

**COTHAM SCHOOL**

**Meeting of the Academy Governing Body**

**Wednesday 20 May 2015**

**DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING**

<b>Governors Present:</b>		
Dora Alderson, CG	Sandra Fryer, CG	Malcolm Willis, Headteacher
Jim Bowyer, PG (Chair)	Claire Grocott, PG	David Winter, PG
Ed Carpenter, SG	Jeremy Krause, LA	Andrew Ellis, SG
<b>In Attendance</b> (non-voting)	<b>Apologies</b>	Governors in Post: 16/19
Christine Ansell, Dep. Head KS3	Jo Feather CG	Quorum = 6 (1/3 rounded up)
Geraldine Hill-Male, Dir. Performing Arts	David Yorath CG	AM = Associate Member
Marian Curran, Dir. Post 16	Lesley Spring, PG	CG = Community Governor
Mel Sperring, Business Manager	Helen Gordon, PG	PG = Parent Governor
<b>Absent:</b>	Caroline Francis, SG	SG = Staff Governor
David Brockington, Coop	Svetlana Bajic-Raymond, Dep. Head KS4	SMT = Senior Management Team
Sujitha Subramanian, PG		

Item	Minutes of Meeting
1	<p><b>Welcome, Apologies for Absence, declarations of interest and notification of AOB</b></p> <p>Apologies accepted. No declarations of interest.</p>
2	<p><b>Forum Update</b></p> <p>GHM circulated an update and talked through the key points.</p> <p>Community Film. We still have £1000 from a funding bid. Francis Blagburn has sourced some more funding of at least £8000.</p> <p>There needs to be a discussion about a fundraising strategy, possibly at FPGP. There are some people in the Forum interested in this. Discussion around different ideas. An overall plan / direction is needed rather than piecemeal project by project. There are staff who are experienced in fundraising, but there has not been a specific person responsible for this. It needs to link with the finance department.</p> <p>SF offered to start work on this.</p> <p>Fundraising needs to be linked to our charitable aims.</p>
3	<p><b>Multi Academy Trust</b></p> <p>A report and diagram has been circulated.</p> <p><b>North BrisToL Partnership</b></p> <p>Documents have been circulated. JB and CA have attended this. There is a Memorandum of Understanding that needs to be signed, which entails spending £1000 to employ someone to facilitate the running of the partnership. All members will contribute this, and some money will be provided by Bristol City Council. Responses to this have been positive in other meetings.</p> <p>There is an expectation that academies will not be stand-alone and that schools remaining in LA control will be expected to convert to Academies – either with a sponsor or as a group.</p>

	<p>JB also attended a meeting of the Cooperative Schools Group for Sponsor Academies.</p> <p>We may be in a position where schools want to join with us, as either a sponsor or MAT partner.</p> <p><b>Query re risks of the North BrisToL Partnership – are there any risks other than time and the money?</b> The idea behind the partnership is that, regardless of academy status, schools can be members of this. Schools who become at risk can use the partnership as support. CA feels there is a real strength in the work that the partnership can do. It might also provide opportunities for schools to move into MAT arrangements if that became appropriate.</p> <p>This group has worked well together for a long time, this is formalising and progressing this work for the future.</p> <p>The Commitment is for one year.</p> <p>It is important to know what the tasks will be – this will be an ongoing piece of work.</p> <p><b>Q – Why are Bristol City Council providing money?</b> This will allow school leaders to work together to provide the kind of support they do not have the same capacity to provide.</p> <p>Discussion around how the LA are able to perform their function.</p> <p>Concern expressed that this partnership needs to be a challenging and supportive partnership rather than a, 'cosy' partnership.</p> <p>We need to be aware of possible sources of funding – e.g. would the partnership look at setting up a teaching school within the group in order to access the funding available for this.</p> <p><b>Query re what the Partnership Development Manager role entails</b> – this has not yet been decided.</p> <p>It is important to support the Local Authority in their strategic role.</p> <p><b>Agreed to support the North BrisToL Partnership.</b></p> <p>JB talked through the key points of the paper. Discussion around gaining MAT status, how many schools are needed and potential organisational structure and governance. There was also discussion around the potential risks and fears of other Governing bodies.</p> <p>We need to be ready to take on new schools and becoming a MAT in our own right would put us in a much stronger position.</p> <p>Everyone was asked to write ideas on post-it notes about the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify risks of becoming a MAT</li> <li>• What responsibilities we would be prepared to give up to a Trust Board</li> <li>• How to make it attractive for other schools to join us.</li> </ul> <p>Next step is to form a working group to progress this and bring it back to the next FGB – JB, SF, JK, DA volunteered.</p> <p><b>Action</b> - need to make sure members not present are given the opportunity to be involved.</p> <p><b>Q – What is Jo Butler's take on this?</b> She has been working in a MAT and is happy to do this.</p> <p>Suggested to bring in an advisor who has experience in this area. MS has information from a presentation about converting to a MAT which she will circulate.</p> <p>It will need to be a Cooperative MAT. How Forums fit in to governance will need to be considered.</p> <p><b>Agreed to ask the working group to report back to the next FGB with proposals for the formation of a Multi Academy Trust.</b></p>
4	<p><b>Forum Development Support Worker</b></p> <p>A Job Description and report have been circulated.</p> <p>This is proposed to be a fixed term appointment for one year.</p> <p>The job role needs to be evaluated. Discussion around potential costs and implications.</p>

	<p><b>Q – Who would line manage this post?</b> That would be a decision for Jo.</p> <p>Agreed to add a line to the JD to cover the work GHM does with the Coop working group.</p> <p>Agreed to get the post evaluated and discuss financial implications at FPGP.</p>
5	<p><b>Skills Audit</b> - previous audits were handed out and members asked to update them or complete new ones and return to Leanne.</p>
6	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>The report was circulated before the meeting. MW talked through the key items.</p> <p>The school has achieved the Employability Charter Mark. This is a new are of strength for the school. Governors thanked Thelma for her work on this.</p> <p><b>Q – Are all the attendance figures percentages?</b> Yes. Year 10 is the lowest and has included a few children who have had particularly poor attendance who have not responded to a variety of attempts to improve this. The figures compare well nationally.</p> <p><b>Q – Could all the figures for high level sanctions be percentages for ease of understanding?</b> Yes, MW will do this for future reports.</p> <p><b>Q – How does the number of Permanent Exclusions compare to other Bristol schools?</b> It is low in comparison. Fixed term exclusions are relatively high in comparison, but are reducing through the use of other sanctions.</p>
7	<p><b>Committee and other Reports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Learning &amp; Well-being – CG</i> Minutes have been circulated. CG summarised the discussions. Query re school Counsellor – JB fed back to the Forum that there was no budget for the post. The Forum felt that they had done a great deal of work on this and would have preferred to know the budget situation before doing this work. There is a need to share with the Forum what the needs and provisions are and the relative costs and pressures on the budget.</li> <li>• <i>Personnel and Training – DA</i> Minutes have been circulated. DA summarised the discussions. Clarified that we are <u>not</u> proposing to change the redundancy policy because we are planning to make redundancies, but because we need to consider it early and ensure it is up to date. MW will begin the consultation and will talk to staff in order to put it into context before starting the formal consultation. It is important that this is not something Jo has to do as soon as she arrives. Discussion about coordinating with other schools and how this would assist in consultations with the Unions. MW to follow up with MS. Need to be clear that, if we were to find ourselves in a position where redundancies are needed, we have a duty to ensure that every other option is explored and that redundancy is a last resort. <b>Q – Has the change management policy been reviewed recently?</b> Yes, within the last year.</li> <li>• <i>Finance Premises &amp; General Purposes – SF</i> Minutes from have been circulated. SF summarised the discussions. The committee formally recommended to FGB not to continue with the classroom development project. <b>Q – Are we applying the living wage?</b> Yes we are. We are facing some hard decisions about how we spend money and balance budgets. We may not save money by being part of a MAT. We need a clear 3-5 year plan of actions and then work out how this could be funded. MS has a useful tool for testing different options.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Q – Without the classroom build, we will now have a larger amount in reserves, how will this be used?</b> There is a list of potential projects and work that is needed.</p> <p>MW updated around the accommodation. The timetable is almost finished. Once this is done, the rooming needs to be added in. We will be using more of the science spaces and other spaces. Some of the core subjects will be taught in more classrooms than before – this will impact the quality of teaching, student behaviour and create additional pressure on teachers. If a further classroom is required, we will use one of the drama spaces or the recycle room.</p> <p>Jo wants to look at the curriculum and groupings when she arrives, which will impact on this.</p> <p>The conversion of a classroom to a computer room is definitely not going ahead.</p> <p>There is a further piece of work to be done around the best use of spaces.</p> <p>The school will reach the admission PAN for Years 7 to 11 and Post-16 often go over PAN. Discussion around the possible number of extra school spaces that will be needed in the coming years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Audit Committee – DW</i> Minutes have been circulated. DW summarised the discussions. Issues were identified with the school’s ICT policy and it was decided that action should be taken on these before the report was seen by FPGP as the auditors felt there were high risk issues. There is now a programme of action for future audits. Discussion around the auditors’ report. There is a need to be clear about the process for managing and responding to audit reports. Also need a clear procedure to follow in the case that urgent issues are identified that cannot wait for the committee cycle. LS to look into this and check the safeguarding policy. Governors thanked EC for prompt action on the items raised in the report.</li> <li>• <i>Appointments &amp; Standards – have not met. The skills audit will be fed back</i></li> <li>• <i>Admissions Group – met Monday 11</i> CG summarised the discussion. Agreed to look at consulting about giving priority to the children of staff and managing mid-year admissions as it would be premature to consider the wider admissions arrangements before the discussion about MAT.  Need to consult between 1 October and 31 January for a period of 8 weeks. Will come to the July FGB with draft documents and a consultation plan for approval to go ahead with the consultation this Autumn. Agreed to feed this back to the Forum.</li> </ul>
8	<b>Minutes of last meeting – 25 March 2015 – Agreed as correct.</b>
9	<b>Matters Arising and Action List - circulated</b>
10	<b>Any Other Business - None</b>

**Meeting closed at 9.45pm**

**Next Meeting – 8 July 2015**

**Signed**

**Date**