



MINUTES OF THE CAREW LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON WEDNESDAY 10th FEBRUARY AT 4.00PM.

Members: Mr P Chambers (Chair)
Mrs J Sherborne (Vice-Chair)
Mr J Prior (Principal)
Mrs A Acik
Mr S Brooks
Mr E Murphy

Also present: Mr D Thomas – Head of Lower School
Mrs B Scott – Head of Finance-Academies
Mrs T Goodsell – Clerk to the Governors
Mrs F Ganderton – Shadowing Clerk

1. Apologies

All governors were in attendance.

Mr Chambers welcomed everyone to the meeting. As this was his first Governing Body meeting as Chair, he explained that he would be working in tandem with Mrs Goodsell, to ensure all agenda matters were covered effectively.

2. Declarations of Interest

Governors **NOTED** Mr Brooks' suggestion that he may need to leave the meeting, when the TA restructure was discussed.

3. Constitution and Appointments

i) Governors **WELCOMED** Mr Chambers as Chair of the Governing Body. His appointment was approved by the OHC&AT Board on 26th November.

ii) Governors **NOTED** that Mrs Sherborne, had been appointed to Vice-Chair on 26th November. Mrs Acik confirmed she was content to step down from the Vice Chair role.

iii) Governors **NOTED** Mrs Goodsell had written to the two parent governors, Mrs Conaghan and Mrs Summers, to advise them that they had been disqualified from the governing body for lack of attendance at GB meetings. An election has been run to replace these governors and nominations have been received from

two parents - Sandra Butcher and Joy O'Connor. Both had been notified that their nominations will be ratified at the OHC&AT Board meeting on the 3rd March. Once approved, induction training will follow and the new governors will attend the next meeting in June. Mr Prior added that Mrs Butcher is also the Chair of Carew Friends.

iv) Mrs Goodsell, informed the governors that there were also two co-opted governor vacancies, one with a portfolio remit for HR and the other for Teaching and Learning. She said that one of the new parent governors may have the relevant skills and interest to hold the HR portfolio remit. She also asked Mr Chambers to consider whether he had any contacts that may be interested in the Teaching and Learning portfolio.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Governors **AGREED** the minutes of the meeting held on 5th November 2015, and they were signed by Mrs Sherborne, in her capacity as Chair of the last meeting.

5. Matters Arising

i) Radon: As referred to in minute 6 ii; Mr Prior updated Governors that from 22nd February, a further 15 monitors will be placed around the school for a period of 3 months. These would then be sent to the PHE for testing. A letter to parents has been drafted, and this will be issued shortly.

ii) School Visits Policy: As referred to in minute 7; Governors **NOTED** that the Educational Visits Policy has had some minor revisions, and will be presented to the OHC&AT Board on 3rd March for approval.

iii) Sixth Form Report: As referred to in minute 7; Governors **RECEIVED** a verbal update from Mr Prior on the current position of the sixth form. Carew currently has a teacher on a fixed term contract, so they will be advertising this as a teaching post for September. Mr Prior has discussed the post with Kirsty Cottrell, Deputy Head of Orchard Hill College who is keen to add this leadership brief to her current remit. Mr Prior said that Kirsty would be a great asset to the school. She is experienced, and would bring the strong leadership qualities required for the role. His discussions with her will continue after the half term. Mr Prior went on to say that there are likely to be 15-20 students in September, and with Kirsty taking the lead, a strong team of TAs, and a possible STA, he was confident that the sixth form provision will be a strong offer. He added that it was important to ensure that the sixth form offers a radically different opportunity for pupils from Year 11. Mr Brooks asked whether the predicted numbers are current Carew pupils. Mr Prior confirmed that they are and this is important because retention rates into Year 13 is an Ofsted Key Performance Indicator.

6. Portfolio Governor Visits

i) Safeguarding – Janet Sherborne

Mrs Sherborne gave a verbal update following her meeting with Helen Morris, the Safeguarding Designated Lead, that afternoon. They discussed how the different boroughs worked, looked at different statistics, and health and safety. Mrs Sherborne said that she is confident that Carew is maintaining its Outstanding Ofsted grade for Behaviour and Safety. The correct procedures are in place and all pupils are safe. Mr Chambers added that on his recent visit to the school, he saw staff undertaking safeguarding training, which he thought was a very positive sign. Mr Prior said that Mr Smillie's absence had stretched his leadership team to capacity. Helen Morris had taken on the role of the designated safeguarding lead. Mr Prior expressed his thanks to his team – Helen, Emmet and David, for all the additional work delegated to them.

ii) Business Development and Marketing – Stephen Brooks

Mr Brooks met with Alice Irvine on the 2nd February and reported that he had had an effective meeting with lots of ideas discussed. Mr Brooks said that there is much good work being done around marketing and on the website. He had discussed some areas of development with Alice e.g. building up a stock of photos taken from after school clubs and events, for the website. Mr Brooks stressed the importance of effective communications between the OHC&AT marketing team and the Carew staff in ensuring an efficient use of resources. Mr Chambers said that his sense, from the website, was that things were happening at the school, but it was always good to continually challenge in order to improve things. He asked whether there was a School Council presence. Mr Brooks confirmed that he had discussed this with Alice as an area to develop (although there is currently a Learner Council – or Pupil Parliament – that meets half-termly). He added that there were other links that could be included, for example, the football coach that runs the after school club. Mrs Sherborne said that the marketing team were moving from Worcester Road to the Old Town Hall so they would physically be much closer to Carew, enabling a quick response to any opportunities for promoting the school and accessing good material for the website. Mr Thomas suggested providing the marketing team with a whole school calendar to enable sufficient planning for attendance at school events. Mr Brooks said the school used to produce a newsletter and it would be good to resurrect this (although there is a weekly E-safety Newsletter). All the governors agreed this was a good idea. Mr Chambers said that the meeting showed good progress, and encouraged more good news stories from the pupils.

Mr Prior made the point that if the 3 potential Kingston schools come into the OHC&AT fold that may put pressure on the small marketing team. He suggested there could be a gatekeeper to Alice, possibly Clare Price.

Finally, on the Business Development side, Mr Brooks said that there was also a discussion about the frequency of wedding hire at Carew and its impact on the site and school functionality. This will be explored further.

iii) Finance – Annette Acik

Mrs Acik met with Brenda Scott on 29th January, and highlighted the key points raised from the meeting. She commented that the risk spreadsheet was a useful document that enabled her to interrogate any issues with Mrs Scott. Governors **NOTED** that these included:

- i) Top Ups – The previous issues with Sutton council for non-payment have now been resolved after some negotiation;
- ii) Outstanding debt with Croydon council – negotiation is under way regarding the one-to-one support fees, but Mrs Acik had the sense this was under control and was being effectively monitored;
- iii) Trips – Mrs Acik acknowledged this was a small amount of self-generated income, but parents did need to be encouraged to pay in advance for the excursions.

Mr Chambers said that that it is apparent that there was a real drive to improve the overall monitoring. Mrs Acik added that with funds so tight, and a small surplus to manage, they needed to be robust. She felt Mrs Scott achieves this and is able to explain the different budget lines and any variances. Mr Prior thanked Mrs Scott and her team for the much more stable position of the finances. Mrs Sherborne explained that the payroll system will be moving 'in-house' as of 1st April 2016. Mrs Acik queried the benefit of this. Mrs Sherborne explained that a payroll manager and assistant had been appointed, which would be more cost effective than paying Sutton council. Mr Prior added that they were spending to ultimately save. The risk (of errors and capacity issues) would be early on, in the first quarter. However, a strong payroll manager has been appointed and he is confident that this is the right decision to make. Mrs Scott reiterated this and said whilst it will be a challenge, it was manageable.

iv) Ethos and Vision – Paul Chambers

Mr Chambers told the governors that his meeting with Mr Prior on the 2nd February had provided a useful induction and had given him a helpful strategic overview of Carew in his new position as Chair. He said that he had gained a good understanding of his role and how best to support Mr Prior. He was keen to do more work to get the children more engaged with the ethos and the vision of the school and had agreed with Mr Prior that a student satisfaction survey would

be carried out in the summer term. This would enable pupils to reflect on their own experiences in school and aid further discussion and developments with managers and staff. Mr Chambers said he was also made aware of the work undertaken with the Senior Leadership Team to help further develop them ready for the next academic year. Additional capacity pressure had been placed on the team during the absence of the Vice Principal, who is currently on long-term sick leave, but this has been managed positively, providing opportunities for staff with ambition to take on extra responsibilities. Mr Chambers added that he was keen to come back and learn more. From his own experience in Further Education, to be outstanding is always the aspiration but it is also important to focus on 'what we are' and 'what we are trying to achieve'. Governors **RECEIVED** all the portfolio reports.

7. Principal's Report

Pupils

Mr Prior informed governors that as of 29th February, Carew will have 155 pupils on roll, with two new pupils in year 6 and 7, coming from Sutton. These are pupils who were on the verge of permanent exclusion from their current provisions. In terms of growth, Mr Prior said he felt that Carew was now much better placed than two years ago to take on pupils with more complex needs and this was testament to the depth and quality of his staff. 155 pupils was the highest number the school has ever had and Mr Prior said he felt confident that by September 2016 they will be even closer to their PAN of 177.

Budget

Governors noted that budgetary pressures remain constant, but that pressures have eased due to the delayed pupil top-up payments received from Sutton council. Mr Prior also confirmed that Sutton had committed to paying £5k top-up per MLD pupil until April 2017, after which the National Funding Formula for high needs pupils will be introduced. Out-of-borough pupils are charged differently, according to the out-of-borough banding structure but Mr Prior felt it wasn't a great discrepancy. He said that it was difficult at this stage to know how the funding formula will affect Carew.

Personnel

Mr Prior outlined the current staffing position, which he felt was strong. There are two long term absences, and some posts currently being advertised; a drama teacher post, a permanent 6th form teacher for September, and 2-4 TAs. He was confident that the school would be in a good position for September. In terms of predicted growth numbers, Mr Prior said that he was looking at 23 pupils in KS2 so he may need a third class teacher, particularly considering that these children

have the more complex learning needs. He felt that stronger provision in this key stage could be provided across three classes of approximately 8 children.

Mr Brooks said that in relation to staff recruitment, Orchard Hill had recently held a recruitment evening and he felt this could be a good way to encourage more applicants to Carew. Mrs Sherborne said that the recruitment evening was a better direction to recruitment because adverts in E-Teach and the Guardian were not always working. Mr Prior said that he would be very happy to try a recruitment evening, especially as the school diversifies its curriculum. As pupil numbers grow, the teaching team needs to expand in a commensurate considered and plausible way. He said that evidence of this was in the approach the school is taking with TAs, eg supporting some to undertake teaching degrees 'on the job'.

Mr Prior confirmed Mr Brooks didn't need to leave the room for his reference to the TA restructure, and went on to say that the second consultation finished on the 8th February and final recommendations will be made shortly.

Governors noted that Nick Hall, the Caretaker/Site Manager will be leaving his post on 29th February. Mr Prior asked for his thanks to be include in the minutes in recognition of Mr Hall's services to Carew over the years. He wished him well for the future. He explained that Carew caretaking will now come under the OHC&AT's Facilities Team and plans are in place for a smooth transition from 1st March. He said that Peter McNamara, the new Caretaker is very good and will be working school hours, which will be a positive change for the school. It also frees up the caretaker's cottage which Mr Prior and Mr McNamara will tour and consider its future use.

Governors also noted Mr Prior's continuing work with Mark Whitby (Associate CEO) to provision map the next 3-5 years, based on predicted pupil growth, and to ensure that the right and appropriate level and structure of staffing are in place ahead of delivery. Mr Chambers asked when a provision map draft might be ready. Mr Prior said that it already existed, but it needs to be updated. Mr Prior **AGREED** to share the updated provision map with Governors.

School Improvement

Carew's programmes of study/schemes of work are on track for completion by May half term. Mr Prior told governors that it will be interesting to see what the national progress measures will be like in September. Once these are published, Carew will be able to refine and revise their own from the beginning of the academic year.

Governors noted that Carew has now joined the 'Forum of Five', a cohort of similar good and outstanding schools brought together by head teachers with the common aim of sharing best practice. Mr Prior said he felt it was very important

to share best practice and to develop the middle leadership strand. Mr Chambers asked who the other schools were and Mr Prior confirmed the four schools were Park School in Woking, Dove House in Basingstoke, Bensham Manor in Croydon and Garratt Park in Wandsworth. Mr Chambers said that he felt it was an excellent approach. Mr Prior said that until now, Carew had not been ready to take on such a collaboration, but is now able to legitimately add value. He said it was reaffirming and reassuring to see Carew's progress.

