

COTHAM SCHOOL

Meeting of the Academy Governing Body

Wednesday 7 December

MINUTES OF MEETING

Governors Present:		
Dora Alderson, CG	Jo Butler, Headteacher	Delroy Hibbert, CG
John Bass, PG	Andrew Ellis, SG	Jeremy Krause, LA
Jim Bowyer, PG (Chair)	Jo Feather CG	David Winter, PG
Paula Bradshaw, PG	Claire Grocott, PG	David Yorath CG
David Brockington, Coop		
In Attendance (non-voting) Svetlana Bajic-Raymond Domini Leong Marian Curran, Dir. Post 16	Apologies Ed Carpenter, SG Sandra Fryer, CG Absent:	Governors in Post: 15/19 Quorum = 5 (1/3 rounded up) 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 Apologies accepted.
2	Election of Chairs Chair - Jim Bowyer – elected by acclaim Vice Chair – Sandra Fryer – elected unopposed Learning & Wellbeing – Claire Grocott – elected unopposed Personnel & Training – Dora Alderson - elected unopposed Finance, Premises & General Purposes – Sandra Fryer – elected unopposed Dave Brockington to continue as lead for liaising with the Forum Jeremy Krause to continue as Chair for Appointments & Standards David Yorath was appointed as Post-16 Link Governor.
3	Annual Report and Accounts This was approved at FPGP and is recommended for approval by the Full Governing Body. Each committee does not meet 6 times per year – this needs to be changed. AGM to be arranged after the next FGB, this is still within the required 15 months since the last AGM. JBo thanked MS and her team for a very good report from the auditors.
4	SEND Information Report The report was circulated before the meeting, DL talked through the key points. There is an increasing number of children with additional needs, many of whom are classified as, 'k' which means there is no Educational Health & Care Plan (EHCP) and no additional funding.

	<p>There is a small number where the EHCP is out of date. To review this is a very large job. Applications for top-up funding are now less likely to be successful.</p> <p>There is an increasing number of Somali students with additional needs. Bristol University has published research showing that there is an increased incidence of autism among the Somali community in Bristol.</p> <p>There is a student with physical needs that are currently manageable, but may not continue to be so. The number of SEN students being excluded will have reduced this year, due to preventative measures like the earlier identification of SEN and rapid referrals to relevant agencies and alternative management of school sanctions for SEN students, such as breaking up time in separated learning. JBU thanked DL for her work, having taken on oversight of this area and made very good progress.</p> <p>Discussion around the research on the Somali community. The research report shows a correlation but does not give enough information to find reasons. There is a higher incidence of students on the ASD spectrum in the Somali community within school. There is possibly some work to do with Somali parents around the stigma – there is no word for, ‘autism’ in the Somali language. Categorisation and diagnosis is being triggered by schools who are spotting the indicators and making referrals. This means diagnosis is often later in life than for non-Somali students. There is anecdotal evidence that Bristol special schools have a good reputation for teaching students with special needs in migrant communities across Europe. Governors are aware of the importance of fully understanding research reports before making generalisations. There is a need for the school to work more with the parents as support is increasingly unavailable from other avenues.</p> <p>Are planning to hold some information evenings around different types of SEN and are also considering how to go out into the community. The SENCO is liaising with other schools.</p> <p><i>Andrew Ellis arrived</i></p>
5	<p>Governor Away Day</p> <p>Agreed date of Saturday 18 March, 9am to 1pm.</p> <p>JK proposed that diversity should be an agenda item for the day.</p> <p>Agreed to hold the day in the library. LS to book in with site team.</p>
6	<p>Headteacher’s Report</p> <p>The report was circulated before the meeting. JBU highlighted key points.</p> <p>Moving the student exit to the back of the building has been positive overall. Need to ask the Council to add zig-zag lines around the gate. Discussion around the parking issues. Action JBU</p> <p>Governors thanked staff for their work in the community.</p> <p>The all-weather pitch was considered as part of a new classroom build. The Local Authority have agreed to fund a 12 classroom block if Cotham contribute £500,000 and take an additional form of entry.</p> <p>This will also allow for an extension of the dining area and the all-weather pitch. There will also be some additional funding for the student growth, which will help the school to avoid redundancies.</p> <p>There is a great deal of pressure on the budget, with Cotham standing to potentially lose £700,000 in the new funding arrangements.</p> <p>Will need to reduce the Post-16 curriculum offer and make classes bigger, as will Redland Green. This will bring teaching hours back into the curriculum that can help with teaching the new intake. It will also free up classroom space.</p> <p>Query whether the additional space will still be needed and whether the additional form of entry will create the same issues later on. There will still be a need for additional space. There is currently no space, for example, to do additional work with SEN students, there is significant movement of staff around the site to deliver lessons. There are currently staff who have to teach in 10 different classrooms over the course of a week.</p>

