



Downland Village Schools Federation

Minutes of a virtual meeting of the board of governors held on Wednesday 31st March 2021 at 4:00pm

Present: Rev Trish Bancroft, David Bertwistle, Paul Brown, Richard Christmas, Jeremy Cogman, Carolyn Costello, Rev Edward Doyle, Vicky Elms, Steph Garwood, Rita Harrison-Roach, Chris Hawker, Sarah Hill, Susie McAuley, Kate O’Kelly, Ed Platt, Neil Ryder.

In attendance: Pippa Bass (clerk).

1. **Welcome and apologies**

The clerk chaired the first part of the meeting and welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the new DVSF board of governor. The Instrument of Government had been finalised by WSCC and was now in place. Apologies were accepted from Margaret Farwell.

2. **Appointment of governors**

The initial governors of the new board (Rev Trish Bancroft, David Bertwistle, Rev Edward Doyle) confirmed the following appointments:

- Dr Kate O’Kelly as LA governor (nominated by WSCC)
- Richard Christmas as staff governor (elected by staff)
- Jeremy Cogman and Sarah Hill as parent governors (elected by parents)
- Carolyn Costello as foundation governor (nominated by Chichester diocese)
- Pippa Bass as clerk.

3. **Appointment of co-opted governors**

Governors then agreed the following appointments as co-opted governors:

- Vicky Elms
- Margaret Farwell
- Rita Harrison-Roach
- Chris Hawker
- Ed Platt
- Neil Ryder

4. **Election of chair/vice-chairs**

The clerk confirmed the term of office for the chair and vice-chairs would be 5 months; new elections would be held in September 2021.

The online election form had been circulated in advance of the meeting and governors had voted. The clerk confirmed the only nomination for chair was Neil Ryder; governors had voted unanimously, and NR was duly appointed as chair.

Governors had previously agreed that there should be three vice-chairs, one from each school community. The clerk reported that the nominations were Rev Trish Bancroft, Jeremy Cogman, Chris Hawker, Vicky Elms, and Sarah Hill; governors had voted and the following appointments were confirmed:

- Vice-chair (Rake) – Rev Trish Bancroft
- Vice-chair (Rogate) – Chris Hawker
- Vice-chair (Compton & Up Marden) – Vicky Elms

NR took over as chair.

5. **Governor code of conduct**

NR thanked governors for their support and welcomed everyone to the new DVSF board. He proposed that the board adopted the DVSF governor code of conduct, which governors agreed and approved. NR explained that DVSF used The Trust Governor (TTG) system for agendas, papers, policies and other information management processes and suggested that the new governors be setup on TTG over the Easter holiday. RC agreed to check with the IT supplier for Compton & Up Marden (CU) that i-frames could be used on the CU website so that relevant TTG information could be automatically displayed.

6. **Closure reports and press release**

Governors accepted the closure reports from the (now dissolved) DVSF and CU governing bodies. Governors noted the press release announcing the new federation had been agreed by NR, DB and CC and sent to the media contacts.

7. **HT report**

DB provided his verbal report:

- Despite a rather difficult situation at CU today, having CU as part of the federation was wonderful and all the CU parents had been very welcoming.
- DB had conducted two classroom observations so far; both were judged as 'strongly good' against Ofsted criteria.
- Displays around the school need attention; in particular, the lack of children's work on display.
- Ofsted are unlikely to do inspections next term, but the aim is to be 'Ofsted ready'.
- We will be looking at the respective roles of the SLT and the exec HT, as well as a rota for attendance at each school, which had been difficult due to lack of personnel in CU.
- Overall, it is going well, and CU already feels like home.

SG added that she had been at CU for 1.5 days so far and the CU staff said they were amazed at the smooth transition and only had positive comments about DB. RC agreed and added that it had been very good to see all members of the SLT at CU.

Governors raised the following queries:

Q What is the plan for integrating CU's IT?

A We are working on the contract change over with CU's IT supplier, the renewal dates are approaching, and we will aim to complete the integration by the start of next term.

Q Given the concerns about SEN at CU, what is your assessment so far?

A [SG] I have been through all the children on the SEND and PP registers with the CU teachers and TAs, who said this was the first time they had done that. The previous SENCo was only engaged for half a day per week and was always re-directed to sort out problems rather than be able to get on with the job. A lot of work needs to be done to sort out the right interventions for the children, but class teachers have been putting things in place in the meantime.

Q Are CU staff more comfortable with the new arrangements?

A [RC] Yes, the staff are very happy with the new arrangements and like having a strong SLT.

Q How do we link up across all the schools on evaluation and monitoring?

A Whatever is decided about governor responsibilities, I would not want to lose the positive impact on the staff from governors keeping in touch with their staff member on an individual basis.

CC thanked SG for the time spent discussing the SEN children with the TAs, which had been a particular frustration for the CU governors in the past. DB also thanked RC for his support during the transition and the positive feedback from staff.

