

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY (FGB) OF STEEPLE
MORDEN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL
HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM ON 24 MAY AT 7.30PM**

Governors Present: Marie Gardner (Chair for the meeting), Mark Arnold, Tracey How (Headteacher), Debbie Littlefair, Jane List (Associate Governor), Ann Lynn, George Lynn, Liz Martin (Associate Governor), Gill McGuire, Karenza Nutley (Co Chair), Catherine Seward.

Also in Attendance: Jacquie Watts (Clerk) and Helen Ogilvie (prospective Associate Governor)

The meeting was quorate.

(NB: Governor Challenge, Questions and Monitoring are highlighted in bold

Action By:

1.	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>NOTED: apologies for absence were received from Gabrielle Edwards (holiday).</p> <p>AGREED: to accept apologies tendered.</p> <p>NOTED: Victoria Hutter and Sam Brown were also absent, but had not submitted apologies. The Clerk highlighted she had been told that Sam Brown would be resigning as a governor, but she had not received confirmation of his resignation from him. The Co-Chairs and Head confirmed they were all aware of his intended resignation and the Chair advised she had received a text from him to that effect.</p> <p>AGREED: that Sam Brown should be considered as having resigned with immediate effect.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>NOTED: there were no declarations.</p>	
3.	<p>Governor Appointments and Resignations</p> <p>NOTED: the following resignations from the Governing Body –</p> <p>Sam Brown (Co-opted Governor) as from 24/5/23 Chiya Jones (Associate Governors) as from 9/5/23 Liz Martin (Parent Governor) as from 24/5/23</p> <p>NOTED: the following proposed appointments were listed on the agenda –</p> <p>Mark Arnold (Co-opted Governor from Associate) Leanne Holt (elected Parent Governor) Liz Martin (Associate from Parent Governor) Helen Ogilvie (Associate and future elected Parent Governor)</p> <p>AGREED: that Mark Arnold, Liz Martin and Helen Ogilvie need not leave the meeting while their appointments were discussed.</p> <p>NOTED: Mark Arnold was nominated and seconded as a Co-opted Governor.</p>	

	<p>AGREED: to appoint Mark Arnold as a Co-opted Governor for a four-year period from 24/5/23 – 23/5/27.</p> <p>NOTED: Leanne Holt was one of two parent governors nominated from the parent body to fill two imminent parent governor vacancies.</p> <p>AGREED: to confirm the appointment of Leanne Holt as a Parent Governor to fill the vacancy created by Liz Martin stepping down as a Parent Governor. The appointment was subject to satisfactory DBS and Section 128 checks. When these were completed, the appointment would be finalised for a four year period from 24/5/23 – 23/5/27 and Leanne Holt would be invited to join the Resources Committee.</p> <p>NOTED: Liz Martin was happy to take on the role of an Associate Governor for the remainder of the academic year. She was nominated and seconded as an Associate Governor.</p> <p>AGREED: to appoint Liz Martin as an Associate Governor from 24/5/23 – 31/7/23.</p> <p>NOTED: Helen Ogilvie was one of two parent governors nominated from the parent body to fill two imminent parent governor vacancies. She would fill the Parent Governor vacancy that would be created when Marie Gardner stood down as a Parent Governor in July 2023. In the meantime, she was happy to serve as an Associate Governor. She was nominated and seconded as an Associate Governor.</p> <p>AGREED: to appoint Helen Ogilvie as an Associate Governor. The appointment was subject to satisfactory DBS and Section 128 checks. When these were completed, the appointment would be finalised for a one year period from 24/5/23 – 23/5/24 and Helen Ogilvie would be invited to join the Curriculum Committee. Once the Parent governor vacancy became available, Helen’s appointment would be formally considered and confirmed by the next available FGB meeting.</p> <p>NOTED: Victoria Hutter’s current term of office as an Associate Governor would come to an end in July 2023. The clerk confirmed the July FGB meeting would be asked to consider her position.</p> <p>AGREED: the school would proceed with finalising the DBS and Section 128 checks for Leanne Holt and Helen Ogilvie as quickly as possible and would advise the clerk when the two appointments could be completed.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>TH</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Minutes of Last Meeting – 29th March 2023</p> <p>NOTED: the minutes of the full governing body meeting held on 29th March 2023 as uploaded to GovernorHub with the agenda.</p> <p>NOTED: the following MATTERS ARISING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee Structure (Matters Arising) (min. 3 refers) – the Clerk had completed all requested actions. • Correspondence (min. 6 refers) – Karenza Nutley as Chair had responded to the 20mph consultation. Others had responded as suggested. She had received a letter back thanking her for her response and providing a pdf 	

