

The Swanage School

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Held on Wednesday 22 January 2020, 5.30pm

Present: Paul Angel (Chair), Mark Hatto, Jenny Maraspin (Acting Headteacher), Nicola Newman, Carl Styants

In attendance: Sue Fletcher (Clerk)

Item		Action	Lead	By
CE 2.1	Apologies for Absence Apologies were received from Amanda Rowley and Nicky Taylor.			
CE 2.2	Declarations of Interest Paul Angel declared that he had become a trustee of the Mowlem Trust. There were no other declarations or conflicts with any agenda item.	Update Declarations Register	Clerk	Jan '20
CE 2.3	Minutes of the Last Meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2019 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed.			
CE 2.4	Matters Arising & Actions Where not elsewhere on the agenda <u>CE 3.4 (2018/19) Website</u> SF observed that several areas of the website could be improved or expanded, particularly the homepage and creation of pages to add information on sports and performing arts, noting that this is planned. PA offered assistance to take a new range of images for use on the website and in other marketing. A new Tree Project page had been created which will be updated as the project progresses. It was suggested that the website may not be well used, with caution expressed over adding too much information that detracts from the core information ("less is more") and governors requested that tracking information on website use be gathered (Google Analytics) and presented at the next meeting.	Consult with Blue Level Tracking information	SF SF	Mar '20 Mar '20

