



**MINUTES OF THE CAREW LOCAL GOVERNING BODY MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 22ND NOVEMBER 2017 AT 4.00PM**

Members: Mr Jamie Bean (Chair)
Mr Rob Watkins (Principal)
Mr Stephen Brooks
* Mrs Sandra Butcher
Mrs Joy O'Connor
* Mr Kevin Leggatt
Ms Ruth Duggan
* Mr Emmet Murphy

* Denotes absence

Also present: Mrs Helen Morris (Vice Principal)
Ms Suzanna Challenger (Clerk)
Mrs Kirsty Cottrell (Observer / potential new LGB member)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs Butcher, Mr Leggatt and Mr Murphy.

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr Bean welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made. Mr Bean introduced Mrs Cottrell, who is Assistant Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead at Orchard Hill College. Mrs Cottrell has expressed an interest in joining the LGB and had been recommended by outgoing Vice Chair Janet Sherborne. Mr Bean thanked Mrs Cottrell for bringing her expertise to the LGB.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no new declarations of interest. Ms Challenger circulated declaration of interest forms to governors who had not yet completed one.

4. SKILLS AUDIT

Ms Challenger circulated skills audit forms to governors who had not yet completed one.

5. FINANCE AND FUNDING

Governors **RECEIVED** the Finance portfolio report at this point. The surplus and the improved cash position were both noted as positive developments. It was also noted that budgeting sometimes lags behind the real time situation in the school, for example regarding numbers on roll. Mr MacDonald said that he meets regularly with Mr Watkins to go through the budgets and that the October accounts are largely in line with ideal expectations.

Governors **APPROVED** the Core Services SLAs.

i) Final Accounts – Year End

Mr MacDonald noted for governors' benefit that these accounts have not yet been signed off by auditors, but said he did not anticipate any changes.

Governors **NOTED** that Carew finished on a small surplus, against a projected deficit. Mr MacDonald said that Mr Watkins had worked closely with LAs during the year to secure extra funding for 1:1 support for pupils. Governors congratulated Mr Watkins on securing this funding for the benefit of Carew pupils.

Mr Bean noted that reserves of £572k would be carried forward and asked whether that was school/Trust policy. Mr MacDonald said that the Trust aims for all schools to maintain 90 days of expenditure as a minimum. In business terms, reserves of £1m would be ideal but this would require a continual surplus to be produced, which is not an appropriate model for a school.

Mr Bean asked whether the intention for Carew is to maintain current levels of reserve or free up spending power. Mr MacDonald said this is determined by the OHCAT Board of Directors – they would approve reserve spending. Reserves are held within school budgets to ensure that they are not transferred between academies. Mr Watkins said the Trust has received confirmation from the DfE that Carew reserves will transfer to the new free school upon opening.

Mr Brooks asked whether the funding for the asbestos removal had come from OHCAT. Mr MacDonald said the Trust had applied to the ESFA Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) but the bid was not successful, so the money had come from school revenue. Mr Watkins said this illustrated the importance of pushing for the new free school; Carew Manor is an old and listed building and so requires a lot of expensive maintenance. The school will be bidding for more improvement funding in 2017-18, mainly for roofing and drainage works.

Governors **THANKED** Mr Watkins and Mr MacDonald for their strong management of school finances throughout the year.

ii) Management Accounts

The budget was set against a projected 191 NOR – there are currently 200 on roll, which will deliver a further £90k of place funding. Top up was budgeted conservatively so is likely to exceed the given figure.

Student numbers are projected at 191 and staffing at 69.

Mr Brooks said it would be ideal for governors to have sight of the 2018/19 budget by the Spring term LGB meeting, in order to offer appropriate scrutiny. Mr MacDonald agreed, saying he and Mr Watkins have discussed setting the budget by January 2018 and so would hope to have at least draft figures available for governors by the Spring meeting.

ACTION: Mr Watkins and Mr MacDonald to update on budget at Spring LGB meeting.

