

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**  
**HELD ON 9<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2015**

**Present:** Martyn Henson (Head Teacher), Richard Aggus (Chair)  
Kath Smith, Graham Blackburn, Julia Marshall, Pippa Frost, Craig Temple,  
Sheenagh Parsons, Jill Borchards, Hilary Rodgers, Kojo Wood

**Apologies:** Julia Brettell, Keith Hopkinson, Nick Hoffman

**Absent:** Martin Powell, Nick Collins

*(NB: Governor Challenge, Questions and Monitoring are highlighted in italics)*

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>To receive any apologies and decide whether to give consent for absence.</b></p> <p>Apologies received and accepted from Julia Brettell, Nick Hoffman and Keith Hopkinson.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>To receive notification of any other business.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christmas concert 10<sup>th</sup> December at 7pm</li> <li>• Robin Hood performance next Wednesday</li> <li>• On December 17<sup>th</sup> former pupils and colleagues have been invited to tea and biscuits between 1030 and 1230.</li> <li>• Governors were very welcome to attend all of these events.</li> </ul>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest</b></p> <p>RA employed by HfL.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Organisation of Governing Board</b></p> <p>The Chair advised that Phil Davidson had submitted his resignation as a governor due to relocation.</p> <p>The Governing Board agreed to appoint Nick Collins and Nick Hoffman as Co-Opted Governors. Both had shown commitment to their role, attended meetings and made governor visits etc.</p> <p>There was 1 parent who was keen to join the governing board; he was qualified as a quantity surveyor and would bring some useful skills to the governors, particularly with regard to possible discussions around FM contracts etc. It was agreed to appoint him as an Associate Member before possibly appointing as a Co-Opted Governor.</p> <p>Kate Perry had also indicated an interest in joining the Governing Board and would bring a very useful perspective to the Board. Governors agreed that they would like the Chair to pursue this further with a view to appointing Kate as AM, and then Co-Opted Governor.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Head's Report</b></p>	

The Head's Report, RELIC, had been circulated.

**Q With regards to the questionnaire, is there any difference in number of people participating in different years? It was around the same and broadly spread across the age ranges.**

**Q** A Governor noted that it looked as though the answers were possibly less good than previous years, apart from the progress students were making. It was noted that 1 was the top of the scale, not 5 so it was the other way round, with areas scored higher than previous years apart from progress. The dip in positive response re progress was surprising as this did not reflect the reality. Governors wondered whether this was due to the change in reporting arrangements. Parents did perhaps not yet have a good understanding of the new reporting/assessment system. The Head said that they would be doing some work on communicating this to parents. It was still a positive response to the question, with answers between Strongly Agree and Agree.

It was still healthy lifestyles that was the worst scored issue. It was not just catering; it covered other topics such as well-being and drugs and alcohol. The Head was considering putting on a variety of presentations for parents on such issues as drugs, alcohol. They did cover these topics with the students in PSHE but maybe parents did not realise the amount of work that was done by school. They could hold an information evening for parents where this was explained.

**Q A governor queried the question on transition; was it moving from Primary to Secondary schools? Yes; the Head added that they had carried out another survey that evening solely focused on transition. Every student had had an interview before joining Year 7 which was viewed as a very worthwhile activity. The feedback from parents on the transition evening was very positive. They covered transition in the curriculum. The Head met once a term with the Heads of the Primary feeder schools. This cluster group was very effective, and in response to a request from the group they were putting on a Science day for Primary students to give them experience of lab equipment.**

In the first term, the school carried out a parent questionnaire, in the second term a staff questionnaire and in the third term a student questionnaire.

A governor commented that they had enjoyed reading Nobel's Learning magazine. Chantal had emailed out the link and it was worthwhile looking through. Different staff were contributing to it; NR had done a fantastic job in putting it together. Articles in the magazine showed the range of events being held for families and the community.

It was Stevenage Day on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2016 - Stevenage's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday –and community groups and schools were involved in the preparations. Nobel was looking to do a celebration involving Outdoor Ed; Business students would organise the publicity.

