

**HITCHIN GIRLS' SCHOOL
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY
HELD AT 7.00PM ON TUESDAY 20 JUNE 2017**

Part 1 Business

Present:	Mrs. C. Astill	Mrs. M. King
	Mr. K. Balfe	Mrs. F. Manning (Headteacher)
	Mr. K. Down	Dr. K. Middleton
	Mrs. C. Emmings	Mr. S. Mills
	Mr. T. Fitzakerly	Mr. C. Minton
	Mr. C. Hall (Chairman)	Mrs. S. Morrison
	Mrs. N. Job	
	Mr. A. Jones	
In attendance:	Mr. T. Hankin	(Clerk)
	Mr. J. Crowther	(Deputy Headteacher)

1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence

Mr. Hall welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Mr. S. Lucas, Mrs. J. Marland, Mrs. M. McPhail, Mr. G. Montgomery and Mr. M. Seaman Hill. Mr. S. Sprawson was absent.

2. Notification of items to be raised under Any Other Business

Mrs. Manning – Governor training records.

3. Declarations of Interest

Governors were reminded of the need to declare any interest in the items for discussion. There were none.

4. Minutes of previous meeting.

4.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2017.

The minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2 Matters arising.

There were none.

5. Headteachers' report

Mrs. Manning gave a brief review of her report, circulated in advance of the meeting, and invited questions. Items mentioned and discussed included:

- Curriculum
 - Withdrawal of college option for next year at KS4.
 - The good increase in the number of students opting for Drama in Year 9 next year.
- Teaching & learning
 - The work of the Growth Mindset working party, led by Ms. Evans;

- Contribution of the school council and students panels to the overview of teaching and learning.
Governors asked about feedback from students who have participated in the student panels. Mr. Crowther advised that they have all responded positively. He will meet with them all before the end of term to review the process and share the reports from the panels.
- Admissions
 - Current number for September 2017 is 173, which includes 5 appeals. There are 18 students on the Continuing Interest list.
- CPD
 - 40% reduction from last year in paid external courses. This is due to there being more internal CPD sessions and webinars available for staff to attend and the increase in free courses offered by exam boards for new specifications.
 - 94% of staff applications for training are approved, highlighting that staff are carefully considering content and relevance before applying.
 - The credit training scheme is very creative and successful.
- Headteacher's Objectives.
 - Update on progress on the 3 objectives.
- Safeguarding
 - Completion of the safeguarding audit for review by the Safeguarding Governor.
Governors discussed the safeguarding guidance and support provided by the Local Authority.
- SEND
 - Staffing update.
- Pupil Premium
 - The very successful weekend Year 11 residential revision course.
- Teaching Alliance
 - The successful bid to run a programme which will train current teachers to teach Physics and Maths. (TSST)
- Staffing
 - Fully staffed for September 2017

Mrs. Manning was thanked for her detailed report.

6. Committee Reports

6.1 Admissions Committee

Mrs. Job reported on the meeting held on 2 May 2017. Matters discussed included the increase in the admission number for September 2017 to 170 and the relationship with the Headteachers of the Letchworth Secondary Schools.

6.2 Curriculum & Performance Committee

Mrs. King reported on the meeting held on 2 May 2017. The meeting received an update on the new examination grading system (1-9) and how staff and students have to adapt to this. The results of the Kirkland Rowell parent, staff and student surveys were reviewed. It had been pleasing to note that, despite all the pressures on staff due to the curriculum changes and budget concerns, the staff outcomes were positive and they rated staff morale as high.

Governors asked whether the survey results were published. Mrs. Manning confirmed that a summary is being sent to parents this month, and the full reports are available to staff on the learning platform.

6.3 Finance & Resources Committee

Mr. Down reported on the meeting held on 9 May 2017. The current financial performance is in line with the budget with no concerns. The draft budget for 2017/18 had been reviewed and a copy provided to all Governors. The school has had to identify a number of budget reductions to help deliver a balanced budget for next year, which includes some reductions in budgets for service contracts and resources. There has also been a reduction in staffing, with the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff level for next year being 5.3 lower than this year. Governors noted that when a vacancy occurs, the school continues to appoint the best person for the job, regardless of their point on the salary scale.

The budget for 2017/18 was proposed by Mr. Minton, seconded by Mr. Hall and unanimously **APPROVED**.