	<p>summary of responses, which she had uploaded to GovernorHub for information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headteacher’s Update (min. 7 refers) – Debbie Littlefair had contacted the Early Help Support Officer to put her in touch with the school and contact had been made with the SENCO. DL had also provided details of free training courses as promised. Further training would be discussed under item 18 on the agenda. • School Development Plan (min. 9 refers) – all actions had been completed. • School Website Compliance (min. 11 refers) – the revised audit report was in hand. • Governance - Succession Planning (min. 12 refers) – was an agenda item. • Governor Training and Briefings (min. 15 refers) – was an agenda item. • Dates of Future Meetings (AOB) (min. 17 refers) – dates of meetings in 22/23 had been uploaded to Governor Hub. The Clerk had completed all requested actions. <p>AGREED: the minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th March 2023 as a true and correct record. The Chair for the meeting would sign the minutes for publication on the school website.</p>	AI/ MG
5.	<p>Minutes of Meeting of Resources Committee – 26th April 2023</p> <p>NOTED: the minutes of the meeting as uploaded to GovernorHub with the agenda. In the absence of Sam Brown, former Chair of Resources, Marie Gardner provided an update. Financial matters and the proposed 23/24 budget had been discussed. Contracts had been renewed. Work funded from the Energy Saving Grant was planned for the summer. Discussions also included pupil behaviour and the impact of Behaviour Support staff, the ongoing cleaner vacancy, staff well-being, premises matters, the swimming pool, governor Health and Safety and Financial audits and approval of policies.</p> <p>NOTED: the meeting had approved the 23/24 School Budget and submitted it to the LA. An error in energy costs had subsequently been discovered, meaning the outturn was likely to be £10k worse than the planned budget. The school wished to model alternative budgets to reduce the resultant deficit, but the LA contract with Orovia had concluded and the school could no longer access its 22/23 figures or budget detail. The new accounting system was not yet available for the school to run alternative budget scenarios. The school had told the LA of its situation and had requested priority access to the new system. It had been advised that the new system should be available a week or two after Half Term. The Resources Committee would review the 23/24 budget once system access had been granted.</p>	
6.	<p>Minutes of Meeting of Curriculum Committee – 4th May 2023</p> <p>NOTED: the minutes of the recent meeting as uploaded to GovernorHub before the meeting. Gill McGuire, Chair of Curriculum, summarised discussions. The Committee had considered policies, including the Assembly and Collective Worship Procedure, which had been uploaded for all governors to see and review. Subject leader audits were discussed. Teachers were already significantly stretched and were unlikely to be able to action all points identified</p>	

	<p>at the same time. Areas of priority were being identified. Governors had been asked to identify how their visits had impacted positively on staff. The SDP had been considered, including changes to wording, and it would be reviewed further at the next meeting. Christian Distinctiveness and a positive meeting with the EDRA were also discussed.</p>	
7.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>NOTED: the only correspondence received was the response to the school's 20mph letter as discussed under Matters Arising (minute 4 above).</p>	
8.	<p>School Budget 23/24</p> <p>NOTED: as recorded under minute 5, the 2023/24 School Budget had been agreed by the Resources Committee and submitted to the LA. An error in energy costs had subsequently been discovered, meaning the outturn was likely to be £10k worse than the planned budget and would require further review by the Resources Committee when physically possible.</p> <p>AGREED: to endorse the decision of the Resources Committee and the resultant 23/24 school budget, on the understanding that further changes would need to be made to the budget when circumstances permitted.</p>	
9.	<p>Headteacher's Update</p> <p>NOTED: the documents uploaded to GovernorHub in advance of the meeting. Governors queried the apparently high level of persistent absenteeism. The Head explained the detail behind the figures, including a virulent stomach bug. The figures did not necessarily relate to persistent absentees previously chased by the school. Governors asked if the school was now fining parents and carers when pupils were absent for a holiday? The school's stance was discussed. Only one absence potentially qualified for a fine, but one was not levied for reasons explained to the meeting.</p> <p>NOTED: governors commented on the large number of trips and asked why none involved years 1 and 2? The school commented that year 2 had had their trip in the autumn term. Year 1 tended to have visitors come into the school rather than go out on trips. The school had reviewed the trips and had noticed a focus on history and geography and less focus on the arts. They were looking to re-balance the focus. Governors supported this approach.</p> <p>NOTED: an unexpected maternity leave after half term would require changes to the staffing organisation. For previously noted reasons, the school was currently unable to re-model the budget.</p> <p>NOTED: the DfE expectation regarding school opening hours. While it was not a requirement, it would be checked by OFSTED. The school was looking to extend the school day by twenty minutes: 8.45am to 3.15pm, but it could not afford to extend non-teaching staff hours to match. The school was therefore having to be creative with cover arrangements. The school day would start at 8.45am rather than 8.45 for 9.00. Governors asked questions about timings, including the impact on the bus timetable. The timetable would have to be adjusted by five minutes. Governors asked why the lunch break couldn't be shortened? The Head felt it would be too much to ask staff to accept. The staff governor commented she only had 15 minutes for lunch. A shortened lunch break would</p>	