**Q** A governor noted that there seemed to be a lot of good extracurricular activities. However, it was not clear just how many clubs there were that were not PE related in the list. Many of them were PE related and

	<p><i>perhaps it needed more information as to the other extra curricular clubs being held. Governors felt that perhaps a column had been left out as there were other activities taking place, which were not listed</i></p> <p><b>Q Are they all being well attended?</b> <i>Staff were taking registers as they wanted to see who was attending and whether Pupil Premium students were attending as this would inform part of their impact analysis. It was good to be able to show what they could offer to students outside the classroom and the uptake and engagement of students.</i></p> <p><i>A governor noted that a lot of intervention classes were taking place. It was now far more established for staff to be running extra curricular interventions out of class.</i></p>	
6.	<p><b>To discuss urgent matters arising from Committee Meetings</b></p> <p><u>Finance, Personnel and Premises –</u></p> <p>Minutes of the committee meeting had been circulated. GB reported that there had been an item of unapproved spend; this had been addressed and procedures put in place to ensure it did not happen again.</p> <p><b>Q When looking at the deficit and options to address this, options were to not replace staff and increase income. What is the maximum potential students' income we want to achieve? What are we capable of achieving with the school space? This was linked to potential status change where we would need a break-even budget. The only moveable items were students and staff. Had the committee come up with a figure for student capacity and would it compromise the learning experience and attainment for children? What was the reference to the LA having an idea about what they could do?</b> <i>The Chair explained that the LA had requested an advance budget from all schools, which had been submitted. Those showing a deficit would be schools where the LA would look to intervene in some shape and form. This could be in various guises such as Finance Action Groups, finance training for governors, penalties associated with the cost of the deficit. They were looking at a whole range of ideas, and how these could be implemented. The LA did not have any financial reserves. Any conversion to an Academy had to be done on a balanced budget but the belief was that they could get there. The school had put things in place, such as not replacing staff. They could address the deficit through other reductions in spend on resources, although this would not have as much impact.</i></p> <p><i>With regards to eventual size of the school, it was an interesting question to consider how big they wanted to get. There were currently 270 in the sixth form and they were projecting 300 plus next year. There was a good turnout at Sixth Form Open evening and their results were getting better. They did not want to get students in at all costs; they also needed to look at the curriculum offer in the sixth form to ensure it was comprehensive, and look at the level 2 qualifications being offered and who they would arrange to work with to provide an opportunity for these students. They had to think about all their students – there were some improvements they could make in this respect.</i></p> <p><b>Q What is the maximum they could raise through selling school</b></p>	

**services/lettings and how far away were they?** The Chair and the SBM had had an interesting discussion with Sport England and SBC. The school had been asked to sign a Community Use Agreement for their sports facilities which they had refused to sign so far. Sport England had said that it was part of the planning approval to have the agreement in place, to make the premises inclusive, and they should be ploughing income from lettings back into the facilities. The SBM was working to associate all the costs so they could show the true cost of hiring out the sports facilities, including staffing costs. They employed 2 or 3 people, and had to pay Cofley for hours the school was open; once they added up all these costs, there might not be a huge income made. The Chair had also mentioned that the school needed to recoup money from lettings to help with wear and tear and damage to the facilities from lettings. Most of the facilities were not up to letting out; the MGA surface was poor and they had not been provided with floodlights so they could not let it out at this time of year. They had left it that Sport England and SBC would work with the SBM to see if there was a cheaper model for managing the lettings. The Chair had insisted that the school would not subsidise the lettings at all from its school budget.

There was a clause in the original agreement that they would use the profit to enhance the facilities and a clause that the school was liable for the lifecycle maintenance; both these had been removed. The Chair was refusing to sign the Agreement for the moment. They could not build a recovery plan around lettings. They could possibly generate income from business use and lettings outside the Community Use Agreement, eg as conference facilities.

The Committee reassured the FGB that processes were now in place with the right checks and balances to ensure that unapproved expenditure did not take place again. The Committee had also asked for an additional check to be included in the procedures, based on business models.

A staff governor noted that staff could be a form of generating income, eg through providing PPA cover for Primary schools, and through sharing resources if there was any slack in the system. The Head said that they were sending a Science teacher to Lonsdale and were getting a day a week of a SENCO in return. They did not have a network manager in school at the moment, and they needed to consider outsourcing or sharing resources with another school. They had to watch how they used resources, so they did not over stretch them. They had to ensure that their own students' performance was not compromised.

L&D Committee –

Minutes of the committee meeting had been circulated. The committee had had a presentation on English and Media.

Pay Committee

The Chair confirmed that the pay reviews had all been done. It had been a rigorous process, in strict compliance with the Pay Policy; not all recommendations had been agreed by governors.

