Exe Valley Federation
CHALLENGE DISCOVER SUCCEED

The Governance duty is, above all to drive relentless ambition for the young people served by our schools system, whatever the circumstances.

FGB Strategic Meeting 01/04/2025 EXE VALLEY FEDERATION					
Date/Time	01/04/2025		**Location**	18.00 Newton St Cyres	
Attendees	**Initials**		**Attendees**	**Initials**	
J.Enright	JE	LA Governor/ Chair	L Price	LP	Co-opted
C.Gilberthorpe	JG	Staff	J. Jolliffe	JJ	Executive Head
K.Wotton	KW	Parent	E.Loosley-Leeming	ELL	Foundation
L.Parry	LP	Co-opted	Ronnie Haynes	RH	Co-opted
H.Jones-Mcvey	HM	Parent (online)	O Burrow	OB	Co-opted
J Ruddick	JR	Co-opted	Rev Paul Hinkley	PH	Foundation
E.Waldram-Mcabe	EWM	Co-opted			
Associate Members	**Initials**			**Initials**	
J.Akhurst	JA	DEHT & HoS Newton St Cyres	L.Penhallurick	LP	Acting EHT Moorsway/HoS The Erme
J.Jeffery	JJe	Associate/School Governor			
Clerk	**Initials**				
Heidi Last	HL				
Apologies					
S.Margesson	SM	Foundation	S.Frost	SF	Co-opted
Absent No Apology					
Quorum	13 governors in attendance at start; meeting is quorate				

MINUTES			
		Action	**Resolution**
1.	**Welcome & introductions** **Agree Job Title changes EHT to EP & DEHT to West Hub EHT** Approved **Approval JR second Vice Chair** Approved Reflection led by ELL		**Job title changes approved** **JR joint Vice Chair with SM approved**
2.	**Apologies for Absence –** Apologies received for S.Margesson and S.Frost		**Apologies accepted**
3.	**Declaration of Interests invited and declared** No declarations	**Outstanding Governors to**	**No declarations**

Signature ……
Date ……..

		complete their declarations	
4. **4.1**	**Approval of the minutes of the previous meetings** Approval of Minutes 03/12/24, 21/01/2025 Minutes West Hub 11/2/25 Minutes East Hub 4/2/25 Minutes Moorsway Hub 11/2/25		**All minutes agreed as a true and accurate account**
5. **5.1**	**Finance (All questions to FBM 7 days in advance)** **Finance and Risk committee minutes and supporting paperwork** Minutes and paperwork shared with all prior to the meeting. No further questions		
5.2	**Budget monitors – questions received in advance** No monitors due to moving to a new finance system. The LA are aware that many schools are struggling. More so the schools who moved first, due to the volume of errors and having 3 months to balance in a new system. HL shared that she is currently 1.5 months behind where she would usually be at this time of year. NI rides take effect this month. There is a grant to help support the impact this will have on our budget. We were led to believe this would be fully funded. This is not the case and has added £30,000 extra expenditure to our budget for next year. HL shared Qs received in advance and gave detailed answers. Q&As to be shared with the minutes.		
5.3	**SFVS** EVF and Moorsway completed SVFS shared prior to the meeting. Main changes from previous year are around the finance systems we now use and being unable to balance our budget going forward.		**SVFS approved for EVF and Moorsway**
5.4	**Approval of LA services 2025/26** All services shared prior to meeting. No changes to last year apart from moving away from LA absence insurance due to uncertainty if they would provide this service this year. Have moved across to the same supplier as Whimple. Far more comprehensive service and waiting period will now be 3 days when teachers are absent rather than 5. Slight increase in costs compared to LA . LA cost £12,500 Teachers Mutual £15,000. The new service will also replace our current Employee Access Programme. Which costs us £900 per year.		**All Services approved for the year.**
5.5	**New Website update** All photos and logos have now been submitted which was the last thing to get across. Currently working on the home screen layout and how we want all schools presented.		
5.6	**Increase in charge for school meals** £2.80, increase of 20p per meal.		**Approved**

Signature ……
Date ……..

