and challenge. * Q How could a governor visit be most effective? JW suggested that governors should pick an area of the SDP and then focus on this during their visit, pre-meeting/conversation with the subject leader prior to this would be useful. Governors should be seeking to collect evidence of the SDP or the curriculum in action. * PC explained that she had used the areas for improvement from the last OFSTED report as the basis of her visit. A joint visit by PC and GL to the lower school had noted clear next steps and curriculum progression well embedded. * NG had just completed safeguarding training and would be seeking evidence of good safeguarding practices during his visit. * ID noted that the even if a visit had a curriculum focus, it was still possible to comment on safeguarding practices/H&S matters etc.   Governor self-review   * ID explained that he hoped to arrange a governor self-review session towards the end of the summer term to reflect on the effectiveness and impact of the governing body. He hoped everyone would be willing to participate in this exercise. |  |
| 5. | **Finances**  The following documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting:   * SBM budget information Collett (must read) * SBM budget information St Luke’s (must read) * SBM budget information FHEC (must read) * Collett year end information: * P12 monitor * 2021/22 budget profiles * CFR report * Summary balance sheet * St Luke’s year end information * Combined summary balance sheet * FHEC profile report * St Luke’s profile report * Combined CFR * Combined summary profile report * P12 monitor |  |
| 5.a | **Year-end outturn: 2021/22**   1. Year-end outturn 2021/22: St Luke’s  * In-year deficit: £86,449 * Carry forward: £7,996 less committed balances of £20,247 = negative £12,252 * Variances to note: * £194,000 cash advance to be partially “written off” by HCC: see Finance Committee Minutes 16 May 22 * £50,000 allocated for roof repairs had been returned to the budget. * £22,810 COVID Testing grant (unbudgeted income) * £45,000 underspend on TA’s salaries as positions left vacant  1. Year-end outturn 2021/22: FHEC  * In year deficit: £62,476  1. Year-end outturn 2021/22: Collett  * In year deficit: £18,624 * Carry forward, less committed balances of £41,119.90: £260,904 * Variances to note: * Agency staff overspend: Budget: £20,000 actual: £79,000:   Questions and comments were invited:   * ID noted that the next meeting of the finance committee would review the budget lines against actual spend during 2021/22. * Previous years had not separated out FHEC from St Luke’s budget (FHEC was not a school in its own right) |  |
| 5.b | **Proposed Budgets: 2022/23**  ID referred to the minutes of the Finance Committee which had reviewed the proposed budget scenarios in detail. Each of the various scenarios had been discussed and the recommendation from the Finance committee were noted:   1. Proposed budget 2022/23: St Luke’s Scenario 5: Budget assumptions:  * Remove a class teacher from September 2022, remove the class, increasing class size to 9/10. * Agency budget is increased by £10k to £30k * An acting up allowance is allocated to fund TA’s fairly £10k * Removed Horticulture TA * No Cover Teacher * Increased support staff - * 3 TA’s & 2 Apprentices * 3 Vacancies * OT & SALT TA will become in class TA’s * 1 TA vacancy 01/09/2022 * Apprentices recruited from May * Fundraiser leaves 31/05/2022& not replaced  1. Proposed budget 2022/23: Collett Scenario 6: budget assumptions  * Remove a class teacher from September 2022, remove the class, increasing class sizes to 11. * Teaching Assistant posts are reduced gradually until Christmas 2022, naturally where possible * Remove 9 TA's   + 2 x 2:1 TA's end July   + 2 TA's with removal of class end of July   + Further 5 by end of December 2022 * Agency budget is increased to £30k * An acting up allowance is allocated to fund TA’s fairly £10k * Fundraiser leaves 31/05/2022 & not replaced  1. Proposed budget 2022/23: FHEC (for 5/12ths of the year)  * In year deficit: £32,166 * Projected year end position as at 31 August 2022: negative £94,665 (HCC have indicated verbally that this deficit would be written off).   The following questions and comments were raised:   * ID thanked MS for the amount of work undertaken to generate the different budget scenarios. * The need to make some structural adjustments was in response to the clear directive from HCC that the schools needed to submit balanced budgets. The Finance Committee had reviewed the different scenarios and whilst none were ideal had felt that they were content to propose scenario 6 for Collett and scenario 5 for St Luke’s subject to the adjustments agreed during the Finance Committee meeting. * MS had included the scenario suggested by the financial review (remove the posts of DHT from each school) but these had been discounted by governors on the basis of SLT capacity, the need for school improvement and the role’s important focus on the Curriculum. * Q How did the Finance Committee make its decision? The committee had reviewed each scenario and felt that the ones chosen would have the least impact