Mr Bean asked whether it was possible to make predictions 1-3 years ahead, saying that WCGS have begun doing this and it is proving helpful in terms of recruitment planning. Mr MacDonald said that this is done at Board level and is driven by pupil numbers. Mr Watkins said there will always be real time variance and budgets may be less accurate if done earlier, adding that this year's curriculum development work e.g. in the Middle School will then influence the staffing structure.

Governors **NOTED** the overall positive status of the budget.

Mr MacDonald left the meeting at this point.

6. CONSTITUTION AND APPOINTMENTS

- i) Governors **NOTED** that Janet Sherborne has stepped down since the last meeting, and offered their thanks to her for all her hard work on behalf of the school. Mrs Cottrell has agreed to join the LGB. Governors **APPROVED** her appointment, subject to ratification by the OHCAT Board of Directors on 15.12.17.
- ii) Governors **NOTED** that following Paul Chambers' resignation, Jamie Bean has been formally appointed as Chair of Governors by the OHCAT Board of Directors.
- iii) Ms Challenger said that Mrs Cottrell has indicated that she will be happy to stand as Vice Chair. There were no other nominations. Governors unanimously **APPROVED** the appointment. This will be ratified by the OHCAT Board of Directors on 15.12.17.

7. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were **APPROVED** and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

Mr Bean requested that future minutes, including Pay Committee minutes, include a summary of open/closed actions so that governors can effectively follow up any outstanding. Ms Challenger agreed to take this forward.

ACTION: Ms Challenger to include a summary of open/closed actions in all future minutes, and to pick up any open actions from this term's Pay Committee for circulation to committee members.

8. MATTERS ARISING

- i) Mr Watkins circulated the draft SEF, which he and Mr Bean have worked up using WGCS's model as a basis. The SEF includes a summary of key areas and five key points which encapsulate Carew's ethos and strengths. Mr Watkins said that recent external validation confirmed that the school is working towards Outstanding, with focus currently on improving the quality of progress data and associated reporting. Mr Bean agreed that with a strong evidence base for parental involvement and student attainment, focusing on progress measures is the right next step. Governors **AGREED** to review the completed SEF at the Spring LGB meeting.

ACTION: Ms Challenger to add SEF review to the Spring term agenda.

- ii) Governors discussed the draft School Development Plan. Mr Bean asked whether governors had had input into the school's Vision and Values statements – this had happened originally, but Governors **AGREED** that a review would be timely. Governors felt the vision and school motto were strong and suggested that three values sit underneath the overarching statement. Governors also requested that staff and student voice feed into the review.

ACTION: Mr Watkins to consult Carew students and staff on the Vision and Values statements prior to the Spring term LGB meeting.

ACTION: Ms Challenger to add Vision and Values review to Spring term agenda.

Mr Watkins and Mrs Morris identified key successes including the further expansion of the GCSE offer and the embedding of Classroom Monitor into everyday practice. Governors discussed the five key priorities for 2017/18. Mr Watkins noted that points 1 and 4 (Community and Employability) relate mostly to leadership, whereas all teachers will experience point 2 (Achievement – embedding Classroom Monitor) and point 5 (Wellbeing). Point 3 is tracked to middle leadership. Mrs Morris has done a lot of work around CPD and reported an increase in numbers of TAs wanting to teach and a boost to staff morale. Mr Brooks said that improved staff wellbeing impacts positively on student wellbeing. Mr Watkins confirmed that this high level five point plan sits above a more detailed SLT work schedule for each strand. Mr Bean suggested this be shared with governors.

ACTION: Mr Watkins to show task schedule for SDP at Spring term meeting.

Mr Bean suggested producing a School Development Plan one-sheet for governors, to embed the overall message, and thanked Mr Watkins for all his hard work so far. Mr Watkins said that appraisals and CPD are now linked to the SDP for all staff. Mr Bean said it would be useful to consider ways of evidencing the action flow.

ACTION: Mr Watkins to share TA and teacher appraisal forms with governors.

