



Bowhill Primary School

The Second Extraordinary FGB – Proposal to join Exeter MAT

(Future of the Cooperative trust)

Minutes

Date of meeting	9 th February 2016	Present	Name of Governor	Initials	Category	Name of Governor	Initials	Category
			Caren Brooks	CB	STH		Reg Edwardson	RE
Time of meeting	6:00 p.m.	Present	Stephen Cousley	SC	COO	George Littlejohn	GL	COO
			Karen Cronin	KC	FOU	Natalie Bracher	NB	PAR
			Caroline Havard	CH	PAR	Rod Ruffle	RRe	LA
			Joanne Radford	JR	COO			
Room	Year 6/2	Apologies	Matthew Giles	MG	PAR	Emma Walker-Brown	EW	PAR
			Ruth O'Neale	RO	PAR	Debra Ward	DWd	STF
			Mark Burnard	MB	FOU	Karen Webb	KW	PAR
		In Attendance	Li Wang	LW	Clerk to Governors			
Minutes to	Attendees							
	Apologies							
	School Website							

Agenda Number	Details of Discussion	Actions
	<p>Fire Alarm</p> <p>RE outlined: There is no fire test today. If the alarm sounds then make your way quickly and safely to the playground</p> <p>Business interests</p> <p>None Declared</p>	
1	<p>To receive apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies received as above.</p>	
2	<p>Co-opt Joanne Radford</p> <p>RR proposed Joanne Radford as a Co-opt Governor and this was seconded by SC and accepted by other Governors.</p>	

	Governors and JR agreed that JR will be a SEN Governor working together with EW, responsible for Reading and Writing sharing the responsibility with SC and is in charge of Foundation with GL.	
3	Co-operative Governing Body The FGB gave SC permission to approach Heather Morris about become a co-operative governor at Bowhill. SC will report back as soon as possible.	SC
4	<p>Cooperative School/Academy discussion</p> <p>RE circulated the Minutes for Exeter Learning Trust meeting held on 1st February.</p> <p>RE explained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Considering the major impact on children and teaching, Governors need to make a further decision about what should be done next on the basis that Governors rejected the proposal that Bowhill join the Exeter MAT; ➤ two schools have left the Exeter Trust (ELT)-Montgomery Primary and Redhills Primary; ➤ the remaining schools in the ELT are exploring options including moving the ELT to a Multi Academy Trust (MAT); ➤ Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for the £75k grant is 31st March 2016 (RE & CB couldn't confirm that the money might come back or not yet) • £25k start up grants for schools converting to academy – no deadline currently ➤ Pace <p>Amy Laver (Tozers Solicitors) advised not to rush and that everything needed to be done properly. However, she suggested that a MAT could be set up by September 2016.</p> <p>CB added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amy recommended the ELT being a 'member' of the MAT. ➤ CEO sits on the Board of Directors. (Discussed the option of a 'rotating' Chair/CEO role, maybe on an annual basis – Amy advised that this could cause problems). ➤ MAT members include business, community members etc. and can also include directors. ➤ MAT Members will be approached by those setting up the MAT. ➤ MAT members appoint the Chair of the Board of Directors. ➤ Directors should include governor representation but not necessarily the CofG, needs the right mix of skills e.g. solicitor, accountant etc. ➤ Directors need the right mix of skills across the Board of Directors (skills matrix) and independent representation. Could also include parent representation – again with appropriate skills. <p>CB suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Governors should have firm ideas by the time the school gets help from advisors or solicitors. <p>Benefits and concerns of joining MAT were generalized based on the observations, research and discussion:</p> <p>Benefits:</p>	

- schools share each other's resources in teaching, teachers' training, arranging events and activities and so on.
- Money that goes to schools could be used more efficiently if shared resources could be used well.
- An individual school can keep its character and identity and each respective Head does his/her own duty.
- MATs can choose to vary the budget they devolve to each school in order to address particular needs.

Concerns:

- Teachers might be reassigned to different schools within the academy, which might affect his/her career as the working styles could be quite different from school to school.
- Although schools have their own budget, they might have a bigger pay roll.
- Staff training might be free for county schools but an Academy has to pay for it.

Governors' worries focused on:

- Acadamisation with extra layer of Executive Head management might devalue the role of the Head
- Could MAT put together local schools' strengths?
- Could forming MAT damage the working relationship with previous ELT members?
- The wage level could be different among academy schools, which might be a potential problem.
- Schools might lose buildings and houses if MAT owns the assets of schools.

JR expressed her opinions about some of those concerns based on her working experience obtained in a school academy.

JR said: The teacher signs the contract with an individual school and is paid according to the guidelines. The grounds or buildings are to be shared with the permission of our school so we could draw redlines to reduce the share of cost.

CB added: She didn't think there would be damage to the working relationship between Bowhill and previous members of ELT. MATs need to have a mix of strengths and weaknesses to help each other improve. It is important to find schools with a similar ethos to work with. She advised to start MAT with four or five schools which have common ethos and of comparable standard.

CB circulated the Timeline from Amy for Governors' consideration at the meeting. CB reminded Governors: Although Amy suggested that a MAT could be set up by September 2016; she also advised that the preparation should be done as soon as possible.

Suggestions were made by Governors:

- To have Super Governor meetings to keep the communication channels open
- A suggested approach and informal investigation will be conducted to help Governors to decide on the best way forward for our school and to be ready to answer all questions from teachers, parents and other groups.
- To make decisions about what specific schools should join MAT at the initial stages.
- To join MAT is a positive choice as long as we have redlines and green lines

	<p>Governors came to a conclusion:</p> <p>We agree in principle to consider forming an MAT with the remaining Co-operative Trust primary school members subject to holding further discussions and we reserve the right to withdraw from the discussions prior to making any application to DfE.</p> <p>SC proposed to accept the decision and this was seconded by GL. Seven Governors were in favour of this decision and one Governor abstained.</p> <p>Governors agreed that the following actions will be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Convene a working party of interested governors to draw redlines and green lines. RE is responsible to draft a redlines and green lines document and send it to Governors for advice. RE will also give the deadline before which the draft document should be completed.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the changing educational landscape ● the particular challenges our school is likely to face over the next few years ● the benefits of collaboration ● different types of partnership schools are entering into ➤ <u>The working party will report back on its work to the next FGB meeting.</u> <p>Allow sufficient time for a full and open discussion. This might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● an explanation of why the working party thinks this would be the best decision for your school ● an explanation of the likely implications for governors, staff, pupils and parents ● an opportunity for the rest of the governing body to ask questions, raise concerns and make suggestions 	<p>RE/ Governors</p> <p>RE will send the deadline to Governors</p>
5	<p>Items brought forward by the Chair</p> <p>5.1 KC proposed to transfer the workload from P&C to B&F and this was approved by FGB. CH & KC are working on the Governors' Calendar and will bring it back to the next FGB meeting.</p> <p>5.2 RO will take responsibility to write a message for this Friday's Newsletter to welcome the new Governor Joanne Radford.</p> <p>Clerk will be responsible for preparing JR's photo for the Governor Board.</p>	<p>CH & KC 15/03/16</p> <p>RO 11/16</p> <p>Clerk 03/16</p>

Attachments: Minutes for Exeter Learning Trust meeting held on 1st February

There being no further items to discuss the meeting closed at 7.56 p.m.

Signed Dated.....