Health & Safety and Premises

Mr Prior informed governors of current premises plans for September. He confirmed that portacabins were no longer being considered for temporary classrooms because the risk was that they would remain a long term provision and potentially impede on future plans to relocate the school to a new building elsewhere. He and Steph Hill, OHC&AT's Director of Business Services were therefore considering how to reconfigure the existing school space. Mr Prior said that there is a need to free up classroom space including possibly splitting up the art room and his Principal's office. Mr Thomas asked for clarification about the square meterage required per pupil in terms of school space. Mr Prior said the laws only apply to new builds, but they could potentially make a case in terms of suitability. He added that a new build remains the long term aim. He said that two local Councillors had come to visit the school and they were on board with the idea of a new build, but that they Carew is always competing with the mainstream sector in Sutton. Mr Prior said that in the meantime, improvement works will be carried out over Easter, new professional signage, new staircase 'nosing' and aesthetic improvements including refreshed paintwork in the communal areas. The signage and staircasing would be colour-coded to support pupils' navigation around the school.

Mrs Acik asked about the letter to Tom Brake MP regarding traffic calming in Church Rd. Mr Chambers **RECOMMENDED** that the Clerk draft a letter for Mr Chambers to issue shortly.

ACTION: Clerk to draft letter to Tom Brake MP and send to Mr Chambers for approval.

Sample of School Events

Mr Murphy outlined the school educational visits which have taken place. These have been positive learning experiences for the pupils. He confirmed there are more visits taking place throughout the school year. Mrs Acik said that she had attended a Food Tech event in December. She had been very impressed and it was great to see the children actively involved and having fun.

Mr Chambers said he was delighted to hear of such activities. He said it was important to get the children thinking about their futures and embed their achievements in a positive way. Governors **RECEIVED** the Principal's report

Monthly Monitoring Dashboard

Governors **RECEIVED** Mr Prior's dashboard which he took them through. Some of the key points included:

- Strong and steady attendance, which Mr Prior said could be attributed to i) better quality of provision; ii) better communication and relationships with families; iii) effective monitoring of attendance.
- Persistent absentees have increased for a variety of reasons. Mr Prior confirmed this will be looked into further after half term.
- There was a spike in fixed term external exclusions in January due to a small cohort of children experiencing acute difficulties at this time.
- After a decrease in the Autumn term, there has been an increase in severe behaviour incidents related to a small number of children with more complex profiles of need.
- Typically good and outstanding teaching is evident through typicality judgements: 26% outstanding, and 89% which was good or better.
- Predicted GCSE and Entry Level grades for Y11 2015/16 are positive. Mr Prior predicted that as the syllabus gets more challenging, it is going to become harder for Carew pupils to achieve at foundation GCSE level PE GCSE is being piloted for the first time. Mr Prior said that it could be a very difficult subject for children with a lot of theory and literacy which may prove challenging.

Governors **RECEIVED** the dashboard

8. Finance and Funding

The governors **NOTED** that the Service Level Agreements are still being finalised and should be ready soon.

Mrs Scott gave an overview of the management accounts and said that Carew was in a much better position than previously. The only area to highlight as a concern was the use of agency staff. This can be explained by the long term sickness absence of some staff. Mr Chambers asked if there were any risks that governors needed to be mindful of. Mrs Scott said that there were no areas of major concern. Croydon are currently refusing to pay for 37 weeks transport because of INSET week. 1 pupil has gone into sixth form and it is costing £56 a day to transport him on a return journey by taxi. Croydon have asked for the invoices and Mrs Scott has passed them across. Mrs Acik and Mrs Sherborne both commented that the accounts were very well presented and clear.

Mrs Goodsell asked if Governors were content to receive the SLAs for approval via email. Governors **AGREED**.

ACTION: Mrs Goodsell to circulate the finalised SLAs to governors for approval.

Governors **RECEIVED** the management accounts.

9. Any Other Business

i) External Lettings Policy:

The External Lettings 2015-2016 policy was tabled. Mr Chambers requested that as governors had not had a chance to read the document, that governors provide any comments back to Mrs Scott by the end of February. All governors **AGREED**.

Action: Governors to read and provide comments to Mrs Scott on the external lettings policy.

ii) Student Satisfaction Proposal:

Mr Chambers suggested that a couple of pupils attend the beginning of each LGB meeting to provide information on their experiences of life at Carew Academy – possibly pupils from the School Council. Mr Prior said this was a good suggestion. Mr Murphy and Mr Thomas said they would look into managing the logistics of this for the pupils and their parents.

10. Dates of the Next Meetings

The following meetings were agreed:
Thursday 23rd June 2016 at 16:00 and;
Wednesday 16th November 2016 at 16:00.

11. Confidentiality

There were no items of confidentiality.

The meeting closed at 5.50pm

CHAIR----- DATE-----