

COTHAM SCHOOL

Meeting of the Academy Governing Body

Thursday 31 March 2022. 6pm

Held virtually

MINUTES OF MEETING

Governors Present:		
Dora Alderson, MG	Jo Feather PG	Rebecca Reid, PG
Jack Barber, CG	Sandra Fryer, CG	Emma Smith, CG
Jo Butler, Headteacher	Peter Huckle, MG	Ian Spencer, IS
Jane Chamberlin, PG	Lucy Hunt, MG	Isabel Tobias, MG
In Attendance (non-voting) Ed Carpenter, ASBM Leanne Sowersby, Clerk Richard Storer, PG, observing Sophie Hamilton, PG, observing	Apologies John Bass, CG Chris Reed, Deputy Head Domini Leong, Deputy Head Allison Crossland, SBM Absent: Richard Puttick, PG Fatima Ali, CG	Governors in Post: 16/20 Quorum = 6 (1/3 rounded up) MG = Member Appointed Governor CG = Co-opted Governor PG = Parent Governor SLT = Senior Leadership Team

Item	Minutes of Meeting
1	Welcome, Apologies for Absence, declarations of interest and notification of AOB Apologies accepted. No declarations of interest.
2	Headteacher's Report JBU talked through the key points. Q – Noted details of Post-16 admission numbers, do we have any numbers for Year 7? We have 243 places and 243 will be offered. We are always over-subscribed, but do have some movement, as students move to the independent sector and parents exercise their right to appeal. Confident we will be full in September, but cannot say where those students will be from until the LA have completed the appeals process. We are one of few schools for whom the LA manages the appeals process, as we feel this is the most equitable and transparent way to manage this. Post 16 numbers are very healthy. Have previously struggled to have 200. It is partially reflective of the fact that there is a bulge of students in the city, but also of the excellent provision. Q – Does the staff survey happen every year, and are there different responses due to Covid? Have not surveyed staff for a while, have had feedback from the NEU around some of their surveys. Will do a big staff survey again this year. Are looking at an external company to administer it. Over the last few years, surveys have focused on Covid. Q – The Cyber Essentials certificate – will re-application be another big job? We had applied before 1 March, since when the standards have changed, so when we reapply, we will have to meet the new standard, which will involve significant additional work. Q – Could parents see the individual usage of their children on digital platforms? JBU will take that back. Some platforms do offer that level of data, which could be shared. Parents can log into google classroom to see what their children have been doing. This is a standing item in the weekly mailing to parents. Q – Where does the lettings income come from for Stoke Lodge? Are some of the potential new hirers for Stoke Lodge? The lettings have grown a lot since ASBM took it on. The main school

	<p>is open from 7am to 10.30pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am to 5.30pm on Saturday. Outside of those times, most of the major facilities are hired out (sports hall, dance studio, main hall, lower dining hall, AWP and MUGA in summer) and conversations are ongoing with potential other hirers.</p> <p>Stoke Lodge hiring tends to be local sports clubs, such as Cotham Tigers (all currently primary age, but expanding to Years 7 & 8) and seven local football clubs (which is seasonal). Stoke Bishop cricket club are also looking to use the space in the summer months.</p> <p>Q – On the digital learning strategy presentation, could have mentioned Governors’ digital engagement. Would also have liked some information about digital exclusion – where are we with tackling this? ASBM has discussed the digital strategy recently. Has re-polled the whole school at the start of the academic year – as far as we are aware, every student that needs a device at home has had one provided by the school. Now believe every student has internet access and the ability to access their work at home at this time. This is kept under review.</p> <p>JBu thanked the senior team for their contributions and ASBM for the work on the premises.</p>
3	<p>Governor Conference</p> <p>NGA vision and strategy morning</p> <p>This has been delayed on order to bring in someone from the National Governance Association to facilitate resetting the overarching strategy for the school, getting up to speed on the national context and be clear how that links through into school delivery.</p> <p>Date to be Saturday 14 May, 9am to 1pm.</p> <p>A planning meeting will be set up with the NGA as soon as possible.</p> <p>Will be useful to discuss what it means now that we have moved away from being a cooperative school, as well as the educational landscape, including the White Paper etc.</p> <p>Discussion around some of the issues raised in the White Paper. JBu will share some briefing slides on the White Paper and a summary of the SEND Green Paper.</p> <p>The conference will be in school and will aim to incorporate an opportunity to walk around the site.</p> <p>Governance Audit May 2022</p> <p>This will look at Governance structures and processes from a compliance perspective. This will be conducted by Bristol City Council’s Audit Services and will look to ensure that governance is compliant with requirements and effective in its oversight of the Trust’s activities as per the Academies Trust Handbook and the Governance Handbook. They will look at: meetings and reporting; the scheme of delegation; committees and how they function; the audit committee and compliance with the ATH requirements; senior leadership structure including governance, register of Members’ and trustees’ interests; clerking, agendas, papers and minutes; and openness and transparency.</p> <p>Governance review</p> <p>This is likely to be postponed into the 2022-23 academic year. There was a review completed by the NGA some years ago. This is a much softer audit which will look at some similar aspects, but also other aspects of governance. The BCC audit will take place in May, it will take some time to report back on that and then will need time to digest it and put any actions into place during terms one and two. Would be sensible to consider this review in January (term 3).</p>
4	<p>Risk Register</p> <p>The register has not been included with the papers. There are very few changes.</p> <p>Risk Register to be uploaded.</p>
5	<p>Policy Approval Process</p> <p>JBu talked through the key points. This has been approved by FPGP.</p> <p>Q – Would the number required to approve a policy be 50% of the quorum of the committee? LS to check this.</p> <p>Q – Could there be further clarification on what constitutes substantial changes? LS to revisit the policy and post on GovernorHub for approval.</p>

	Discussion around the need to ensure that new governors are trained around using the IT systems and regularly logging in to email etc.
6	School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool Checklist Governors noted that they have received and read this, and that it has been completed and submitted, dated 10 March.
7	Committee and other Reports Minutes from all committees have been circulated. Chairs gave brief overviews. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Learning & Well-being – JF/JC</i> Q – What happens to free school meals students when school is closed to some year groups? We did not meet all the free school meal entitlements on those days. We had trouble providing meals on those days due to staff shortages. There were vouchers available. Will also be providing vouchers over the Easter holiday. Discussion around the results of the mocks and noted that staff are going above and beyond to provide revision sessions. ● <i>Personnel and Training – IT</i> ● <i>Finance Premises & General Purposes – RR</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - January Budget re-forecast - Financial Procedures Policy ● <i>Appointments & Standards – JF</i> ● <i>Joint Staff & Governors – SF</i> – No meeting since last FGB. Would be useful for governors to express interest in attending this. ● <i>Post 16 - LH</i>
8	Minutes of last meetings – 9 December 2021 - Agreed as correct.
9	Matters Arising and Action List – See Actions Report
10	Any Other Business Q – When are dates for next year likely to be available? LS to look at this. Discussion around the ongoing use of virtual meetings. Hope to hold the next FGB in-person. Q – Could meetings be done in a hybrid way? We do have the tech to do this, but it does not work particularly well for those joining remotely. But governors could join remotely if they are unable to attend in person. Congratulated LH on being one of Bristol’s 100 most influential women.

Meeting closed at 19:35

Next Meeting – Thursday 7 July 2022