**7. Feedback on Governor Survey**

	<p>The Chair thanked the 9 governors who had completed the survey. There was not a massive variation in scores, with scores ranging between 3.1 to 3.7. The lowest were looking at the big picture and ensuring the agenda dealt with priorities, encouraging contribution, encouraging the FGB to reflect on how they were working and ensuring all voices were heard and people felt their effort was valued. The Chair would look at developing these areas during the year.</p>	
<b>8. Policies</b>	<p>Nil</p>	
<b>9. Safeguarding</b>	<p>Deferred to next meeting. SP would arrange a visit early next term to meet up with Steve Morley.</p> <p><i>Q Is everything up to date from the school's point of view? Nothing beyond what was raised at the last meeting. The Child Protection Policy had been recently approved by the FGB.</i></p>	<p><b>Action 14/77</b>  <b>SP to circulate Safeguarding annual report and checklist when available. To be signed off at next FGB meeting</b></p> <p><b>Action 15/34</b>  <b>SM/SP to provide briefing on safeguarding for governors, incorporating radicalisation</b></p>
<b>10 Governor Visits and Links</b>	<p><i>KS came in for the MFL work scrutiny, which was very impressive. The books clearly showed the progress and learning. She looked at French and German books. There appeared to be more of a focus on grammar to underpin the learning, which seemed to be working.</i></p> <p><i>HR came in for a feedback meeting on the English Faculty review. She was arranging another follow-up meeting with Emma Foreman.</i></p> <p><i>KW was trying to arrange a meeting with Martin and was waiting for some documentation, including an action plan for the sixth form to trace strategic actions. The sixth form review was this week. KW would then visit in January.</i></p> <p><i>NH had sent a governor visit report on PE.</i></p> <p><i>JB had circulated a governor visit report on Science.</i></p> <p><i>Staff were appreciating that governors were visiting more and taking a more proactive stance; it was helping to raise the profile of governors. JB had appreciated governors coming to the Shanghai Maths presentation.</i></p>	

	<p><i>Governors wondered whether their pictures should be added to the photo wall. The Chair advised that badges needed to be updated and asked Governors to either go to IT to have their picture taken or send in a photo of themselves to Mark in IT.</i></p> <p><i>The Head would send an invite to governors for the staff get-together on 17<sup>th</sup> December to celebrate the school's results and all their hard work.</i></p> <p><i>Governor Training – JM advised that they had used their in-house allocation and could book another course from April. There were places on some courses still available this financial year. There were also online courses available which governors could take at the school, such as Prevent Duty and safer recruitment. It would be useful if governors could complete the Prevent Duty training.</i></p>	<p><b>Action 15/66</b> Governors to ensure IT have a photo for updated bades</p> <p><b>Action 15/67</b> Governors to complete Prevent Duty training</p>
11	<p><b>To agree the minutes of the last meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and discuss any matters arising including actions from tracking sheet</b></p> <p>The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governors could contact Mark in IT if they needed any historical emails locating.</li> <li>• KH was in contact with the Stevenage Business Centre. This was a useful area to pursue.</li> <li>• Chair to talk to IT re Office 365 – put on hold at present.</li> <li>• The Head was asked to see if there were any potential clashes with Parents Evenings for the future meeting dates for the year.</li> <li>• The Chair offered to provide an article for Nobel's Learning on the role of the governing board. Governors could also provide an article on their visit. The magazine was produced termly.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action 15/68</b> Head to find out if any potential clashes with future meetings</p> <p><b>Action 15/69</b> Chair to send article for Nobel's Learning</p>
12	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nil</li> </ul>	
13	<p><b>GOVERNOR WORKSHOP</b></p> <p>A confidential issue was discussed.</p>	
14	<p><b>Dates of next meetings</b></p> <p><b>L&amp;D (Progress) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016</b></p> <p><b>FGB – 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016</b></p> <p><b>L&amp;D (Teaching and Learning) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup></b></p>	

<p><b>March 2015</b></p> <p><b>FGB – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016</b></p> <p><b>L&amp;D (Progress) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2016</b></p> <p><b>FGB – Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2016</b></p> <p><b>L&amp;D (Teaching and Learning) and FPP Committees – Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016</b></p> <p><b>FGB – Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2016</b></p> <p><b>(FGB meetings at 7pm; L&amp;D to start at 6pm; FPP to start at 7.30pm)</b></p>	
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