	<p><u>CE 3.4 (2018/19) Alumni</u></p> <p>No actions had been taken as yet in relation to alumni, primarily due to lack of capacity within the support staff team. However, it was again agreed that “where are they now?” information could be powerful in raising aspiration for existing students and for supporting the message that the school widens horizons beyond the immediate area and for 16+ education. It was also suggested that alumni returning to talk at assemblies and open evenings would be valuable.</p> <p>JM noted that the Office Manager is planning to contact ex-students for video-byte tributes in relation to the party being planned to mark Mr Hobson’s departure as headteacher and that this would be an opportunity to capture information about what they are doing now. It was also suggested that a crib sheet of questions to ask alumni should they ever call the school be displayed in Reception.</p> <p><u>CE 3.5.3 Climbing Wall</u></p> <p>There were no updates at present in relation to the possible installation of a climbing wall in conjunction with a partner. JM reported that she will be passing this issue to Mr Scott, PE Teacher, to take forward. She also reported that Cumulus Outdoor have acquired the Townsend Centre and that Mr Scott has been tasked with setting up a meeting to discuss ways in which collaboration might be possible.</p> <p><u>CE 3.11 Video edit</u></p> <p>SF reported that the edit of the video on the homepage of the website had been completed, and was pending upload. However, it was noted that the video will need to be updated or removed when the school has a new headteacher. This could tie in with plans to review the homepage (see above).</p>	Discuss with AK	JM	Feb '20
CE 2.5	<p>Admissions Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Current students on roll</u>: JM reported that 334 students are on roll, which is the highest number the school has had since opening. 12 students had started since September 2019, across the year groups, but after the census date and so would attract no funding in the current academic year. These had been a mix of students transferring from other schools and moving into the area. Governors expressed frustration that funding does not move with a transferring child and, in response to a question, JM reported that she was unaware whether questions in relation to this issue come up at a national level. 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Entry for 2020</u>: Noted that there is no change (from the last meeting) in the information available on applicants for 2020 entry. 			
CE 2.6	<p>Marketing</p> <p>I. <u>Report from the Marketing Working Group</u> Notes from recent meetings of the Marketing Working Group had been circulated. Governors noted the list of annual events and asked about the marketing priorities and social media plans.</p> <p>In discussing staff capacity, governors expressed that the school can no longer afford not to invest in marketing work and that a member of staff needs to have responsibility for messaging and getting information out to create a buzz within the town about the school and the exciting things that it is doing. JM noted however that increasing staff costs did not sit well under the present financial constraints or with the suggestion from some governors that a review of support costs is needed. She reported that it may be possible to have a third year student from Bournemouth University undertake some marketing work and that she had in mind a teacher who might be interested if some dedicated hours could be found. The possibility of using the student media team and/or volunteers (it being noted that the Swanage Volunteer Centre meet every Friday in the library) for some aspects of marketing work was also suggested.</p> <p>It was agreed that a proforma would be useful for staff projects, to include questions in relation to marketing the project, it being noted that understanding how to promote the school and what message is to be relayed when advertising events is often missing. Updating the School Trips proforma to include questions about marketing and to sign out a camera with each trip was also suggested. JM proposed buying two or three digital cameras for this purpose (it being noted that staff taking photographs on their own phones is not permitted under the E-safety and ICT Policy).</p> <p>CS noted that he would be happy to give press release training to staff, as it was agreed that more frequent press releases are desirable and that there have been missed opportunities.</p> <p>Other marketing ideas were suggested, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That the school invest in some “5-minute litter pick” kits. 	<p>Consider volunteer or other staffing</p> <p>Proformas</p> <p>Buy digital cameras</p>	<p>JM with SLT</p> <p>MWG to discuss questions /AK</p> <p>JM</p>	<p>Mar '20</p> <p>Mar '20</p> <p>Mar '20</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - That the school consider employing two PE teachers (or a second who can teach PE in addition to another subject) to increase the draw of sport at the school, it being recognized that for some prospective students and parents this is an area of perceived weakness in the school's offer. - That a "Sorting Hat" be used on the first day to sort students into houses. - That a higher priority be made of serving healthy, nutritious food and to increase the number of times per year that pupils are made to feel as if they are a family sitting down to a big meal together. - JM proposed that fenced off allotment plot/s be created at the rear of the field, with an invitation for local residents to cultivate fruit and vegetables on the basis of growing some for the school and benefitting from some for themselves, perhaps tying in with Forest School. <p>It was noted that each new member of staff must fully understand and share the school's vision and ethos and be given appropriate information to enable this. It was noted that "entry interviews" with two governors (Chair of the Staffing Committee and Vice-chair of Governors) were already planned. CS and PA were willing to give a talk on vision and ethos at Inset Day.</p> <p>2. <u>Year 7 "marketing survey"</u> A summary and analysis of the responses to the survey, which had been completed by parents at the Year 7 Parents' Evening, had been circulated. Responses were overwhelmingly positive. In terms of marketing events and materials, responses indicated that the Open Evening has had a decisive influence for a lot of families. The survey outcomes will be discussed by the Marketing Working Group.</p> <p>3. <u>Evaluate progress on the marketing plan</u> See also minute CE 2.6.1. The committee noted the ideas on the annual plan and in addition suggested that the school consider events aimed at new parents, such as a "teddy bears' tea party", "wriggle and rhyme" sessions, Easter egg hunts, performances or story times. Making more of the school's eco-friendly credentials was also suggested.</p> <p>4. <u>Budget requirements for 2020/21</u></p> <p>It was noted that the budget for 2019/20 was £2,000, of which spend to date has been £855.</p>	Consider	Working Group	Mar '20
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	<p>For 2020/21 governors recommended that an allowance for additional staff time should be budgeted. On the basis of 30 weeks, one day a week at £150 a day, a budget of £5k was proposed, it being noted that if one or more additional pupils results from the efforts it would be a sound investment. It was agreed that a consistent approach to content creation and other forms of marketing should have a significant impact. In addition, £2k for promotional materials and £3k for premises improvement were suggested.</p> <p>AGREED to recommend to the Finance & Premises Committee that a budget of £10k be set for marketing in 2020/21, broken down as noted above.</p> <p>Prior to recruiting, it was suggested that the Volunteer Bureau be approached to see if a suitably skilled volunteer can be found.</p>	Pass to F&P	Clerk	May '20
CE 2.7	<p>Lettings Annual Report</p> <p>An annual report on lettings had been circulated. SF (Community Administrator) outlined the new business that had been secured, but also noted that the projected income for the current year was not significantly different to the previous year given that several groups had either ceased using the school's facilities or had reduced their hours (e.g. going from year-round to term-time only).</p> <p>The desire to make more use of classrooms was expressed and it was suggested that Dorset Council's Skills and Learning Department and the local branch of the University of the Third Age (U3A) may prove useful contacts.</p> <p>Noting that there had been a significant rise in charges for 2019/20, the committee agreed not to recommend a further rise.</p> <p>It was reported that the Swanage & Purbeck Development Trust are advising the Football Club on funding for the new leisure building proposed for the Day's Park site. Whilst the new centre, when completed, would be a risk to the school in terms of lettings, it was recognised that it would be good for the community and that often the greater the amount of facilities available, the greater the likelihood of overall demand increasing.</p>	Make contact	SF	Mar '20

