



Cotham Co-operative Academy Forum
 Wednesday 25 January 2017, 7-8.30pm
 Library

Minutes

Attendees:

Parent/Carer Reps: Penny Beeston, Emma Gibbins (EG, Chair), Becky Chapman (BC), Henrietta Wilson

Staff Reps:

Community Reps: Ken Smith, Lynda Hay

Student Reps:

Alumni Reps: Jeremy Birch (JBi)

School Governors: Jim Bowyer (JBo), David Winter

Also present: Jo Butler (Headteacher - JBu), Leanne Sowersby (Clerk)

Apologies: Abbie Allender (AA), Louise Arnold, Beth Aiken, Nancy Cobblestone (NC), Mukhtar Ali, Simon Wilks (SW), Jo Eades (JE), Gareth Edmunds (GE), Valerie Aspin,

		Action
1	<p>Welcome to all and apologies - EG welcomed everyone. Everyone introduced themselves. Kerry Chester has now resigned as a Forum Rep.</p>	
	<p>There was an informal discussion about the school's ranking and some of the issues facing the school, in terms of the cohort and the impact of Progress 8 and EBACC.</p> <p>It will be, in the future, more difficult for schools as diverse as Cotham to achieve, 'outstanding' in inspection, under the new measures.</p> <p>Want to ensure that Pupil Premium students make aspirational choices at GCSE.</p> <p>JBu agreed to ask Chris Reed to talk to the Forum about progress measures.</p> <p>Q – How many PP students are EAL etc? There are not many white working class students. PP students are statistically likely to be from BME backgrounds. For the purposes of the measure, all PP students are grouped in one category.</p> <p>JBu would be happy to arrange for curriculum leaders to talk to the Forum about the challenges they are facing and plans for the future.</p>	JBu
4	<p>Minutes from last meeting - Agreed as correct.</p> <p>Matters arising – LH resent the Forum response to the MAT consultation.</p> <p>Co-fund - LA and AA can coordinate getting information to tutor groups and generating ideas etc. LA can organise a student rep – still to be completed.</p>	LA/AA
5	<p>MAT Discussion</p> <p>JBo gave an update. Governors have decided not to progress with the plan to form a MAT with the Prima Trust. The Prima Trust has now been dissolved.</p>	

	<p>Also decided, based on consultation responses, to move forward with creating a MAT using the Cooperative Articles.</p> <p>Have continued to talk to some schools and a Governors' working party have drafted an action plan to be agreed by Governors. This will involve working with schools that want to join with Cotham.</p> <p>There are two issues – Governance and the more operational side; how to Cotham staff work with staff at other schools to improve student outcomes.</p> <p>Once the action plan is agreed by Governors, can begin talking more concretely to other schools.</p> <p>Redland Green have told staff that they are working with Aston Park and other schools to form a MAT. Bedminster Down are doing something similar. JBo has met with the Chair at Bedminster Down to explore the Governing Bodies supporting each-other with this process.</p> <p>Q – How does the funding situation affect which schools we might want to join with? If a school with a surplus joins a school with a budget deficit, the MAT overall would absorb both.</p> <p>Can be difficult to see the benefits of two secondary schools working together. Cotham does not currently have an issue with recruitment, but may in the future and this could support with staff recruitment issues.</p> <p>The Regional Schools Commissioner is looking for secondary schools to work together. She is unlikely to approve new MATs until she has a MAT strategy for the whole region.</p> <p>There is a move to allow schools to leave a MAT if there are not adequate improvements in student outcomes.</p> <p>Would be useful to have some context information of the structure from the DfE down to have a broader understanding of the situation.</p> <p>Could there be a space on the website to keep people up to date on the progress of the MAT work.</p> <p>Governors are trying to get to a point where there is a real logic and business case for a MAT, detailing the benefits and the ways it will improve outcomes for students.</p> <p>The business case needs to support the Governance structure. The structure will be very important in terms of ensuring proper financial controls and other Governance controls.</p> <p>Working in a MAT with feeder primary schools could support the transition from Year 6 to 7.</p> <p>The biggest risk to the school is that students will not as well as hoped and the school will not be in a position to choose the way forward.</p>	
6	<p>Stoke Lodge</p> <p>JBu gave an update.</p> <p>There was a discussion around some of the issues. JBu thanked Forum members for their support.</p>	
	<p>Constituency Updates</p> <p>Parent Constituency - Discussed the website – there is some good feedback from parents, and a few tweaks to be suggested.</p> <p>There is an issue with the contact list – some schools have had issues with ransomware, where hackers have used a virus to access and encrypt school data. They then charge a ransom to get the data back. If people need contact details, they can phone reception or use the info address.</p> <p>A parent was concerned about cold classrooms, this concern was not widely shared among parents.</p> <p>Discussed data protection – whether parent reps could have access to a wider database of parent contacts. Gareth Edmunds has volunteered to administer this.</p> <p>Recruitment is down for the current Year 7, possibly due to the focus on the MAT.</p>	

Discussed fundraising and a desire to re-invent the Coop to be a helpful to the school as possible. May be able to access other expertise among parents.

Parents also discussed representativeness and considered fundraising to support English Language learning.

JBu meets regularly with the Somali community, predominantly women. A meeting before Christmas attracted about 40. Are looking at training some of them as volunteers. It is also useful for them to be seen in school.

The community have also asked for English Language Lessons in the school. JBu would like one of the EAL teachers to work with them. This would incur an additional cost.

They also want basic IT training, such as Google Classroom and spreadsheets etc.

They also want curriculum information with translation. Translating there and then is more useful than translating written information – many of the Mothers do not read Somali.

Are already looking into what schemes and potential funding is available.

Concern expressed that not all parent groups are receiving the same attention. JBu is focussing on the Somali parents in terms of building relationships – many of them do not know the school system and are likely to be pupil premium families. They want to know specific information around their children's schooling. This group is now more comfortable coming into school.

There may be a role for parents building relationships. JBu is open to any ideas for engaging as many families as possible.

Could consider pairing newer or less confident parents with more experienced parents to provide support.

Community Constituency - have not met. LH commented that there are some road closures proposed around the area of Bristol University, which will lead to re-routing some busses, which may affect access to the school.

Feeling that the constituency does not adequately represent the communities in the area. Need to look at recruiting to improve this. The main issues are around the physical impact of the school in the local area.

Could send a communication to members to ask them to invite more members or consider becoming reps. BC could send this if provided with the wording. Could include ways the community could help. To liaise with JBu about what would be appropriate to communicate.

Staff Constituency – No staff reps were present.

Alumni –

There has been one application to Co-fund this term, from a student who wishes to fund a gap year. This is not an appropriate use of the fund. Are not getting a regular call out to ask for applications. So far, only two applications have been progressed. There is a need for applicants to understand the timescales involved.

JBu has tried to encourage bids for extra-curricular activities.

Bids come in to JBi, who then sends it out to the panel of people who have been involved in decision making. There is often no response. Discussion around the make-up of the panel and a possible need to be more flexible.

Discussion around the possibility of changing the process to be more immediately responsive in the hope of increasing the number of accepted applications. Also need to consider the people involved to ensure engagement. There is a cut-off date in the finance office for signing cheques at the end of the school year.

<p>It is important to ensure that the fund benefits as many students in the school as possible. Staff may be better placed to make this decision.</p> <p>To review the funding plan at the next meeting.</p>	<p>EG</p>
<p>Fundraising Strategy, action plan & possible projects</p> <p>EG and BC have been working on this. Need some information from the school.</p> <p>EG and BC to set up a meeting with MS</p> <p>Looking to come up with a list of small things that could be relatively easily fundable.</p> <p>There is an additional layer of families with little income, slightly above the level of pupil premium. The school prides itself on the enrichment offer, such as trips, visits etc. Funds could be used to continue some of the activities the school offers such as careers events.</p> <p>Could look at having a, 'donate' button or option for voluntary contribution on WisePay. Hope to make it really easy for people to give extra contributions.</p> <p>EG and BC will also meet with Ed Carpenter about the options on WisePay.</p> <p>This could be a good opportunity to communicate the value of the Forum to staff, in terms of these ideas coming through.</p>	<p>EG/BC</p> <p>EG/BC</p>
<p>Summer community event (Fiesta)</p> <p>JBu would like to have an event like this again. Asked whether there is appetite and/or capacity to organise something like this.</p> <p>Students used to come forward with ideas for stalls, including an open-mic type event. There would probably be enough student volunteers, but there is a need to have enough adult volunteers.</p> <p>It would be good to have the concept driven by students. This is not a problem, but there still needs to be enough commitment from adult organisers.</p> <p>Katie will have a lot of knowledge. She now has a completely different role – there is not the same dedicated performing arts resource.</p> <p>BC to convene a meeting to discuss this further.</p>	<p>BC</p>
<p>Forum vacancies</p> <p>There are some vacancies in all constituencies. Need to put a call out for new members / reps. This could also go into the weekly mailing. EG to draft something.</p>	<p>EG</p>
<p>Any other business</p> <p>LS cannot make the next meeting. EG asked for a volunteer to take notes.</p> <p>EG will chair the next meeting</p> <p>LH gave apologies until November</p>	

FORUM MEETINGS

Tuesday 14 March 2017

Thursday 18 May 2017

Thursday 29 June 2017