

# Cotham School

## Co-Op Forum

### First Meeting Monday 18 March 2013 at 7.00 p.m. School Library

**Present:**

**Parent Reps:** Dick Willis, Adam Rehin, Julie Nottage, Becky Chapman

**Staff Reps:** Rick Standing, Ross Geoghegan, Katherine Clune, Kate Armstrong, Abbie Allender, Kate Hughes

**Student Reps:** Martyna Czerwinska, Tom Holmes, Izzy Triggs, Louis Egerton, Gabriel Osborne

**Others:** David Yorath (Governor), Malcolm Willis (Headteacher), Marie-Annick Gournet Moore (Partner), Nancy Copplestone (Governor), David Brockington, Geraldine Hill-Male, Heather Marouf (taking minutes)

1.	Terms of reference (DY)	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document, Terms of Reference given out to read at leisure. Attention was drawn to the important item 4, bottom of page 2, Guiding Principles and Values on page 3 – what the forum will be based upon.</li> <li>• Consultative role on Academy Development Plan – everyone happy with driving principles. DY explaining Cotham first of 2 academies to convert to Co-Operative model and want to make it work. No comments. Everyone happy.</li> </ul>	
2.	Forum development update (GHM)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>What we've done so far and what's still to be done</i></b> <p>GHM explaining about different stakeholder groups on the Co-operative Academy Trust map presented to forum. Learners (students) worked hard to bring students on board and run elections – Year reps met today with Dr Willis with discussion items. Good meeting.</p> <p>Student membership is 859. 80% election turnout. New Year 7 students and parents to sign up as they approach the start of Yr. 7.</p> <p>Staff group – 139 staff members. Election - 80% turn out. Delighted.</p> <p>Parents and carers. Membership nearly 300. 4 came forward for election in February. Not enough for an election. Appendix 1 shows composition of forum – there should be 12 students, 12 parents and 12 staff. Encourage parent group to grow towards next elections in the autumn and encourage diversity and breadth.</p> </li> <li>• <b><i>Development of community and alumni constituencies</i></b> <p>In the summer move on to local community individuals. Nancy has done preparatory work and advising that in the Articles of Association – community definition is within 3 miles of school. Further work needed on fine tuning.</p> <p>Look at long list of organisations of people who use school i.e. health authorities and universities – look at who has biggest impact on education on school as well as geographical location.</p> <p>. Colston's Primary School and Bristol Old Vic put forward as possible examples of community organisations.</p> </li> </ul>	

	<p>Invite local community neighbours such as churches to become members then hold an election. The distinction between community members and community organisations was made.</p> <p>Alumni. Ex-students go back over 60 years. An extensive piece of work to be done. They are very keen to be more closely informed about and involved with the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>How do we develop a wider representation in the parent membership</b></li> </ul> <p>Questions: <b>Parents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we develop the group whilst not drowning people in e-mails?</li> <li>• How do we get more parents on board?</li> <li>• How to encourage more parents from all over the school to become involved?</li> <li>• How will we communicate within this body? E-mail? <b>DY</b> – Need an area on school website. Make it as inclusive as possible. 30 different languages spoken in school. 80% have access to e-mail. Start a programme of face to face contact – start with year 7. Look at year 7 and try and find a way to get in touch with them. Have a succinct description of what it means to be on the forum.</li> <li>• Alumni debate in City Hall - David Garmston an ex pupil has lost contact with the school. Professor Higgs? - Big piece of work – how do we do that?  <b>The question was asked about whether this was an open</b>, public meeting and information would be published on the school’s website or should there be a separate website? Agreed that dealings should be public unless a special reason for it to be private. Everything should be as public as it can. Minutes to be on school website. That would be the first step to make it clear to all what we are doing.  Students’ communication – <b>DY</b> - how are you doing this? <b>Students</b> – organised it into sub headings and general items that we needed to address –<b>DY</b> - how do you take it back to your representatives? – Student - will have relatively frequent meetings with tutor reps – a week after meeting feedback and ask them to take notes.  Can staff do something similar?  <b>DY</b> – the guiding principles are helpful but don’t want to be too prescriptive – should not restrict exchanging views.</li> </ul>	
3.	<p><b>Protocols for the work of the Forum (DY)</b></p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chair</b>  Chair of Forum – do you want to elect your own Chair? DY thinks it should be one of the forum to chair the meeting. What process is going to be used to arrive at Chair? Nominations? Difficult to choose chair as they don’t know each other. Suggested an expression of interest in who would want to be a chair before next meeting. We need a vision of where we are going. DY proposing to rotate chair?  <b>Tom</b> – each group should have a main agenda rather than one chair. Each group taking different sections of meeting rather than having one chair.</li> <li>• <b>Support including minutes</b>  Discussed later on under training.</li> <li>• <b>Number and frequency of meetings (including AGM) and quorum</b>  There should be a minimum of 3, one of which is the AGM. Agreed on one every term( 6 a year)</li> </ul>	

- **Agendas**

How are we going to prioritise and discuss? How long will the meeting be? How are you going to agree what is on agenda? **DY** -groups should meet to discuss what items to go on agenda. Have a steering group to do next agenda? One member from each group?

