

The Swanage School

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY & ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Held on Wednesday 30 September 2020 at 5.30pm (via Zoom)

Present (via remote access): Paul Angel (Chair), Jenny Maraspin (Headteacher)

In attendance (via remote access): Sue Fletcher (Clerk), Tanya Hamilton-Fletcher (Governor observer), Joanne Martin (Governor observer)

Item		Action	Lead	By
	The meeting was held via remote access due to the guidelines in place in respect of the Covid-19 pandemic.			
CE 1.1	<b>Welcome</b> The Chair welcomed new governors Tanya Hamilton-Fletcher and Joanne Martin to the meeting as observers.			
CE 1.2	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were received from Carl Styants. Amanda Rowley and Nicola Taylor had notified the Clerk they would be late if able to attend.  It was noted that <b>the meeting was not quorate</b> , but those present agreed it would go ahead as the items on the agenda were unlikely to require decisions or approvals.			
CE 1.3	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> There were no new declarations of interest or conflict with any agenda item.			
CE 1.4	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2020 were confirmed as an accurate record. The minutes will be signed at a later date.			
CE 1.5	<b>Matters Arising</b> Where not elsewhere on the agenda:			

	<p><u>CE 3.6.4 Staffing/Budget</u> The Chair reported that the Clerk (SF) had been contracted for an additional 10 hours per week for marketing and promotion work. In addition, marketing had been allocated a £5k budget. The cost of the visual improvements to the sports hall entrance and corridor would be attributed to the capital expenditure budget and so would not affect the marketing budget.</p> <p><u>CE 3.8 Banners (front of school)</u> The “walk to school” banner did not go ahead. “Book a Tour” banners had been designed and displayed.</p>			
CE 1.6	<p><b>Review Terms of Reference &amp; Annual Plan / Review of Effectiveness</b> The Chair suggested that the committee should continue on a half-termly basis. No changes were proposed to the terms of reference in the Scheme of Delegation.</p> <p>In relation to reports provided for the meetings, the Chair suggested that a useful addition might be a regular report on the number of students on roll for each year group and showing transfer in and out, although it was recognised this information is usually provided in the Headteacher’s report to the full governing body.</p>	Add to reports	SF	Autumn 2
CE 1.7	<p><b>Reports</b></p> <p>1. <u>Admissions</u> JM reported that to date 32 applications for entry 2021 have listed the school as one of the preferences, of which 66% are first choice preferences. The current Year 6 cohort (the September 2021 entrants) across the five closest primary school (three in Swanage, one in Langton Matravers and one in Corfe Castle) was only 88 pupils, a significant dip from the usual 105-115 cohort size.</p> <p>The Chair asked about the school transport service noting that, prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, Dorset Council had appeared to be considering providing transport only to the closest school. JM confirmed this had been her understanding and that it would have been in line with the Council’s eco-strategy, however changes were likely to be on hold given the shift in priorities that the pandemic had created.</p> <p>2. <u>Marketing &amp; engagement</u></p> <p>i) <u>Activities and plans</u> JM reported that the school had been running tours for one or two families together, in line with current government guidance on social distancing, in place of being able to hold an Open Evening. However, following a meeting of Dorset Cluster headteachers, Dorset Council had issued a memo to all schools stating that they were unable to support school tours and therefore advising schools not to</p>			