	<p>mean lunch clubs could not be held, which would impact negatively on enrichment. Governors asked if the school should notify the Parish Council given the likely change in traffic flow and the recent 20mph consultation. It was felt there was no need to formally notify the Parish Council, but an item would be put in Prospect, the Village newsletter, and the school newsletter.</p> <p>NOTED: a governor queried the likely Reception intake in September 23. There had been 22 offers and the figure was unlikely to increase.</p>	
10.	<p>Safeguarding</p> <p>NOTED: Debbie Littlefair highlighted that, with Liz Martin stepping down, another Safeguarding Link governor was needed in addition to herself. The Chair commented that link governor roles were normally reviewed in September, but a review in July might be possible.</p> <p>AGREED: in the meantime, that Debbie Littlefair would undertake the next Safeguarding review on her own.</p> <p>NOTED: Debbie Littlefair asked if all new governors and associates had undertaken safeguarding training or read part 1 of the KCSiE? The Chair commented that governors were asked to read the new KCSiE and confirm they had done so at the start of the autumn term, but as there were a number of new governors and associates, she invited them to read part I of the KCSiE and send an email to the clerk to confirm they had done so. Safeguarding training would be discussed under the agenda item on training.</p>	<p>DL</p> <p>New governors & associates</p>
11.	<p>School Development Plan</p> <p>NOTED: the RAG rated document uploaded to GovernorHub prior to the meeting. The Head explained why some areas of activity would not be marked green until the end of the academic year. She had no major concerns with the plan and expected that all areas would achieve amber, as a minimum, by the end of the year. The school had not yet moved forward on metacognition because of the focus on behaviour and curriculum. Work would start and the area would turn amber by the end of the year.</p> <p>NOTED: Governors felt the ticks on the back page were clear and helpful. They were pleased to note that the moderation section of the SDP had turned amber and asked whether any external moderation had taken place, given that the LA adviser had highlighted the importance of this? Peer moderation with Bassingbourn Primary School had taken place and had proved useful. Years 2 and 6 teachers had attended an LA moderation event and visiting LA advisers had also moderated aspects of the plan.</p>	
12.	<p>Three Year Strategy</p> <p>NOTED: the latest version of the three year strategy uploaded by the Chairs prior to the meeting. The SDP currently contained details of the old three year strategy and the new document needed to be approved prior to inclusion in the SDP. The Head had spoken to the EDRA regarding the unresolved section on bible stories and Christian Ethos. The Head shared the document on screen including new wording to reflect the inclusion of Christian Ethos.</p>	