**KC** – can agenda be circulated a few weeks before meeting so that can get feedback from their individual groups? Database of all members held at school Who is responsible on the parents’? – Who is responsible for increasing membership? **DB** – this is an issue for the whole of the group – Getting school represented, class and culture – **Marie- Annick** – cultural diversity – parent – working with staff issues around diversity – chair groups with Bristol City Council. **DY** saying, shall parents meet to discuss how to communicate/increase numbers? **Ross** - Parent issue should be a priority for next meeting as under-representation is a problem. **DY** - 850 student members – where are the parents? Students need to try and get parents represented. **GHM** – family consultation day – letters via tutors – are parents evening an opportunity to give out information? Need to get sales pitch right for parents. **Parent** – Parents need to be aware local authority not giving direction now – tell parents that is their role now – **DY** – that is right –parents will have more representation through the forum. **Parent** - perhaps the parents don’t understand it. Parents need to be informed as to what has happened so far and be part of it. **DY** what has been exciting has been the level of voting for students and staff. 2/3rds of constituencies very interested – we need to send that message across to the parent group. **Parent** – need to communicate transparently to parents.

- **Members and substitutes**

**DY** – substitutes can be nominated for meetings. Does this meeting wish to approve this? **Parent**- It depends on the size of the group – difficult for someone else to step into someone else’s shoes. **Parent** – where representation is not broad or balanced that could work. **DY** – members make effort to attend meetings but can put up a substitute if they cannot make it. **Student** – If a student could not make meeting – they don’t feel they would need a substitute. **DY** – substitute rule therefore only for parents? **DY** - active members be there if not a substitute is acceptable – students don’t need to – staff may feel same? Parents may think they want a substitute.

- **Code of conduct**

**DY** – will look at that with Governors – will bring back next time. **DY** needs to look at how you develop next Agenda – steering group?

Students’ items for agenda? - **Tom** –Split into groups each small sector just focused on sub heading. Tom gave examples of types of issues students raising and voting on. **Parent** – Has the school thought about a yearly charity? There is not much awareness coming home.

**DY** – will work out on next agenda representing the concerns. **Tom** –not sure what to do from here – **DY** – the forum will let you know what it expects from you on any one of those issues. Balance of curriculum an important item to go on agenda. **Parent** – a briefing out to parents? Briefing on curriculum important item on Agenda **DY**

**Staff** – lines of communication within set of members. Separation of teaching

	<p>staff and non-teaching staff? Agreed for some issues.</p> <p><b>DY</b> question for students – Fairtrade? When did that begin 2003/2004 – is it a live concern for students? <b>Tom</b> not sure what talking about – <b>MW</b> – doesn't think it is known. <b>DY</b> – talking about Fairtrade – <b>MW</b>: question to ask head chef when they meet him. <b>MW</b> to ask chef about Fairtrade – where sourcing materials and as a Co-Op it is what should we be doing.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Training (GHM)</b>	
	<p>DY looking to group to identify training needs. <b>David B</b> – talking about Co-Op training. Your Cooperative Trust _Making it work published last week –MW will buy it. DY saying there will be support for the forum as it develops. <b>David B</b> advising that there are 412 co-op schools around country.</p> <p><b>Parent question</b> – is there a current best practice? <b>David B</b> – there is a networking co-operative schools society. The book has lots of pages of best practice. Schools Co-operative Society – helping with schools improvement services which was previously a local authority function. MW saying it would be interesting to visit schools that have recently changed. <b>MW</b> - we are all very ambitious for this group – we should be able to tackle serious, meaty matters of school and not trivia. <b>David B</b> will get sample of schools the co-op college think would be good to visit. MW says visit similar kinds of schools with the diversity of Cotham.</p> <p><b>Student</b> – whilst we can use forum to tackle issues – each school will take a different approach – no-one will have perfected it – very much a work in progress. MW introduced student leadership and allowed them to create their own agenda with no taboos. MW looks to this group to take on serious matters otherwise a waste of time.</p> <p><b>Parent</b> – to what extent will the governing body present issues to forum? <b>DY</b> – there are already some issues to be discussed at forum. Governing body to service the school and to be guided and influenced by forum Governors look to forum for items to be taken back to governing board and leadership team. How to ensure that communication happens? - Good to visit other schools. GHM – allowing the structure and space and facilitating the process Kate – We need effective communication for items prioritised as it comes to forum – report back that it is working. <b>DY</b> – Will look to Co-operative to review and refresh Co-operative development plan. The forum will need to think further ahead i.e. 3 – 4 years – maybe thinking ahead for your sibling – what will the school look like.</p>	<b>MW</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Future Agenda topics/items (DY/MW)</b>	
	<p>Future Agenda? <b>Tom</b> – before we tackle any issues – we need a structure of how the meeting will work and timings.</p> <p><b>DY</b> – Perhaps group would like to meet half an hour before meeting to talk through matters before the formal meeting. – Each group needs to know how long they will have.</p> <p><b>MW</b> – do you want input from school? You decide whether you want MW there – you might want to invite people from school – a curriculum issue – deputy head teachers? Curriculum team leaders? Feedback through MW who can facilitate. <b>Tom</b> – says useful to have MW there – has a good view on how school works.</p> <p><b>DY</b> –first item on agenda election on chair.</p>	

	GHM - dates for next meetings Thursday 16 May and Monday 1 July 2013 7pm	
6.	<b>Anything Else</b>	
	<p><b>Parent</b> – Can we set up an e-mail list just for this group?</p> <p><b>Tom</b> – How long before meeting do we get an agenda out?</p> <p><b>Marie-Annick</b> – Post 16 representations? <b>GHM</b> – rolling through in September.</p> <p><b>Ross</b> – before we meet – fixed agenda item – those forms of communication.</p>	