



Moorland Local Advisory Committee (LAC)

Minutes: Wednesday 22nd November 2023 @ 5.30 p.m. via Teams

Invited : Olli Heathman (OH), Lynda Cooper (LC), Rosie Stamp (RSta), Ewa Ziubryniewicz (EW) Alex Waterman (AW), Sam Curtis (SC) James Gething (JG), Robert Steemson (RS)

In Attendance : Charlotte Roe – Governance Professional (GP)

Minutes: Louise Lloyd (Clerk)

Apologies Accepted from: Olli Heathman (OH), Robert Steemson (RS)

No	Item	Action
1.	Welcome and apologies. LC welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies as above.	
2.	Declarations of interest – None received with regard to items on the agenda.. Action Point : a. GP to email blank Declaration of Business Interest form to SC for completion. b. LP to update Declaration of Business Interest form.	a. GP b. LL
3.	Approval of meeting minutes from 27.09.23 For approval: Minutes agreed.	
4.	Matters arising from 27.09.23 (not on the agenda) 1. CHANGING TIMINGS AND DAY OF MEETING TO ENCOURAGE MORE GOVERNORS TO ATTEND. Discussion ensued regarding changing timing/day of meetings; Governors agreed to continue with Wednesdays @ 5.30 p.m. which worked well for the majority but noted that timings of meetings could be alternated to facilitate Governor attendance if necessary. 2. CHECKING OF THE SINGLE CENTRAL RECORD - AW WOULD DISCUSS THE CORRECT PROCEDURE WITH JON GALLING .) GP/OH WOULD RAISE THIS WITH THE S&C TRUSTEES AND THE CEO. <u>ACTIONED AW sent an email to all Governors on 03.11.23 clarifying the procedure.</u> 3. OH, to raise at S&C – lack of funding for 1:1 support <u>ACTIONED</u> 4. It was agreed to change the agenda around to ensure that the focus of visit had more of a priority. <u>ACTIONED</u>	
5.	Clerk Update 5.1 Appointments/nominations LL update: SC had been elected as Staff Governor by staff at Wolborough Primary School Sharon Lord had approached Rev'd Gareth Regan re becoming Foundation Governor and the appointment was currently being formalised. Rev'd Gareth Regan would look after Ilington and Wolborough. 5.2 Training - Update on training Governors have been reminded they must complete L2 Safeguarding and send certificates to LL . <u>Action Point: EW, JG and SC to access the training and email certificates to LL</u> 5.3 Clerk to Local Board Committee to update the governors on any local or national issues LL had nothing further to add; Governance Alerts were emailed to Governors weekly.	EW, JG and SC
6.	Standards and Curriculum Committee Focus.	

Written report received from ILSINGTON – see attached.

Verbal feedback from Governors on their focus visits:

ILSINGTON - RSTa: Visited Ilsington last week with OH, it was a good visit and SIAMS focussed, we went through the school's visions, values and SIAMS in detail . We then did a learning walk with that in mind and chatted to pupils. The vision was evident throughout the school; staff ethos; pupil ethos; on the walls ; books on shelves ; prayer beads . Lots of links to personal development work class manifestos, assembly programmes and how this tied in with Oracy /empowering pupil voice. There was someone at school who may be interested in the Foundation Governor vacancy. Sam meets the vicar regularly as part of ETHOS work . AHT recently did online SIAMS training and was writing the self-evaluation SIAMS form in preparation for a visit (2025/2026). Spirituality ties in strongly with the relational approach to learning which was a clear focus for the Link in general. Sam had observed the change in staff and pupils, people that look around the school also said it had a calmer more relaxed feel. We had a chat with a couple of pupils in the Pupil Ethos Group they were very forthcoming about the school vision , values, pupil voice and how they could effect change, escalate issues and be heard. We chatted with AHT re the idea of a Parent forum and she was keen to progress the idea of an informal evening drop-in. It was a good visit.

MORETONHAMPSTED JG: Completed a focus visit a couple of weeks ago, spoke to AHT and discussed the school's vision and values. Understood that the whole Trust vision was being re modelled and vision and values was being overhauled alongside this . AHT was working with parents re new values and vision for the school . We discussed the SEF & recent Ofsted inspection , the SEF ties into that. Also discussed the relational approach , the school had ongoing issues with a number of SEND pupils , the relational approach had been used quite widely and used very effectively . It was a good visit, things appeared to be going very well.

Governor question: Was not aware the Trust vision was changing do we have a sense of why, what it was changing to and what the timeline might be.

AW: The strap line was small schools, big opportunities, it would not be changed dramatically , but would be refreshed and updated. There was a Trustee Day which looked at them and the heads have looked at vision and values.