- iii) Further to minute 9, governors **NOTED** that Tracey Goodsell has received Sandra Butcher's Safer Recruitment certificate.
- iv) Further to minute 9, Mr Watkins said that KPI comparatives would prove tricky for schools, especially special schools. Carew's SLT has looked at top-up comparisons and staffing structures.
- v) Further to minute 9, governors **NOTED** that the new portfolio visit report template is available to download from the portal.
- vi) Further to minute 13, governors **NOTED** that the Pay Committee had met and pay recommendations have been actioned accordingly.

9. (a) PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Re. Annex 2, Mr Watkins said he had included this summary of Carew's progress and achievements over 2016-17 in response to previous questions from governors about sharing examination results. Governors congratulated Mr Watkins and his team on a stellar set of results. Mr Watkins noted that the maths results were particularly strong, given that every pupil entered had passed a more difficult exam than in previous years. The points score should increase year on year as a measure of attainment. Mr Watkins thanked Mr Brooks for leading the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme.

Mr Brooks said that it was refreshing to see the sixth form represented in this summary, as sixth form provision is to some extent a discrete entity. Ms Challenger said that the upcoming website redevelopment would include a specific Sixth Form tab to reflect this, with information on next steps and destinations as well as post-16 curriculum and enrichment opportunities. Mr Brooks noted that Carew's sixth form had for the first time received interest from a prospective external student, which governors agreed is very encouraging.

9.1 Pupil Matters

Carew currently has 200 students on roll. The LA has agreed an increase in the PAN, to 195, from September 2018 and discussions are ongoing with respect to numbers over capacity.

Governors **NOTED** the positive results of the parent survey, with Mr Bean saying that these provide excellent evidence for the SEF as well as highlighting areas for improvement e.g. bullying. He asked whether the results had been fed back to staff and Mr Watkins said this had not yet happened.

ACTION: Mr Watkins to feedback to staff re. parent survey results.

9.2 Budget

This was discussed under item 5.

9.3 Staff and Personnel

Carew is now fully staffed with permanent teachers, including a full Senior Leadership Team which is driving greater strategic progress within the school. Debbie Capon has been recruited as the Attendance and Family Lead, and is also Deputy DSL.

9.4 Health and Safety

Governors **NOTED** the installation of the new fire alarm system. Mr Bean asked when the last fire drill had taken place. Mr Watkins confirmed it had been the first day back after October half term and had gone smoothly, with all staff and students evacuated and accounted for within five minutes. A report is completed after each drill, and governors **AGREED** it would be useful to note these at future LGB meetings.

ACTION: Mr Watkins to bring fire safety reports to future LGB meetings.

9.5 CPD

Governors **NOTED** the comprehensive report on this year's CPD to date. Mr Bean asked how the SLT measures the impact of CPD on standards within the school. Governors discussed possible ways of measuring impact: DET and AET can be evidenced via the external observations built into the course; for general CPD, Mr Bean suggested building the question into observation reports so that teachers are asked "What impact did CPD have on this lesson?" Staff drop-ins are part of CPD and include a conversation around impact during the progress meeting. Other suggestions included looking at behaviour data and incidences of positive handling in relation to Team Teach training, and looking at the impact of Lego therapy or ELSA input for pupils heavily represented in the behaviour data.

9.6 Safeguarding

Governors **NOTED** the safeguarding information in the report. Mr Bean asked how SLT ensures the Single Central Record is complete. Mrs Morris said that Lisa Nagle updates it monthly and the safeguarding portfolio governor checks it termly; Mrs Morris reports the monthly update to Mr Watkins. No contracts are signed without Mr Watkins seeing all the relevant documentation. Mrs Cottrell said that as the incoming Health & Safety, Child Protection & Safeguarding portfolio holder, she would be happy to carry out a simulated Ofsted check on the SCR.

ACTION: Mrs Cottrell to make arrangements with Mr Watkins to look at the SCR.

Governors discussed the overall format of the Principal's Report, saying they appreciated the input from SLT members. Mr Watkins said he would like to further evolve the format in order to personalise it to Carew. Ms Challenger said she would take this back to Tracey Goodsell, Governance Manager, for consideration.

ACTION: Ms Challenger to raise reporting format with Mrs Goodsell.

