

MINUTES OF A STRATEGY MEETING OF THE NOBEL SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD AT THE SCHOOL ON 4 July 2018 at 6.30pm

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

Also in Attendance: Jacquie Watts (Clerk) and Barry Burningham with Christine Crawley and Naomi Rose (for part of the meeting).

Apologies For Absence Received From: Sheenagh Parsons and Rev. Kojo Wood.

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

Action By:

1.	<p>To receive any apologies for absence and decide whether to consent to the same</p> <p>NOTED: apologies for absence had been received by the Clerk from Sheenagh Parsons and Rev. Kojo Wood. Craig Temple and Phil Cave were also absent.</p> <p>AGREED: consent for absence was given to those who had tendered apologies.</p> <p>NOTED: The Chair asked the Clerk to write to governors who had not tendered their apologies to ascertain the situation regarding their future attendance.</p>	Clerk
2.	<p>Notification of Any Other Business</p> <p>NOTED: Chris Crawley asked for the costs of the grounds maintenance contract to be considered, as matters were progressing rapidly in some areas of the new facilities management contracts.</p> <p>AGREED: to consider the costs of grounds maintenance work as Any Other Business.</p>	
3.	<p>For governors to declare any potential conflicts of interest re. items on the agenda</p> <p>NOTED: there were no declarations of interest.</p>	
4.	<p>Draft Business Plan</p> <p>NOTED: The Headteacher stressed that the document uploaded to Moodle was very much a draft. In order to finalise the Business Plan the Governing Board would need to make decisions regarding the shape and ethos of the school. He was hoping discussions could be had and decisions reached on a rolling basis throughout the 2018/19 academic year.</p> <p>NOTED: the school had now taken ownership of the caretaker's house and, given its condition, was considering whether to sell it. There were also issues regarding the possible development of Timebridge and the funding of the same. Sale of the caretaker's house could be used to</p>	

	<p>fund this. The Headteacher also flagged up limitations to the school's sports area and sixth form facilities, and the possibility of developing the school further now the constraints of the Engie contract were coming to an end.</p> <p>NOTED: the Headteacher felt there was a need to move quickly regarding the Caretaker's house and wanted the Board's support in doing so, but acknowledged issues of access to the property still needed resolving. The Chair stressed the need to undertake proper evaluations of the costs involved in renovating and/or selling the caretaker's house before a final decision was reached. The Board also raised the issue of buildings insurance and whether sale of the house might affect the school's risk levels and impact on its insurance premium. This would require investigation.</p> <p>PROVISIONALLY AGREED: to the sale of the caretaker's house subject to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the school obtaining three evaluations of the value of the caretaker's house in its current condition; 2. the school obtaining three quotations for work necessary to improve the condition of the house; 3. clarification of any impact on the school's insurance should the house be sold; 4. the sale only proceeding if the above investigations identified that the preferred option was cost effective. 	CC
5.	<p>AOB – Grounds Maintenance Contact</p> <p>AGREED: to take this item out of agenda order to allow Chris Crawley to leave the meeting early.</p> <p>NOTED: the Engie contract had now been formally terminated. The school had received a quotation of c£16k for undertaking elements of Grounds Maintenance from Hertfordshire Business Services. Details of the proposal were discussed. In response to questions from the Board, the school confirmed that the quotation from Hertfordshire Business Services did not vary from grounds maintenance work currently carried out and would not require any additional expenditure above and beyond contract.</p> <p>NOTED: it had not proved possible to progress as quickly with the cleaning contract for the school as Engie had not provided the TUPE information it was required to do following termination of the Facilities Management contract. The Chair stressed that any costs incurred by the school as a result of this delay should be born by Engie as the fault was legally theirs.</p> <p>AGREED: to accept the Hertfordshire Business Services quotation for grounds maintenance work.</p> <p><i>Christine Crawley left the meeting at this point.</i></p>	CC
6.	<p>Approval of Policies</p> <p>6.1 PLT (Homework) Policy</p>	

