



The Blue Tangerine Federation

7.00pm Monday 17 May 2021 on Zoom and in person
at St Luke's School, Redbourn

Full Governing Body

MINUTES

Present:	Rachel Andrew (RA), Aurele Mes Boaye (AMB), Ian Dignum (ID), Debbie Dorman (DD), Ruth Hammerson (RH), Stephen Hoult-Allen (SHA), Claire Kelvin (CK), Pauline Mills (PM), Josh Pollard (JP), Andy Summerskill (AS), Parris Williams (PW), Ros Wood (RW, Chair)
Not Present:	Poppy Choudhury (PC)
In Attendance:	Huw Bucknell – HB, Head of School, Forest House Education Centre Jamie Caple – JC, Head of School, St Luke's Pam Stocks - PS, Head of School, Collett Tracey Norris – HfL Clerk

Agenda item		Action
1.	To receive apologies and approve absences RW welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Aurele Mes Boaye to his first meeting as a co-opted governor. Attending via Zoom were Claire Kelvin, Debbie Dorman and Huw Bucknell. Apologies for absence had been received and were approved for Manda Sides (Operations manager), and Poppy Choudhury was not present.	
2.	To declare any conflict of interest None declared.	
3.	To approve the minutes of the previous meeting The minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 March 2021 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.	
4.	To consider matters arising from the minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. RW to approach Inspiring Governance to identify potential governors: Completed. AMB had been recruited. There was one vacancy remaining. b. SHA to re-circulate the 5-year vision document: completed. c. AS to attend covid-catch-up/pupil premium review meeting with JP on 26 March: Attended. AS provided the following feedback: all appropriate policies and procedures were in place, an action plan had been drawn up to address areas for improvement; greater specificity was required in the PP funding report (eg make it clear what was being funded and how this was targeted to PP children). Going forward it was recommended that 50% of PP budget should be spent on teaching and learning. Q Was this level of detail published on the website? A high level overview was made public which did not identify pupils. The 2021/22 report would be shared with governors at the next meeting in July. Action: Agenda item for July meeting: Pupil Premium report 2021/22 d. MS to submit SFVS: Completed. 	JP

	e. SHA to ask Donna to update the “Get information about schools – governor pages”. Completed.	
5.	To note any other business SHA handed out Blue Tangerine marketing material which had been donated/funded by sponsorship.	
6.	<p>Finance Matters</p> <p>The following reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting for both Collett and St Luke’s Schools (and separate budget summary for Forest House Education Centre which was included in the St Luke’s budget):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For the year-end 2020/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Year-end budget summary ○ CFR year-end report ○ V8 monitoring report ○ Governor analysis ▪ For the proposed budget 2021/22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Income and expenditure report ○ CFR budget report ○ New budget draft summary ○ Governor analysis ○ Budget comparison ▪ SHA provided some contextual background for new governors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governors had approved a safe staffing structure in March 2020 which would have seen the schools move into deficit budget during the 2020/21 financial year. ○ In the event, this did not happen as recruitment and other areas of school improvements were put on hold due to covid. ○ Both schools submitted only minor in year deficits at year end, these amounts were covered by the school’s carry forward. ○ HCC had commissioned a number of reports in the last two years at St Luke’s, a review of pupil needs and a financial audit. ○ The first concluded that pupil need was in most cases higher than that funded for by the local authority (ie the schools were underfunded on a per pupil basis) and the latter that there was no inappropriate or wasteful expenditure. ○ Manda Sides (operations manager) had met with Parris Williams (finance link governor) and reviewed the year end out-turn vs the proposed budget and all variances as well as the proposed budgets for 2021/22. ○ Additional (unbudgeted) funding had been received in 2020/21 - contribution to teachers pay and pension increases and covid catch-up funding which had positively impacted both schools. ○ The minimum salary for qualified teacher will be increased to £30,000 pa. though this is not in the planned budget software presently. ▪ PW confirmed that he had reviewed the variances against budget with MS and was satisfied with the explanations provided. ▪ Forest House Education Centre is funded from HCC into the St Luke’s budget of £306,000. <p>a. Year-end position 2020/21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Collett: In year deficit: £40,000 	

- Collett: Carry forward at the beginning of the financial year: £360,647
- Collett: Carry forward at the end of the financial year: £320,000
- St Luke's: In year deficit: £22,600
- St Luke's: Carry forward at the start of the financial year: £116,369
- St Luke's: Carry forward at the end of the financial year: £94,316

b. Proposed budget 2021/22

- Collett: projected income: £2,304,952
- Collect: projected expenditure: £2,689,421
- Collett: projected carry forward at the end of the financial year: £16,179
- St Luke's: projected income: £3,074,874
- St Luke's projected expenditure: £3,794,392
- St Luke's: projected carry forward at the end of the financial year: negative - £625,053

The following questions were raised:

- **Q Why was projected income less this year than last?** There were fewer primary pupils at St Luke's (who received a larger top up) and some income in 2020/21 had been one off funding streams (Eg covid catch-up, grant to support pay and pension increases).
- **Q What will HCC's response be to the deficit budget positions?** SHA assured governors that senior colleagues at HCC had been kept informed of the financial situation within the Federation. Following last year's deficit budget projections, the Federation and the Chair of Governors had written to Simon Newland at HCC. Notification had been given to FSS senior staff and Tania Rawles (HCC). The matter has been repeatedly raised at the St Luke's Action Group meeting attended by HCC staff (Tania Rawle, Sally Glossup) and HfL staff (governance, finance, HR, HIP). No response had been received from HCC and the requests from the school to hold subsequent action group meeting have not been responded to, The Federation has been completely transparent and open about the situation.
- **Q Was this typical of other special schools?** SHA was aware that many mainstream schools were on track to face deficit budgets, other special schools were perhaps not as close to deficit as St Luke's at the moment as a result of the impact of Covid (over-spending in some areas and underspending in others.)
- PW noted that the school's committed expenditure was for essential safeguarding and safe-staffing levels.
- **Q What would be the consequences of pausing recruitment to attempt to balance budget or reduce the deficit?** This would result in classes being closed and pupils being turned away. The high SEMH needs of many pupils dictated the staffing level.
- The Federation's priority was pupil and staff safety.
- **Q What sanctions might HCC take?** This was unknown, to date, there had been no correspondence/acknowledgement from HCC.
- **Q Should the Federation approach the DfE?** DfE would refer the schools back to HCC. HCC were continuing to place pupils at St Luke's and Collett (albeit at a lower funding level that was required).
- SHA provided examples of the per annum cost which was funded by HCC when pupils moved on from St Lukes/Collett (because the Federation could not meet their needs): £70,000 - £250,000.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q How many pupils did the Federation currently have whose needs were not being met/they had been inappropriately placed at either St Luke's or Collett? This was estimated at 17/160 at St Luke's and contributed directly to its deficit budget as more staff were needed to support these extremely complex children with high additional needs. During the consultation process (in these cases) the school had responded making it clear that it could not meet the needs of the pupils but were directed (by HCC) to take them anyway. ▪ Q What difference did the size of the school have on income? The school's budget share was calculated on the number of pupils on roll. Primary aged pupils received a higher payment than secondary. There were more primary aged pupils at Collett (50%) compared to 13% at St Luke's. <p>Governors unanimously approved the proposed budgets for St Luke's and Collett and instructed the Federation staff to inform HCC (again) of the deficit budget at St Luke's.</p> <p>Action: governors asked MS to keep them informed of the cash in bank position and report to the July meeting on cash projections going forward (would the school need to apply for loan from HCC for example?).</p>	MS
7.	<p>Executive Headteacher's Update</p> <p>The following documents had been circulated in advance of the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Blue Tangerine Risk Register ▪ Five-year vision (draft) <p>SHA described the main drivers for the new five-year strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What meaningful work experience was the federation offering its pupils? ▪ What employment opportunities were being created/fostered? ▪ Did the schools' curriculums support pupil's potentials to have success as independent young adults? ▪ 94% of adults with learning disabilities issues were not in employment (DfE Social Care 2019: gov.uk) ▪ SHA was keen to challenge this statistic for Federation pupils and improve their chances of success in the workplace. ▪ The schools' actions plans would be re-drafted with this 5-year strategy in mind. This would be reviewed at the end of each year. <p>Questions were invited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Q Was covid a catalyst for this change in strategy? SHA and heads of school were keen to jettison practices, policies and procedures which did not impact on T&L. Covid had helped to sharpen that desire. ▪ Q Would parents be involved in creating the five-year vision? All stakeholders would be involved at some stage in a variety of ways. ▪ Governors were mindful of the need to be especially supportive of parents of pupils with SEN when discussing pupils' futures/work opportunities. ▪ The Horse Box Café was a great visual and physical acceptance of SEN young adults in the work place. ▪ Q How would outcomes be measured? Governors would want to see KPIs to measure progress against and also have a meaningful staff voice/survey to understand how they were feeling. ▪ Q How would school track ex-pupils re careers? An alumni association was being put in place. It was great to have former pupils come back and talk to current pupils. This would take time to develop. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Action: Governor clinic/drop-in sessions for staff would be arranged. This could take place via Zoom in the immediate future. ▪ Action: RA to ask how teachers would like to interact with governors. ▪ Action: Review of SIP progress at next meeting. <p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A summary of the Federation's risk assessment (main risks, new risks and risks that have been mitigated) had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Main risk (other than finances): The potential loss of Forest House Education Centre to Roman Fields Academy. SHA reported that there was no update on this matter which was being driven by HCC. ○ Retirement of Head of School at Collett: A new head of school and DHT had been appointed. This risk was now reduced. ▪ There were no questions arising. 	
8.	<p>Heads of School Update</p> <p>Reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting on governor hub.</p> <p>a. Head of School report: Collett (Pam Stock)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All staff have received their second vaccination. ▪ Bubbles remained in place although staff/pupils were no longer wearing masks. ▪ Twice weekly testing continued in school, after May half term, testing kits would be sent home. ▪ 5 x TA vacancies: interviews were taking place next week. ▪ PS was aware of one teacher who was interviewing next week and may resign (if they were offered the job). ▪ New joiners (pupils) were typically more complex with more significant level of needs (eg pre-verbal). ▪ The site was lacking space for breakout rooms which these pupils needed as the classroom could often be overwhelming. This was a risk. ▪ Q Was this risk relating to safeguarding or pressure on staff? The risk was to staff and pupils. The additional needs put pressure on staff who were already stretched and the lack of space/sensory areas put the children at risk of negative behaviours and potential fixed term exclusion. ▪ The safeguarding leader was working with one particular pupil every morning (who was attending school on a reduced timetable). ▪ Eight pupils were still in nappies and needed changing at least three times a day. ▪ Q Recruitment issues? Lots of applicants, but unfortunately few with experience. ▪ Q Would the school consider a training programme for inexperienced new staff? There was not the capacity nor the resources to do this either internally or externally at the moment. ▪ Q Was staff turnover high? Three teachers had left the Federation last year, for career change or moving out of the area. ▪ Governors noted the positive progress being made with reading through HIVE. <p>b. Head of School Report: St Luke's (Jamie Caple)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The first in-person open mornings had recently been held which had been a 	