Ms Duggan said the school reputation is very good at the moment, which is testament to the hard work of Mr Watkins, his SLT and the Trust. Mrs O'Connor agreed, saying that in previous years parents had not wanted to send their children to Carew but that there is now a real sense of pride about the school. Mr Watkins said that Carew's students are a fantastic asset; every recruitment panel includes a student panel, and students lead all the school tours for external visitors.

Governors **RECEIVED** the Principal's report

9. (b) DASHBOARD

Mr Watkins tabled the dashboard and apologised for the incomplete data, delivering a verbal report on areas not represented on the dashboard. Staff typicality is currently 100% good or better. Staff sickness has improved; staff calling in sick now have to speak directly to Mr Watkins, who also covers lessons himself. Return to work meetings are also in hand. Student attendance is good despite the impact of some persistent absentees and a range of medical needs among the student body.

ACTION: Mr Watkins to update and recirculate the completed dashboard to governors.

Mr Bean suggested that progress measures should be included on the dashboard.

ACTION: Mr Watkins to discuss the inclusion of progress measures with MIS.

Governors **RECEIVED** the Dashboard.

10. PORTFOLIO GOVERNOR VISITS

Ethos, Vision and Strategy: Mr Bean reported a sense of calm and positivity around the school, and that he was pleased to see an open door culture in action. Mr Watkins said that in addition to pupils knowing they can speak to him throughout the day, parents all have his phone number and know they can reach him directly.

Teaching and Learning: Ms Duggan reported that she had been very impressed by the calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school, saying pupils were always confident and happy to talk to visitors. Ms Challenger said she had also observed this during a recent visit to Carew.

Health & Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding: Governors **NOTED** that there was no HSCPS portfolio visit this term due to the handover from outgoing to incoming portfolio holder. Mrs Cottrell confirmed that she will conduct a longer visit in the Spring term, including thorough scrutiny of SCR processes.

ACTION: Mrs Cottrell to arrange portfolio visit to Carew for the Spring term.

HR and Operational Development: In Mr Murphy's absence, governors **NOTED** the continuing support from Shamani Wathsala and the OHC&AT HR team, and corroboration of the improvement in staff absence.

Marketing and Business Development: Mr Brooks reported that he and Mrs Butcher had met with Lynn Barratt, OHC&AT Director of Corporate Development & Partnerships, to discuss promotional strategies for Carew, and that Carew's website will be redeveloped early next year as part of a Trust-wide refresh of academy websites.

Finance: Mr Leggatt's report was discussed under item 5 as part of the wider discussion around finance matters.

Governors **RECEIVED** the portfolio visit reports.

11. PAY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr Bean confirmed that the Pay Committee meeting had taken place and that all recommendations had been actioned.

ACTION: Mr Bean to write to high performing staff to offer thanks on behalf of the LGB.

12. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Governors **NOTED** the listed policies and procedures that were approved by the OHC&AT Board on 30th June 2017.

Mr Bean asked how policies and procedures are managed. Ms Challenger said that the majority of policies are OHC&AT-wide and as such are managed centrally by OHC&AT and signed off by the Board of Directors. Where school-specific local procedures are required, these would be developed by the SLT and signed off by governors before being sent to John Prior (OHC&AT Executive Head, Quality & Development/Deputy CEO) for final approval.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- i) Mr Bean said he would like to adapt the OHC&AT SLA template for use with his own Trust, if possible, as it is clear and comprehensive.

ACTION: Ms Challenger to follow up with OHC&AT Finance.

- ii) Mr Watkins noted that some Carew governors had not been able to attend the OHC&AT Governors' Conference as it was held in term time, and asked whether future training events could be held in holiday periods.

ACTION: Ms Challenger to discuss governor training schedule with Mrs Goodsell.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Governors discussed holding meetings on a different day, and **AGREED** that Tuesdays would best suit the majority. Therefore the following dates were agreed:

Tuesday 6th March 2018 at 4.00pm
Tuesday 12th June 2018 at 4.00pm
Tuesday 13th November 2018 at 4.00pm

15. CONFIDENTIALITY

There were no confidential items.

The meeting closed at 5.50pm.

CHAIR-----

DATE-----