



**SWANMEAD COMMUNITY SCHOOL  
MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY MEETING  
HELD ON**

**Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 5:30pm in Room 5**

**Present:** Kate Murdoch (KM); Duncan Perks (DP); and Mark Raven (MR). Kate Priddle (KP); Michaela Sharman (MS); and Mark Walker (MW) (Headteacher)

**In attendance:** Natalie Wainwright (NW)- Clerk to the Governing Body.

**Guests:** Dean Aspinall (DA); Mark Cook (MC); Marian Gamper (MG); Davyd Muxworthy (DM) and Sue Wilson-Smith (SWS).

**SCS421 Apologies for absence\*** were received and accepted from Jesse Pattison (JP).

**SCS422 Governor Business Part 1**

The Clerk assumed the Chair, in the absence of the Chair (standing for co-option at this meeting) and Vice-Chair (absent).

Each candidate was asked to leave the room in turn and supporting statements, previously circulated via email or read out at the meeting, were considered. Governors voted unanimously in favour of the co-option of Marian Gamper (also to resume her role as Chair); Dean Aspinall; Mark Cook; and Davyd Muxworthy to the Governing Body.

*17:40 MG left the meeting/17:41 rejoined the meeting*

*17:41 DA left the meeting/17:43 rejoined the meeting*

*17:43 MC left the meeting/17:44 rejoined the meeting*

*17:44 DM left the meeting/17:45 rejoined the meeting*

**Action – Clerk to issue new starter documentation, including copy of Safeguarding docs and SDP, and inform LA of new appointments**

**SCS423** No **pecuniary interests\*** were declared in this meeting’s agenda items.

**SCS424** **Minutes of the last meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018**, were agreed as an accurate record.

**SCS425** **Matters Arising\*** - for actions not otherwise updated in the Actions Log.

<i>SCS332</i>	<i>Annual Self-Declaration forms yet to be issued to Governors. <b>Action: Headteacher to ensure Governors also receive a copy for completion, then close.</b></i>
<i>SCS387(i)</i>	<i>Still awaiting update on action to chase SS regarding paperwork to be destroyed.</i>
<i>SCS396</i>	<i>Papers to new Governors to include a copy of the Keeping Children Safe in Education document and link to Prevent training</i>
<i>SCS398a(iii)</i>	<b><i>Action: Meeting to agree Scheme of Delegation to be convened asap.</i></b>
<i>SCS405a</i>	<i>Finance Working Party met on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2019 not the 14<sup>th</sup>, as previously advised.</i>

Signed as being a true record ..... Chair

Date:.....

SCS426

### Finance and SFVS

The finance working party met on the 17<sup>th</sup> January. The School Finance Manager will attend the next meeting to present latest financial report. The Clerk referred to anticipated changes to reporting nationally and greater scrutiny of finances into the future.

SCS427

### Headteacher's Update

- a. The **Headteacher's Report** had been circulated prior to the meeting. Governors queried whether the **year 8 attendance figure was cause for concern?** It was explained that, as a smaller year group, individual absences have a greater impact on the overall absence figure. **What is the national benchmark for attendance?** Nationally, schools can expect lower attendance at Secondary level, i.e. 92% in Year 7. **Do you think the overall improvements are as a result of the school's focus on attendance?** In part, yes, but also reflective of a different cohort of pupils. Governors noted that boys' attendance was higher than girls in some instances, which was a positive development. The work of Debbie Harvey and tutors, in their support to pupils and families, was praised.

MC agreed to support **staff** interview process on the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> January.

Governors noted that there was still a considerable difference in **progress** between boys and girls, although boys have outperformed girls in reading in year 6. Of most concern, is the performance of Year 8 boys in reading and writing.

The new progress monitoring has enabled teachers to identify pupils who are lagging behind. **Is there a correlation between lowest number of pupils, lowest attendance and progress?** The boys' achievement data reveals the impact of this. All pupil data is gathered three times a year, whilst data for lowest performing boys is gathered during each half-term.

Improvements have been noted in Maths following the introduction of more Maths sessions within the timetable. Maths in the first term is taught in tutor groups, then pupils are set by term 3 in year 5, aiding their transition to year 6.

- b. **School Development Plan** – New Governors were introduced to the role and purpose of the SDP but there was no further discussion on this topic.
- c. **Area Restructure** – Governors reflected on their meeting, on 10<sup>th</sup> January, with representatives of Bridgwater College Trust and colleagues at Maiden Beech at which Swanmead Community School had been invited to become part of the Bridgwater College Trust. A decision is expected before the end of the Spring Term. Governors' understanding is that existing governance arrangements would be retained and the Chair would represent the school on the Trust's Board. The focus would become largely focused on performance, rather than HR, finance and health and safety, which would be centrally managed. Questions raised by Governors included:

**What impact would there be on staff performance, appraisal and pay/TUPE arrangements?** tbc

**Would expertise be lost from the school to schools within the trust requiring improvement?** It is anticipated that expertise would be shared both ways and benefits could be derived from more joint training and greater support to staff working within larger departments.

**Why is the trust being encouraged to expand?** Governors believe the offer comes

---

Signed as being a true record ..... Chair

Date:.....

from the growth potential at Swanmead, particularly as a possible 'through school'.  
**How would this move make Swanmead financially viable?** The addition of Years 9-11 = extra numbers and fewer losses to other schools. It could double in size.

**Is the growth of the school a good thing?** Benefits at KS3 include the continuity of teaching.

**Can we speak to members of the Trust?** The Chair had circulated a paper suggesting questions to be asked of the Trust before a decision is taken. Governors need to better understand the implications for governance and school operations and would ideally like to see a written agreement, confirming what level of independence would be retained?

**How will it affect current year 8s?** Support from the Trust for pupils during transition has been suggested, but the detail is not yet known

**What is the mechanism for this to happen?** The first decision to be taken is whether to become part of the Trust, which would require an application from Swanmead to the Trust, the second application would be made, by the Trust, to increase the age range of the school.

**When will this go public?** The Headteacher advised that he would be writing to parents within the next week or so.

***ACTION –Governors to consider again in February with a view to taking a decision regarding application to the Trust.***

Governors were invited to join staff at a presentation on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January, from 4:15pm, to ask further questions of Trust representatives and be available to support staff in their questions.

***ACTION – Governors and staff to forward questions or concerns to the Clerk to collate for a response.***

**SCS428 Safeguarding Update and Governor Training**

Item deferred.

**SCS429 Policy Review and Renewal**

Item deferred.

**SCS430 Governor Business**

Items a., b. and c. were deferred.

19:35 MW, MS,  
MR left the  
meeting

- d. The **Pay and Performance Committee** were unable to confirm their recommendations to the Governing Body, following a staff member's request to increase their pay. The school's Pay Policy, along with any additional advice received from HR, would be reviewed again at a further meeting of the Pay and Performance committee, to be convened. A recommendation would be brought back to the next meeting.

***Action: Pay and Performance Committee to convene a further meeting asap.***

**Date of next meeting – Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2019, at 5.30pm in Room 5.**

Meeting closed 19:41

---

Signed as being a true record ..... Chair

Date:.....