5.7	**Increase in WA and Pre-School fees** £6.50 £7.60 2-year-olds		**Approved**
6.	**EP Executive Report** **EP Executive Summary update and Q & A** JJ thanked all governors for their questions. Presentation to be shared with minutes. Focus on two schools with main concerns this evening. JA shared information around BSP. A lot of work has gone into BSP. Stepped back and reflected living and breathing the curriculum, and how it is shared across the schools when it sits with HF and CT. Getting this across to the HoS and other staff. Refinement and sequencing at BSP needed unpicking. Maths leads have spent time in the school supporting maths. Visit took place at the beginning of term. Worked with staff. Have seen significant improvement. Had lots of timetabling issues that have been resolved. On an upward and positive trajectory. Revisiting this Thursday. JJ – Shaugh Prior – Recruited interim HoS C.Pearson in SJ's absence. Important to bring some stability. Appointed a job share in class 1, and long-term supply for class 2. Giving consistency. Premier sports to support PE sessions. Will be a continuing challenge. Work around the curriculum has taking place, focusing on Ofsted improvements. Deepen children's knowledge to ensure they progress well. Very difficult when working with temporary staff to drive it forward. Audit of SEND needs. As expectations rise it should change the needs of children. Getting to a point where we have the right people in the right places. Behaviour plans in place and working with staff to support a consistent behaviour approach. Work around Little Wandle to ensure reading progression throughout the school. We know Little Wandle works. New PSHE curriculum introduced. Ensure robust challenge of the schools leadership with the support of the LA. A direct Academy Order was issued on the 18th March. 17 MATs,have been identified and the Regional Director will short list best MATs for this, taking over in September 2025. We would have to de-federate. 2 issues with that happening, possible that no MATs will want SP. And not all the MATS are able to expand so this cuts the list. Needs to be MAT who understands how small schools work. The MAT who agree to take them will get between £70,000 and £100,000. **Q – Current numbers?** *A – Have had leavers and joiners. Have 25 currently on role but know of 6/7 who are actively looking to leave.*		

	RH - Feel best to part company. The school is a drain on the budget with no additional funding. All the work that will be required and getting parents on board. Sustained leadership that the school lacks at the moment. Feels very unfair if we were handed it back with no funding. There is another pathway, if due diligence shows it is not financially viable, the RD will hand it back to the LA to close. **Q – What about redundancy costs for staff?** *A – We can distribute some at other schools. If the children with EHCPs went to Cornwood then staff could go with them. Very hard at this stage to know what that will look like.* Some do want to look at other Moorsway schools for the SEND provision we offer. Devon do not like to close small rural schools. Difference is only one children lives in Shaugh Prior. Feel that maybe a deciding factor in the process. **Q – What happens to the assets if the school closed?** *A – Will go back to the LA. Resources and furniture etc will get moved* **Q – How are the staff?** *A – Emotional and a lot of looking elsewhere. Changing daily. Have shared everything we know and are supporting them* **Q – What assessment can the federation make of the staff? Capability? Other two schools could be RI. Inheriting additional needs in the federation. What do you think the impact will be?** *A – Will have some staff who will naturally finish. Feel that our expectation of children at Cornwood and The Erme is very different. We are not looking a lot of staff.* **Q – Has to be a concern around the ability of the SENDCO? Is the role too much, or will she need considerable support?** *A – There is support in place. Difficult with what has been inherited and labels children have come with.* The Erme get a lot of in-term admissions. Majority come with SEND needs as they heard we are good with SEND. Some of these children have not been correctly identified. **Q – What timeline are we looking at?** *A – Academisation must happen fairly fast. Land and buildings issues due to the history etc will make it complicated. They are saying by the end of June we will know what MAT if any are interested.* **Q – if academisation does not work and it is handed back to us, at what point do we have a say in what is the best option going forward?** *A – Need to think what is best for the staff, children and families. Financial viability will become an issue. This will then force the LA to close the school. Would feel very differently if it was serving the local community and had children attending that lived in the village.* **Q – Who does the financial viability?** *A – We have a list to work through and we will do this with the LA financial advisor.* **Q – Agee we need to be looking after children and staff. Cautious about Cornwood, who are also due an Ofsted. And if moving the children does not work it could be detrimental to Cornwood.**		