The committee had received an update on premises matters and the successful bid to the EFA Condition Improvement Fund for work on the Lower Block. Mr. Down noted that the school has now had 9 successful applications to this fund since becoming an academy, and this has brought in £4.6m for premises improvements. Mr. Hankin was thanked for his work on these bids.

The Risk Review register had been reviewed and updated and it was recommended to the Governing Body. It was unanimously **APPROVED**.

The Data Protection Policy and Health & Safety Policy were reviewed and recommended to the Governing Body. They were unanimously **APPROVED**.

The committee had reviewed and approved the CCTV Policy and Governors Allowance Policy and this was **NOTED**.

6.4 Personnel Committee

Mrs. Job reported on the Part 1 Business of the meeting held on 9 May 2017. It had discussed the increased use of social media and networking to advertise vacancies and recruit staff. Improving the recruitment process is included in the school improvement plan. The trainee teacher scheme was discussed. Whilst staff are generally supportive of this, it was noted by Governors that some departments do not feel that it is always possible for them to have a trainee teacher in their department.

The committee had discussed the reduction in staffing FTE for next year and the impact this might have on workloads. It was noted that the school hasn't increased its standard teaching load for staff from 42 periods a fortnight, but many local schools now require staff to teach 43 or even 44 periods. The school also still provides 10 hours of A level teaching per subject, whilst other schools have reduced this to 9.

7. Expansion update

Mr. Hankin confirmed that Planning Approval has been received for the work required to support the expansion of the school. Detailed requirements are being finalised to allow a tender proposal and negotiated contract to be agreed for the work. Various site surveys and investigations are underway. The formal application for expansion of the school has been submitted to the Regional Schools Commissioner for approval.

Governors asked what would happen if the new facilities were not ready for September 2018. Mrs. Manning advised that in the first year only 1 additional form group will join the school and that this can be accommodated should there be a delay.

8. Multi Academy Trust update

Mrs. Manning reported on discussions she has had with some local schools regarding the formation of the MAT and advised that an information session will be held for Governors at one local school later in the month. These discussions have been helpful in clarifying some of the decisions that will need to be made. A due diligence document is being prepared which will form the basis of the formal discussions with a school should it confirm that it wishes to join.

Mr. Hall referred to the information documents circulated following the previous meeting. Governors agreed that the proposed name will help to retain the local identity of the MAT and show that it exists for the local community. Mr. Hall also reviewed the proposed governance structure and referred to the importance of retaining a strong Local Governing Body. Names of the proposed Members and Trustees of the MAT need to be submitted to the Department for Education. Mr. Hall proposed that Mr Fitzakerly, Mr. Hall and Mr. Minton are put forward as the Members, and Mr. Down, Mr. Fitzakerly, Mr. Hall, Mrs. Job, Mrs King and Mr. Minton as the Trustees. There would still be 2 vacancies for Independent Members and 3 vacancies for Trustees appointed by Members. Once the MAT is approved and in place, Mr Fitzakerly, Mr. Hall and Mr. Minton would no longer be part of the Local Governing Body. Governors were asked to vote on this proposal. There were 13 in favour with 1 abstention.

(Mrs. Astill had to leave the meeting at this point).

Governors were asked for any comments or feedback on the proposed Articles of Association and Funding Agreements for the MAT, which are based on the model DfE documents. Governors confirmed that they had found the summaries and information provided by Stone King Solicitors very helpful. No changes were identified and these will now be submitted to the DfE in support of the application.

9. Link Governors

Mr. Minton reported on time spent in the Computer Science and Business Studies department. He found it extremely exciting and was very impressed to see Year 7 students critically analysing websites and making suggestions for improvements. He was most impressed to see 2 Sixth Form students acting as mentors and supporting the students in class.

Mrs. Job reported on her involvement with the Children Looked After review which had been very positive. Mrs. Manning conformed that the report has been received and will be reviewed at the next Curriculum & Performance committee.

Mrs. Job also reported on her participation in learning walks, which had looked at movement around the school and general behaviour. She felt that movement was very orderly despite the constraints of some narrow corridors and stairways, and general behaviour was good.

Mr. Mills advised that he had participated in the Key Stage 3 student panel and was very impressed with the students that were involved.

10. Proposed meeting dates 2017/18

The schedule of dates was agreed.

11. Any Other Business

Mrs. Manning circulated details of Governor training records as received from Herts for Learning governance services, and asked for any omissions or corrections to be advised to her PA or the Clerk.

12. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 12 September 2017

The meeting closed at 8.20pm