



**MINUTES OF THE CAREW LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON  
THURSDAY 15<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2017 AT 4.00PM**

Members: \* Mr P Chambers (Chair)  
Mrs J Sherborne (Vice Chair)  
Mr R Watkins (Principal)  
Mrs A Acik  
Mr S Brooks  
Mrs S Butcher  
Mrs J O'Connor  
Mr K Leggatt  
Ms R Duggan  
\* Mr E Murphy

\* Denotes absence

Also present: Natalie Taylor (Head of Middle School)  
Lucy Davey (Head of Lower School)  
Joe Sheppard (Head of Upper School)  
Helen Morris (Vice Principal)  
Tracey Goodsell (Acting Clerk)

## **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Mr Chambers and Mr Murphy, and from Suzanna Challenger (Clerk). Mrs Sherborne chaired the meeting in Mr Chambers' absence.

## **2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mrs Sherborne welcomed everyone to the meeting and made introductions.

## **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no new declarations of interest.

## **4. CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS**

Governors **NOTED** that Annette Acik has stepped down since the last meeting. Mr Murphy will manage the HR and Organisational Development portfolio as per matters arising. Governors **AGREED** to write to Mrs Acik formally thanking her for her dedicated service to the school during her tenure as governor.

**Action: Mrs Sherborne to write to Mrs Acik on behalf of governors.**

Governors **NOTED** that Fran Ganderton has stepped down as Clerk, to be replaced by Suzanna Challenger.

## **5. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were **APPROVED** and signed by the Vice Chair as a correct record, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 8-Finance and Resources-fourth line should read: 'what the school has to pay versus its liabilities not assets

## **6. MATTERS ARISING**

- i) Further to minute 8, Mr Watkins said that on site sixth form provision will be covered in the Principal's report.
- ii) Further to minute 10, the clerk has provided Stephen Brooks with the log in details for the portal.
- iii) Further to minute 12, Mr Watkins said the results of the student and staff satisfaction surveys are outlined in the Principal's report.

## **7a) PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

### **7.1 Pupil Matters**

There are now 186 students on roll. Carew is on track to have 192 students from September 2017 and a waiting list is now in operation. Governors agreed that this is a reflection of Carew's excellent reputation within the local area.

Mr Watkins outlined the upcoming school events, including Year 6 induction week, Duke of Edinburgh award scheme trips and assessments, Centre Parcs and the Year 12 induction week.

Mr Watkins said that there had been 200 children on site today, as part of transition week. It had been a successful day.

### **7.2 Budget**

Mr Watkins confirmed that a balanced budget has been set and thanked Norman MacDonald (OHC&AT Finance) for his hard work.

### **7.3 Staff and Personnel**

Natalie Taylor has now been appointed as Head of Middle School, bringing the Senior Leadership Team to its full capacity of 5.

There are a number of TAs leaving to go to university. Mr Watkins said he was considering the possibility of offering zero hours contracts to these staff instead of using agency staff for cover.

There has been a Wellbeing focus in school.

The school continues to invest in CPD as part of its strategy to retain good quality staff.

#### **7.4 Health and Safety**

Governors **NOTED** the issues around the boiler and asbestos in the basement. Mr Watkins said the most immediate problem was a lack of heating due to the boiler problems. A school improvement bid has been submitted to replace the boiler but the school has been advised that the asbestos must be removed first. The cost of asbestos removal has been estimated at approx. £180K, and Mr Watkins said OHC&AT is looking into funding for this.

#### **7.5 Safeguarding**

Governors noted that Mrs Morris is the Lead Safeguarding Designated Officer and Mr Watkins is the deputy lead.

Mr Watkins then tabled the following documents for information:

- Leadership structure
- SLT report into school development

#### **7.6 School Improvement**

Reports from Ms Davey, Ms Taylor and Mr Sheppard were tabled.

##### Lower School (Ms Davey)

The main priority has been to develop closer working relationships within the lower school team, with initiatives including 'catch up Tuesdays'. Governors welcomed this idea. Informal weekly planning meetings are held every Thursday. Ms Davey reported that KS2 teachers particularly value these meetings, and some TAs also attend.

Transition week was a great success and Ms Davey said that photos of teachers, TAs and classes will be sent to individual students before September. All new parents had attended last night's meeting and were given a booklet devised by Ms Davey, Mr Watkins and Alice Irvine (OHC&AT Marketing Manager). Ms Davey tabled a copy of the booklet for governors to peruse.

A Celebration of Achievements is planned for next week.

Mr Brooks reported that two pupils who had not previously met were already planning a 'play date'. Mrs Butcher added that she had received some excellent feedback from a new parent about the school.

### Middle School (Ms Taylor)

Feedback from students is largely positive, reflecting that they feel happy to be at Carew and feel safe at school. Ms Taylor has introduced five ambassadorial roles for which pupils can apply, working with a key adult.

School Council continues to be a success with pupils re-elected. Ms Taylor said the school is looking into obtaining the 'Investors in Children' kitemark, which she feels will be easily achievable.

The school is working with Cygnet to create the appropriate assessment data for SIMS.

Relationships with parents and carers are good and Ms Taylor said she is keen to build on this, with initiatives including subject leaders hosting parent groups to help families to support their children.

### Upper School (Mr Sheppard)

In Mr Sheppard's absence, governors read his report and were invited to ask questions.

Mr Brooks asked whether there are plans for middle school teachers to share good practice. Ms Taylor said that SLT are happy to incorporate this, for example in 'catch up' sessions, but noted that there are differences in terms of planning.

## **7.7 Compliments and Complaints**

Responses to the recent staff survey were largely positive, and Mr Watkins said that the SLT continues to work hard to make sure people feel valued and communication is effective.

Mrs Sherborne asked how many people had responded to the school survey and Ms Taylor confirmed 180.

The recent parent/carer survey produced 53 responses, which again were overwhelmingly positive. Governors **AGREED** that the results made for encouraging reading. Mr Brooks asked whether most responses were from lower down in the school. Mr Watkins said that it was hard to tell as most responses were anonymous. Mrs Sherborne agreed, saying it would be good to replicate this turnout on Ofsted's own Parent View survey of the school. Mrs Butcher asked whether the school could do something on bullying at one of the parent workshops.

Governors **RECEIVED** the Principal's report

## **b) Dashboard**

Overall the dashboard is improving, with regular communication between the school and OHC&AT's MIS team. Mr Watkins said it would be easier to input data half-termly. Data is currently inputted monthly, which can skew the data if school holidays fall within that period. Governors were pleased to that attendance is excellent.

Mr Watkins said that the school aims to keep fixed term exclusions to a minimum.

Governors also noted that staff sickness absence has reduced.

Mr Leggatt asked why safeguarding data is displayed for April only. Mrs Sherborne said that this is a new area of dashboard reporting and is taking time to embed.

Governors **RECEIVED** the Dashboard.

## **8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY REPORT**

Mr Watkins tabled Bedelsford School's equality objectives as an example for discussion. Mrs Sherborne reminded governors that the objectives for the school are on the website.

Mrs Butcher reported that the school is looking to sponsor a child (Sarah) in Gambia at a cost of £150 per year, as part of working towards Rights Respecting School (RRS) status. Mrs Morris said that Carew should attain RRS Level 1.

Governors said they look forward to hearing an update next term.

Mr Watkins said the final three objectives on Bedelsford's example would be good for Carew to start monitoring, particularly with a view to improving school trips and activities for pupils.

Mr Watkins said he will rework the equality objectives and upload them to the website. Mrs Sherborne said that pupil premium could be included as the report is on the website. Mr Brooks asked whether there was a plan to explore different religions, for example Carew has already held Islam day. Mrs Morris said this is addressed in departmental assemblies but the school needs to ensure that diversity initiatives like this are recorded. Mr Leggatt agreed that each faith should be fairly represented.

Mrs Sherborne said that including equality and diversity on the agenda had proved to be a good idea, as it has generated useful discussion. Mr Watkins agreed and invited governors to comment further by email.

## **9. PORTFOLIO GOVERNOR VISITS**

Ethos, Vision and Strategy: Mrs Sherborne tabled her report and said that points had been largely covered in the Principal's report. Mr Watkins said that marking is good in the school, albeit with some inconsistency. Marking has moved to a 'next steps'

model – purple pen time – reflective time for pupils – and this will launch fully from September.

The 6<sup>th</sup> form will offer three pathways from next year. Mr Watkins said he is hoping to move 6<sup>th</sup> form provision to the Air Cadet building next door as of September 17, although arrangements are not quite finalised as yet.

Governors **NOTED** that the free school will realistically take at least two more academic years to come to fruition, although things are going to plan. Mrs Butcher asked whether planning permission for the new building has gone through. Mr Watkins said not yet, partly due to delays as a result of purdah. This will be discussed at the LBS planning committee later in the year, after which OHC&AT will need to tender for building works.

