

By Brook Valley Academy Trust
(Company Registration Number 8020467)
Academy Board Meeting
Thursday 18th November 2021



Minutes

Present: Graham Pike (Head teacher) (“GP”), Rosemary Jago (“RJ”), David New (“DN”), Jaclyn Cross (“JC”), Anjali Kangaratnam (“AK”), Elizabeth Gilbertson (“EG”), Carrie Davies (“CB”), Martin Lowe (“ML”), Sarah Wren (“SW”) and (from 6.25pm) Lakmini Harkus (“LH”)

In Attendance: Edwena Rowell (prospective foundation governor)(“EP”) and Michelle Hocking (Clerk/Company Secretary) (“MH”) and (until 7.05pm) Simon Cunningham, Moores (the company’s auditors) (“SC”) and Cathryn MacDougall (“CMc”)

Apologies: Deborah Henshall (“DH”)

Item	Minute	Action
	Opening Prayer AK led the opening prayer	
1	Welcome and Apologies RJ took the chair and opened the meeting at 6.06pm. Apologies were noted and accepted from DH. RJ declared that a quorum was present and formally welcomed everyone to the meeting, particular SC, and CM – present for review of the accounts in advance of the AGM (originally planned for tonight but re-scheduled to 15 th December due to lateness of pension liabilities report receipt causing late circulation of the accounts) and EP (who, pending formal appointment had been invited as an observer and had signed confidentiality undertakings accordingly).	
2	Pecuniary and Business Interests Register It was noted that all present had completed the annual Related Parties Declaration of Interests forms and, save as declared by staff in relation to any Pay Policy/salary discussions, no interests were declared in the business of this meeting.	
3	AGM Business Items: It was noted that the Accounts, including the auditors’ report, Trustees’ Report, the Audit Summary and Letter of Representation had been circulated (by email and uploaded to File Manager) immediately prior to the meeting and it was presumed that most present had been unable to review in detail. Review of the Accounts: (A) Audit Summary Report (ASR) SC explained that the audit summary must be filed with the Education & Skills Funding Agency (EFSA) by the end of December and that he would	