	<p>AGREED: the document as shared on screen, subject to the replacement of the word “stakeholders” with “all members of the school community”. The new three year strategy should be incorporated in the SDP and would be uploaded to GovernorHub for further governor scrutiny.</p>	<p>TH Co-Chairs</p>
13.	<p>Review of School SEF</p> <p>NOTED: the School SEF would be reviewed in the Autumn Term</p>	<p>TH</p>
14.	<p>Policies</p> <p>NOTED: the list of policies recorded on the agenda and uploaded to GovernorHub for approval.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premises Management and Security policy - was a single policy document AGREED: the Premises Management and Security Policy. • Volunteers Policy AGREED: the Volunteers Policy 	
15.	<p>FGB Diversity Data (DfE Guidance)</p> <p>NOTED: the Clerk advised that DfE advice, whilst not a requirement, was for school governing bodies to publish equality and diversity information about their membership on the school website. A number of governor associations had raised concerns that, for a small governing body, certain data was likely to breach personal confidentiality and data security because it could be attributed to known individuals. The Co-Chairs believed that GovernorHub would eventually incorporate secure diversity data collection.</p> <p>AGREED: no action should be taken regarding the publication of governing body diversity information until further advice was available from the DfE or other appropriate bodies and until GovernorHub included a way to collect diversity information safely and securely for appropriate publication.</p>	
16.	<p>Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair 23/24</p> <p>NOTED: the Co-Chairs advised that Mark Arnold was willing to stand as the new Chair when they stood down and Ann Lynn was willing to stand for the role of Vice Chair on a temporary basis. The Co-Chairs would be arranging a hand over and briefing session with Mark and Ann. The meeting thanked Mark and Ann for volunteering. The Clerk reminded the meeting that, even if it was unlikely that other governors wished to stand for the two roles, the election of Chair and Vice Chair should be a formal item on either the July or September meeting agendas and nomination and election to the roles should be conducted formally and openly.</p> <p>NOTED: the Co-chairs recommended that anyone interested in becoming chair should attend the LA training event for Chairs. Mark Arnold was happy to share the position as a Co-Chair if anyone wanted to consider the role. Once Marie Gardner stood down as a parent governor in order to become an Associate governor, as planned, Karenza Nutley would be the sole Chair until the new appointments were made.</p>	

17.	<p>Health and Safety</p> <p>NOTED: the recent health and safety visit by Mark Arnold. He had reviewed school activity against the health and safety checklist and considered the integrity of the building. He had noted a couple of points, but nothing major.</p>	
18.	<p>Governor Training and Briefings</p> <p>NOTED: the amount of governor training undertaken and booked. Jane List advised she had been unable to undertake safeguarding training booked for June, but had rescheduled it for July. Gill McGuire had also been unable to undertake the June training and had yet to confirm a replacement date. She would be attending the termly briefing in July. Other training being undertaken was noted and discussed. Marie Gardner encouraged everyone to keep up the momentum with regards to training.</p> <p>NOTED: the importance of exclusion training for a wide range of governors as the Chair often had to recuse themselves from a panel because of prior knowledge of events.</p>	
19.	<p>Governor Monitoring and Visits.</p> <p>NOTED: Marie Gardner would be visiting the school on the coming Friday. Debbie Littlefair had visited to discuss Art and was planning an English visit. Ann Lynn had reviewed Maths. Mark Arnold would be considering computing in June and Victoria Hutter was scheduled to review Geography on the following day. Visits in relation to MFL, Science, RE, Finance, Health and Safety and Music had also taken place or were being planned. Governors were reminded to record their visits on a visit form for publication on GovernorHub. Ann Lynn’s Maths visit record was highlighted as an excellent example of a visit report.</p> <p>NOTED: school staff had requested that governors submit questions in advance of visits so staff could be prepared.</p> <p>NOTED: Chiya Jones had been unable to schedule a PSHE visit before resigning.</p> <p>AGREED: Karenza Nutley would undertake a PSHE visit.</p> <p>NOTED: a governor questioned if a SEND visit was currently appropriate? Given the backlog of SEND paperwork, the school requested the SEND visit be deferred until September. Governors confirmed that the principal focus of visits was the curriculum. Governors were reminded to complete the bottom section of the visit form to ensure continuity with the next visit.</p>	KN
20.	<p>AOB</p> <p>NOTED: the Clerk advised that the LA had sent out support service SLAs to schools for the next academic year. These included adviser visits, but also CamClerk support. If the school wished to continue with her as Clerk (or with another CamClerk) the form needed to be signed and returned. The school email system had been down for a couple of days, but the Head would check to</p>	TH

	see if the document had been submitted and would discuss it with the Co-Chairs prior to them signing the document.	
21.	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting</p> <p>AGREED: the next scheduled meeting of the Full Governing Body would take place on Tuesday, 11th July 2023 at 7.30pm in person at the school. An earlier start time might be considered to allow for a social element to the meeting in recognition of recent appointments and forthcoming resignations.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">The meeting finished at 21:00</p>	

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts
Clerk To The Governors
25th May 2023

Approved by the Full Governing Body on:

Date:11th July 2023.....

Signature (Chair):.....