8. **Governor responsibilities**

NR thanked governors for sending through their preferences for responsibilities:

- CC volunteered to cover premises and H&S across all three schools.
- Governors agreed that NR and the vice-chairs should discuss the allocation of responsibilities and propose a suitable approach for discussion at the next meeting.

- The previous DVSF board had signed up for the NGA review of governance, which had stalled as federation discussions got underway. Governors agreed that it should be revived next term and that NR and the vice-chairs should discuss how to take the NGA work forward.
- Governors agreed that the HTPM panel should include a governor from each school and approved TB (as chair), NR and VE. CH had been on the DVSF HTPM panel since last year and kindly agreed to stand down.
- Governors agreed that the other statutory committees (exclusions, appeals, complaints) should be appointed as and when required.

9. Policies

- Joint policies. Governors agreed to adopt all the DVSF joint policies across the three schools, subject to adjusting any references to named schools or individuals. School specific policies would be delegated to the local school committees for review.
- SIAMS. SG raised the point that the forthcoming SIAMS review would look at the school policies and the schools' vision and values. NR suggested that the vision and values across the three schools should be looked at with the NGA consultant next term. In the meantime, CC agreed to work on the SIAMS document with SG and the three rectors.
- DSLs. DB confirmed that RC is the DSL at CU, with DB as deputy. The same arrangement is in place for Rake (PB) and Rogate (SG).
- Governors agreed that the Christian ethos policy and the well-being & collective worship policy should be approved by the Foundation governors.

10. Adoption of DVSF systems

- Governors agreed to adopt the following systems:
- The Trust Governor (TTG) for governor support and document management.
- MS 365 for Teams, etc.
- The Key for advice and guidance.
- The NGA Learning Link for governors training (as well as WSCC training courses).

NR would ensure the new governors had logins to these systems and asked governors to forward any training certificates to the clerk for recording on TTG.

11. Local school committees and associate members

Governors agreed the following appointments as associate members to the board for a 4-year term:

- Paul Brown
- Steph Garwood
- Susie McAuley
- Sarah O'Malley
- Rev Lindsay Yates

Governors also agreed that PB, SG and SM would be invited to all board meetings.

Governors felt that it was important not to lose the 'parent voice' and agreed that the local school forums should be 'dissolved' and replaced by formal committees of the GB with new terms of reference; members would be formally appointed as associate members of the board and would be invited to attend occasional board meetings, on a rotation basis, to provide feedback on local issues.

Governors also agreed the initial membership of each school's committee as set out below:

Local School Committees – initial membership		
Rake	Rogate	Compton
Paul Brown	Steph Garwood	David Bertwistle
Rev Trish Bancroft	Susie McAuley	Richard Christmas
Jeremy Cogman	Rev Edward Doyle	Rev Lindsay Yates
Sarah O'Malley	Neil Ryder	Sarah Hill
		Carolyn Costello

NR agreed to write to the chairs and members of the previous DVSF local school forums to explain the refreshed approach and encourage their continued involvement. The terms of reference for the committees and proposed additional members, particularly parents at Rogate, would be discussed at the next meeting.

12. Future meeting dates

NR suggested the MS 365 group discuss whether setting up a 'governor shared calendar' would be helpful to provide everyone with access to latest meeting dates.

Governors noted the calendar of future meeting dates and agreed that board meetings would start at 3:30pm, for the time being.

The next board meeting will be held on Wednesday 28th April 2021 at 3:30pm.

Approved by the board of governors and signed by A Neil Ryder

Date: 28th April 2021

ACTIONS:

Reference	Who	Action	By when
2021.03.31-5	RC	Check with the IT supplier for Compton & Up Marden (CU) that i-frames can be used on the CU website.	asap
2021.03.31-8	NR, vice-chairs	Propose a suitable approach on allocations of governor responsibilities for discussion at the next meeting.	28.04.2021
2021.03.31-8	NR, vice-chairs	Propose how to take forward the NGA review of governance.	28.04.2021
2021.03.31-9a	NR	Adjust any references to individual names in the DVSF joint policies.	28.04.2021
2021.03.31-9b	CC, SG, rectors	Work on the SIAMS document.	28.04.2021
2021.03.31-9d	Foundation governors	Approve the Christian ethos policy and the well-being & collective worship policy.	28.04.2021
2021.03.31-10	NR	Ensure the new governors had logins to TTG, The Key, NGA Learning Link, MS 365.	28.04.2021
2021.03.31-11	Clerk	Add agenda item on local school committees to the next meeting.	28.04.2021
2020.09.16-8a	NR/all	(Action carried forward) Arrange ongoing follow-up with staff on their well-being.	28.04.2021
2020.10.21-5b	NR	(Action carried forward) Set up small group to take forward work on the school websites.	28.04.2021
2020.10.21-9	Clerk	(Action carried forward) Add item on safeguarding training courses to future agenda.	28.04.2021
2020.12.02-6b	DB	(Action carried forward) Provide recommendations for SLT pay progression.	28.04.2021