

**COTHAM SCHOOL**

**Meeting of the Academy Governing Body**

**Wednesday 13 September 2017**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

<b>Governors Present:</b>		
Massimo Bonaddio, CG	Ed Carpenter, SG	Sandra Fryer, Co-opted
Jim Bowyer, Co-opted (Chair)	Gareth Edmunds, PG	Claire Grocott, PG
Paula Bradshaw, PG	Jo Feather CG	Hannah Russell, CG
David Brockington, Coop		David Winter, PG
Jo Butler, Headteacher		David Yorath CG
<b>In Attendance</b> (non-voting)	<b>Apologies</b>	Governors in Post: 18/19
Suzanne Priest, Business Manager	Dora Alderson, CG	Quorum = 6 (1/3 rounded up)
Svetlana Bajic-Raymond, Senior Deputy Headteacher	Jeremy Krause, LA	AM = Associate Member
	John Bass, PG	CG = Community Governor
	Andrew Ellis, SG	PG = Parent Governor
	<b>Absent:</b>	SG = Staff Governor
	Delroy Hibbert, CG	SMT = Senior Management Team

<b>Item</b>	<b>Minutes of Meeting</b>
1	<b>Welcome, Apologies for Absence, declarations of interest and notification of AOB</b> JBo introduced SP. SP gave some background about herself. Everyone introduced themselves. Apologies accepted.
2	<b>Elections</b> Chair & VC not included as JBo and SF were co-opted to maintain consistency of leadership, in July. <b>Committee Chairs:</b> Learning and Wellbeing – Claire Grocott proposed by DY, seconded DW, elected unopposed Finance, Premises and General Purposes – Sandra Fryer proposed by DY, seconded DW, elected unopposed Personnel and Training – Dora Alderson, proposed JBo, seconded DB, elected unopposed Appointments and Standards – Jeremy Krause, proposed by DY, seconded DB, elected unopposed Appeals - Dora Alderson, proposed PB, seconded CG, elected unopposed There is a need to work on succession planning. Committees are asked to select a vice chair who has not previously served as a chair and may be willing to consider becoming a chair in future.
3	<b>Review &amp; sign Code of Practice</b> – LS handed out copies to be signed, everyone was asked to return signed copies to LS. <b>Review &amp; sign Declarations of Interest</b> - LS handed out copies to be signed, everyone was asked to return signed copies to LS.

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### **MAT Update**

A briefing paper was sent out before the meeting. JBo talked through the key issues. The key issue was the cost of joining a MAT and the likelihood that redundancies would be required to meet the 5% top slice to be paid into a MAT.

Discussion around what would be an acceptable cost level. This is something that we need to agree as a Governing Body.

SP has undertaken an informal due diligence and felt that there is very little that is viable within the current school budget. Would currently advise not to consider joining a MAT, at least partially until any reorganisation has been undertaken, which has a three year restriction on savings being shown.

Governors thanked SP for her work on this.

**Query about the reorganisation** – this has been discussed at the Personnel and Training committee, and involves reorganising the staffing, particularly middle management. This aims to avoid redundancies while making significant savings, but savings will not be evident for three years as there is three years' salary protection for redeployed staff.

**Q – Why have we not previously discussed being unable to afford to join a MAT?** If we had been the lead school in forming a MAT, then we would not have been subject to a top-slice of our budget and the situation would have been different.

There is still work to be done around how much can be saved by joining a MAT and how much we can afford as a budget top-slice without redundancies.

**Q – To what extent do the costs relate to TiLA or to any MAT?** This would refer to any MAT.

Feeling that there needs to be a very clear reasoning for why we are unable to afford to join a MAT.

It would be useful to revisit the options available, with a detailed financial, legal and educational impact analysis.

Savings would not be seen immediately, or even quickly. This year's budget does not have an amount built in to accommodate a payment to a MAT.

Discussion around communication from the Governing Body to the Forum and staff.

JBu has been reflecting over the summer. There was a great deal of pressure from the Regional Schools Commissioner, who has now left. There now seems to be less pressure.

Results have held up despite uncertainty. Progress 8 is not quite where we would like, but do not feel we will be below the threshold for pupil premium students. JBu feels very strongly that the school, and results, are improving.

