



**MINUTES OF THE CAREW LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER AT 4.00PM.**

**Members:** Mrs J Sherborne (Chair)  
Mrs A Acik (Vice Chair)  
Mr J Prior (Principal)  
Mr S Brooks  
Mr E Murphy  
\* Mrs T Conaghan

Also present: Mr D Thomas – Head of Lower School  
Mr C Smillie – Assistant Vice Principal  
Mrs H Morris – Assistant Vice Principal  
Mrs T Goodsell – Clerk to the Governors  
Mrs F Ganderton – Shadowing Clerk

### **1. Apologies**

Mrs Conaghan did not attend the meeting.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Mrs Sherborne welcomed everyone to the meeting. She said that this is the first meeting since the successful Ofsted in June 2015, and the previous Chair, Mr Mills, has now stepped down from his role. She congratulated Mr Prior and all the staff and Governors for an excellent Ofsted result which was very well deserved.

Mrs Sherborne explained that the Governing Body was in a process of transition and whilst she was content to be Chair for the meantime, the relationship between Orchard Hill College & Academy Trust (OHC&AT) and Carew Academy meant that it would be appropriate to find an alternative Chair. She could then continue as a Governor. This was **AGREED** by all.

Governors handed in their declaration of interest forms.

### **3. Skills Audit Form**

Governors handed in their skills audit forms.

#### 4. Constitution and Appointments

- i) Governors **NOTED** Mr Mills' resignation from the LGB. Mr Prior confirmed that he has written to Mr Mills to thank him for his time as Chair.
- ii) Governors noted that Mrs Phillips had resigned, leaving a portfolio vacancy for Teaching and Learning.
- iii) Mrs Goodsell confirmed that Mrs Conaghan's absence meant that she, along with Mrs Summers, both Parent Governors, had been disqualified for lack of attendance and she would arrange the paperwork. Mr Prior said that there were 40 new parents from the September intake and hopefully that would lead to some interest in taking on the Parent Governor role.
- iv) Mrs Goodsell proposed that Mrs Acik, in her experienced position on the Board, temporarily take on the role of Vice Chair until another is found. Mrs Acik confirmed she was content with this and it was **AGREED** by all.

**Action: Mrs Goodsell to arrange the paperwork to terminate Mrs Conaghan's membership and to arrange a Parent Governor election.**

#### 5. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Governors **AGREED** the minutes of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

#### 6. Matters Arising

- i) Parent Governors: As referred to in Minute 4 iii.
- ii) Radon Letter: Governors **NOTED** that a letter has still to be issued to parents informing them of the radon issue. Governors noted that the risks are low in this area.

**Action: Mr Smillie to draft a letter, and send it to Alice Irvine, OHC&AT Marketing Manager before circulating to parents.**

- iii) Traffic Calming: Governors **NOTED** that there had been no progress on traffic calming on Church Road although the school were trying to manage the situation after school by monitoring children around the perimeter of the school.

(See Minute 7; Health and Safety, for action).

- iv) Grounds Maintenance: Mr Prior confirmed that the school is continuing to buy grounds maintenance services from Sutton, whose prices are competitive.

## **7. Principal's Report**

### **Pupils**

Mr Prior reported that there were 151 pupils on roll, sitting against the PAN (published admission number) of 177. He stressed the importance of ensuring that the school meets its PAN as quickly as possible without compromising the nature of the overall intake. Mr Prior said it was important to gate-keep the school intake and ensure that the school only accepts children whose needs can be met by the school without any detriment to the education and welfare of the other pupils. Mr Prior said that the biggest challenge is to manage mid-year requests.

There was a discussion about the changing nature of the cohort of pupils being admitted to Carew. Mr Prior explained that out of the 13 Sutton Secondary Schools, 6 are selective. He said that Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils that may have been previously taken by mainstream schools, are now not being routinely accepted, or their placements are breaking down, and therefore, pupils of these ages coming to Carew are often comparatively able than pupils already at the school. There is an increasing tranche of MLD pupils alongside those with ASD and more complex needs and Governors recognised that this has an impact on how the curriculum is managed. Mr Prior said that he is keen to get pupils into the school from Year 7, as there is evidence that there are less issues around pupils' confidence and self-esteem when they are admitted earlier.

Mr Brooks asked if there are more children coming in at Year 7, could further links be developed with local primary schools. Mr Prior said there are already good links with secondary schools but the school will now look to build further links with primary schools. Governors noted this as a strong point and one for future action.

### **Budget**

Governors noted the difficulties the school is experiencing because of the tight budgetary constraints, which are in part, due to ongoing discussions with Sutton Borough, and others, regarding i) current rates of MLD top up and ii) money owed to the school because of unpaid invoices. Mr Prior confirmed that a payment of £83,000 had just been approved which has helped, but the school has only 4 days of cash flow available. He went on to say that whilst strategic financial planning was difficult in the circumstances the school is fortunate to have a strong team in place to prevent the quality of provision deteriorating.

Mr Brooks sought clarification on how money comes into the school. Mrs Acik asked if the school invoices the LA. Mr Prior said that the LA are not routinely paying invoices on time at the moment. Mrs Sherborne said that OHC&AT will continue to pressure the LA to help alleviate the issue. Mr Prior said he felt

escalation to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) would be best avoided for now but it remains an option

It was **NOTED** by Governors that the financial difficulties were having a negative impact on the smooth running of the school insomuch as such matters require a disproportionate amount of leadership and management time.

### **Personnel**

Governors noted that the school was almost at full complement with 3 new TAs and two Vice Principals in Helen Morris and Craig Smillie. Emmet Murphy is now Head of Upper School and David Thomas Head of an extended Lower School (to Year 8). Middle School leadership had been disbanded with ASD pupils falling to either Mr Murphy and Mr Thomas. Mr Prior confirmed this arrangement was more streamlined and ensured all pupils received strong and effective leadership with an integrated approach. There has also been the recruitment of two additional school posts for lower school leads in English and Maths. Mr Prior said he was keen to encourage middle leaders. They work hard and provide good value for money.

Governors also noted that the school is experiencing an ongoing culture shift working with OHC&AT services to build relationships and strengthen the quality delivered but also to ensure value for money. Mr Prior said both sides were managing the tension and are keen to work positively together as colleagues.

Mrs Acik asked who was monitoring the Service Level Agreements. Mr Prior said that he, Mr Smillie and Mrs Morris are assigned SLAs for monitoring. Mrs Sherborne said that the school had the decision to buy the services elsewhere if they so wished but it would be preferred that they grow as a family. Mr Prior said that any issues are raised at the CEO monthly monitoring meetings.

### **School Improvement**

Mr Prior said the focus going forward, following the successful Ofsted inspection in June, will be the 2017/18 Ofsted. The school has already started the journey towards outstanding status and is embedding strategic changes. He presented the Carew Academy Monitoring Dashboard which contained 2014/15 year-end data for learners enrolled, attendance, summer exam results, behaviour exclusions and incidents, typicality judgements and the high level budget overview. Mr Prior talked through the dashboard and reflected on the GCSE point score, which had nearly doubled in 2015, and exceptional exam results year-on-year that demonstrated both increasing breadth of provision and a deepening of quality outcomes. Governors noted that the dashboard is being worked on across the family and there should be a monthly dashboard by the end of January.

Mr Brooks asked if Carew accreditation scores will plateau after such good results, or whether they will continue to rise. Mr Prior said that aspirations are

relevant to the cohort that they have and they will always make an informed decision about entering children in for GCSEs. He felt the need to continue improving the breadth as well as increasing English and Maths. Mr Prior went on to say it was not all about accredited outcomes, but the destination as well, and he explained that Carew are preparing children for the next part of their journey.

