

HOUGHTON VALLEY SCHOOL MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Date: Monday 16 March 2020 7pm

Venue: Houghton Valley School, 110 Houghton Bay Road, Houghton Bay

Open: 7:00pm

1. Welcome and Apologies

Present: Susan Hall, Teneti Ririnui, Bret McKenzie, Luana Carroll, Steph Bosch (staff rep), Richard Carroll, Angela Williams

No conflict of Interest.

Minutes of the last Board of Trustee's meeting approved.

2. School Stewardship

Update on landfill gas risk investigation - Robert Hon (WCC)

Luana received an enquiry from a parent about how the landfill site is managed. She contacted Robert Hon at Wellington City Council for detail. Robert is a civil engineer in waste operations for WCC.

Robert monitors closed landfills in Wellington (there are 35 closed – 15 are potentially risky e.g. close to homes etc so are monitored). HVS is one of these monitored locations. Work subcontracted to Golders as technical experts. Landfill closed in 1971. Risks identified – landfill continues to produce methane for around 50 years until levels drop off and site becomes less active. In reality however, site will always continue to produce gas.

The main risk is gas production. HVS buildings not sited on top of landfill, but adjacent to it. Extension to school in 2012 lead to further tests which also found no evidence of school being on landfill. There is however, evidence of the field being sited on old landfill. WCC run tests every 6 months along with PDP company. There is no evidence of major risks. We do need to be mindful if we do any major building work that involves trenching. Susan questioned if there is an earthquake what happens to the land. Robert answered that there is a risk if we have an earthquake – we should keep people away from the field. Robert said that experts will come and test within c.24 hours after an earthquake. Let Community Hub know that in event of earthquake people should stay away from field. Ensure people move away from the area if it smells.

COVID-19

Luana updated that the Ministry of Education asked today about what facilities we have for online learning and our children staying at home. HVS has been advised we can't have assemblies. Any decision to close the school is to be taken by either Ministry of Health or the Board. MoH would guide us through any decisions we need to make.

Luana commented the HVS community talking more about COVID-19 risks today. Children told no hugging, high fives etc to minimise contact. Need to keep parents and community calm about what's happening. Keeping communication open with parents and staff encouraged to take sick days if required. Discussed difference between wide spread community transmission and having to close the school because of staff sickness.

Plan of response: out of school events (e.g. Y1/2 trip to town, Y5/6 rippa rugby) to be cancelled. Assemblies to be deferred (keep people 1.25m away from each other). Upcoming events – discussed deferral / cancellation of different events as appropriate.

Business Continuity Plan: Teneti queried what happens if the Principal and Deputy Principal are away? Discussed the delegation of responsibilities among the Leadership team, and Denise. All staff are able to communicate via Skype/Zoom from home. Note the Signal app as a secure way to group message, if required.
ACTION: Teneti and Susan to share examples of written Business Continuity Plan for Luana to look at.

Leave for Staff: queried if our staff need additional support/have enough sick leave. Luana assured staff were sufficiently supported.

Planning: teachers concerned about prospect of 'teaching online', especially for younger children. All children would need digital device at home – not always available. Start putting together a communication – if school closes how can we prepare for having children at home. Photocopied resources could be provided once a week, digital subscriptions can be provided etc. Communication to parents about how parents will be supported.

If child appears ill, isolate into Principal's office. Teacher can apply masks to children if required. Some teachers concerned that response isn't enough.

School doing extra cleaning. Additional cleaning costs have been approved.

Communication: COVID 19 link of the HVS website. Central place for all information to be stored and accessed. Can still notify community via text etc.

Board of Trustees and HVS Leadership Team to communicate via Whatsapp group.

Review of Staff Leave Policy

Current Staff Leave Policy discussed.

Action: Teneti to provide an explanation around discretionary leave to be added to the policy.

Governance Manual

Angela reported that work continues on updating the HVS Governance Manual and will circulate a draft to the Board soon.

Principal's Report

Focus on restorative circle time – now more a PB4L school. Discussed minor incidents. Meeting in committee at 8.15pm and out of committee at 8.30pm.

3. Whānau / Community Engagement and Feedback

Update from Home and School

Teneti attended the Home and School meeting. Discussion about purpose of H&S and need for clarity about where money is spent. Need to find new chair for H&S and then they will define their own agenda. BOT's role in assisting them to help find someone. Consider timing of AGM and recruitment of new Chair – hold off until next term? Direction of Home and School needs to be driven by H&S.

Staff Leave

Discussion of staff leave. Meeting in committee at 9.15pm and out of committee at 9.40pm.

Closes: 9.45pm

Next meeting 28 April 2020



RICHARD CARROLL

04 - 09 - 20