CE 2.8	<p>Environmental Initiatives</p> <p>1. <u>Tree planting scheme</u> JM confirmed that the saplings had been delivered and had been heeled in, pending better weather and agreement of a planting scheme. Several outside agencies, such as Greening Swanage and Sustainable Swanage, had provided useful advice.</p> <p>2. <u>Plastic reduction strategy</u> It was noted that any strategies for reducing plastic should be welcomed and promoted in school, on the website and via social media. Agreed that JM would invite Mr Ringrow and the student Eco-Reps to the next meeting of the Governing Body to make a pitch for introducing plastic free initiatives, with a view to the strategy being student-led. Governors and JM agreed that the ethos of the school must be to be environmentally sustainable and that small practical changes were needed in addition to larger initiatives. Staff and student understanding of this ethos would be key to its success. It was suggested that creation of a recycling centre in school could perhaps be a DT project.</p> <p>Other initiatives discussed included a suggestion that the school consider a transport policy, aiming for people not to drive. Use of the train as an alternative for those coming from central Swanage or Corfe Castle could be discussed with Swanage Railway, making the most of the Herston Halt stop. Making the most of the steam railway for wider marketing purposes was also discussed. For example, it was suggested that the Railway might agree to an “Alight here for The Swanage School” sign and for promotional activities, in conjunction with the primary schools, tied in with Harry Potter Day (2nd May) or World Book Day (March).</p>	<p>Speak to DR</p> <p>Discuss partnership ideas with Swanage Railway</p> <p>World Book Day 2021: agenda for next PEP meeting</p>	<p>JM</p> <p>JM</p> <p>JM Clerk</p>	<p>Jan '20</p> <p>Mar '20</p> <p>Mar '20</p>
CE 2.9	<p>Surveys AGREED that ideally there should be a parent survey every year, to be able to review trends over time and as there is value for parents in being asked for their opinions. Engaging with parents on the answers would increase the value of the survey and improve communication. The same survey as devised previously, via Survey Monkey, could be used. After completion, parents could be thanked and an invitation circulated for participation in a focus group to discuss any issues that arise in the responses. This would hopefully lead to a focus group with a sample of parents across the year groups. CS noted that he would be happy to lead the focus group.</p>	<p>Survey</p>	<p>JM</p>	<p>Mar '20</p>
CE 2.10	<p>Risk Register Annual Review The committee reviewed the risks falling under their remit, which were:</p>			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient demand for places at The Swanage School leaves if unsustainable - Reputation loss leading to negative impact within the community <p>Both risks were considered “major” before control procedures and “moderate” after.</p> <p>AGREED the risks should remain as listed, with the addition of adding to the control procedures that the Community & Engagement and Finance & Premises Committees regularly discuss demand for places.</p>			
CE 2.11	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None.</p>			
CE 2.12	<p>Confidentiality</p> <p>No item would require confidential minutes.</p>			
	<p>Next meeting</p> <p>Spring 2: Weds 4th March 2020 (additional meeting)</p> <p>Summer 1: 29th April 2020 (already on schedule)</p> <p>Summer 2: Wednesday 10th June 2020 (additional meeting)</p> <p>Governors suggested the following information would be helpful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Website data (Google Analytics) - Calendar: what activities/events have been held, and what is coming up (this information could be removed from the Headteacher’s report to the full Board of Governors and presented instead to the Committee). 			