on the quality of education, whilst delivering an improved financial performance. * JW confirmed that MS had shared each scenario with her (and JC) and, as Heads of School, they were content with the proposed scenarios. * Q How much money did the fundraising post bring in? Was it short-sighted not to replace this post? There was overlap between the fundraising post and the PTA associations. MS reported that SHA was in the process of creating one PTA for the federation in addition to the Blue Tangerine community farm charity. * Q Did the fundraising team (fundraising and assistant) cover their costs? This information was being collated, in the past funding raising had generated large sums of money, this had fallen during covid. * **Action: Finance committee to review fundraising income generated vs costs.** * Parental engagement and PTA fundraising was an untapped area although it was noted that the parent body was much smaller (120 families at Collett for example) than a typical secondary school which would ultimately restrict its fundraising abilities. * Corporate sponsorship was a potential area of fundraising. * The Blue Tangerine charity was entirely separate from the school. * Q What would be the impact of reducing the number of TAs in each class? This would be a staggered reduction between September to December. Each class would retain 1 teacher and 2 TAs. * Some TAs were on a fixed term contract and these would not be renewed. * JW was planning to link TAs to pathways so there was more mobility between classes and how TAs were deployed. * Q Had the impact on staff wellbeing been considered? The outcome of the budget would need to be shared in a positive light. It achieved the school’s medium term financial sustainability. SLT were mindful of the need to maintain staff morale. * Q What did this mean for 1:1 funding? If a pupil had 1:1 funding then this support would continue, therefore a class may have three TAs or more depending on the cohort. * Q What provision would there be for pupils who needed 1:1 provision but did not have the funding for this? This was an area where both schools could be more challenging on (to HCC). * Q If the schools set a balanced budget (by making the suggested structural changes) would this not negate its assertion that it was underfunded? The balanced budget at St Luke’s was only achievable with the additional £321,000 and the suggested (minor) structural changes. MS felt that the school had to demonstrate a willingness to engage with the recommendations from the financial review. * Q Was it possible to submit a narrative with the budget? That governors were reluctant to agree the budget based on the impact on class sizes (i.e. now above the recommended level of eight pupils per class). This was not possible within the budget software but the governors could write to HCC if desired. * Q What would happen if the schools submitted a deficit budget? The clerk advised that ultimately HCC had the power to take away the school’s delegated financial authority if it felt the governors were not having due regard for their financial responsibilities. * Q Was it right that the governors had to choose a budget which appeased HCC but was not right for the pupils? MS noted that there were some budget lines which were in need of tighter management control e.g. agency staff costs. * JW confirmed that the proposed budget scenario would not have a detrimental impact on the pupils. * MS confirmed that she had reviewed each of the scenarios with the heads of school before sharing with the Finance Committee. * Spending on capital projects had been cut back. Q Was this prudent in the long term? MS confirmed that capital bids would be made for the various projects due at St Luke’s but noted that the HCC team were often reactive rather than proactive in their prioritisation and allocation of funding. * Q What was the impact of removing a class at St Luke’s? The school currently had 18 classes this would be reduced to 17 classes. * Q What impact would this have on pupils’ wellbeing/friendship groups? This would be monitored. The long term aim was always to have eight pupils in each class supported by two TAs. * Q Why had FHEC budget been prepared on a 5/12th basis? This reflected the fact that the unit would move to Roman Fields in September. * Q What was the budget implication for St Luke’s of this? MS would prepare a list of costs to be re-imbursed from HCC re pre-paid contracts, de-coupling costs etc. HCC had agreed to write off the FHEC deficit from St Luke’s accounts. * Q Had this been guaranteed in writing? No. * **Action: MS/SHA to write to HCC confirming their understanding of the position to create a paper trail**. * Q How/when would the additional £321,000 be paid? Unknown at this time.   **The governors approved the proposed budgets as recommended by the Finance Committee:**   * Scenario 6 (with agreed adjustments made in the Finance committee meeting) for Collett * Scenario 5 (with agreed adjustments made in the Finance Committee meeting) for St Lukes * 5/12th proposed budget for FHEC | Finance Com  MS/  SHA |
