

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BOARD OF THE FEDERATION
OF HEAVERS FARM PRIMARY SCHOOL AND SELSDON PRIMARY SCHOOL
HELD ON THURSDAY 29TH APRIL 2021 AT 6.15PM VIA ZOOM**

Present

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| Nina Ballo | Staff Governor |
| Moses Bukanya | Partnership Governor |
| Graham Cluer | Partnership Governor, Chair |
| Nigel Collins | Co-opted Governor |
| Susan Papas | Executive Head teacher |
| Jo Read | Associate Member |
| Everton Stuart | Co-opted Governor |
| Johnny Tang | Co-opted Governor |
| Hilary Smith | Associate Member |

Also In Attendance

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| Robert Askey (HoS, Heavers Farm) | Observer |
| Liz Parry | Governance Manager |

Absent

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| Tanya Dennis | LA Appointed Governor |
| Alan Tigg | Co-opted Governor |
| Rebecca Tomasiewicz | Parent Governor |

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| 1. | <p>Welcome & Apologies</p> <p>The Chair opened the meeting at 6.15pm and welcomed everyone. Apologies for absence had been received from Tanya Dennis and Alan Tigg which were accepted by the Governing Board.</p> <p>The Chair reported that regrettably Robert Ward had tendered his resignation as a governor with immediate effect, meaning that there was now a Co-opted Governor vacancy,</p> |
| 2. | <p>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests in the Current agenda <i>Governors to declare any pecuniary or personal interests in any agenda item for this meeting</i></p> <p>No conflicts of interest were declared in the current agenda.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Quorum</p> <p>It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.</p> |
| 4. | <p>Minutes of the Previous meeting held on 16th March 2021 <i>checking of accuracy and signing by the Chair</i></p> |

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| | <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate account of proceedings. The Chair would sign a copy for the school files as soon as it was possible to come into school again.</p> |
| <p>5.</p> | <p>Matters Arising from the previous minutes including update on all action points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>• Update on Staff Governor and Parent Governor elections/appointments at Selsdon. Susan said that there was no update at the current time but she hoped to be in position to update the Governing Board with new appointments by the July meeting.</p> <p>• Alan to set up a Zoom or Microsoft Teams meeting with Scott as soon as possible. This was in process. Update on outcomes to be reported at the next meeting of the Resources Committee.</p> <p>• Johnny to re-circulate the Finance skills audit with a request that all governors return the completed audit as a matter of urgency Johnny said that there were two outstanding audits yet to be received. As soon as possible he will circulate the collated results for governors' information</p> <p>• Johnny to liaise with governors to provide a strategy for comparing a chosen metric against other like schools. Update on progress at the next meeting of the Resources Committee.</p> <p>• Johnny to liaise with Susan and investigate possible reasons as to why Selsdon has not suffered such a severe loss of income. Update at the next meeting of the Resources Committee. Johnny and Susan had not yet met but a meeting was planned.</p> <p>• Working Party and Susan to liaise and arrange a suitable time to have an initial meeting re Staff Survey matters The Working Party had met on 27th April and a process is in place. Update on progress to be reported at the July meeting of the Governing Board.</p> |
| <p>6.</p> | <p><u>Finance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <p>• <u>End of Year, Q4 for both schools</u> Governors were in receipt of the end of year figures and CFR documents for both schools, which both had a slightly better end of year position than predicted. Heavers Farm: The school had begun the year with a £300,000 deficit and ended the year with a £125,000 deficit. Given the challenges of the past year, and in particular the complete loss of opportunity to earn income through clubs and lettings, the Governing Board agreed that this was a very positive outcome. Selsdon: The school had ended the year with a £75,000 surplus which was a healthy end of year position.</p> <p>The Governing Board formally approved the end of year figures for both schools.</p> |

- **Review of the Budget Plans for Heavers Farm and Selsdon 2021 - 2022 with a view to formal ratification.**

Heavers Farm: Susan explained that a lot of hard work had been put into setting the budget plan which had been based on the known funding and worst case scenario. There was a predicted in year surplus of £45,000 taking the deficit down to £80,000.

Alongside this a Deficit Action Plan had been drawn up which detailed all the things the school is doing to continue to reduce costs and make savings. The Leadership Team had reviewed this plan in detail to ensure that all areas for potential savings were clearly thought about.

Q: Is there any possibility that the school will receive any additional funding which isn't identified at the current time?

A: There is a possibility as there is still unresolved confusion with regard to the bulge class and expansion funding the school had received.

Susan then took the Governing Board through the actions which had been identified with a view to making savings over time:

1) Addressing the impact of the falling school roll. Robert Askey had been in touch with the local authority to discuss the school's options bearing in mind that the school roll is dropping with only 45 first choice applicants for September. Robert explained that this was a borough wide issue, as the birth rate was falling. Heavers Farm is in close proximity to other schools which are also experiencing reduced numbers of applicants. The LA had advised that the school could request that the school does not open four forms of entry next year if it appears that numbers are too low rather than going through the formal process of reducing the PAN. This would be an informal arrangement but with the understanding that the LA would not put forward more pupils for the school once a decision had been made to limit the number of classes. The school would need to inform the LA of its decision by the end of May. This would then enable the school to save on staffing costs for classes which are too low in numbers to be sustainable. Governors agreed that this was a good solution and allowed flexibility going forwards. Governors also agreed that the school would have the authority to make this decision as circumstances dictate, as an operational decision, rather than bringing back to governors each time.