	A – Do not feel all the children will move to Cornwood due to distance and not wanting a C of E school. Some may go to The Erme and others back to Plymouth. Agree if they all went to CW it would be a challenge. **Q – Felt like with BSP issues were identified quite late in the day. We identified things at SP, and the tone of the reports prior to Ofsted did not identify all the issues. Does this come back to LA?** *A – This is a problem and for SP can go back to other advisors in the past. Have challenged some visits from the LA.* JJ has much more confidence in our own assessments. 24th April visit Cornwood to see where they are. This is without the LA. Advisor. This will include Governors. HF working on the format for the day. Learnt a lot of from last weeks Ofsted and their focus now swinging back to core subject focus. **Q - Thinking about SLT, how many days are they away from their own schools.?** *A – CFP, Sford and NSC are in good places. If there was any impact on these schools, we would rethink. They have reduced their teaching commitment to support SP, so not coming out of their Leadership time.* Need to be realistic with how much time we put into SP now. At this point time was given for governors to have further discussions amongst themselves.		
7. **7.1**	**MP with South Hams 1st Jan'25 to 31st August '25** **Management Partnership update** Meeting took place last week, very positive. Z.Bryant-Evans, Governor support, has offered some bespoke governing training. C.Maben Diocese and ZBE both very supportive of the MP. Minutes need to be circulated.	**Minutes from MP meetings to be circulated**	**.**
7.2	**Agree to explore federation in principle from April 2025 to July 2025 and potentially re-federating from 1st September 2025**. JE has had a conversation with SHs Chair. They had no time to discuss exploring re-federation with EVF from April at their last FGB meeting. They will call a special meeting after Easter to focus on this. Decision for our governors is do we agree to explore this if South Hams agree to move it forward? JR disagreed, feels we need a period of calm with everything else going on. Not to start it for a few months until had time to catch up on this. RH, would like to know JJs view and the advantages. SH brings capacity to the Federation. Have seen that significantly over the past few months. To relieve some of the pressure on EVF schools supporting Moorsway. Important to formalise that at an appropriate pace. Collaborative approach would make sense to continue moving forward, but equally don't want to rush into anything. We could extend the MP. We are not agreeing to re-federate at this point, we are agreeing to consult on re-federating. All schools inspected recently and are all Good. Would like to know a bit more for certain that all are Good. We do not		

	want to increase risk. EHT has been very good at offering us support. Location wise it makes sense. Finances? They are in a better position, than we are, intending to eliminate deficit in the coming years. This would form part of the due diligence. Would be good to get to a place of calm. Is there such a thing? Sometimes it is better to not drag things out and move forward. Moorsway felt similar in the beginning. Have discussed before ideal timing and voiced having South Hams first. Are we increasing the risk with them changing their minds if we delay. Concern that it was not discussed at their FGB. **Q – Can we go through due -diligence but do the consultation after?** *A – Unsure. issues we have if we don't make the decision in time is we could end up having some funny conversations in July. And not tying it all up before the end of the school year.* **Q - Engaging parents as they have just gone through this?** *A – Felt we would offer more remote meetings and not in person. Geographically makes more sense. Gives us a better forum. We have been open about the MP in the consultation with Moorsway.* **Q – How many extra governors?** *A – Would recommend no increase, advised by Diocese and LA to not as it gets too hard to manage.* Makes more work for lead governors, but would introduce school governors to support this. Vote taken show of hands to agree moving forward if South Hams agree, or we delay our decision until they have had their meeting. Which we could do virtually. If we go to consultation, we can gather all the finance information and other information to help us make an informed decision on re-federating. We are not committing to anything at this stage. Moorsway have gone down the route of consulting with a MAT and decided to not go forward. Makes sense to do it with current parents who have been on the journey so far. Vote taken, majority agree to move to consultation if South Hams agree to this at their meeting after Easter.		**Vote taken and majority in agreement to move towards consultation in the Summer Term if South Hams Governors agree at heir meeting**
8. **8.1**	**Church School update** Thorverton Pre-school have approached us to take the pre-school. They are struggling as a committee. They are finically viable. We cannot afford to let it fold up. Vital to Throverton's sustainability. JJ shared C of Es vision for church schools and the 4 elements for this.(To be shared in presentation with minutes) **CW SIAMS** Have worked through the new framework at Cornwood. Judgement 1 was given and it was a very positive report.		

Signature ……
Date ……..

8.2	**Church schools team** Discussed above.		
8.3	**Exeter flourishing partnership** Discussed above**.**		
9. **9.1**	**Governor Updates** **Safeguarding** Reports from all Hubs have been received. CPOMs is the core of reporting and information sharing. Still, some work to do around consistency and miscategorising of incidents. Suggested staff do not make those decisions. Learnt last week from Ofsted that it is important to have many different voices when recording an incident. Level 3 training is required for HoS every 2 years.		
9.2	**Behaviour** Only 2 incidents of suspension, Silverton and CFP. Continues the downward trend across the schools. Reports more information needed around lower-level behaviour. West Hub had a long chat around behaviour and recording on CPOMs. Lower-level behaviour at BSP and issues around playtimes and not able to resolve conflict. Silverton some children adjusting to being in KS2, strategies are being put in place. Reception cohort few struggling and staff needing to support them in the day. Sandford no significant issues, all very low level. Main thing that came out was general behaviour was positive across the schools.		
9.3	**Attendance** All West Hub schools are above 96%. East Hub has a few more specific issues going on that are being resolved. Higihlighted how attendance is being reported in HoS reports. Discussed how it would be good to have some clarity on how we represent our data, 4 categories. Is there a more accurate way to give a clearer picture? Qs to Heads on the form, felt it was difficult to do this at the meeting. Idea is for the qs to go to the EHT of each hub prior to the meeting. Attendance is all positive. Need to introduce leads for Moorsway Hub.		
9.4	**SEND** One thing discussed was the difficulty to pull out strengths and weaknesses in each HoS report. Decided that HoS to do a summary for this. Looking at the way SEND is reported across the Federation. Wanting all SENDCOs to report in the same way. Being looked into. All to use the same report so easier to compare.		
9.5	**Feedback from Hub Chairs on how Hub Board meetings are working and if there are any suggested changes** Felt everything was relevant. Easier to talk about a fewer number of schools and having that time to talk in more depth. Moorsway, refreshing space to not focus on the details of polices etc, gave time to break up in groups. SM has also agreed with all the above.		

Signature ……
Date ……..

9.6	**Hub reports format on key areas of responsibility** Discussed above		
9.7	**Kat Goldby new School Governor home school Thorverton** All approved. Will be at the next Hub meeting, LP to mentor her.		
9.8	**Governor Vacancy on Finance Committee** LP agreed to this. HL will send info.		**LP agree to join Finance and Risk Committee**
9.9	**Federation Governor Chaplain role** Thought about developing a chaplaincy role in the schools. Build a small team to be able to do this. Offer that time for staff to talk. Be very valuable from a wellbeing point of view. JJ shared thinking and it will be shared with all.		
9.10	**Venues for future federation board meetings** JJ has been trying to find somewhere halfway between NSC and Ivybridge. Struggling. May need to move around the schools. Will continue investigating. Diocese? Could potentially use The Old Deanery, maybe issues with parking. To be further investigated.		
10. **10.1**	**H&S/Premises** **Any known school issues/concerns** No new issues.		
10.2	**H&S Audit Report combined Hub reports** JE thanked RH for report. Generally, overall all very consistent. Some inconsistencies around intimate care records in schools. Some areas for improvement to be reflected on. Any outstanding reports to be sent to RH. Some building H&S issues.		
11. **11.1**	**Governor Reports** **Pupil Premium Reports** Deferred		**Deferred**
11.2	**Appraisal Report** Circulated		**Agreed**
11.3	**Children in Care** Deferred		**Deferred**
11.4	**SEND reports from SENDCOs** Not discussed		
11.5	**Equality Duty**		**Agreed**
11.6	**Music Grant**		**Agreed**
12. **12.1**	**Policies** **New Spirituality Policies**		**Agreed**
12.2	**Parent communication**		**Agreed**
12.3	**SEND Report 2024/25**		**Agreed**
12.4	**Whistle Blowing**		**Agreed**

Signature ……
Date ……..

12.5	**Payment Arrears**		**Agreed**
	Impact – OB to do the report		

Finance & Risk 9/5/25 11am Silverton
East Hub 13/5/25 Silverton
West Hub 6/5/25 Cheriton Fitzpaine
Moorsway 12/5/25 Hub Cornwood
FGB Strategic Meeting 01/07/25 Newton St Cyres