Mr Brooks also asked if the dashboard was accessible to Governors and could they access specific data relevant to subjects such as maths. Mrs Goodsell confirmed that the dashboard will be on the governors' portal and every governor will have a log in. Mr Prior said that the dashboard will allow governors to drill down to the raw data monthly and cumulatively. Mrs Sherborne said the database was a helpful tool for the governing body, and provides information on one page that effectively summarises what would take several pages in a written report.

Mr Prior also presented a Key Areas and Risks paper which he explained would be RAG rated each month. Mrs Sherborne asked if there were any areas of high risk at the moment. Mr Prior confirmed that only the budget was currently a high risk. Mrs Sherborne said the paper was well received as it gave the governors everything they needed, and meant they didn't have to wait until the next meeting to check on status.

Mr Brooks asked about plans for the future offer. Mr Prior said that he needs to be mindful of the cohort and ensure that teachers' targets are aspirational and achievable and relevant to that cohort. There was also a discussion about the Government's intention to make GCSEs more challenging. Mr Prior said that although this will present challenges in terms of year-on-year results improvements, as long as the school can contextualise any 'dips' then this can be managed. The breadth of the offer will also be important. Mr Smillie said that there is also a move towards less coursework and more exams, which will effect results of Carew, where the pupils tend to perform better following the coursework model. Governors agreed that if there is a 'dip' it will likely be a national drop in achievement.

Governors noted the Teacher Evaluation Schedules which Mr Prior outlined. These typicality judgements for teaching and learning comprise of 8 areas that cover a range of monitoring activity and will help to ensure that good or better practice is delivered by teachers consistently and typically. It had been presented to teachers and worked on a total point score system, with 1a equating to with the best (12 points), and a 4c equating to the weakest (1 point). Teachers have 10 pieces of graded monitoring across the term that is aggregated at the end of the term and ultimately the year.

Mr Brooks said he thought the typicality method needed to be holistic and Mr Prior responded that 'good' teachers will generally do well across all the areas. If

a teacher is flagged up as a requiring improvement, it can be addressed immediately. The intention is to encourage teachers to perform well across all areas, all of the time.

Mrs Acik queried the equal weighting across all 8 areas. Mr Thomas explained the importance of taking all aspects into consideration particularly as some teachers have previously required encouragement to engage in the 'softer' side of teaching (for example, display or engagement with families). Mr Smillie added that all aspects impact on the pupil's education. Mr Prior saw that the system is working well for the school but will be kept under review as the school continues its journey to outstanding.

### **Health and Safety**

Governors noted that works are ongoing to improve the building, and there will be further work over the Christmas period. As part of the dashboard monitoring, there will be two safeguarding audits per year. The next safeguarding meeting, headed up by Mr Smillie, with Mrs Morris as his Deputy, will be held this half term.

**Action: Mr Smillie and Mrs Morris to hold a Safeguarding meeting this half term.**

Mr Prior flagged the concerns regarding traffic calming and safety measures on Church Road. He said there were a lot of independent travellers, and whilst the school has put measures in place, such as staff at the gate, bus stop and at the railings, he still has concerns. It was agreed that Mr Smillie will write a letter to address this.

**Action: Mr Smillie to write a letter to local MP Tom Brake and other relevant parties about traffic calming measures.**

### **School Events**

Governors noted the school events. They were invited in to attend anti-bullying week 16-20<sup>th</sup> November. Mrs Morris confirmed she will provide a list of all the activities taking place, once they had been confirmed.

**Action: Helen Morris to let the governors know of the activities available, should they wish to attend**

Mrs Sherborne said that there are many outstanding initiatives taking place, such as the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools award.

Mr Murphy spoke to Governors about the upper school Debating Group. Pupils will take part in debating competitions. This will be of great benefit to pupils, increasing their confidence and will link into the School's Gifted and Talented provision. Mr Murphy also spoke about plans to restructure residential visits.