| 6. | **Premises and H&S**  The following documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting:   * H&S Report * IT proposals: Collett, FHEC, St Luke’s * Premises summary * St Luke's fire door condition survey * St Luke’s toilet condition survey * St Luke’s window condition survey   Questions and comments were invited:   * A bid would be submitted for the fire door replacement – this was due in the next two years. * Windows: a bid would be submitted. * Toilets: the capital bid programme did not include toilet refurbishment. This would be included in the discussion re St Luke’s expansion proposals with HCC. * Governors noted that a number of premises matters would become urgent in two years' time. Q What would be the impact of this if not addressed now? Buidling work would be scheduled to take place during holidays and after school so as not to disrupt learning. St Luke’s was in a worse position than Collett as prior to SHA the previous leadership team had not paid enough attention to a rolling programme of repairs and maintenance. The environment at Collett was in a much better state of repair.   Windows 10   * The Window 10 quotes were reviewed. * Governors approved the lowest cost options.   H&S audit   * This would be conducted by governors in the summer term. * A**ction: ID and PC to arrange suitable dates in June.** | ID/PC |
| 7. | **Staffing**  The following documents had been uploaded in advance of the meeting:   * Federation wide staffing structure * Collett staffing structure  1. Staffing structure  * The recruitment difficulties at St Luke’s were noted. Redbourn was a small village and did not have good transport links which made TA recruitment particular hard compared to Collett. * Other local schools were similarly struggling to recruit. * In addition to Teach in Herts, St Luke’s were advertising TA vacancies in the village shop and on the BT Horsebox café. * PC was supporting the interview process at Collett for the head of lower school.  1. Exit interviews  * **Action: AMB to provide feedback from exit interviews.** * **Action: AMB to arrange teacher exit interviews.**  1. Staff wellbeing  * A staff survey would be issued in the second week after half term. The results of this would be shared at the next FGB meeting. | AMB |
| 8. | **Safeguarding**  The following reports had been shared in advance of the meeting:   * Spring term safeguarding report * Attendance data   Questions and comments were invited:   * Q What was being done to improve long term persistent absenteeism? * JP described the steps taken by the schools to address this which included: * Regular contact from JP * Engagement with external agencies, ESMA and the attendance team. * Q How responsive where the external agencies, what support did they offer? * These teams could provide guidance and advice and suggested next steps. * Q How did the school attempt to improve attendance levels? There was an attendance action plan in place and attendance targets were part of CIN plan and social worker dialogue. * Q What was the process of escalation to JP? Admin staff tracked daily attendance, a first response call was made on day one (message left if no answer), on day two a follow up call was made, on day three (if no response) an in-person visit was made. * Q What could be done to achieve target of 90% attendance? The schools were stable and higher than the national average for special schools. Many pupils with complex needs also had associated medical needs or conditions which meant they were more vulnerable to illness or had regular medical appointments. * Q Were behaviour expectation made clear to parents/carers? It was agreed that this needed to be raised in the newsletter with a positive spin. * **Action: Include positive reinforcement of attendance in school newsletter.** * Governors noted that attendance was critical to safeguarding and a clear action plan showing impact should be drawn up. * **Action: JP to prepare attendance action plan and impact for next meeting.** * Q What was recorded when a pupil was late due to transport? This was taken into account when allocating the attendance mark on the system. * Q What was the process if a complaint had been made to OFSTED? Typically, the complaint would be passed to HCC to investigate and report on. In this case the parent had by-passed the school’s complaints process and policy. * Q Was the policy readily available to parents? Yes, it was on the school website. * Q What process was in place at school for staff to log issues/concerns? The school’s used CPOMS to track all safeguarding/behaviour concerns. All staff had a log in and when an entry was made, an alert was sent to the DSL (designated senior leader: JP) and the heads of school. * There were 21 children recorded as being on a CIN plan. Q How many of these had been stepped down? Ans: Two. * Q What opportunities were there to teaching safeguarding to pupils – was it reactive or planned? * The PSHE curriculum was being reviewed to ensure this was adequate. There was a good focus on online safety and PHSE sessions were timetabled within the curriculum. The schools were reactive when needed i.e. in response to a particular incident at school. * JC