	<p>provide an outline summarising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key findings • Audit risks • Mandatory matters under auditing standards. <p>SC thanked CM for all her work – particularly in chasing the pension report (for some reason pension reports had been late for schools across Wiltshire this year).</p> <p>Part 2: Key Reporting Matters (p.4 ASR) SC highlighted key areas: <i>Significant audit risks:</i> Six risks – 3 significant (see below). <i>Uncorrected misstatements detected by auditors:</i> N/A. <i>Expected modifications to auditors' report:</i> N/A. <i>Significant difficulties:</i> None except pension report delay. <i>Internal Controls:</i> Observations detailed in section 5 of ASR (see below) <i>Required communications:</i> N/A.</p> <p>Part 3: Significant Risks and Audit Approach (p.6 ASR) SC highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Override: This is risk of management bypass controls – mitigated by audit review of journal transactions and bank statements (for exceptional items, etc). No issue identified. • Revenue Recognition: Because General Annual Grant (GAG) income and Free School Meal (FSM) income are not coterminous with accounting period (at the end of August) some income is deferred and pushed forward into the next accounting period. No issues identified. • Restricted Funds: GAG is restricted so important that it is spent in accordance with restrictions. No issues identified. • Other Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Valuation: this is a significant amount but out of trustees' control and, having reviewed and benchmarked the pension report, Moores have confirmed the assumptions are reasonable/ in line with standard ○ Payroll: this is also a significant amount (salary costs are 70%+ of total expenses). No issues to report. ○ Covid 19: this looks forward to considering plans, funds, etc going forward as a going concern for the next 12 months – no significant matters to report although obviously the pandemic remains ongoing and so some uncertainty remains <p>Part 4: Risk of Fraud and independence (p.9 ASR) Reiterates Moores' independence as auditors for By Brook.</p> <p>Part 5: Accounting systems and internal controls (p.10 ASR) Details the control points/audit adjustments. There were significantly more last year than this year.</p> <p>Two control points: (1) The academy must consistently follow its policy on depreciation – not all assets in the same category were depreciated at the same</p>	
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	<p>rate – this is an accounting adjustment only and the fixed asset register is being amended accordingly.</p> <p>(2) Bank figures were understated – creditors understated because the bank BACS system failed – should be a one-off issue caused by the bank and was resolved within days post Year End.</p> <p>CM explained that, following an internal system upgrade, the bank erroneously removed the academy’s facility to make BACS payments (£150 compensation has been paid for the inconvenience)</p> <p>Appendix 1 – Summary of adjusted and unadjusted misstatements (p.11, ASR)</p> <p>(1) Miscalculation of prepayments: variance increased deficit</p> <p>(2) Inclusion of rejected year end direct debit payment: reinstatement of creditor</p> <p>(3) Invoices that relate to the year under review did not appear to be included in the figures – there is an open question about these, so this may be removed</p> <p>(4) Net impact of pension deficit movement over one year – out of trustees’ control</p> <p>LH joined the meeting at 6.25pm</p> <p>One unadjusted misstatement relating to the grossing up of depreciation – this was below threshold.</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Letter of Management representations (p.13, ASR)</p> <p>SC confirmed that this is a standard letter and invited questions on it. There were none.</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Sector Updates (p.17, ASR)</p> <p>SC drew trustees’ attention to the minor sector updates in this appendix. In particular the timeline on the final page was noted:</p> <p>Timetable</p> <p>Key deadlines are noted below for the year ahead:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <th>Action</th> <th>Deadline</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Financial statements</td> <td>31 December 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accounts return</td> <td>25 January 2022</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Publish financial statements on the Trust’s website</td> <td>31 January 2022</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Budget forecast return</td> <td>17 May 2022 (indicative date)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Submit 2020-21 audited accounts to Companies House</td> <td>31 May 2022</td> </tr> </table> <p>SC emphasised that this, second year of Moores auditing the school, had been smoother with clearer and more accurate information provided.</p> <p>(B) Draft Accounts</p> <p>SC highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typos and formatting issues will be corrected • The Trustees’ Report is largely written by the school, but Moores 	Action	Deadline	Financial statements	31 December 2021	Accounts return	25 January 2022	Publish financial statements on the Trust’s website	31 January 2022	Budget forecast return	17 May 2022 (indicative date)	Submit 2020-21 audited accounts to Companies House	31 May 2022	
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	<p>confirm it is compliant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserves Policy wording to be reviewed (see below) • Signatory to be changed from former Chair of Governors to RJ as current Chair of Governors <p>Financial review (p.6, Accounts)</p> <p>SC highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section provides narrative of numbers • Total expenditure is greater than income but includes accounting adjustments • 2020/21 had budgeted deficit – this is not uncommon in the education sector at present due to additional Covid expenditure (cleaning, supply staff, utility bills, etc) <p>RJ emphasised that, for By Brook Valley, the additional Covid costs were predominantly supply costs.</p> <p>SC continued to highlight:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pension deficit exceeds half a million (£554,000) - total funds as a school as at 31 August 2021 of £2,276,000 • Reserves Policy is an additional emphasis of recent accounts directive - £35K in unrestricted pot is a little low. <p>Trustees queried what best practice was for appropriate level of reserves. SC explained that there are a large number of different approaches with the key thing being that trustees can justify and are comfortable with the amount – suggesting the norm is generally slightly (although not significantly) above the proportion By Brook Valley reserves.</p> <p>The board briefly discussed, noting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It seemed to be against the ethos of spending money to the maximum benefit of the children in the school to cut costs in order to retain money in the bank • £35K stated in the draft accounts was less than the 7-12% of GAG reserves policy recently discussed at F&P Committee. • the board should be satisfied that the academy remains a going concern (i.e., able to meet its liabilities as they fall due) for 12 months from the date of signing the Accounts as the main income stream is guaranteed <p>SC explained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest of document through to p.9 is standard boilerplate • Principle Risks & Uncertainties (p.10): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Risk Register is in place and must remain a live document (it was noted that this is regularly reviewed by F&P Committee) ○ The academy complies with the other requirements on p.10 • All trustees give the governance statement on p.12 – all must be comfortable with this prior to RJ's signature on behalf of the board • The following administrative amendments are required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ RJ will replace LN as signatory throughout ○ Explanatory footnote regarding ML's lack of attendance to be 	
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4	<p>Minutes of last meetings: 16 September 2021 FGB and 1st November 2021 Special meeting (+ matters arising not covered elsewhere)</p> <p>The minutes of both 16 September and 1st November meetings were unanimously approved as a true and accurate record of those meetings.</p> <p>Matters arising not covered elsewhere</p> <p>All matters complete, covered by this evening's agenda, or superseded save as follows:</p> <p>Item 3: GP to communicate with parents about RSE curriculum and policy – GP confirmed that the safeguarding matrix would be out for consultation by the end of Term 2. <u>ACTION: GP to ensure RSE/safeguarding matrix are out for consultation by the end of Term 2.</u></p> <p>Item 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LN to send Data Walk checklist to JC and RJ and JC and RJ to liaise to arrange Data Walks as appropriate – RJ confirmed that she now had the checklist and she and JC would commence checks. • LN, RJ and GP to meet to discuss methods of approaching/addressing parental questionnaires' points – JP confirmed that she and GP were taking this forward. • DN/SW to update 'Expectations of Governors' document and circulate for November meeting – carry forwards <u>ACTION: DN/SW to update 'Expectations of Governors' document and circulate for January meeting</u> <p>Item 5: MH to circulate Modern Governor registration instructions (available via RightChoice) to all – superseded by GP circulation of National College training. <u>ACTION: GP to send National College link to EG.</u></p> <p>Item 6: GP to amend Priority 2 of SIAP in line with DN's comments at the last meeting – carry forward <u>ACTION: GP to amend Priority 2 of SIAP in line with DN's comments at the September meeting.</u></p> <p>Item 12: GP to circulate 'Ofsted Prep' documents as soon as possible <u>ACTION: GP to circulate Ofsted Prep documents as soon as possible.</u></p>	<p>GP</p> <p>DN/SW</p> <p>GP</p> <p>GP</p> <p>GP</p>
5	<p>Headteacher Report (including SIAP Update)</p> <p>It was noted that GP's Headteacher Report had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was presumed all present had reviewed it. GP highlighted Covid Impact on attendance and workload:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 47 pupils down to 90% attendance • Public Health is reminding of other illnesses impacting on attendance too – winter viruses likely to continue to impact attendance pre- and post- Christmas <p>The board noted that, according to figures reported on the DfE website, the school's attendance remains in line with or just above national – 88.2% is the current national average attendance <u>ACTION: GP to add national comparison to report for the duration of the pandemic.</u></p> <p>The board also considered in school incidents reporting, noting that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governing bodies should have an awareness of incidents of harmful sexual behaviour • This could be included in safeguarding or behaviour sections of the Headteacher's Report • There is a presumption that such incidents are occurring, and 	<p>GP</p>

