

COTHAM SCHOOL

**Extraordinary Meeting of the Academy Governing Body to consider possible
classroom extension and increase of PAN**

Monday 9 January 2017

MINUTES OF MEETING

Governors Present:		
Dora Alderson, CG	David Brockington, Coop	Sandra Fryer, CG
John Bass, PG	Jo Butler, Headteacher	Claire Grocott, PG
Jim Bowyer, PG (Chair)	Gareth Edmunds, PG	Jeremy Krause, LA
Paula Bradshaw, PG	Jo Feather CG	David Winter, PG
In Attendance (non-voting) Leanne Sowersby, Clerk Mel Sperring, Business Manager	Apologies	Governors in Post: 16/19 Quorum = 6 (1/3 rounded up)

Minutes of Meeting

Reports were circulated before the meeting.

JBu talked through her report and highlighted the comparison between Cotham and Drayton Manor School.

MS talked through the financial impact. Feels that it would be a very positive move for the school in terms of the budget and financial impact.

JBu commented that we have already planned an all-weather pitch, which will help with movement of students around the school. There has been a significant improvement in students' behaviour – are now able to open the hall where students will sit and eat with minimal supervision. Need the improvements to the dining space now, as this is creating problems currently. Would also like to create additional covered space.

Working with the LA has advantages in terms of looking at traffic management and the possibility of creating additional parking in Hartfield Avenue.

Q - Does the model assume the maximum funding cut that we could have? Yes, it assumes the maximum reduction in budget. The new funding formula will hit Cotham hard. Projected figures showed a loss of 2.9%, which will be limited to 1.5% by the minimum funding guarantee.

This proposal has not been discussed at FPGP.

Need to be careful about the financial vs strategic approach.

Concern about the projected number of additional staff.

Concerns about whether the proposed solution would easily gain planning permission.

Redland Green are expanding to 10 forms of entry. In the North Bristol Post-16, Cotham is now the provider of the lower number of students where it was previously higher.

Need to be clear that the opportunity to have this growth funded by the LA is there now and will not be available in the future. Would need to move quickly.

Need to be aware of developments locally in terms of MAT formation and the aims of Government in terms of the way they would like MATs to be formed.

Need to decide, in principle, whether we want to expand or not, and can then move on to the detail and working in partnership with the LA.

There is currently a surplus of hours in the staffing budget. Some of this is due to the Post-16 curriculum having been completely driven by student choice, leading to some very small courses with staffing fitting around that. This has led to A-Level teachers with hours to spare. They are redeployed, but this is not always easy to plan effectively.

Q - Do changes in Post-16 need to be agreed with Redland Green? They need to be made across the centre. RGS need to make economies and the Heads have agreed that these steps are necessary to ensure the financial security of the centre.

C - We would need written commitment from the LA about hoped for improvements. We have been very clear that dining area improvement would be part of the deal.

Concerns expressed about the capital costs and whether the funding would cover the costs. Discussion around this.

The budget shown in the report does not detail all income. This covers things like catering income, school trip income, facilities hire etc.

Q - If there is currently not enough space in the dining provision, how is that impacted by the proposals? The extra space that would be created will almost double the space we have. Are asking for two serving areas, so that they could be zoned by year / key stage and would allow more variety of food to be served. Moving the covered area to the play area will allow that area to be used for more of the year and will prevent students in the current canopy area blocking a thoroughfare. The dining space was not upgraded with the last expansion.

Q – What are the criteria for deciding which Post-16 subjects are not offered? Where numbers are very small, for example some History courses are so small that we cannot justify teaching staff time on them. MS has researched that number needed for a viable group, and it is around 24. Some subjects are teaching at this level already, but others have very few students. Need to balance protecting the minority subjects with maintaining viability. We do subsidise the Post-16 curriculum. Decisions are based on historical trends and numbers.

Q – Are we seeing some arts / performing arts squeezed out in favour of more STEM subjects? Languages is an example where it is difficult – there are very few students. Still offer Textiles, Fine Art and other art subjects, but are having to alternate teaching of year groups between schools. This can lead to tensions in terms of which school should offer subjects. Will be running Music and Drama. Will be introducing a level 3 BTEC in Performing Arts. Cotham students are not taking up A-level courses in Music and Dance. Are hoping that the BTEC will attract more students.

Although we are moving funding from Post-16, and increase in PAN would perhaps bring that back.

Q – How many applications are there for this year's Year 7? There are about 50 more applications where Cotham was first choice – there are more first choice applications than there are places. There are also more second choice applications.

Concern expressed that the build project will not be in place in time for the new class in 2018, especially in terms of planning permission.

Concern expressed around the playing fields issue – this is a significant risk.

By agreeing in principle to expand, we can start to have the firm negotiations for this. In principle agreement should be subject to certain issues being resolved, such as access to Stoke Lodge, as well as that the financial input will be fixed.

Q – Could the LA ask for an increase of two classes? That would not be viable without a new site and the LA cannot make us do that. Need to be clear that the agreement would be for one form only.

JBu explained what is likely to happen at Schools' Forum. This is where funding decisions are agreed. DY has contacted the Schools' Forum to add an amendment so that secondary growth funding will be formalised in their documentation. Would be very useful if JBu could attend that meeting tomorrow with an in principle decision.

Expansion might require modernisation of areas like the library The report does not mention ICT – if we move forward, the LA will kit out the classrooms with ICT etc.

Proposal - To approve an increase to the PAN to 9 form entry – carried unanimously.

This is subject to:

- Guarantee re growth funding
- Assurance that the LA will work with us on playing field provision and ensuring that strategic development of the site resolves current issues.
- Classrooms will be to the national standard.