Teaching and Learning: Ms Duggan reported that she had undertaken a thorough learning walk and got a real feel of the school, being impressed by its engaged, happy pupils, good management of behaviour, excellent displays and the overall high standard of teaching.

Health & Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding: Mrs Sherborne said that, due to a safeguarding incident being managed during her meeting with Mrs Morris, she was able to witness school processes first hand and was impressed at how the incident was handled. She thanked Mrs Morris for her thorough and diligent work around safeguarding, acknowledging the amount of time spent managing safeguarding issues. Mrs Morris confirmed that it is very time consuming.

Ms Duggan described safeguarding management at Eagle House School, saying there are 7 Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) and one senior DSL. The school uses an online communication system (MyConcern) which also helps. Mrs Sherborne said that now the SLT is fully staffed, the school can look at sharing the load. Mr Watkins added that having a family support worker who could attend meetings on school's behalf would be ideal.

HR and Operational Development: In Mr Murphy's absence, governors **NOTED** the good support from Shamani Wathsala and the OHC&AT HR team. Mrs Butcher said she had recently completed Safer Recruitment training and would encourage others to do so.

**Action: Lisa Nagle to send Mrs Butcher's Safer Recruitment certificate to Mrs Goodsell.**

Marketing and Business Development: Mr Brooks reported that he and Mrs Butcher had met with Alice to discuss revamping the website. A refresh of the home page will be in place by September.

Governors **NOTED** the website analytics. Mr Leggatt asked whether students can access work via the website, for example through a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Mrs Morris said not yet, but could include links to 'My Maths'.

Mrs Butcher said she is keen to add a page for Carew Friends. The school's Summer Fayre is coming up, with lots of prizes received by local businesses. The posters for the fayre was designed by a pupil and was tabled. Governors commented on the excellent poster and were pleased to note that the pupil will be given a prize at assembly.

Mr Brooks and Mrs Butcher asked governors to let them know if there is anything else they would like to be covered in their portfolio meetings.

Finance: Mr Leggatt reported that he had met with Norman MacDonald (OHC&AT Finance); there is now a surplus and the accounts look much healthier. Governors congratulated Mr Watkins and Mr MacDonald for their good financial management, including less use of agency staff and securing extra funding for the school.

The cash position is good and the debtor days are above target. The cash flow model has been improved.

Mr Leggatt said that the KPIs might benefit from some comparatives.

**Action: Mr MacDonald to look at this for next term.**

Governors **RECEIVED** the portfolio visit reports.

Governors noted that the guidance on OHCAT portfolio governance arrangements has been updated, including the template for reporting back.

**Action: Mrs Goodsell to email the portfolio template to all again.**

## **10. FINANCE AND FUNDING**

### i) Management Accounts

Mr MacDonald said that overall the school is in a positive position, with a £28K surplus forecast, and thanked Mr Watkins for his continued good management. The cash position is strong.

### ii) Budget Year End

Mr MacDonald tabled this item, with apologies for the late submission. He explained that there was a need to leave some decisions as late as possible in order to allow Mr Watkins to agree pupil and staff numbers, and noted that the review process can also be lengthy.

Student numbers are projected at 191 and staffing at 69.

A small surplus of £35K is predicted for next year (approximately 1% off school income). Mr MacDonald said this budget will be presented to the OHC&AT Board for approval on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

It was **NOTED** that the supply teacher insurance has been cancelled as all schools in the Trust were spending more paying into the scheme than they were saving.

Mrs Butcher asked whether the current school building could be further monetised through event hire, since the new free school building is some time in the future. Mr Watkins said that weddings have not proved cost effective but that he will look at other options, although he is reluctant to hamper the planned summer works.

There is a need to focus on maximising pupil numbers and securing 1:1 funding.

Governors **NOTED** that the budget will need careful management, as there is currently only a small surplus and there will be continued cuts to school funding.

## 11. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Governors **NOTED** the listed policies and procedures that were approved by the OHC&AT Board on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

## 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- i) Mr Brooks asked about the Radon detector results. Mr Watkins confirmed that these had all been within the normal parameters
- ii) All Governors were invited to End of Term events.

## 13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Governors **AGREED** the following dates:

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at 4.00pm  
Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018 at 4.00pm  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at 4.00pm

Regarding the Pay Committee meeting, Governors **AGREED** that this meeting would comprise Mr Leggatt, Mrs Sherborne, Mr Murphy and Mr Watkins.

**Action: Mr Watkins to suggest suitable dates for the week before half term – governors to confirm date ASAP.**

## 14. CONFIDENTIALITY

There were no confidential items.

The meeting closed at 5.55pm.

CHAIR-----

DATE-----