	<p>appropriate mitigation should be in place</p> <p>GP also noted that he was attending a Single Academy Trusts and Multi-Academy Trusts meeting on Monday and he would feed back on this at the next meeting. ACTION: MH to add Single Academy/Multi-Academy Trusts Meeting Update to the January agenda.</p> <p><u>Questions</u></p> <p>Q1: With regard to staff absences, are there any increases in phased returns/support required on return?</p> <p>A: Two Teaching Assistants are back on phased returns. One was a short-phased return, the other is longer – with weekly review meetings, although almost back to full time now. The school's duty of care is fully acknowledged, and these staff members have been specifically signposted to the Wellbeing Hub provided via the school's insurers.</p>	MH
6	<p>Policies:</p> <p>(a) Responsible Use – ratification of final version</p> <p>(b) Recommended by F&P:</p> <p>(i) Fire & Emergency Evacuation</p> <p>(ii) No Smoking</p> <p>(iii) Staff/Governor Expenses/Allowances</p> <p>(iv) Out of Hours Procedure</p> <p>(v) Finance Manual</p> <p>(vi) Pay Policy</p> <p>(c) Recommended by F&E:</p> <p>(i) Allegations Against Staff & Volunteers</p> <p>(d) Recommended by C,T&L:</p> <p>(i) SEND</p> <p>(ii) EYFS</p> <p>It was acknowledged that each of the documents listed in (a), (b)(i)-(vi) and (c)(i) had been circulated prior to the meeting and all present had reviewed them.</p> <p><i>Responsible Use</i></p> <p>It was noted and unanimously agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIA incomplete ACTION: DN to complete EIA. • Appendix 1: Rather than refer to 'no personal use', WiFi should be used 'only in accordance with rules set out in this policy' ACTION: GP/Clerk to arrange update of appendix wording and ratification at the next meeting. • Staff should be specifically made aware that usage of school WiFi will be monitored ACTION: CD to reiterate to staff that usage of school WiFi will be monitored. <p><i>Fire & Emergency Evacuation</i></p> <p>Does not make provision for disabled/those requiring specific assistance and it was queried whether linked policies – such as Critical Incident/disaster evacuation – included such provisions. ACTIONS: (i) GP/Clerk to arrange for update (ii) Clerk to add review of Fire Evacuation</p>	<p>DN</p> <p>GP/Clerk</p> <p>CD</p> <p>GP/Clerk</p>

	<p><u>and Critical Incident Policy to the next F&P agenda and (iii) Clerk to add revised Fire & Emergency Evacuation Policy to the January agenda.</u></p> <p><u>Staff/Governor Expenses/Allowances</u></p> <p>Wording relating to deduction of travel from home to usual place of work (the school) during working hours should not relate to governors' expenses. <u>ACTION:</u> GP/Clerk to arrange for update of the <u>Staff/Governor Expenses/Allowances Policy and ratification at the next meeting.</u></p> <p><u>Out of Hours Procedure</u></p> <p>A governor queried whether this, or another associated document:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> states prohibited use of school premises e.g., for political purposes or any illegal/ immoral activities sets out restrictions/guidelines for use of the school's commercial kitchen <p><u>ACTION:</u> (i) GP to confirm details with Office Manager and revert via F&P and (ii) F&P to report back to the next meeting.</p> <p><u>Allegations Against Staff & Volunteers</u></p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> (i) F&E to personalise for the school and (ii) Clerk to add ratification of personalised Allegations Against Staff & Volunteers to the next agenda.</p> <p><u>SEND</u></p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> DN to circulate final version of SEND Policy via the Clerk.</p> <p><u>EYFS</u></p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> DN to circulate final version of EYFS Policy via the Clerk</p> <p>Each of the No Smoking, Finance Manual and Pay Policy were unanimously approved in the form circulated prior to and produced at the meeting. <u>ACTION:</u> The Clerk to file each of the No Smoking Policy, Finance Manual and Pay Policy as approved policies.</p>	<p>GP/Clerk</p> <p>GP/F&P</p> <p>F&E Clerk</p> <p>DN</p> <p>DN</p> <p>Clerk</p>
7	<p>Safeguarding Governor/Single Central Record Update</p> <p>JC reported she:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> was booked on Nominated Safeguarding Governor training and had completed the first session had met with the Office Manager to review the Single Central Record and identified action points had met with GP to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> gain an understanding of CPOMS (electronic safeguarding reporting and records system) discuss the safeguarding governor's role commence preparation of template for safeguarding audit <p>JC also drew everyone's attention to the general safeguarding training slides circulated – for review prior to the January's meeting's school specific scheduled training session. <u>ACTION:</u> <u>All to review safeguarding training slides circulated in detail prior to the January meeting.</u></p>	<p>All</p>

8	Link Governors Update DN confirmed nothing to report due to recent pandemic restrictions on visits.	
9	Curriculum, Teaching & Learning Committee Update It was noted that the minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. DN highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference: Pupil Premium Report date changed from end of September to end of December • SEND Report: Strategic Report which includes pupil progress removed from website due to risk of identifying children. • Prospectus: Requires updating (JC and AK also noted that F&E discussed equalities review of prospectus too) <u>ACTION: GP and RJ to arrange for update of Prospectus/relevant pages on the school website.</u> 	GP/RJ
10	Foundation & Ethos Committee Update It was noted that the minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. JC highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .Equality Information Objective is in progress: equality legislation/Equality and Human Rights Commission requires at least one objective each year; highlighting achievements since the last one and objectives going forwards (SMART objectives to have ongoing review exercise) • Committee's Action Plan: Refreshed to ensure in line with key threads and acknowledge realistic objectives in light of pandemic disruption this year 	
11	Finance, Premises, Staffing & HR Committee Update It was noted that the minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. EG highlighted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee proposed she was appointed chair and ML was appointed vice chair of F&P The appointments of EG as chair and ML as vice chair of F&P Committee were unanimously approved • There was a detailed review of the budget and financial position: at year close £83.4K reserves (11.6% of GAG) and in-year deficit of £43.6K were reported – deficit was predominantly attributable to Covid increases in supply costs and decrease in wraparound care income - need to understand reasons for post-audit variations • Acknowledged concerning year on year position and need to increase revenue (via increasing NOR and wraparound care, including potentially holiday clubs' provision) GP observed that the school had so far managed to sustain NOR despite reduction in birth rate impacting other local schools. <u>ACTIONS: (i) F&P to review budgeted position and expedite how to address declining budget position before the AGM and (ii) EG to revise Risk Register for consideration at the December F&P meeting.</u>	F&P EG
12	Governor Training and Participation (a) Skills Audit Review Ongoing <u>ACTION: Clerk to liaise with RJ/GP and add Skills Audit Review to the next agenda.</u>	Clerk

