



**Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Governing Body of Castle School  
held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at 6.30 pm in the School Hall**

Present: Mary Langran (Chair), Carol McCarthy (Head Teacher), Elvira Spronck, Helen Dolling, Nick Brenton, Lesley Leech, Kate Dove, Mark Littlewood, and Janice Frankham

In Attendance: Sally Hempson (School Business Manager) and Yasmin Khan (Camclerk).

1.	<p><b>Welcome &amp; Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p>Mary welcomed governors to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Jane Elliott Poxon, Gerry Skews, and Natalija Clark.</p>
2.	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>None made.</p>
3.	<p><b>Minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015</b></p> <p>The minutes had previously been circulated for review. Governors agreed the minutes represented a true record.</p>
4.	<p><b>Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015</b></p> <p>(7- 5.1) Camclerk informed governors that all information regarding training for governors was sent to the nominated governor, Kate Dove. This link can also be found on the Cambridgeshire website (Learn Together) and a hard copy is also sent via the school bag system. Chair also informed governors that Castle School now had membership of 'The Key for School Governors' and log in details would be circulated after the meeting. Governors were encouraged to try out this form of governor support.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action Chair</b></p> <p>Business manager agreed to check that the office is still circulating information to all governors.</p> <p>Chair will contact all governors before the next FGB meeting to ascertain whether they wish to be considered for transfer to the categories under our new Instrument of Government with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action : Chair</b></p>

	<p>(11) KIT Visit Report – Governors agreed to defer to next FGB meeting in view of other concerns which need addressing in this meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action Chair</b></p> <p>(12) Lead Governors – discussion deferred to the next FGB meeting .</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action Chair</b></p>
<p><b>5.</b></p>	<p><b>Proposal to change the Castle School Instrument of Government.</b></p> <p>The Chair explained that the new regulations required governing bodies to formally agree changes to their Instrument of Government. To ensure Castle School meets that timetable it was necessary to formally minute and agree the future composition of the governing body at this meeting. She explained that although the governing body has been operating with several longstanding vacancies she was still recommending that the governing body stayed at the same size which would then enable the existing governors to transfer over to the new categories thus retaining the current experience and strengths whilst also allowing for agreed targeted recruitment.</p> <p>A full discussion took place and the governing body made the following decisions:</p> <p>i) Its composition to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 Parent Governors</li> <li>The Headteacher</li> <li>1 Staff Governor</li> <li>1 Local Authority Governor</li> <li>9 Co-opted Governors</li> <li>Total: 16 Governors</li> </ul> <p>ii) For the new Instrument of Government to come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.</p> <p>iii) For the clerk to send the School Governance Team a copy of the minutes.</p>
<p><b>6.</b></p> <p><b>a)</b></p>	<p><b>Budget 2015-16</b></p> <p>Nick Brenton set out the current 2015-16 draft budget position in detail so all governors were fully informed of the financial position. Unlike in previous years, the budget was not yet ready to be presented for formal ratification. In summary the governors were informed that funding had decreased and expenses had increased: despite a modest carry-forward from 2014-15, this year there is a forecast overspend of some £250k.</p>

This was followed by a presentation by the Head setting out the factors which have led to the budget position and possible economies which could be made this year. The impact on the overall budget of individual pupils, and the funding provided to the school to meet their individual needs, was considerable, as were the pressures of increased pension contributions and salary inflation. Absorbing current vacancies, increasing admission numbers, reducing budget items such as curriculum and 'enrichment' activities, and increasing charges for use of the school's facilities by external parties were proposed as possible avenues for making savings. Effective succession planning and reviewing the staffing structure could also contribute savings in the longer term.

It was highlighted that even with these suggestions there would still be a deficit of £100K. Key to addressing the deficit was a proposal to increase pupil numbers to 165 for the coming year, which would require agreement from the LA.

Concerns were raised about how these savings would affect the school's working towards being rated 'outstanding' and how they would impact on our aim to put the needs of children first. Some of the cutbacks discussed would affect the school's ability to deliver what parents and pupils expect from us, as set out in the original plans for area special schools in Cambridgeshire

Further drastic measures such as shutting the pool, not opening the new build and redundancies were discussed, but the hope was that discussions with the LA would enable us to move forward without taking these steps..

Governors were informed that the school had requested a meeting with the LA to discuss the budget which would be held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015. Governors agreed to wait for feedback from this meeting after the LA had been fully informed of the situation and options for making savings. The LA has said it expects Castle School governors to sign off the final budget at their meeting on 6 July at the latest: this would be confirmed at the meeting on May 11<sup>th</sup>.

<p><b>b)</b></p> <p><b>7</b></p>	<p>Governors all agreed that the FGB was in no position to propose and agree an application for a deficit budget license in view of the uncertainty about what the final budget would look like: it would depend on recruitment for September and further discussions with the LA. Governors reaffirmed their commitment to the original rationale and remit for Castle as an area special school.</p> <p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>Governors agreed to support the end of year staff tea party on 20<sup>th</sup> July, especially in view of a member of staff retiring.</p> <p>Kate Dove's term of office ends on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2015. Chair proposed to extend this term of office as community governor. From September this will become a co-opted position. Governors agreed.</p>
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Date of next Finance and Personnel meeting:</b> Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 6.30pm</p> <p><b>Date of next FGB meeting:</b> Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at 6.30pm</p>

Signed ..... Date.....