

**MINUTES OF A SCRUTINY MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS**  
**HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON 13 December 2017 at 6.30pm**

**Governors Present:** Peter Heppelthwaite – Chair, Richard Aggus, Graham Blackburn, Steven Chown, Martyn Henson (Headteacher), Nick Hoffman, Sue Padfield, Amy Pearson, Hilary Rodgers, Robin Spicer, Rev. Kojo Wood.

**Also in Attendance:** Jacquie Watts (Clerk), Barry Burningham, Christine Crawley and Naomi Rose. Keith Hopkinson (former governor), Becky Cox, Dave Martin, Steve Morley and Corrina Reader were present for part of the meeting.

**Apologies For Absence Received From:** Phil Cave, Craig Temple, George O’Neil and Sheenagh Parsons. Sue Padfield apologised in advance for her late arrival.

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

Action By:

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Presentation of Leaving Gift</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> on behalf of the Board of Governors and the school, Peter Heppelthwaite presented the former chair, Richard Aggus, with a leaving gift. The meeting was Richard’s last as a governor. He thanked him for his many years’ service to the school. His thanks and comments were echoed by further words from Rev. Kojo Wood, Keith Hopkinson and Martin Henson.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the speech made in response by Richard Aggus, which emphasised the role of governor as a critical friend to the school, the need to debate, ask, consider and challenge issues presented to the Board and the importance of putting the students and the school before the needs of other organisations and public bodies.</p> <p><i>Richard Aggus and Keith Hopkinson left the meeting at this point.</i></p> <p><i>Barry Burningham, Christine Crawley, Naomi Rose, Becky Cox, Dave Martin, Steve Morley and Corrina Reader joined the meeting at this point.</i></p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>To receive any apologies for absence and decide whether to consent to the same</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> apologies for absence were received from Phil Cave, Craig Temple, George O’Neil and Sheenagh Parsons. Sue Padfield apologised in advance for her late arrival.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> consent for absence was given to those who had tendered apologies.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest re. items on the agenda</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> no declarations of interest were received from those present.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Headteacher Presentation – Refreshing the School Vision</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the presentation given by the Headteacher regarding the evolution and re-assessment of the school’s vision. His aim was to develop a shorter summary vision that captured the essential ethos of</p>	

	<p>the school, in particular putting the needs of children first rather than issues like the progress 8 scores</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the vision statement had been brain-stormed by the SLT and then, on 22 November, by all staff. Students and parents had also considered the resultant statement:</p> <p>“Our school is happy, kind and caring. It fosters positive relationships and mutual respect. We embrace diversity in a community full of opportunity and based on fairness.</p> <p>We celebrate our successes and aspire to grow academically, culturally and socially so we can lead fulfilling lives as Nobelians who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wear our uniform with pride</li> <li>• look after each other and support our community</li> <li>• are courageous, resilient and responsible role models</li> <li>• work hard, have fun and develop a love of learning</li> <li>• challenge ourselves, develop good character and achieve success</li> </ul> <p><b>AGREED:</b> to amend “opportunity and based on fairness” to “opportunity that is based on fairness”.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> to amend “our successes and aspire to grow” to “our successes, aspiring to grow”.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the recommendation from governors that there should be an international element within the statement. Also that : “wear our uniform with pride” should not be the first bullet point, but should either be the last or removed all together as too specific.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Headteacher would finalise the above changes and circulate the revised statement to governors by Friday for online approval so that it can be displayed in the school building by the start of term in January.</p>	<b>MH</b>
5.	<p><b>Safeguarding Report</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the oral presentation by Steve Morley. Current school attendance rates were above the national average.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the number of pupils educated outside the school, the number of safeguarding referrals since the last report and the number of full referrals in-year.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the town of Stevenage was concerned about drug rings and child sexual exploitation. School staff were aware of what to lookout for.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> a new member of staff would be joining the school team in January.</p>	
6.	<p><b>RACE Update (Community – C1)</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> Barry Burningham tabled a graph showing the results of the annual survey of parents across the last five years. The school had consistently received good results, although additional work needed to</p>	

	<p>be done in relation to question 7, “This school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle”, which repeatedly received the lowest score. On the down side, only 42% of parents had returned the survey this year.</p> <p><b>NOTED: the Chair asked the school what it was going to do to engage with more parents? Ideally, he wanted to see a survey with responses from over 50% of parents.</b> The school outlined its processes for issuing and collecting surveys. It acknowledged it had more to do in relation to the school calendar and communication with parents. <b>Governors pointed out that many year 11 parents had been contacted by phone rather than invited to visit the school to discuss their child’s progress and therefore had not had an opportunity to contribute to the survey.</b></p> <p><b>NOTED: the suggestion from governors that the graph be inverted so the best results were at the top of the graph, rather than at the bottom.</b></p> <p><b>NOTED: that parent comments had still to be collated and shared with governors. The school would be publishing a “you said – we will do” response</b></p> <p><b>AGREED: the school would present a list of concrete proposals to improve parental involvement in the survey to a future meeting of the Board.</b></p>	<p><b>BB</b></p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Reporting on the Sections of RACE</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the presentation given by Barry Burningham. Each SLT lead would work with their respective link governors to discuss the relevant online sections of RACE, providing the governors with an opportunity to ask questions and record their responses. The meeting then dispersed accordingly.</p> <p><i>Sue Padfield joined the meeting during this process.</i></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> when the meeting reconvened, that any additional comments from governors on their sections of RACE could be added online using the links that Barry Burningham had previously emailed round.</p> <p><i>Becky Cox, Dave Martin, Steve Morley and Corrina Reader left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Revised Budget</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report previously uploaded to Moodle. The school was currently predicting a £176k deficit as opposed to the c£130k deficit budgeted for, leading to a worsening of the school’s position by c£42k. There had been financial swings and roundabouts, but overall income was £13.5k lower than anticipated and expenditure had increased beyond budget parameters. Staff sickness had been greater than in previous years and the staff pay rise authorised by the Foundation Committee had been larger than budgeted for. Christine Crawley was hoping to receive a payment from the Life Cycle Fund for premises expenditure already incurred. The exact figure had yet to be confirmed, but she was hoping it would be in the region of c£140k.</p>	



