

COTHAM SCHOOL
Meeting of the Academy Governing Body
Thursday 21 May 2020
Virtual Meeting
MINUTES OF MEETING

Governors Present:		
Dora Alderson, CG	Ed Carpenter, SG	Lucy Hunt, PG
Jack Barber, SG	Andrew Chadwick, PG	Morag Pirie, SG
John Bass, PG	Jane Chamberlin, PG	Richard Puttick, PG
Jim Bowyer, LA (Chair)	Jo Feather PG	Rebecca Reid, PG
Jo Butler, Headteacher	Sandra Fryer, Co-opted	David Yorath CG
In Attendance (non-voting) Allison Crossland, Business Manager Domini Leong, Deputy Headteacher Chris Reed, Deputy Headteacher Leanne Sowersby, Clerk	Apologies Absent:	Governors in Post: 15/19 Quorum = 5 (1/3 rounded up) AM = Associate Member CG = Community Governor PG = Parent Governor SG = Staff Governor SMT = Senior Management Team

Item	Minutes of Meeting
1	Welcome, Apologies for Absence, declarations of interest and notification of AOB There have been no apologies.
2	Governance during lockdown Some guidance from the NGA had been circulated.
3	Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy DL gave an overview. This was posted on GovernorHub when the addendum was drafted. There has now been some more guidance from the DfE which DL will now look to incorporate. There has been an increase in domestic violence which the safeguarding team have been working on. There have also been issues relating to mental health, as well as parental mental health. DL is currently working with the team in forward planning and how they support the students as they return to school. There is a great deal of work to do to support students to transition back into school. Faculty Leaders are being prepared for the fact that the first month back in school after summer will likely look very different to normal. Work is likely to be needed around dealing with trauma, bereavement etc. Governors thanked DL for the work on this.
4	Headteacher's Report - School Closure Planning / Return Planning JBU has shared a great deal of information over the past few days. This has been a very challenging time. JBU praised the SLT and all staff for their support. JBU gave an overview of the current situation and return planning.

The Government and Local Authority have made clear that all DfE guidance is overruled by Health and Safety legislation. As Trustees of an Academy, Governors ultimately hold responsibility for this. The health and safety of all our students, staff and families, needs to be considered when planning a wider re-opening of the school.

No guidance has been published for secondary schools as to how the DfE expects the 'face to face' support for Years 10 and 12 to be implemented.

JBu referenced that she has also shared some information from her professional association, ASCL. The consensus is to be very cautious around plans to bring more students back in term 6 ahead of any guidance for secondary schools being published by the DfE.

Bristol City Council have not made any central decision around school opening. They have said they will support every school and Governing Body to make their own decisions, based on risk. Alison Hurley has written to parents saying that Heads would communicate to parents by 1 June. This is difficult, but it is also important to communicate to our parents as soon as possible.

The general feeling among schools in NW24, especially primaries, is that they will not be able to open on 1 June.

JBu has worked closely with the Head at Redland Green School (RGS) and they are in agreement about not being able to open before 15 June.

JBu is aware of other secondary schools who also feel that 15 June is likely to be the earliest they can open.

JBu highlighted the ASCL comments on the links between school, public health and wider community, such as transport and the activities of older students travelling to and from school.

For example, there is concern about the ability to socially distance students on the train (GWR have written to JBU to ask for expected numbers returning for example).

There has been a great deal of work done on the provisional plan. The plan is provisional on what is said by the Government on 28 May, as well as DfE guidance when it comes and input from staff.

There was a Joint Staff and Governors Committee meeting this afternoon. The feedback from staff there was positive. JBU feels that the staff are on board.

Once the Government publishes guidance for secondary schools, we will take into account union guidance on planning for wider reopening. JBU is hopeful that we will be able to work constructively towards a plan for opening more widely.

JBu would like to share provisional plans with parents tomorrow. JBU has worked closely with RGS and both Heads would like to send their letters at the same time, tomorrow morning.

Key workers should now send their children into school. We will now be contacting key worker parents/ carers whose children are not in school to ask them why their children are not in school. This is not to 'badger' them, but to ensure that they are aware that there will be as safe as possible a provision within school for their children.

Will also survey Year 10 parents and carers to find out how they feel about sending their children to school. This is to assist with planning provision.

Next steps will rely on feedback from staff and Governors, and further input from staff and union reps, following further guidance from the DfE.

We will then be able to fully risk assess, using HSE methodology. Then there is the extra level of granular detail that needs to be added. Protocols for parents, students, staff etc. Policies will need to be adapted – Eg, behaviour, exclusions. The site will need to be prepared, staff will need to be briefed. Students will need to be prepared for returning and briefed.