2) Cost savings with Staffing: Some members of support staff are on short term contracts which will not be renewed once the current bubble arrangements are no longer needed. There will also be the opportunity to reduce the number of teachers if class numbers are reduced.

Q: Will this involve redundancies or are you already expecting staff to be leaving at the end

of the school year?

A: Yes. Quite a large number of teachers have indicated their intention to leave, mainly because they are planning to move away from the area.

During discussion it was noted that the staffing savings would not impact the current financial year fully bearing in mind that the academic year runs from September to September when most staff savings would start to be seen.

3) Reduction in staff overtime. Overtime for staff has been cancelled except in exceptional circumstances.

4) Re-introduction of Club provision, budgeted at 75% take up of capacity

5) Expansion of Breakfast club provision

6) Reduction of Free sports places with introduction of a nominal charge of £3 per session

7) Cancellation of theatre PPA cover

8) Reduction in admin costs following the introduction of Magic Booking system

9) Decision not to replace the Deputy headteacher post

The Governing Board recognised that all these elements were carefully thought through and recognised that the school was continuing to look at every possibility for cost reduction. There was discussion about a clear aim to match the level of expenditure to the number of pupils coming in. Johnny pointed out that the staffing budget costs were reduced by only 10%. Susan reiterated the difficulty of matching savings across a financial year versus an academic year with regards to staffing.

The Governing Board formally approved the budget for Heavers Farm.

Selsdon: The Budget plan for Selsdon was very much in line with the previous year with a predicted end of year surplus to add to the brought forward carry forward.

The school was keeping a careful eye on admissions with a view to making a decision as to whether or not there will also be a need to request that a class is closed due to lack of pupil numbers.

The Governing Board noted that the budget plan with a predicted end of year positive figure of £88,006.29 was a healthy balance and **formally approved the plan with unanimous agreement.**

- **Review of three year budget plans for both schools**

Governors were in receipt of three year budget plans for both schools. Governors scrutinized these in detail. It was noted that predictions were based on known figures at the current time. For example, SEND funding is predicted to drop because of the known numbers of children with EHCPs leaving at the end of the current year. At this stage it is unknown if/how many children with EHCP funding will join the school within the next three years. Taking into account the many unknowns at this stage, the Governing Board agreed that the three year planning had been produced as accurately as possible at this stage and **formally approved the plans for both schools.**

- **Review and Ratification of Schools Financial Value Standards documents for both schools**

Governors were in receipt of the completed SFVS proforma for both schools. Governors discussed the benchmarking figures included in the report noting that the two schools showed that they were in the lowest 10% of expenditure on teaching resources, but in the highest group for staffing costs. This was not unexpected given the emphasis in the past year on a high level of staffing in order to protect bubbles as much as possible and minimise the number of children and staff who would be affected in the event of having to close a bubble due to Covid 19 infection.

Energy costs were also noted as particularly high. Susan said that this was an issue the Federation was very much aware of, and was looking at if/how it will be possible to reduce costs going forwards. There was also an historical issue with billing from Croydon and after years of non-billing and schools making budget accruals, schools had this year received extremely large bills which were not expected.

It was noted that low energy lighting had just been installed at Heavers Farm, the benefits of which will take time to realise in cost savings. It was also hoped that the new building management system will have an impact on fuel usage. The Federation was also looking at different energy providers to try and secure the best value deal.

Expenditure on other staff costs was also in the higher end of the spectrum, and Susan explained that this was due to fees for Teach First staff.

At the conclusion to discussion the Governing Board formally approved the SFVS documents for both schools.

- **Selsdon Audit Report**

Governors were in receipt of the recent Audit Report following an audit at Selsdon. As noted at the last meeting of the Resources Committee the school had achieved a Substantial level of assurance with very few required priority actions.

Susan took the Governing Board through the report and explained that all the identified actions were now in hand

- Fire safety was not included in staff induction training; This is now rectified
- The new caretaker was yet to complete asbestos awareness training; Training is booked
- A lack of glazing risk assessment: A glazing company has been commissioned to undertake a

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| | <p>full audit at both schools.</p> <p>➤ A traffic management plan was not in place : This has now been allocated to a member of staff for completion at both schools.</p> <p>The identified procurement issue had been addressed, and the staffing structure had been formally approved at the last meeting of the Governing Board.</p> <p>Governors extended their congratulations to the Federation for the outcome of the Selsdon audit which demonstrated good management overall.</p> <p>Q: Is Heavers Farm due to have an audit this year too? A: Heavers Farm is not on the list for the current financial year. However, it is important to be well prepared and an audit will be likely to take place next year if not this year.</p> |
| 7. | Any Other Business None |
| 8. | Confidential Items None |
| 9. | Dates of the next meetings: see below |

| Summer Term 2021 | |
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| Tues 18th May 6.15pm | Quality of Education Committee |
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| Tues 22nd June 6.15pm | Resources Committee |
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| Tuesday 13th July 6.15pm | Full Governing Board |

Signed.....Chair of the Governing Board

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