GP: re Timeline it would not be quick a job , as everyone was being talked to including parents and pupils , it was good practice to re visit and check in on vision and values , the current ones were quite a few years old .

AW: The plan was to pull together in some way and then pass to local boards for a contribution and then go to school staff, parents and get everyone involved.

Governor question: It had been mentioned that parents were included in collecting Moretonhampstead school vision and values , would be interested to know how parents voice had been captured.

AW: Have started to talk to parents but have not done as a whole school formally yet. This will be done in the spring term.

BEARNES . EZ: Had a meeting with AHT today. At the moment we are working on phonics across all years, which would also help with language and phonics. AHT was currently focussed on Key Stage 1, when children were starting, they were below average . The main problem at the moment was with speech and language, 28% of pupils have significant and moderate problems with speech and language , so were having interventions/classes. Across the school there were pupils with 12 different languages, which had a big impact on speech and language. The most important thing for EZ was safeguarding as the school had quite a lot of incidents (circa 16 per month) , at the moment there were no children on Child Protection plans , there were 2/3 families under Child in Need and one case in Court. The main concerns were regarding neglect. There were no significant issues with attendance, there were 5 pupils on the school's radar with 1 letter sent. AHT would be leaving the school in January , and a Head from Wolborough would be coming over.

Governor comment: was not aware that AHT was leaving, it would be a big loss for Bearnese he has had a very positive impact during his time there.

Governor question: Did you have a chance to talk about vision and values EZ or do you have any observations on this as a parent.

EZ: Not really it took us an hour to talk about safeguarding issues.

	<p>WOLBOROUGH <i>Governor question: Will we have a Parent Governor from Wolborough.</i> GP: the process was currently ongoing ; one expression of interest had been received. <i>Governor question: Would be interested to hear Woodborough's vision and values and how they align with the wider Trust. Was there any tension with local vision and trust wide vision that we need to be aware of.</i> SC: One driving factor of why Wolborough joined The Link was because it aligned really closely with our school values and what we want to do with our children. We looked at a few potential academies to join , but Governors were overwhelmingly sure that it would be The Link , we felt identity was a big part for us, we did not want to be joining an academy where it was one size fit all. We wanted to make sure our individuality would still be strongly represented, which with the Managed Partnership we felt everything was. We have started on the journey with relational practice as well , we attended the Trust wise CPD back in September. Our HT would be overseeing Wolborough and Bearnese. Our deputy would be going full non-teaching . With both schools being so close and having the same catchment area, we should be able to find common ground and be able to share what was good about both schools. It would be an exciting few months ahead.</p> <p>HENNOCK - LC: AHT was quite clear that the vision and values were working – they were only changed last year. AHT would like to take some time to explore them herself/look at them again. There was nothing wrong with what was there at the moment, which was clearly evidenced throughout the school. They had plans to make it even clearer with different displays. Some of the pupils I spoke to were able to articulate it , the values were covered in assembly every week. Re SEF AHT acknowledged she had worked through the SEF and made some changes with things she did not feel she had been able to evidence. The changes she had introduced were around structural changes. AHT had captured there were ongoing issues with recruitment which were trust wide.</p> <p>WIDECOMBE – Information not available, RS was not present at the meeting.</p>	
7.	<p>School Updates Governors to consider and discuss the Academy Head's Report to Governors and to feedback any issues/successes from their school visits.</p> <p><i>Governor question: Re Parent forums are they held on a 1:1 basis , or whole group.</i> AW: The idea of a Parent Forum was to discuss whole school issues and avoid a 1:1 . I normally started the school year with sharing my school development plan with parents , the turnout was not great circa 10 parents between the 2 sessions. We then got onto other things that they would like to see improving LC: We have talked about running a Parent Forum at Hennock and would be starting a day time one. If there was interest, we could then maybe do one in the evening or even via zoom. We would be having a communication focus as a way to try and lead into the relational approach . In the past when we have run a Parent Forum, we have had circa 10 attendees. JG: The SEND issues at Moretonhampstead still took up a lot of time and were the biggest issue the school faced. Funding did not cover the provision that was needed. LC: SEND funding was definitely something that had come up at Hennock/lack of funding/ when the school was meeting a need without funding being in place. This was raised at S&C. OH: Had emailed some notes for the meeting which LC read out. GP: SEND provision across the Trust came up all the time. The Trustees were bringing it up and were well aware of it. DCC have 5 schools who have failed Ofsted, it was also in the news that people were protesting and saying Devon was letting down their children. My understanding was that we are doing better than some schools ,because of our collective approach. SW: The situation was dire, but our Trust was doing better than many , we still have TA's in school , there are some schools that did not have them. The funding received from 0-25 did not match the need of some of the children. There were children in a lot of schools (including schools within the Trust) who should be attending a special school provision but there were no places available in County. LC: it was good that it was acknowledged by the Trustees that on the ground there were tricky challenges, and it was important that they were aware of that when there were other expectations, so there was a realistic sense of what was possible for our schools to do when their resources were being split so thinly. <i>Governor question: Was the Director of Inclusion a new appointment.</i></p>	