	<p>run them. JM therefore reported that, whilst the risk is minimal, remaining tours would be cancelled to follow the local guidance provided.</p> <p>A summary of marketing and engagement activities had been circulated and SF briefly highlighted some of these, in particular noting that a letter, prospectus, parent pack and leaflet had been distributed to Year 5 and Year 6 parents via the five local primary schools, and a letter and leaflet circulated via the wider catchment schools, as well as new pages created on the website providing information to prospective parents and pupils. She noted that a virtual tour is to be filmed, and a Q&amp;A session with the Headteacher, via Zoom, is open to all prospective parents and pupils (6<sup>th</sup> October 2020).</p> <p>Plans for the next quarter were also summarized. These included resurrecting the newsletter, conducting a Year 7 parents' survey and establishing contact with alumni.</p> <p>ii) <u>Facebook reports</u>  SF summarized the Facebook reports that had been provided. These showed growth of page followers over a four-month period June to September, the average reach of posts in these months compared with the previous period, and the average reach and engagement of different types of posts. She noted that it was pleasing to see that "status" posts have increased in average engagement from the previous period, when video posts had been the most highly engaged, indicating that the information being shared in status updates is engaging. This would have been helped, however, by high levels of engagement on posts relating to the production of personal protective equipment and the Cooking for the Community initiative, which had received very high engagement levels during the Covid-19 lockdown.</p> <p>The Facebook report also showed the reach and engagement of individual posts over the last three-month period and SF noted that the page benefits from having engaged followers, which could be taken as a sign of good relationships with the school.</p> <p>The Chair and observing governors felt that the reports were interesting and appropriate for the committee to receive, suggesting also that a demographic report on Facebook users would be interesting to see.</p> <p>iii) <u>Google Analytics report (website)</u>  SF outlined the information contained in the report on website use from Google Analytics, noting that it showed the website was used more than perhaps might have been thought. The pages visited indicated that most users were likely to have been current parents over the last three month period</p>	Demographics report	SF	Nov '20
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	<p>(for example, uniform, staff and contact pages), and that it would be interesting to see if the pages visited over the coming month indicate a greater use by prospective parents (e.g. the admissions, prospectus or FAQs pages).</p> <p>4. <u>Lettings update</u> SF reported that hire of the school's facilities had re-commenced from 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020, with a small number of groups resuming their activities. Other groups, such as indoor football, were not yet permitted to resume under the government's Covid-19 guidance. Groups had been required to provide Covid-19 risk assessments and mitigation plans, taking into account advice from their national bodies as well as new procedures required by the school as a result of the school's risk assessment.</p> <p>5. <u>Working Group update</u> There had not been a meeting of the Marketing Working Group since the last meeting of the Committee.</p>			
CE I.8	<p><b>School Development Plan Objectives</b> The Chair noted that the draft School Development Plan (SDP) had been circulated and that it contained one objective related to the Community &amp; Engagement Committee's remit: "Effective marketing raises the profile of The Swanage School in the community". Actions included the development and monitoring of an effective marketing strategy and active promotion of all marketing through the website and social media. Monitoring and evaluation criteria would be to have a strategy produced and implemented, parent survey feedback, analysis of social media activity and an increase in applications for entry September 2021.</p>			
CE I.9	<p><b>Marketing Plan Review</b> The Marketing Plan had been annotated to provide an update on actions. SF summarised each element of the plan, noting that the majority of actions had either been completed or were work in progress. Many had been discussed at earlier points in the meeting.</p>			
CE I.10	<p><b>Survey Outcomes</b> JM outlined the outcome of the parent survey, noting that overall the results were very pleasing, with many positive comments and strengths identified. She had been particularly pleased to see positive outcomes in relation to pastoral support and areas such as handling of bullying incidents. A number of themes had emerged as areas for improvement, which had informed the School Development Plan. These included the need for more effective reporting and to improve after-school provision. Negative comments had tended to relate to anecdotal accounts of single incidents rather than systemic issues.</p>			

	<p>JM noted that she plans to write to parents with a summary of the feedback and the school's response, to ensure that parents are aware that feedback is valued and meaningful as a means of informing continual improvement.</p>			
<p>CE 1.11</p>	<p><b>Communication with Stakeholders</b>  Referring to the list of stakeholders given in the terms of reference for the Committee (see Scheme of Delegation), the Chair questioned JM on each, on which she summarised as follows:</p> <p><u>Current parents:</u> The level of communication with parents has, and will continue to, significantly improve due to the new Management Information System (Arbor) which can directly text/email parents. Text alerts were increasingly being used to keep parents informed of news. Improvements to reporting are planned and had been one of the issues identified in the parent survey. Since the start of term, tutors have been in touch with Year 7 parents in the first instance, but calls home are being rolled out to all year groups. Parents have been encouraged to download the “parent portal app” for Arbor and will be encouraged again once historical assessment data and behaviour records have been populated.</p> <p><u>Feeder schools:</u> The relationship with all feeder schools is very good. As examples of recent engagement, JM noted that an Ofsted training session had been delivered to staff from several schools and had been well received. Director of Performing Arts Mr Peake had been engaged in outreach activities prior to the Covid-19 lockdown and is planning to resume these as soon as practicable. There had also been outreach activities in maths and science.</p> <p><u>Local community:</u> Engagement with the local community had been good during the Covid-19 lockdown, as noted above, due to PPE production and the Cooking for the Community initiative. JM reported that she had been asked to join the Town Council Community Partnership Steering Group.</p> <p>[Confidential minute]</p> <p><u>Employers &amp; business leaders:</u> Apprenticeships provision remains in development and is a School Development Plan objective. An Apprenticeship Lead role has been created and appointed. The school is also well suited to set up traineeships for access to work, which also attract government funding. Every 2020 leaver left school with an appropriate and suitable next step lined up. Work experience for Year 10 students will continue this academic year unless it does not fit with Covid-19 guidelines in place at the time.</p>			

	<p><u>Community &amp; volunteer groups:</u> Volunteer youth workers from the local churches regular work with students, under a collaborative initiative with the churches. The number of other volunteers in school had been affected by Covid-19 mitigations.</p> <p><u>Colleges &amp; universities:</u> Interaction with colleges was ongoing, and the annual Careers Fair will again be held in March/April if practicable. As examples of interaction with universities, JM outlined projects with Bournemouth University which included a Year 10 trip to the Media Department and provision of student mentors. Student trips had also taken place to Southampton University. JM noted that affording students the opportunity to visit universities was valuable in helping to raise aspirations.</p> <p><u>Alumni:</u> Contact and engagement with alumni was not yet happening in any systematic way but would be developed over the coming year. All present agreed that alumni would be a source of valuable and inspiring stories and SF noted that a survey or some other form of contact would need to be carefully thought through to ensure appropriate and useful information is captured and to maximise the continued engagement of alumni students.</p> <p>[Kay Lawton joined the meeting].</p>			
CE 1.12	<p><b>Any Other Business</b> KL noted that tours for prospective parents and pupils have been very positive.</p>			
CE 1.13	<p><b>Confidentiality</b> An item relating to Harrow House was deemed confidential.</p>			
	<p>The meeting closed at 6.45pm.</p>			