	<p>Q – Is there a drop in demand for Post-16 subjects? Students will now generally be choosing three subjects rather than 4. The curriculum nationally is becoming narrower. Are still trying to ensure breadth and the vocational offer but will need to make difficult decisions around the less popular subjects. There has been no reduction in the number of students applying.</p> <p>The majority of students who start on four subjects then drop one, due to the changing curriculum. Are moving towards a model where the curriculum is planned on the basis of the number of classes to be put on and how many teachers can be afforded.</p> <p>Concern expressed about the building becoming more crowded and the impact of this on managing the school and students moving around. The new build will be on the mound and will be approximately in line with the science block. There is an access point and utilities are already available. Hope to keep the disruption to a minimum. The school is quite calm now</p> <p>Q – Has this decision been made? The school was approached a year ago to increase intake and building some additional classroom space was previously discussed and agreed at FPGP. This needs to be decided quite quickly as the LA needs to ensure enough yr7 places in sept 2018.</p> <p>There are provisional plans for a modular build.</p> <p>The decision on increasing the PAN is still to be made by FGB. The LA has agreed the funding and will need FGB to confirm agreement very quickly.</p> <p>The extra intake would be Sep 2018 entry. There is a dire need for school places and many schools are doing their bit to help address this. If we do not take this opportunity for the additional funding, there will not be additional funding available.</p> <p>We planned to have four additional classrooms built two years ago, we put this on hold, it is now clear that these 4 classrooms are required.</p> <p>Request to create covered outdoor spaces for students as part of this, such as an additional covered walkway.</p> <p>Are going ahead with the MUGA / all-weather pitch, space for children to play is needed now. Planning permission has been granted.</p> <p>There have been discussions re the use of Hartfield Avenue as Staff parking with BCC going back to the BSF project. These should be returned to as part of this project as it would free up the current car park for student use as additional outdoor space.</p> <p>Agreed to hold an extraordinary meeting where Governors can see plans etc.</p> <p>The new build and the changes to Post-16 should provide enough space for future needs.</p> <p>Question about Stoke Lodge</p> <p>The inspector has ruled that the TVG should not go ahead. The Greens committee is meeting to consider the inspector's report next week. The TVG applicants are requesting a deferment to place a new TVG application, school will be presenting an argument against this. Have made a planning application for fencing which has had 80 objections. Governors were asked to put in support for the application. Have also made a Condition Improvement Fund bid to improve the facilities.</p> <p>Would like to negotiate shared access with the local community but do not want dogs on the playing field area. It would also be useful if Governors are able to attend the meeting.</p> <p>Actions: JBo to write to PROWG committee, Governors to encourage responses to planning application.</p> <p><i>DH left the meeting</i></p>
7	<p>Joint Governors and Staff Committee</p> <p>This is a proposal to improve workforce engagement and support. Draft terms of reference for the committee will be distributed. JBu talked through the main points.</p>

	<p>JBu already meets with staff in this way, this would be a more formal way of doing this. The professional associations are happy with the proposal.</p> <p>Concern expressed that this creates a more operational role for the Governing Body and the possibility of providing opportunities for staff to create difficulties between Governors and SLT. Discussion around the role of Governors on this committee.</p> <p>Q – Would staff be discouraged from saying what they want to say? JBu does not think so.</p> <p>Further discussion around how this might work. Governors involved would need a briefing from JBu. The committee would report to FGB. Agreed to go ahead.</p> <p>JBu and DY to work on this further.</p>
8	<p>Committee and other Reports</p> <p>Minutes were circulated before the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning & Well-Being • Personnel & Training <p><i>Staff Code of Conduct for approval</i> – Staff name to be removed, approved with that change</p> <p><i>Disciplinary Policy for approval</i> – Policy approved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance, Property & General Purposes (Inc. H&S) <p><i>ICT Investment Plan</i></p> <p>LS read a message from EC:</p> <p>“In the paper which went to FPGP, the request was made using ball-park figures and was estimated at £256,300.00 which was approved and to go to FGB.</p> <p>We have now at least three quotes back for every item in the plan - These have been obtained by contacting our regular suppliers as well as using the CPC framework as mentioned by Mel in FPGP. I have also contacted Lombard and Softcat as requested by Paula. The total requested spend from accurate quotations is now down to £176,218.55</p> <p>A number of these quotes are only valid until the end of this year and a number of suppliers are saying that manufacturers have price increases planned for 1st January 2017 - So if there is a discussion around whether or not to approve the spend, it may be worth mentioning that if it is not approved now that the cost is only likely to rise.”</p> <p>Governors thanked EC for his work on this.</p> <p>Approved Investment Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coop Working Group – has not met • Appointments and Standards <p>Votes for the Parent Governor election will be counted at the end of this week.</p> <p>LS and AE are drafting a message for staff. LS to forward a draft to JBo to look at.</p> <p>Community Governor vacancies – there are potentially three candidates. Need to take this back to the Forum. Also need to let the other parents know that they could potentially change constituency once outcome of the parent election is known. Could also decide to co-opt.</p> <p>Discussion around recruiting Governors and filling skills gaps. Can ask the Forum to consider the skills we need. Could do this for parents too.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post 16 – DY has volunteered as Link for this

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupil Premium Working Group - The group has met. The website is fully compliant and has been audited.
8	Minutes of last meetings – Agreed as correct.
9	Matters Arising and Action List – See actions list.
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Thelma Wheedon – JK. TW is retiring after many years' service to the school. Suggested Governors write to TW – JBo will write this. Kerry Chester has agreed to step up into the role. Louise Arnold will become the careers assistant.</p> <p>JK complimented the staff on their knowledge and work in this area.</p> <p>MAT Update – Since the extraordinary meeting of Governors, JBo has met with the Chair of Bedminster Down School who have put in an application to become a MAT with two primary schools, and would be happy to work with us to look at how we could form structures for GBs to work together.</p> <p>JBu and JBo have also met with the Head and Chair at Blaise Primary, as well as the RSC. Could talk to primary schools to involve their Governors in working on ways forward.</p> <p>The working group has not yet met. .</p> <p>Q – Were any of the individuals from Prima interested in continuing to be involved? One person was interested. She could be co-opted as a Governor. JBu will make contact.</p> <p>Discussion around the MAT and ways of / possibilities for working with other schools. Discussion around the things that Cotham could offer other schools – could be written up in a, 'prospectus' for other schools.</p> <p>JBu invited Governors to the Christmas lunch on Friday 16 December at 1pm.</p> <p>Agreed to continue with the start time at 6.30pm</p>

Meeting closed at 9.00pm

Next Meeting – Wednesday 5 April 2017

Signed

Date

Initials: