

# CROSBY RAVENSWORTH C of E (Aided) SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Crosby Ravensworth, Penrith, Cumbria, CA10 3JJ

School telephone: 01931 715265

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## FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING 28 September 2016, Crosby Ravensworth School

### MINUTES

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Helen Gill	Foundation Governor	CHAIR	HG
	Duncan Priestley	Staff Governor, ex officio	(Headteacher)	DP
	Sarah Rogers	Foundation Governor		SR
	Rev Stewart Fyfe	Foundation Governor, ex officio		SF
	Marion Rucker	Parent Governor		MR
	Becky Day	Foundation Governor		BD

#### OTHERS ATTENDING:

Chloe Randall	Clerk to the Governors	CR
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#### APOLOGIES:

Susan Pattinson	Staff Governor	(father in hospital)	SP
John Paul Turnbull	Parent Governor	(working away)	JPT

#### 1 PRAYERS

SF opened the meeting with a prayer in which he thanked God for the school, for the parents and above all, the children. He thanked God for the teachers' hard work and dedication, and asked for the children, their families and the teachers to be blessed. He prayed for wisdom for all in the conduct of the meeting, and that all might give of their best, laying aside any stresses which they may have brought with them in order to focus on the needs of the school. Amen.

#### 2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 **APOLOGIES:** John Paul Turnbull had sent apologies as he was working away from home, travelling overnight, and Susan Pattinson had to send late apologies due to the hospitalisation of her father.

2.2 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 5 May 2016:** the minutes had been circulated by e-mail, and – now that the board was quorate – were ratified.

2.3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** all present reviewed their written declarations of interest and signed that they were correct and up to date.

2.4 **MATTERS ARISING NOT COVERED ELSEWHERE:** none were raised.

#### 2.5 **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

2.5.1 **RESOURCES COMMITTEE:** the meeting scheduled for 14 September 2016 had had to be cancelled due to illness/injury affecting more than half the committee members. Dialogue had nonetheless taken place by e-mail and a summary submitted to the board by JPT,

together with various other relevant papers. HG asked the board for any comments, questions or challenges.

**2.5.1.1 Health and Safety Training:** DP said that he was delighted to be able to update the board with the news that Pauline Cleasby, School Administrator, had successfully passed her Health and Safety At Work written examination, no mean feat.

**2.5.1.2 Nursery and school banner:** DP also advised the meeting that he had spoken to the Nursery Committee about the possible change of name to Crosby Ravensworth Nursery. After consideration, the Nursery decided that they should continue to operate under the name Lyvennet Nursery. They were, however, happy with the use of the phrase "Primary School and Nursery" on the new banner. DP took the opportunity to show the board the new banner, with updated logo, and explained that it would be displayed above the school entrance. The benefit of having a small, portable version was briefly discussed and generally felt to be useful.

**2.5.1.3 Roof repairs:** DP explained the Resource Committee's view of the current situation with the roof, following extensive discussions, meetings, research and dialogue:

- the repairs to the roof have been successful and it is now watertight, having been closely observed during recent extreme weather
- the ceiling continues to attract condensation owing to the contractor's initial error
- the contractor will not remedy the condensation issue on terms in-line with technical advice given by Cowan and Company (the contractor's proposal for remedial works not being acceptable to Cowans)
- legal action is being discouraged by both the Diocese and Cowan and Company: the outcome is in doubt as there is a general lack of detailed information; considerable time has elapsed since the original work was done, and there is significant doubt as to the contractor's ability to pay any damages. The financial cost of pursuing this could also be considerable with no guarantee of any success.

This leaves the school with three separate issues with remedies proposed for all three as follows:

1. **making good the water damage to the interior of the building:** the Local Authority is encouraging the school to put in an insurance claim. Should this claim fail, the school has access to £15,387 for Formula Capital projects on a "use it or lose it" basis
2. **remedying the condensation issue:** Cowans has assured the school that condensation is not causing any structural damage to the building. MR commented, however, that dripping water is troublesome and stains ceiling panels. Funds to remedy the situation could be sought via an LCVAP claim to the Diocese; if this is unsuccessful, the school will just have to "live with the situation"
3. **replacing the fascia boards:** quotations for the replacement of these with UPVC or similar material should be sought immediately, with the costs forming part of the Formula Capital claim

The board questioned DP closely on the long term health of the school building, and the morality of not pursuing a legal claim. After extensive discussion and consideration of all the advice received, it was resolved not to pursue litigation against either the contractor or Cowans. The reason for this was that the likely cost in time and money did not justify the

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risk. In the case of the contractor, insufficient documentation to support our case combined with the lapse of time made the outcome uncertain. In addition, we have no information about the contractor's ability to pay damages in the event of success. Consequently the financial cost and time involved (with consequential disruption to the life of the school) did not justify taking legal action. In the case of Cowans, the advice from the Diocese suggested that there was no case to answer and consequently litigation was not a reasonable option. The board felt, however, that the role of Cowans and Company throughout the project – from original sign-off of the roof works to the resolution of the damp ingress – had not been as constructive as it might have been, and that a change of property agent might be worth considering.

The following actions were therefore agreed:

<b>ACTIONS:</b>	An insurance claim to be made as soon as possible, to get the internal damage repaired, with a fallback to the Formula Capital funds if necessary	<b>DN</b>
	To apply to the Diocese for LCVAP funding for works to resolve the condensation issue	<b>DN</b>
	To arrange for quotations for replacing the fascia boards to be obtained from Keswick Windows (JPT's father's company); North West Glass in Penrith (contact: James); and Finesse Windows in Carlisle	<b>DP</b>
	To ask the School Business Manager to investigate the contract with Cowans and Company to see if/when an alternative might be achieved	<b>DP</b>

2.5.1.4 **Budget:** the Resources Committee's comments on the current budget situation were noted.

2.5.1.5 **Pupil numbers:** all present recognised that the falling pupil numbers had financial implications for the school's viability. HG stated that for the Governing Body, this must be the most important issue to address this year. Steps taken to date included:

- running a good school
- having happy children, doing well
- good Ofsted and SIAMS reports
- an article by DP in the Lyvennet Link seeking information from prospective parents about what might influence their choice of school (eg, wraparound care)
- efforts to achieve greater visibility in the press and in other ways (eg, publicity for the presentation of a cheque to "Images of Nepal;" the new school banner
- recognition that it is imperative to improve the appearance of the school following the roof troubles

A wide-ranging discussion of the ways in which pupils might be attracted to the school followed, with the following ideas put forward:

- targeting new housing developments in Kings Meaburn (which is part of the Crosby Ravensworth catchment area, but with many children going from there to Morland and Bolton schools, notwithstanding that they have to pay for transport which would otherwise be free)
- raising awareness of the school with parent-and-child groups in the catchment area
- exploring ways in which wraparound care might be offered
- encouraging the nursery to extend its hours of operation/consult with parents about operating hours that suit demand

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- helping parents to realise the advantages of a small school – each pupil is friends with all the school, not only their own age group
- finding ways to communicate the improvements in the school's standards over the past three years

It was also recognised that a number of external factors such as the freedom this generation of parents has to choose which school their children go to; future issues such as the bus services to secondary schools, had an impact which the school would have difficulty addressing.

Positive actions emerging from the discussion were:

<b>ACTIONS:</b>	DP to look at establishing Facebook and Twitter accounts for the school (which could be managed by school admin staff)	<b>DP</b>
	Governors to pursue any contacts they have for positive PR, news about housing developments parent-child groups, with a view to raising the school's profile	<b>All</b>
	DP to bring back to the next board any information which comes from the Lyvennet Link request, or from other sources concerning wraparound care	<b>DP</b>

**2.5.2 PUPIL PROGRESS COMMITTEE:** the meeting scheduled for 20 September had also had to be postponed due to illness/injury to members and their families. DP had, however, provided his Self Evaluation Report and Special Educational Needs Report for circulation, with pupil results also included in his Headteachers Report. A considerable amount of quality time was spent discussing pupil attainment and progress, together with the new system for monitoring these.

DP explained that the Whole School Attainment Table showed the overall achievement of the school. The use of colour highlighted what was going on with dark green indicating a very good attainment; shading through lighter greens, yellow, orange, pink and dark pink. The column on the left of the table indicated pupils who were classed as Gifted and Talented in certain subjects, and also identified those with Special Educational Needs. The figures for each subject for each child indicated the level of attainment each had achieved for comparison with expectation of their year.

It was noted that Maths appears to be slightly stronger than Reading and Writing, and that this reflected the effort put into that subject since weakness was detected two years ago. It was observed that the very small cohorts in the school can skew the data very significantly, and it was also noted by Governors that DP was able to give the particular circumstances of every pupil in the school. This led to a discussion on the use of IEPs, as one governor queried the lack of SEN status for a particular child with lower than average attainment in each core subject. It was recognised that given the detailed knowledge of every child in the school, the need for a written IEP was sometimes in doubt. DP also advised that assessment took place three times each year.

DP then introduced the individual progress tables, explaining that under the new system each child was given a "flight path" – ie, at the end of Year 2, KS1, their attainment score is

used to generate a forecast of where they should be in Year 6. Progress is assessed as a whole school, rather than individual pupils, and “floor standards” are set for each subject (-5 for all but writing, which is -7). CRPS is well above the floor standard in each subject. It was commented that from the board’s point of view, the number the system produced as a result was relatively straightforward, even if the method of producing it was difficult to comprehend.

The SEN report was also noted, with thanks to Heather Lowthian for its detailed reporting.

### **3      MAIN BUSINESS**

#### **3.1    HEADTEACHER’S REPORT**

- 3.1.1    SIAMS report:** HG congratulated DP and his staff on the results of the SIAMS inspection, and SF commented that the standard has gone up significantly, with the school not far off being considered outstanding. DP said that the SIAMS criteria is now a lot more stringent than it was, and that the school had been described as “being in the fast lane to outstanding.” The school was marked across a number of categories, with several questions in each category. The inspection had told him the school had achieved at least one “outstanding” in each category, with all other questions answered as “good.” SF said that he would personally like to echo the praise for the SIAMS report: he said he was really proud of the school, and thought all credit was due to DP, who on appointment had said that leading a faith school for the first time was the biggest challenge he would face in his headship.

MR commented that the only feedback for Governors had been that parents did not always seem to realise how the strong faith in the school contributed to the education of the children.

It was thought that the next Ofsted inspection would be unlikely to take place until three years after the completed academic year of the last one; with SIAMS following.

- 3.1.2    Staffing:** DP said that he was investing responsibilities in his staff and that Susan Pattinson would be leading on RE and collective worship, while Jane Corrie would lead on Sports and PE.

The shrinking roll is a matter of paramount concern, and to make ends meet, changes will have to be made. If any changes have to be made to staff hours, the School Business Manager has indicated that measures may have to start now. However, DP explained that one staff member had already come to him to say that if hours had to be lost, she was prepared to take a reduction to protect those in more difficult circumstances. Because the need to enforce redundancy of hours appears unlikely, it is anticipated that restructuring will not need to take place until September 2017. HG commented that this was a superb indication of the strength

of the team and it was good to know, but the board hoped that this would not be necessary as the two-class structure was considered essential for the school.

DP at this point drew attention to the paper setting out the pressures on the High Needs Budget, noting that the deadline for responses had been extended to 14 October 2016. HG asked for an overview from DP's perspective, and he handed out an article setting out the story. Basically, the application process for High Needs funding changed in 2014, resulting in an 80% increase in applications, with the result that the fund was oversubscribed and the Council are seeking to clawback £11m. This would have disastrous results for CRPS, as any further pressure on staffing hours will make it difficult to maintain the two class structure. SF commented that the situation had presumably arisen because SEN requirements were higher than anticipated, so any clawback would make the situation worse.

HG offered to send the template letter suggested by the Schools Forum, if DP would put in the specific details needed and some additional comment pertinent to the school.

<b>ACTIONS:</b>	DP to prepare letter for HG to sign	<b>DP</b>
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(Although discussed under Monitoring Visits, this item is relevant to the above, so is included here)

**Teaching Assistant:** DP explained that 8 hours of Katie Taylor's time was funded from an Emergency Health Care Plan for a pupil with diabetes, which was provided until December 2016. These extra hours are vital – and still insufficient – given the challenge of providing the crucial and often erratic care which the child needs, some of which DP described to the board. Katie is already finding difficulties in fulfilling her other SEN commitments within the hours currently available. DP asked if the Governors could provide a statement supporting the claim for these additional hours to be continued and increased to 12 hours per week, to allow Katie to be available for EHCP requirements for the whole of the school day and to ensure that other commitments are not missed. MR commented that Katie also has responsibilities under Health and Safety for the child's medicine – even though that only amounted to regular fridge temperature monitoring, the pressures did stack up.

<b>ACTIONS:</b>	DP to prepare letter for SR to adapt and sign	<b>DP, SR</b>
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**3.2 SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN:** DP had circulated this in advance and the new areas added since the SIAMS inspection were discussed:

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- 3.2.1 Need for new Governors:** various names were suggested, and SF was nominated to make approaches to two individuals whose names had occurred to him. In addition, an advert had been placed in the Lyvennet Link and the Friday bulletin.

<b>ACTION:</b>	SF to approach the two individuals he thought might be potential candidates	<b>SF</b>
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- 3.2.2 Baptisms/admission to communion/confirmation classes offered through school:** SF said he would like to introduce these classes through school, and all relevant permissions and approvals were in place. He needed to write a letter to parents introducing the idea, and he commented that there was not a single child in the school who would not be suitable. DP suggested that the subject might best be introduced at an assembly to which parents were invited, rather than solely through a letter.

<b>ACTION:</b>	DP and SF to liaise over a suitable assembly for the purpose	<b>DP, SF</b>
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### **3.3 GOVERNORS' OBJECTIVES AND VISITS**

**3.3.1 Children's happiness and general approach to learning visit, 13 May 2016:**

HG said her report was very brief, but that it had been an extremely good visit and she was delighted with what she had seen.

- 3.3.2 Reading visit, 6 June 2016:** DP thanked SR for the helpful detail in her report of her visit, and SR commented that it was a challenge to teachers to find enough TA hours.

**3.3.3 Other visits required**

- **Music:** now that David Evans is no longer available, a volunteer for this visit is needed
- **PE:** MR to arrange
- **Art:** JPT and DP to organise a mutually convenient time
- **Drama:** BD offered to make a visit related to drama, of which she had experience

<b>ACTION:</b>	Governors to maintain the momentum of the visit programme as above and ensure that reports are produced	<b>All</b>
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### **3.4 POLICY REVIEWS/CREATION:**

- 3.4.1 Health and Safety Policy:** HG thanked MR for her very comprehensive H&S policy. MR explained that the school had invested in H&S training and with lots of support from Kym Allan the school now had a single policy, made up as follows:

- a policy statement and organisation

- the main policy document, as required by law, in which MR had included useful links to Council policies which might be of assistance to staff (the school still has to abide by CCC policies, even though Kym Allan is retained as H&S adviser)
- a schedule of named individuals clarifying who is responsible for various aspects
- a declaration of acceptance of the policy, which by law needs to be signed by all staff (which MR would introduce to staff when she came in to train them in H&S in the near future)
- an annual health and safety management plan, which will largely be driven by the school administrative staff and will give Resources Committee an overview of running costs of the building (and will also be introduced to staff at H&S training so they have the opportunity to identify any concerns)
- a Fire Safety Management Policy and Procedures

MR also commented that the original requirement for three annual H&S “walk arounds” was legally reduced to one, but that she would be prepared to do it more often as she felt that would be beneficial.

MR also commented that an H&S audit was due every two to three years, and that the next one should probably take place in September 2017.

A brief discussion took place over a staff concern already raised over the need for a way for people to contact the school in an emergency when the office is unmanned. This was needed in case a parent wanted to notify the school they could not collect a child, or if the school needed to be alerted to an external threat affecting the safety of children or staff.

The suite of Health and Safety Policies was approved in its entirety, with a bi-annual review, and the Lone Worker Policy was also approved at the same time.

<b>ACTION:</b>	MR to assist the school to establish an emergency number for incoming calls	<b>MR</b>
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**3.4.2 Crisis Management Plan:** DP presented this policy, which was approved.

**3.4.3 Home School Agreement:** DP presented this policy, which was approved.

**3.4.4 Charging and Remissions Policy:** this policy was presented by JPT through the Resources Committee, and was approved.

**3.4.5 Fire Safety Policy:** - this was approved as part of the H&S Policy.

**3.4.6 E-Safety Policy:** SP had advised the Pupil Progress Committee that there were no changes required in the E-Safety Policy, so this was also ratified.



**3.4.7 Financial Delegation:** JPT had advised the Resources Committee that no changes were required to this, so this was also ratified.

**3.4.8 Religious Education and Collective Worship Policies** were noted as needing to be updated following the SIAMS inspection.

<b>ACTION:</b>	SF and SP to liaise when meeting to discuss RE plans for the year	<b>SF, SP</b>
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### **3.5 SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS:**

(This matter was discussed at the end of the meeting in the absence of MR, as she and her husband together operate the local business offering the school photography service.)

DP explained that MR and her husband David have started a local photography business and have offered their services as school photographer. The current photography is under the Tempest franchise, and the school has no particular contract or commitment to the company. It was also noted that it would be possible to return to the Tempest arrangement if the local basis ceased to trade.

Photography costs the school nothing; the photographer pays a percentage of sales to the school. The Rucker business has offered to either:

- match the percentage of the current supplier AND sponsor a new sports kit for the pupils, OR
- pay a higher percentage to the school

After a brief discussion, it was agreed that the board would like to support local business, and that they would be happy to offer the opportunity to the Ruckers to take this year's school photographs. It was suggested that the Ruckers might be invited to hold a pre-photograph workshop with parents to ensure that they were offering what was wanted, or that they might want to invite parents to the shoot itself.

<b>ACTION:</b>	DP to invite the Ruckers to take on the school photography	<b>DP</b>
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## **4 STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES AND GOVERNING BODY MATTERS**

### **4.1 STATUS OF GOVERNING BODY:**

**4.1.1** The current four Governor vacancies had been discussed under School Development Plan above.

**4.1.2** HG was delighted to accept BD's offer to Chair the Pupil Progress Committee. All present noted BD's concerns over her lack of experience of the subject and assured her that a fresh viewpoint was highly desirable and all would support her as much as possible.

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4.1.2 **Governors' DBS checks:** CR reported that David Nattrass, School Business Manager, had very efficiently taken responsibility for this and that Governor checks were now part of the School Central Record.

4.2 **GOVERNORS' RAPID ACTION PLAN:** HG had not had the opportunity to update this plan and circulate it. After a brief discussion, it was considered that it was still an important document, and that it did require input from all the board, not just the Chair.

<b>ACTION:</b>	HG to develop the plan to gain greater input from other Governors	<b>HG</b>
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### 4.3 LINK GOVERNOR UPDATES:

.1 **Church:** SF reported that there had been a very good School Leavers Assembly; the "Bible in a Year" had been completed, and the new term had started with looking at Christian values and tying them into Bible stories not covered last year – this included not only the school's core values, but others too. There will be two special assemblies in school this term: Remembrance Day on Friday, 11 November, and a Christingle Service, which had been much appreciated last year.