These will now have more of a focus on pupils' learning outcomes. This year, Year 10 and 11 will take part in subject specific overnight and day visits, linked to the curriculum, enhancing their learning and independence skills. This will also encourage Subject Leaders to think at a more strategic level and take ownership of this process. Governors commented that this initiative is the sort of progress that will move the school from Good to Outstanding.

Governors also discussed the need to revisit the 'School Visits' policy (minute 4 refers). It was **AGREED** that Governors should only have to approve a visit if a risk has been identified as 'adventurous and hazardous' or where there is a substantial residential element.

Mrs Sherborne requested a separate report on the sixth form, outlining progress and the curriculum.

**Action: Mr Smillie to provide a report on sixth form for the LGB meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> February.**

Mrs Morris spoke about the Beddington Park Lottery Fund. The school is bidding for funding for the project which will start in 2016-17. There will be a project to work on a piece of land opposite the church, and this may lead to further work to the river. Governors will be kept updated. Mr Prior also spoke about a pupil's mother who is actively fundraising. This parent has previously raised money successfully for another larger school in Wimbledon. Mr Prior saw that this is a great opportunity for the school, which will need to be managed i.e. setting targets and managing expectations.

Governors **RECEIVED** the Principal's report.

## **8. Portfolio Governor Visits**

### **i) Safeguarding – Janet Sherborne**

Mrs Sherborne reported that she had her half termly meeting with Craig Smillie and Helen Morris, to discuss safeguarding. All pupils have a named 'go to' member of staff, and in October there was a CPD update on safeguarding, attended by all staff.

Mrs Sherborne also reported that Jackie Van West, of OHC&AT, will carry out a safeguarding audit later in the term.

**Action: Jackie Van West will carry out a safeguarding audit this term.**

### **ii) Vision, Values and Ethos – Janet Sherborne**

Mrs Sherborne outlined her visit and meeting with the Principal. The vision and values are now all about moving towards outstanding status. The vision is to be 'the school of choice', and current progress includes the strengthening of the

leadership team, particularly middle management. The first round of teaching observations has been positive. Mrs Sherborne reported that the journey to outstanding will be difficult but certainly achievable.

### **iii) Teaching and Learning – Janet Sherborne**

Governors noted that Mrs Sherborne had visited the upper school and she was very impressed by the behaviour and focus of the pupils.

## **9. Finance and Funding**

Mrs Acik is planning her finance visit on 13<sup>th</sup> November. Mr Prior informed the governors that he has created a finance dashboard. Governors also **RECEIVED** the management accounts and were asked to pass on any questions about the accounts to Mrs Acik who will raise them at her portfolio visit.

**Action: Mrs Acik to produce a RAG rated report following her finance meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November.**

Governors **RECEIVED** all portfolio visit reports.

## **10. Key OHC&AT Documents for Information**

Governors noted the Programme of Works for 2015-16 (Enclosure 9) and Scheme of Delegation 2015-16 (Enclosure 10). Mrs Goodsell informed the Board that both documents are going to the OHC&AT Family Board on 26 November for approval.

## **11. Policies and Procedures**

Governors noted that following the alignment of OHC and OHC&AT, a review of all policies has been undertaken to align policy and procedure across the organisation. Mrs Goodsell confirmed there was now a suite of family policies which demonstrate compliance. Mrs Sherborne said the policies will be available on the portal and login details would be provided shortly.

Mr Prior requested that 'learning outside the classroom' policy be reviewed and aligned by OHC&AT.

**Action: Mrs Goodsell to ensure this policy is reviewed and aligned.**

## **12. Any Other Business**

Mrs Sherborne confirmed the pay recommendations for 2014/15 had been approved by the Pay Committee. She thanked Mr Prior for his succinct summaries of teaching staff appraisals which had made the process much easier this year.

**13. Dates of Next Meetings**

The following meeting was agreed:

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 16:30 at the sixth form building at VPC.**

**14. Confidentiality.**

**Part 2**

*Mr Brooks left the meeting for the confidentiality agenda item – see part 2.*

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