noted that the area of focus in Hertfordshire at the moment were right wing extremism. * Q The number of racist incidents was higher than national average, what was being done to address this? * JP explained that staff were now recording all incidents of inappropriate language (regardless of intent) so the total number of incidents recorded had increased. * Q What work was being done/planned to improve pupils and staffs’ understanding of racism? A diversity group had been set up to look at the curriculum and audit curriculum resources/content. * **Action: Follow up report on anti-racism initiatives to next FGB**. * JP explained the ABC process in place following an incident: * A: antecedent * B: behaviour seen * C: consequence * All staff were training in Herts Steps, this was a therapeutic approach to behaviour management. Consequences could be educational or protected. * Q Did new staff get trained in this approach? Yes. * **Action: future reports to show breakdown of staff numbers who had received safeguarding training at each delivery point.** * Q Did staff receive updates on KCISE? Yes, this was part of the annual safeguarding training delivered during the INSET day and also part of regular safeguarding updates from JP. * **Action: LL to arrange a safeguarding visit to review the SCR**. | **JP**  **JP**  **Diversity group report**  **JP**  **LL** |
| 9. | **Equality and diversity report**  Rachel Andrew was not present. The report had not been circulated in advance of the meeting.  **Action: Item would be carried forward to the next meeting**. | RA |
| 10. | **Pupil Premium**   * A meeting had been arranged on 16 June for AS to review this area with SHA and JC. * **Action: Governor visit report to the next meeting**. * It was noted that all statutory requirements were up to date on the website (funding, interventions delivered, theory behind interventions etc). * Some targets in the PP report were high level e.g. improve the teaching of reading. Q How was this being monitored and impact tracked? * **Action: AS would seek evidence of this at his meeting.** | AS  AS |
| 11. | **Stakeholders**   1. Parent survey  * The questions were based on the OFSTED parent questionnaire. * Q Could governors have input into the questions? Yes. * **Action: JW to share questions with governors via Governor Hub prior to circulation to parents.**  1. Pupil voice: governors noted the video, with thanks. 2. Impact of pupil voice on SLT decision making: noted.  * Behaviour HUB: this was a new scheme which the federation had joined. * The school had partnered with a lead school which had a successful behaviour culture in place and could share/support best practice. * An audit tool, action plan, training, visits were available and a £9,000 contribution to costs incurred (for release time etc) was recoverable at the end of the scheme. The concept was how to successfully approach all behaviour needs ranging from SEMH > SLD > MD. | JW |
| 12. | **Policies**   * There were none due at this time. * ID reminded governors of the process for policy review. * Policies would be uploaded to governor hub for review, comment and approval in advance of the meeting. * The FGB would ratify these decisions at the following meeting. |  |
| 13. | **Governor Visits**  ID noted that no governor visits reports had been uploaded to Governor Hub. He asked all governors to try and make time to do this, it was essential evidence and added value to all governors.  Governors were able to upload a visit report directly to the visit folder in the documents section in governor hub and send a message on the noticeboard to the rest of the FGB.  See: Governor visit folder on governor hub for policy and template visit form. |  |
| 14. | **Governing Body Effectiveness**   1. Skills audit: the last response had been received and ID would compile the responses and circulate to governors. 2. Training: ID encouraged all governors to book either HfL live training or Modern Governor training; they should select areas which would support their link role. New governors were expected to complete induction training and safeguarding training as a minimum. 3. Code of conduct: AS would review this, with two other Governors and streamline it ready for review and signing in September. 4. FGB meeting papers: Staff had been asked to upload papers as either “MUST READ” or “FOR INFO” to help governors prioritise documents in advance of the meeting. | ID |
| 15. | **Any other business**   1. Forest House: Gina noted that the lack of staff at FHEC following HB’s enforced garden leave meant that it would not always be able to meet its contractual obligations to provide 25 hrs education per week.  * The clinical staff at the unit had raised this and SHA had forwarded their concerns to HCC. * Governors noted that the staff should always respond to safeguarding concerns and if adequate staff:pupils ratios could not be maintained then it should close (albeit temporarily). The priority had to be the safety of staff and pupils. * ID thanked Gina for stepping up and taking on the role of acting head of school. It was much appreciated. |  |

Meeting closed 9.33pm