	<p>GP: Sparkwell have joined the Trust , their Head was continuing as Head , but also spending time out of school to be Director of Inclusion.</p> <p><u>Action Point: GP to email to Governors an updated list of Senior Leadership structure.</u></p> <p><i>Governor question: Re staff wellbeing. If there was a turnover of Heads at Bearnese how was staff mood/how were staff feeling about that level of change.</i></p> <p>EZ: Have not spoken to staff regarding this . There were also some changes in staff at the moment a teacher was leaving and a new one would be appointed.</p> <p>Kelly Yeo would be Head Teacher Assistant and would not be in the class often. Hope that someone would be appointed to cover her teaching hours , otherwise staff would be very stretched.</p> <p>SC: Could talk at length about underfunding , but this had already been covered.</p> <p>One big issue with staff wellbeing had been staff illness this term, where staff were already being stretched. Our FSW retired , we have appointed a Pastoral Worker who would be more child based, but we need someone to come in and take over her TA responsibilities which was underway as we speak, and she would then be freed. She was actually freed today, and we saw the benefit of her going around and working with children. We have had a big focus on our synthetic phonic scheme , over the last couple of years we have really pushed on with that. We have been happy with the results we have seen. We have been working with an English Leader in Cornerstone which had been great, we were currently looking at how we push our reading on in key stage 2 which was the focus. Attendance was an issue we have children who have been off long-term as well , it was something we were constantly talking to families about & constantly looking to support as best we could.</p> <p>LC: There was someone in the Trust who supported with attendance and provided quite a lot of centralised support.</p> <p>LC: Re Hennock we have real challenges with staffing, which was ongoing , there was some recruitment that we would like to do but this was not taking place as yet , teacher roles have been advertised with no applicants received which was a difficult position to be in from a planning point of view. The school had undergone quite a lot of upheaval particularly in early years . We were seeing the ongoing impact of the cost-of-living crisis, pupils were coming to school and saying that they did not have dinner last night . During the pandemic the Trust put together food parcels . I wonder if cost of living crisis related there was any centralised action around this from the Trust. At Hennock staff were doing what they could on an individual basis.</p> <p>Wonder if OH could raise at S&C if this was a picture that was being seen across the Trust more generally i.e. level of need increasing.</p> <p><u>Action Point: GP to discuss with the Trustees cost of living crisis related food parcels.</u></p> <p><u>Action Point : OH, to ask Trustees if level of need increasing was a picture that was being seen across the Trust.</u></p> <p>AW: What was coming out was the new expectations around filtering and monitoring (KCSIE 2023).I met with Matt and Martin (Limtec) and Ross (Estates Manager) to look at filtering and monitoring across the Trust. An Action Plan had been drawn up. We do have filtering in place, but in order to meet the new standards more needed to be done by Heads/staff in schools.</p> <p><i>Governor question: Need to unpick PP funding for Hennock and where this was going. Re the Sports premium grant – the paperwork that needs to be completed and shown on the website was this handled through the central sports team, or do we need to produce something separately.</i></p> <p>SW: Re Sports premium the PE Team draft up something , the heads go through it/finish it off and then it is put on the website. Becky had been doing the draft reports for Pupil premium and supported Heads to get that done</p> <p>LC: despite the level of turnover at Hennock there had been a remarkable degree of consistency , we have been very fortunate with the Heads that we have had.</p>	GP
		GP OH
8.	<p>Current Year's Trust Focus – Relational Approach</p> <p>The meeting discussed that staff/pupils understood what the relational approach was, the rolled-out plan would be starting in schools from January.</p>	
9.	<p>Standards and Curriculum Trustees Meeting</p> <p>OH, attended the S&C meeting and provided feedback to Governors in an email which was shared by LC at the meeting.</p>	
10.	<p>Next S&C Focus: Wellbeing/PHSE and Safeguarding Audit with a <u>LEARNING WALK</u> to evidence the practice within the school.</p>	

	GP: The Spring term was short, the Spring 1 LAC meeting was 24.01.24 , suggested that Governors booked in visits with Heads now. The Spring 2 LAC meeting was 06.03.24. If Governors were not able to get in , even a phone call would be helpful and give the Trustees a flavour of what was going on.	
11.	Feedback from Ethos Committees and Community Groups The appointment of Reverend Gareth Regan as Foundation Governor was currently being formalised.	
12.	Evaluation of governance impact Governors had nothing that they wished to comment on. The meeting ended 18:50	

Signed as a true record by the Chairon