**Q – What is the trigger to be forced into a MAT?** Going into a category – into requires improvement / special measures. Being assessed as, 'requires improvement' does not necessarily mean being pushed to be sponsored.

Can continue to work collaboratively with a number of schools in the city.

**Q – When are Ofsted likely to inspect?** As an outstanding school, we are currently exempt – if our data falls below a certain threshold, it could trigger an inspection. Until we know the national data, we cannot be sure whether we will fall below this level, but feel it is unlikely.

The National Schools Commissioner has commented that he wishes to encourage Associate Partners of MATs. This could potentially be explored with the RSC.

JBu would still like to work with other schools, including TiLA schools. Will look to formalise this more and report to Governors in more detail.

Discussion around collaborative working among schools.

Feeling that there is a need to a very clear rationale and justification for the decision with external validation. Discussion around this and whether the expertise exists within the school and Governing Body. Feeling that it would not be appropriate to spend further money on external work on this at this time.

	<p>Discussion around how and when to move this forward, considering other pressure on senior leaders.</p> <p><i>SBR joined the meeting</i></p> <p>Further discussion led to Governors agreeing that they could not justify joining a MAT if it resulted in redundancies having to be made beyond those linked to increased cost effectiveness and the improved running of Cotham.</p> <p><b>Agreed not to sign the Memorandum of Understanding with TiLA.</b></p> <p><b>Working party to be formed to progress this.</b> Need to have a clear remit and purpose for the group. This will involve coming up with the questions that need to be asked of a MAT. JBo to lead. Will need to bear in mind that the cooperative status of the school could still be a stumbling block.</p>
4	<p><b>Safeguarding Briefing</b> – DL gave a briefing. <b>Absent Governors to read the slides.</b></p> <p><i>SP left the meeting</i></p> <p><i>PB left the meeting</i></p>
6	<p><b>Expansion Update</b></p> <p>SF gave an update. The planning update has been submitted. Will go to committee in October. There is a stakeholder meeting on Monday.</p> <p><b>Q – If we do not get planning permission, will we not expand to 9 form intake?</b> We cannot expand without the new classrooms. Are working with the Council. Discussion around this.</p>
7	<p><b>Headteacher’s Report</b></p> <p><b>Exam Results</b></p> <p>SBR talked through the key points. These will be discussed in more detail at Learning &amp; Wellbeing and at the Governor Away Day in November, when Progress 8 will be available.</p> <p>Request for cohort numbers to be included for the next report to Learning &amp; Wellbeing.</p> <p><b>Strategic and Improvement Plan/Priorities</b></p> <p>JBu talked through the key points. These will be discussed in more detail at the Governor Away Day in November. Will also discuss how this can be reviewed.</p> <p>Have now introduced non-negotiables around teaching and learning. There have been issues with a lack of consistency. All quality assurance processes have been reviewed and refined.</p>
8	<p><b>Review Committee Structures, Membership and Terms of Reference</b></p> <p><b>All Governors to contact LS if there are any errors in the committee membership list. Committees to review terms of reference and to be put into the same format as the more recent ones.</b></p> <p><b>Link Governors</b> – Governors to volunteer to be Link Governors. JBo will talk to individual Governors.</p>
9	<p><b>Review delegation of functions</b></p> <p><b>JBo and LS to review and bring back to the December meeting.</b></p>
10	<p><b>Complaints Report</b></p> <p>To add whether timescales are met in terms of resolving complaints. Also add outcomes in terms of changes to procedures etc.</p>
11	<p><b>Minutes of last meetings – 12 July 2017 – Agreed as correct.</b></p>
12	<p><b>Matters Arising and Action List - See Actions Report</b></p>

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**Any Other Business**

**JSGC** – the first meeting of this on 16 October at 2.05pm. LS to send out a message to ask for volunteers. DY will be FPGP member. JBU suggested that employees chair the first meeting.

**Forum elections** – there need to be elections for staff reps and parent reps. LS to coordinate.

**Transition from Year 12 to 13** – request to discuss this at Learning & Wellbeing – why students chose to leave after year 12.

DB has contributed to a book about a proposed new model for Ofsted inspection – appreciative enquiry.

SF thanked everyone for their contributions to MS' leaving gift.

**Meeting closed at**

**Next Meeting –**

**Signed**

**Date**