	<p><b>10.3 More Able Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy as previously uploaded onto Moodle and the online comments on the same. The Policy aimed to take into account the stress and anxiety experienced by different pupils at different levels and the support provided where needed.</p> <p><b>AGREED: to add a statement about the support to be provided to the policy and to upload the revised policy on to Moodle.</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the policy provisionally, subject to the above addition being made to the document</p> <p><b>10.4 Health and Safety Policy</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the policy as previously uploaded onto Moodle, the online comments on the same and the changes made as a result.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the policy as amended.</p>	<p><b>NR</b></p> <p><b>CC</b></p>
11.	<p><b>Governor Training Review and Update</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the oral report from Hilary Rodgers as the lead governor on governor training. She had put together a new training spread-sheet based on courses available on the Herts For Learning website. It was felt that new governors, as a minimum, should attend training on being a new governor, safeguarding and pupil exclusion.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> that a course on pupil exclusion was being provided for all Nobel governors in the New Year. All should seek to attend. Courses like Prevent were available online, but Hilary Rodgers was reliant on governors forwarding copies of the completed certificate to her and not all had done that.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that Hilary Rodgers would circulate a copy of the training spread-sheet to all governors for them to consider and update.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the possibility of running in-school training on Safeguarding, as Steve Morley was an approved trainer.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the Headteacher would speak to Steve Morley about arranging a safeguarding training session for governors.</p>	<p><b>HR/ ALL</b></p> <p><b>MH/CC</b></p>
12.	<p><b>To Agree the Minutes of the Previous Meeting of The Board held on 18 October 2017 and discuss any matters arising, including actions from the tracking sheet</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the minutes of the Governing Board Scrutiny meeting held on 18 October 2017 as a true and correct record. These were duly signed by The Chair.</p>	
13.	<p><b>To Receive and Ratify the Minutes of the Last Two Foundation Committee Meetings held on 22 March 2016 (Agreed minutes) and 15 November 2017 (Provisional minutes)</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the explanation from the Clerk that, previously, the minutes had not been brought forward to the Full Board until they had been approved by the next meeting of the Foundation Committee, which had led to long delays. As per the 15 November Foundation Committee</p>	

	<p>minutes, the Chair was therefore bringing forward one agreed set of minutes and one set of provisional minutes that had been drafted and seen by the Foundation Committee, who had had an opportunity to challenge them, but which had not yet been formally agreed by the next meeting of the Foundation Committee (scheduled for April 2018).</p> <p><b>NOTED: the Chair did not want to revisit all discussions held at the Foundation Committee in detail but wanted all items agreed by the Committee to be highlighted in a separate report.</b> A discussion ensued as to whether this would be helpful or simply result in more paperwork for governors to read.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> for future meetings where Foundation Committee minutes were to be presented, in addition to the Foundation Committee meeting minutes themselves, the Clerk should present a separate report and list of all matters agreed by the Foundation Committee.</p> <p><b>RECEIVED AND RATIFIED:</b> the minutes of the Foundation Committee Meetings held on 22 March 2016 (Agreed minutes) and 15 November 2017 (Provisional minutes).</p>	<b>Clerk</b>
14.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> the report tabled by Christine Crawley on the <b>Facilities Management Agreement</b>. Recent benchmarking activity had highlighted that the school had been overpaying for its Facilities Management Contract. Christine Crawley asked for a small working party of governors to be set up to discuss the way forward regarding the Facilities Management Contract.</p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> that a working party of: Peter Heppelthwaite, Christine Crawley, Martyn Henson, Robin Spicer, Steven Chown and Hilary Rodgers would meet in the New Year to draw up an action plan in relation to the Facilities Management Contract.</p>	<b>PH/ CC/MH /RS/SC /HR</b>
15.	<p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p><b>AGREED:</b> the date of the next Scrutiny meeting of the Board of Governors as Wednesday, 17 January 2018 at 6.30pm.</p> <p><b>NOTED:</b> apologies for absence were received in advance from Rev. K. Wood.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts  
**Clerk To The Governors**  
**16 December 2017**

**Approved by The Board of Governors on:**

**Date: ...17 January 2018 .....**

**Signature (Chair):.....**