



Ruskin Community High School

Leadership, Management & Environment Committee

18th March 2025 at 4:00pm

Venue - School

MINUTES – PART ONE

Present:	Dean Postlethwaite (HT) John Rhodes (JR) (Chair) Denise McCumskey (DM) William Ollier (WO) Emma Szymura (ES) Don Higgs (DH) Debbie Jones (DJ) Peter Storey (PS) Peter Thorpe (PT) Duncan Burrow (DB) Marion McKenzie (MM)	Headteacher Co-opted Governor - Chair of Committee Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Staff Governor
Apologies:	Margo Veitch (MV) Claire Harrison (CH) Sarah Robson (SR)	Co-opted Governor Deputy Headteacher Assistant Headteacher
In attendance:	Hazel Goodwin (SBM) Cheryl Jackson (Clerk)	School Business Manager Clerk

AGENDA ITEM 1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES
Discussion:	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and Marion McKenzie, the new Staff Governor, was introduced to the Committee. Governors agreed to accept apologies from MV.

AGENDA ITEM 2	CONFLICTS OF INTEREST, (PECUNIARY OR OTHERWISE)
Discussion:	There were no declarations of interest declared with the business of the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 3	AOB
Discussion:	There were no items of AOB.



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AGENDA ITEM 4	APPROVAL OF THE PART 1 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING
Discussion:	Governors approved the minutes from the meeting on 12.11.24 as a correct record and the Clerk was asked to send the minutes to be signed virtually by the Chair.
Decision:	Governors resolved to approve the minutes of the above meeting.
Action:	The Chair to sign a copy of the minutes and provide for school for retention.

AGENDA ITEM 5	MATTERS ARISING
Discussion:	Governors reviewed the Governors' Action Log. Governors noted that the School are still awaiting the next site inspection from Cheshire at which point 'disability access' will be discussed. There were no other outstanding actions.

AGENDA ITEM 6	LINK GOVERNOR REPORTS – HEALTH & SAFETY
Discussion:	The Health & Safety Link Governor (PT) visited the School on 12.02.25, the Visit Report was circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. PT raised a concern about general housekeeping around school, particularly in the classrooms and felt that teachers should take more responsibility. He highlighted that during the walkaround the downstairs kitchen area door was wedged open and although there was a sign 'Strictly no Students' chemicals had been left unattended on the worktop by the door which were easily accessible. This has now been addressed.

AGENDA ITEM 7	SITE & BUILDINGS REPORT
Discussion:	The Site and Buildings Update January 2025 was available on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. The SBM then drew Governors' attention to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Decarbonisation Project - The Heat Source Pump project in Sports Hall should have been completed October half term with the heating being connected but was not



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completed until the end of January, which meant no heating in the areas during exams. Jan 25.

The project in the main building has not been started yet and there are concerns about the amount of disruption it will cause. There are also concerns about the Cheshire East (CE) management of the project as they do not seem to be aware of work that is outstanding.

Q – Is CE championing the project on the School’s behalf?

R - The HT noted that the project is a year behind schedule and the communication from CE is very limited, with no updates or assurances and no indication of timescales.

The Chair noted his concern about the impact of the heating in School after all the work that has been done previously to improve it. The SBM also highlighted that the boilers will need replacing at some point. The HT confirmed that questions regarding the level of heating from the pumps were asked at the start of the project and reassurances had been given.

The HT is concerned about the impact of the next phase of the project and suggested that Governors are invited to a meeting with the contractors and CE prior to the next phase of work starting.

Q – When will that be?

R – No plans or timescales have been communicated to the School.

Q – Will this delay impact the cost?

R – No the costs are fixed, and subcontractors have already receive the funding – this may well be the problem.

Q- Have the School paid the subcontractors?

R – No, the School funded £60K of the project which was paid to CE who managed the central funding.

Governors discussed the possibility of speaking to the MP or going public with their concerns but decided to hold off for now.

Governors agreed that an additional LME committee meeting should be scheduled prior to the next phase of work commencing and the HT noted the Planning & Infrastructure Bill and the 2030 deadlines for clean power which would be a key consideration.