.2 **Governor Training and Induction:** SR said that there had been no new governors to induct, but that an article had gone in the Lyvennet Link seeking nominations.

.3 **Special Educational Needs:** HG was happy that the SEN report included above was fully comprehensive.

.4 **Nursery:** BD said that as she was not part of the Nursery Committee any more, she was unable to fill this role. DP also mentioned that he had passed the Nursery the comment that the Board would welcome a report, but with no result at this meeting. BD mentioned that there was some confusion in the village over a donation of £200 to the Nursery from Kitty Fest, which had been unacknowledged and was erroneously thought to have been given to the School. Duncan undertook to ensure that the Nursery had received the donation and tactfully advise that any acknowledgement sent had not been received

<b>ACTION:</b>	DP to liaise with Nursery Manager over donation	<b>DP</b>
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.5 **Health and Safety:** MR commented that the Accident Report should really be included in the Headteacher's Report in future, but that it was quite pleasing to note that only four playground accidents had been reported.

.6 **Safeguarding:** SR reported that there had been no incidents. DP mentioned that the staff had held a meeting on safeguarding, and as part of their awareness training had completed a quiz, at which all had done well.

.7 **Staffing:** SR said that no concerns had been raised by the staff, and the whole meeting unanimously offered a vote of thanks for the very good team work, enthusiasm and dedication of all the staff members. MR said that Pauline Cleasby

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and her husband in particular deserved a special mention for giving up holiday time to sort out the school telephones following a lightning strike at the end of the summer term.

<b>ACTION:</b>	MR to convey the Board's thanks to the Cleasbys by card and gift	<b>MR</b>
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- 4.4 **GOVERNORS' DIARY:** CR to continue with this work in progress.

<b>ACTION:</b>	CR to publish the governors' diary on the shared drive	<b>CR</b>
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- 4.5 **GOVERNORS' NEWSLETTER:** SR is the nominated author of the Autumn 2016 newsletter, and HG undertook to send her the template.

- 4.6 **BRAINSTORMING:** everyone felt that the meeting had already contained a lot of brainstorming already!

**Window cleaning:** SR said that as she had been unable to obtain any quote for getting the school windows cleaned, she would like to invite parents to "adopt a window" and take responsibility for cleaning it. This was thought to be an excellent idea.

<b>ACTION:</b>	SR to provide a paragraph for the school bulletin	<b>SR</b>
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## 5 REVIEW OF MEETING

- 5.1 **MEETING REVIEW:** everyone felt a lot of ground had been covered and whilst it was recognised that extra time had been given to Pupil Progress, it was not thought that the cancellation of the meeting had materially contributed to this – Governors needed to understand the new progress and attainment reporting system.

DP asked if everyone thought the three-meetings-a-year format was working, and it was confirmed that it was liked by all.

- 5.2 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS / ITEMS FOR AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:**

None.....

- 5.3 **DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS:**

Pupil Progress Committee	1830, Wednesday, 11 January 2017
Resources Committee	1830, Wednesday, 18 January 2017
<b>FULL BOARD</b>	<b>1830, Wednesday, 25 January 2017</b>
Resources Committee	1830, Wednesday, 26 April 2017
Pupil Progress Committee	1830, Wednesday, 3 May 2017
<b>FULL BOARD</b>	<b>1830, Wednesday, 10 May 2017</b>

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**Ratified by:** DP comments on 30 September 2016 accepted in entirety  
HG amendment on 30 September 2016 added  
SJF clarifications at item 2.5.1.3, 3 October 2016  
SR amendments at 2.5.1.2, 6 October 2016  
MR "They're great, thanks!" 16 October 2016  
BD "Nothing to raise or amend, thanks" 17 October 2016