	<p>positive experience for all involved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ These had been conducted in a covid-secure way. ▪ There had been positive feedback on the Blue Tangerine Café from parents. ▪ Two members of staff were expected to resign (deadline was 28 May), one was moving to Bristol, the other to a SEMH school. ▪ Action: AMB to conduct exit interviews. ▪ A new AHT had been appointed (previously at Colnbrook School). ▪ Q What transition arrangements were in place? A transition coordinator visited the current setting and numerous transition sessions were arranged at the school. <p>c. Head of School report: Forest House Education Centre (Huw Bucknell)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All staff had received their second vaccination. ▪ The Centre's administrator had resigned to take up a position at St Luke's. ▪ The science teacher would be retiring at the end of the year. ▪ The residential unit had been impacted by covid (in terms of numbers of staff affected and negative impact on patients not be able to leave/have visitors etc). ▪ Teacher assessment grades for GCSE and A Levels were challenging for the small teaching team. ▪ One member of staff has been shielding all year and would be returning to school next week. ▪ Q How were referrals made to Forest House? ESMA identified day pupils (6 in total, currently there were four on the waiting list) and the residents in the hospital unit were also provided for. Currently the unit was oversubscribed. ▪ There were a number of patients who had been in the residential unit for more than a year, this was unusual. 	
9.	<p>Policy Review</p> <p>The following policy had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ H&S at Forest House Educational Unit 	
10.	<p>Governor Matters</p> <p>a. Governor visits: Governors were now welcome to make visits to school and/or make contact with link staff either in person or via zoom. There was a governor visit policy and visit report template in the Governor Visits folder on governor hub.</p> <p>b. Succession planning: RW reminded all present that she would be standing down at the end of the year and that a new chair would need to be elected.</p> <p>c. Appointment of governors: The appointment of Aurele Mes Boaye as a co-opted governor was noted. His four-year term of office would run from 17 May 2021 – 16 May 2025.</p>	
11.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>a. Fundraising: A summary of the fundraising activities throughout the year had been circulated in advance of the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Blue Tangerine Charity (separate to the Federation) had been set up and would run the community farm. Significant donations had been received from a single benefactor. ▪ Other fundraising had paid for art and S&L therapists. 	

12.	Meeting dates for 2020/21 Monday 5 July at 7pm at Collett School (and via Zoom for governors unable to attend in person).	
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Meeting closed at 8.50pm