	<p>(b) Brochure on Teams + Cascaded training materials ACTIONS: (i) All to book training via the Clerk and (ii) Clerk to investigate Finance training via the LA for EG.</p> <p>(c) Ofsted Preparedness GP reported that he would upload information to Teams and reiterated that safeguarding was key priority.</p>	All Clerk
13	<p>AOB</p> <p>(a) Key dates RJ circulated paper copies of key dates as follows:</p> <p><i>C, T & L Committee Meetings (Monday 3.45pm):</i> Term 2 – 15/11/21 Term 3 – 17/01/22 Term 4 – 14/03/22 Term 5 – 16/05/22 Term 6 – 04/07/22</p> <p><i>F&E Committee Meetings (Tuesday 3.30pm):</i> Term 2- 09/11/21 Term 3 – 04/01/22 Term 4 – 01/03/22 Term 5 – 10/05/22 Term 6 – 05/07/22</p> <p><i>F&P Committee Meetings (Friday 1.00pm):</i> Term 2 – 10/12/21 Term 3 – 07/01/22 Term 4 – 11/03/22 Term 5 – 06/05/22 Term 6 – 01/07/22</p> <p><i>FGB Meetings:</i> Term 2 – 18/11/21 – 6pm Term 2 – 15/12/21 – 6pm AGM Term 3 – 13/01/22 – 6pm (Safeguarding Training) Term 4 – 10/03/22 – 6.30pm Term 5 – 19/05/22 – 6.30pm Term 6 – 13/07/22 – 6.00pm</p> <p><i>School/Governor Visit Meeting Dates – Term 2:</i> W/C 22/11/21 – Maths learning walk W/c 06/12/21 – Update on RSHE 01/12/21 – KS1 Christmas Play 9.30am 02/12/21 – KS Christmas Play 1.30pm 08/12/21 – KS2 Christmas Play 1.30pm & 6.00pm 14/12/21 – KS2 Christmas Service at Castle Coombe 15/12/21 – Christmas Dinner</p> <p><u>ACTION:</u> RJ to arrange upload of dates to Teams.</p> <p>(b) Succession planning RJ emphasised that growth of the governing board would be tied in with</p>	RJ

	<p>skills and targeted advertising and roles would be shared both to appropriately distribute workload and provide handover lead time. It was noted that the Diocese had formally approved EP's appointment earlier in the day and she was officially welcomed to the team. <u>ACTION:</u> Clerk to send induction materials to EP as soon as possible.</p> <p>(c) Safeguarding training Noted above.</p>	Clerk
14	<p>How have we contributed to the vision of By Brook Valley C of E Primary School today?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed accounts presentation to aid thorough review and return of comments by 24th November • Helpful Headteacher Update • Detailed review of policies – including approval of staff Pay and consideration of Fire Evacuation practicalities for vulnerable groups • Helpful update from committees • Focus on safeguarding and Ofsted training • Focus on website/prospectus for prospective parents 	N/A
15	<p>Date of next meetings: Wednesday 15th December 2021 (NB starts at 6pm because AGM) Thursday 13th January 2022 (NB starts at 6pm because Governor Safeguarding Training)</p>	Note

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.30pm

Signed.....

Date.....18.11.21.....