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• EV Charging – The School are working with a provider to install charging points. Detailed information and the initial report was available on Governor Hub. The School are currently waiting for an alternative quote to be provided. <p>Q – Will the EV charges be available to the public? R – Yes when the School is one.</p> <p>Q – Is the project cost neutral? R – The School have been conservative and are looking to install 3 chargers, costs are covered from funding and £5K from the main budget.</p> <p>Q – What happens if they are vandalised? R – The School are responsible, but they will only be accessible when the site is open.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Building & Environment 5 Year Plan was presented in rough draft to Governors, the HT noted that this plan will be RAG rated and available at the next FGB on 02.04.25.• Waste Management - From 31.03.25 all workplaces in England have a legal duty to separate waste (dry recyclable materials, food waste and black bin waste). The Ruskin Plan to achieve this was available on Governor Hub. The SBM noted that there may be a cost saving. <p>Q – Are there any plans to replace the windows? R – The School would like to replace the windows, but it is too costly without funding.</p> <p>Q – What is the progress with the Bell Tower? R – The project is being managed by CE, the repairs have not been completed yet.</p>
Actions	The SBM to schedule an additional LME prior to the next phase of the Decarbonisation Project commencing.

AGENDA ITEM 8	FINANCE UPDATE
Discussion:	<p>The Finance documents were circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting.</p> <p>The SBM gave a brief update:</p> <p>a) The 2024-2025 budget v actuals was on track and there were no significant variances. The SBM highlighted the £8k deficit in the premises and noted that a £57K insurance claim is outstanding. The predicted carry forward is £470K approx.. The School will earmark £200k for salaries.</p>



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b) CE completed their annual Finance Monitoring visit to review the budget and 3 Year Plan. The School uses their own budget and monitoring software and although the figures varied slightly from CE figures, there were no concerns. The School is in a positive position and have a draft plan in place to use any available surplus funds. The HT noted that the funding for pay is not yet known, the SBM noted that pay grants are now wrapped up into the overall funding.

c) Governors reviewed the staffing structure for 2025-2026 which was circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. The School is fully staffed.

d) Governors reviewed the 2025-2026 draft budget which was circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. The SBM informed Governors that the School had cut back in some areas and that assumptions included a reduction in energy costs. To School assumptions are based on a cautious worse case scenarios and include 5% salary increase. Additional funding is expected for NI and SEND.

e) The 2024/2025 SFVS was circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. The SBM noted that CE have completed an audit and additional detail on the Business Continuity Plan, Whistleblowing Policy, and the School Development Plans (finance link) have now been included. The SBM noted that Governor Training Plans and Skills Audit had been included in the submission.

Governors **approved** the SFVS which will be submitted by 31st March 2025. The Chair noted his involvement and thanked the SBM for her work on this.

Q – Will the School receive feedback on the SFVS?

R – The submission will be graded, and feedback will be provided.

f) Governors reviewed and **agreed** the changes to the Manual of Internal Financial Procedures (MIFP) for recommendation to the FGB for approval. The SBM noted the changes continue to be linked to the move towards cash-free processes in school.

Q – What is the uptake from parents?

R – 90% are now using the School Gateway.

Q – What is the transaction cost?

R – 1.28%. The SBM noted the significant amount and time and resources that have been saved following the introduction of School Gateway.



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	The Chair asked if the School has any financial worries. The HT just confirmed the concern about the heating and Decarbonisation Project discussed in agenda item 7.
Decision	Governors approved the SFVS 2025.

AGENDA ITEM 9	DEBT RECOVERY
Discussion:	<p>The SBM referred Governors to discussions in the previous meeting relating to debt accumulated in the dining hall and noted that it had now been reduced to £600. The credit limit has also been reduced from £20 to £3 (to cover one meal).</p> <p>The SBM proposed that £380 of historical debt should now been written off as it is not recoverable. Governors agreed the proposal.</p>
Decision	Governors approved a £380 write-off of historical debt in the dining room.

AGENDA ITEM 10	DATA PROTECTION REPORT
Discussion:	<p>The SBM informed Governors that the School is working on an Information Asset Register to support the increasing number of Subject Access Requests received. The SBM noted that an improved data retrieval process is required. This work is being done alongside the Cyber Recovery Plan and retentions.</p> <p>It was noted that staff have a good knowledge of GDPR, and that recent additional training and education has been very valuable.</p> <p>The SBM reminded Governors to complete the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) Cyber Security training as this is an annual requirement of the insurance with the DfE and RPA. It is also good practice following on from the School's our own experience.</p> <p>DB then highlighted some of the main around cyber security and the ever-increasing complexity of phishing and scams.</p>
Actions:	Governors to complete the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) Cyber Security training.

AGENDA ITEM 11	HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT
Discussion:	The Health & Safety Report was circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting.



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	<p>The SBM noted that the School had been audited by the RPA, the process had been very thorough and the follow up report had been very useful. The follow up report will be discussed further in Part 2.</p>
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AGENDA ITEM 12	STAFF & STUDENTS WELLBEING & MENTAL HEALTH UPDATE
Discussion:	<p><u>Community Cover Scheme</u></p> <p>ES introduced Governors to the Community Cover Scheme (CCS) which has been trialled in school since October. It enables staff who do cover, to accumulate credits which allows time off in lieu (TOIL) This gives staff some flexibility to take time off which has had a positive impact on staff wellbeing and has also reduced the cost of supply. 85% of staff have signed up to the CCS which in addition to the Personal Leave policy.</p> <p>Q – Is this monitored?</p> <p>R – The hours are recorded and requests for TOIL are all checked.</p> <p><u>Mental Health and Wellbeing Update</u></p> <p>NC talked through the Mental Health and Wellbeing Update was circulated on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. She talked Governors through the numerous initiatives that the School have in place to support both staff and student mental health and wellbeing and highlighted the changes made to the Star of the Week process following feedback from staff. She also noted the high take up of the flu jab and the School's Advisory Service (SAS).</p> <p>NC also informed Governors about the new activities taking place in the SEND Hub for all students, including Bagel and Brew and Self-Power Hour.</p>

AGENDA ITEM 13	DIRECTORS REPORT
Discussion:	<p>The Clerk highlighted several items and Governors noted the items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1 – Management of recyclable waste requirements.2.4 – Educational Visits Requirement and the available training available from CE. DM is the Link Governor for Educational Visits, and she will attend the training.3.1 – Governor Hub subscription charges.3.3 Updated HR polices.
Actions	DM to attend Educational Visits training.



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AGENDA ITEM 14	POLICIES
Discussion:	<p>Governors reviewed and agreed the following statutory policies for approval at the next FGB on 02.04.25.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Premises Management• First Aid <p>Note - Health & Safety was not circulated and will be available for the next FGB on 02.04.25.</p> <p>Governors noted that the following non-statutory policies had been reviewed and updated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acceptable Use of IT• Business Continuity• Critical Incident Management Plan• Dignity At Work• Flexible Working• Risk Assessment• Student Mental Health & Well-Being• Whistleblowing <p>Governors noted that the following non-statutory policies had been reviewed and there were no changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CCTV• Records Management• Visitors (no change)
Decisions:	Governors approved all the policies listed above.

AGENDA ITEM 15	DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING
	The date and time of the next LME Committee Meeting was confirmed as: Summer 17.06.25 at 4:00pm.

AGENDA ITEM 16	AOB
Discussion:	There were no items of AOB.



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AGENDA ITEM 17	STATEMENT OF IMPACT
Discussion:	Governors helped to move the school forward in this meeting by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being reassured of the Schools' financial position and checking on the plans for any surplus budget.• Carrying out a Health & Safety Link Governor visit and highlighting concerns that have now been addressed.• Checking on the progress of the Decarbonisation Project and agreeing to support the School at a meeting with the contractors and Cheshire East.• Supporting the introduction of the Community Cover Scheme and recognising the benefits for staff mental health and wellbeing.• Advising and supporting the School with their drive to improve cyber security.

The meeting part 1 ended at 5.20 pm.

The meeting moved to part 2 agenda.

Chair.....

Date.....