	<p>It is proposed to convene another JSGC meeting on 4 June. JBu has prepared a Decision Making Log to log and sign-off decisions around the risk assessment. JBo and SF to manage this with support from LS.</p> <p>Assuming there are no significant changes from the Government etc. this should allow us to open more widely on 15 June.</p> <p>Will then need to monitor this. As well as considering what provision might look like in September.</p> <p>Feedback from Staff Governor – feeling very reassured.</p> <p>Governors need to be clear that it is their decision to open to more students. Need to be comfortable with their decisions and ensure that they are logged and recorded.</p> <p>Q – Is it inevitable that both Years 10 and 12 will be brought back, or could there be just one or the other? JBu feels they are the right year groups to focus on. We are going for 15 June because we feel that we can provide some form of quality provision for our students this way. We will avoid cross-over between the year groups.</p> <p>Want to bring Years 10 and 12 back.</p> <p>Q – What is the long-term plan for those two year groups? There is no guidance on what the provision should look like. Some schools may make phone calls, some will do remote one to ones. There is not the opportunity to teach new topics, the aim is to help them to consolidate existing learning as much as possible. Will then need to consider how we try to plug the gaps in the students' education. In addition to considering how we support them pastorally and socially.</p> <p>DL is working with Faculty Leaders and the Inclusion Team on these issues.</p> <p>There is also a push from some national education bodies for a statement on assessment (exams in 2021) for the current Year 10.</p> <p>Q – The NGA guidance said that the decision to re-open was for Headteachers – is this incorrect? The Head is responsible for operational decisions, but the Governors in an Academy are the employers and are therefore liable, and responsible for Health and Safety. Therefore Governors need to be completely confident in the decisions being made / proposed.</p> <p>Q – If Years 10 and 12 return, will the continuation of virtual timetabling create complications? The face to face contact with the students will be to support the on-line learning. On-line will still be the dominant mode of learning for the students. This will be supplemented by the time in school. The aim of this is to assess where the students are. It is about having that contact, seeing their friends (socially distanced) and assessing where they are to enable better planning for remote learning.</p> <p>Q – How would Governors engage with the decision making process and the log? A lot of this is already captured in the risk assessment. JBu feels that the appropriate thing would be for the Chair and Vice-Chair to work with the SLT on the detail of the document. For FGB approval on 8 June after the JSGC on 4 June.</p> <p>There will be a need to decide who will step in if either JBo or SF become unavailable.</p> <p>Governors supported the plan to re-open the school from 15 June 2020, subject to further guidance / Government announcements, or other relevant occurrences.</p>
5	<p>Ongoing Governance / Articles of Association</p> <p>There has been an ongoing project to resolve issues around the issue of Members and Trustees. There has been some work that indicated that the Articles of Association needed some small changes.</p> <p>SF proposed that Governors delegate the work to get those changes made, including a change to allow the AGM to be held virtually.</p> <p>SF will circulate the report for Governors.</p> <p>Proposal Approved</p>
6	<p>AGM Planning - Proposed to hold the AGM virtually in September. Proposal Approved</p>

7	<p>Committee and other Reports</p> <p>Minutes from all committees have been circulated. Chairs gave a brief overview.</p> <p>Q – If the school is open more widely, could Governor meetings be in person? Government advice is that where remote working can be maintained that it should be. It would be difficult to maintain a fully risk assessed environment for in-person meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Learning & Well-being – JF/JC</i> ● <i>Personnel and Training – JBAs</i> ● <i>Finance Premises & General Purposes – SF</i> <p>Q – Is there any additional funding for managing the risks? The Government have said that they will meet additional costs for schools, unless, as an Academy, you are in a surplus position. As we have managed budgets well and are in a surplus position, we will have to absorb those costs.</p> <p>Q – What is the position with the free school meals vouchers? The DfE have said that they will pay for the vouchers, and will not claw back the FSM funding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Appointments & Standards – JF</i> ● <i>Joint Staff & Governors – Meeting held today</i> ● <i>Post 16 - LH</i>
8	<p>Minutes of last meetings – 11 December 2019 - Agreed as correct. 2 April 2020 (Chairs' Meeting) – Agreed as correct</p>
9	<p>Matters Arising and Action List – See Actions Report</p> <p>JBu reiterated the importance that Governors have read Keeping Children Safe in Education and to acknowledge that they have done so.</p>
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Support for Governors – SF queried whether Governors felt they needed any additional support around meeting virtually in this way. Any queries to be e-mailed to SF.</p> <p>New Governors – SF welcomed new Governors and asked for any comments of things that might be helpful. DL to do a safeguarding briefing - LS to arrange</p> <p>Governors recorded their thanks for JBu, SLT and all staff in school</p> <p>JBu thanked Governors for their support.</p> <p>School have arranged for free school meals vouchers to continue over half-term.</p> <p>Have had issues with getting the laptops allocated to us by the DfE. So we have lent out some school laptops. EC has been identifying old desktop computers in school to send to students.</p> <p>Have gifted 38 laptops in total to year 10 students. Gifting 50 old desktops from Charnwood to students with no computer at home.</p> <p>JBu thanked EC for all his support and hard work generally, as well as at this time.</p> <p>Update on the PPE masks that school have been producing. Mr Lawrence started this. SLT and students have been involved in making them. Over 3000 have gone out. The demand is not going away. The gofundme page has now been closed down. We will calculate the material costs and then distribute any remaining money to organisations that requested the PPE.</p>

Meeting closed at 19:35

Next Meeting – Monday 8 June 2020

Signed

Date

Initials: