

St Wenn School

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Mr K Beer – Staff Governor
Mrs S Hawkey– Parent Governor
Mrs E Lawrenson– Parent Governor
Dr G Smith-Laing - Local Authority Governor
Mr R Savage – Co-opted Governor
Mr R Fenwick – Co-opted Governor

Minutes

**Extraordinary Meeting of the St Wenn Governing Board
Wednesday, 17th February at 5.00pm held via video
conference using Microsoft Teams in light of COVID-19
restrictions.**

Joanne Trudgian, Clerk to the Governing Board

Typed:17.02.21

Approved for circulation: 18.02.21

ST WENN SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD MINUTES OF MEETING

School:	St Wenn School
Quorum:	6
Chair:	Dr Tessa Cubitt
Clerk	Miss Joanne Trudgian
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday 17 th February at 5.00pm
Venue:	Virtual meeting using Microsoft Teams

Attendance:

NAME	GOVERNOR	ASSOCIATE MEMBER	OTHER (Please state)	Present/ Apologies/ Absent
Mrs S Berry – Head Teacher (SB)	YES			P
Dr T Cubitt – (Chair) – Partnership Governor (TC)	YES			P
Mrs N Mathers – (Vice Chair) Co-opted Governor (NM)	YES			P
Mrs E Lawrenson – Co-opted Governor (EC)	YES			P
Mr M Rabone – Co-opted Governor (MR)	YES			P
Mrs S Hawkey – Parent Governor (SH)	YES			P
Mr K Beer – Staff Governor (KB)	YES			P
Dr G Smith-Laing - Local Authority Governor (GSL)	YES			P
Mrs K Messenger – Parent Governor (KM)	YES			Ap
Mr R Savage – Co-opted Governor (RS)	YES			P
Mr R Fenwick – Co-opted Governor (RF)	YES			P
Miss J Trudgian	NO		Clerk	P

1.	<p>Welcome, apologies and consideration for absence</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Governors and declared the meeting open at 5.03pm. The Clerk started to record the meeting on MS Teams.</p> <p>Apologies were received and accepted from KM who was attending a virtual University meeting at the same time of this meeting.</p>	
2.	<p>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests</p> <p>None declared</p>	
3. 3.1	<p>Constitution</p> <p>To confirm appointment of Co-opted Governor from 29.01.21</p> <p>At the last meeting, the Instrument of Government was changed to reduce the number of Parent Governors from 3 to 2 and increase the number of Co-opted Governors to 5 allowing greater flexibility. As EL's term of office ended on the 28.01.21, she was immediately co-opted from 29.01.21 to 28.01.25 to allow continuation as a member of the Head Teacher recruitment panel. Proposed by SB and seconded by RS.</p>	<p>Clerk to arrange GAD form to County. EL to complete and return to clerk. Actioned 17.02.21 Website already updated</p>
4.	<p>To ratify the appointment of new Head Teacher based on panel recommendations</p> <p>The Chair thanked the panel for their team-work, commitment to the process and the arrangements under difficult Covid-19 restrictions. Each had played their part maximising their skill set. The Local Authority representative, who was very supportive, acknowledged this and appreciated the different skills of the team.</p> <p>TC explained the recruitment process from an initial 12 high calibre applications throughout the country and overseas (x2), with many prepared to accept a pay cut. Six were invited to the next stage which included 2 days of specific exercises and methods to 'test' them; preparation and delivery of a video assembly to pupils; a video of answers to staff and pupils' questions and a formal interview. Three decided not to proceed at this stage, citing that they had commitments to their current role and did not have the time to devote to the necessary preparation. Were we asking too much? TC explained that the role at St Wenn was very demanding and challenging, with the requirement to respond to various demands</p>	

and situations at short notice. She felt that if applicants desired the job, they would undertake the necessary tasks asked of them during the process.

From 3 final candidates, Mark Francis and Grace Smith were shortlisted. The panel deliberated for some 2 hours to decide. After an incredibly close call, Ms Grace Smith was chosen. Living in Bodmin, she is currently the Assistant Head of Camelford School and has worked throughout Cornwall and very aware of the challenges facing small, rural schools. KB wished to thank all Governors involved in the process and wished to report that staff work in a tight knit team and are quite unique, with all having input to the management team. Whilst aware of the changes in September, they were a little pensive. Whilst they offer support and help to the incumbent, they are looking forward to new ideas but aware it will take time for them to find their feet.

RF stressed that Ms Smith came over very educationally sound, having taught every age group across the school which was a strength. She is happy to teach and will be expected to teach. SB welcomed this and that it was important to know the pupils by being in the school all of the time.

KB asked what the deciding factor was? TC explained that the panel felt Ms Smith was a better fit, understanding and sharing the school vision and ethos. We thought it more of a gamble to appoint Mark Francis.

RS wished to allay any fears that staff may have. The consideration to staff was front and centre of their mind. Ms Smith would integrate very quickly, mindful not to 'rock the boat' and bring energy to the task in hand, whilst being a warm, team player. He assured it was a rigorous task with healthy debate and that all governors had put a lot of work into it. Staff were involved as much as possible and wanted to stress that Sally's legacy will be in safe hands!

SH asked if Ms Smith was aware of the school's location? Due to covid restrictions, she was unable to enter the school but had walked past it. She was very keen to meet the pupils and staff as soon as possible once restrictions were lifted.

With there being no further questions or comments, TC asked to ratify the panel's recommendation to appoint Ms Grace Smith as the new Head Teacher of St Wenn School. Proposed by GSL and seconded by KB. Board was unanimous to support.

KB asked who would notify the staff and when? On behalf of the Board, KB was asked (as the Staff Governor) to notify staff but only once TC had received confirmation from Ms Smith that she accepts the offer and confirms that she has informed her current head and transition terms agreed.

TC asked how the appointment should be announced? She was concerned with any negative impact SB's resignation may have on pupil numbers. RF pointed out that the one person pupils, parents, stakeholders and the community trusted was SB. He felt it appropriate for SB to send a positive message on the impressive choice of candidate and that the future of St Wenn would be very safe. GS thought it prudent for TC to outline the selection process to parents and staff as this could be very reassuring. Lots will be very surprised to hear that 12 people applied. This clearly indicates the diligence getting the best possible replacement for SB. The Board fully agreed these last 2 points and suggested that County Cllr Paul Wills, Parish Council, Hall Management Committee, School Field Management Group and Churchwardens be notified also.

EL asked about local press coverage to promote the appointment and the significant task under very difficult conditions of Covid restrictions? Board felt that this was essential news, worthy of an article. TC to contact Cornish Guardian.

SH asked what the transition would be? It was probable that MS Smith would not be able to leave her current appointment until the end of the summer term. As with SB's appointment, there would be a 3 day visit for the Head Teacher to handover. Ms Smith would need to meet the staff and children before the end of the Summer Term. This would be arranged during the contact that TC makes with Ms Smith.

RF asked if we should be certain that Ms Smith is willing to accept the offer and arranges a release date before KB informs staff? Yes, TC to make contact first and liaise with SB and KB outcomes.

1)TC to contact Ms Smith to confirm offer in writing, transition terms, dates etc and to encourage contact with SB. Notify KB outcome.

2)TC to draft a letter to staff/parents/stakeholders. Copy on website?

3)KB to notify staff.

4)SB to meet Ms Smith.

5)SB to endorse positive message of new appt in school newsletter (quoting TC letter).

6) TC to notify Cllr Paul Wills, Parish Council, School Field Management Committee, Churchwardens & Hall Committee of appointment.

7) TC to contact Cornish Guardian regards reportage.

<p>5.</p>	<p>Business brought forward by the Chair</p> <p>The Clerk shared some information from Cornwall Council regarding the Cornwall Schools Forum having a vacancy for a Primary Governor. She agreed to forward a link detailing what the forum does, the role of the Governor, Constitution, Minutes of previous meetings, dates of future meetings and the application process of expressions of interest. They wish to appoint by 30.04.21. Governors to consider and notify clerk at the next FGB meeting if they are interested.</p> <p>SH wished to thank the panel for their incredible effort. SB wished to thank the panel for all they have done. She will of course support any transition.</p>	<p>1)Clerk to forward link. 2) Govs to consider and notify clerk if interested.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Close meeting</p> <p>With no further business to discuss, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 5.38pm and reminded Governors that the next meeting of the Full Board would be Monday 01st March 2021.</p>	

These Minutes were signed as a true and accurate record at the Full Governing Board Meeting held on 1st March 2021.

...T Cubitt..... Chair of Governors
Dr T Cubitt