	<p>their children were not making sufficient progress at The Nobel School and wanted to know what was being done to address this. The school advised that a minority of parents did not engage with the school or read information provided to them about their children. Nevertheless, Barry Burningham would look into the comments made on the survey and report back to governors.</p>	<p>BB</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Annual Meeting and Agenda Schedule 2018-19</p> <p>NOTED: the report and accompanying draft annual meeting and agenda schedule posted on Moodle, as prepared by the Clerk in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team and based on the current Governing Board meeting structure.</p> <p>NOTED: The Chair and Headteacher had been considering changes to the current meeting structure. Instead of twelve meetings per year, consisting of three Foundation Committee meetings, three Strategic Governing Board meetings and six Scrutiny Governing Board meetings, they wished to propose reducing the number of meetings per year to nine, made up of three Foundation Committee meetings and six multi-purpose Governing Board Meetings (two per term). Meetings would still start at 6.30pm, so would, of necessity, go on for longer than currently. The time saved by removing three Governing Board meetings could be utilised by governors visiting the school.</p> <p>NOTED: the further proposal by the Headteacher and Chair that each Governing Board meeting would consist of a presentation to governors by an area of the school, a thirty minute discussion on an aspect of the draft business plan and then other items as shown on the current draft meeting and agenda schedule. This would mean rolling together the agenda items for some meetings in order to make six agendas out of the original nine. In order to make this viable, all governors would need to access Moodle more often and ensure they commented on and agreed reports online in advance of meetings. It was felt by some governors that to facilitate this there should be a standing item on RACE on each of the six Governing Board agendas, with a clear deadline provided by the school for governor comments to be added online. Governors also wanted a more structured approach to school visits with specific times and dates offered and/or agreed up front rather than a non-specific open invitation to visit. The Headteacher felt the school could provide this. Governors also queried if the proposed changes to the meeting pattern met Christine Crawley's needs in terms of reporting to governors and obtaining governor agreement to key financial and estate documentation within specific timescales. The Headteacher confirmed that Christine Crawley had been consulted was happy with the proposed changes.</p> <p>AGREED: to reduce the number of Governing Board meetings from twelve to nine, made up of three Foundation Committee meetings and six Governing Board Meetings (two per term). Meetings would start at 6.30pm. The first meeting of the Governing Board in the 2018/19 academic year would take place on Wednesday, 10 October 2018.</p> <p>NOTED: changes to other meeting dates proposed by the Headteacher, including:</p>	<p>MH</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First Foundation Committee meeting of the Academic year to be held on 19 September 2018; 2. Second Foundation Committee meeting to be held on 14 November 2018; 3. Second Governing Board meeting to be held on 5 December 2018; 4. Third Governing Board meeting to be held on 30 January 2019; 5. Fourth Governing Board meeting to be held on 13 March 2019; 6. Fifth Governing Board meeting to be held on 1 May 2019; 7. Sixth Governing Board meeting to be held on 26 June 2019; 8. Third Foundation Committee meeting to be held on 3 July 2019; <p>AGREED: the Clerk would redraw the draft annual meeting and agenda schedule for 2018/19 based on the above proposed dates and taking into account the changes so far agreed. She would circulate this, in the first instance, to the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher for their consideration. A final draft schedule would be brought to the 10 October meeting of the Governing Board for finalisation and agreement.</p>	Clerk
9.	<p>Link Governors</p> <p>NOTED: the need to identify and appoint link governors for the academic year 2018/19.</p> <p>AGREED: the link governor arrangements for 2017/18 should continue unchanged for 2018/19 where possible. Specifically:</p> <p>R1 – Vacancy R2+R3 – Hilary Rodgers and Nick Hoffman R4 – Robin Spicer</p> <p>A1+A2 – Sue Padfield A3+A4+A5 - Steven Chown A6 – Hilary Rodgers and Nick Hoffman A7 – Philip Cave and Vacancy</p> <p>C1+C2+C3+C4 - Rev. Kojo Wood</p> <p>E1+E2+E3 – Craig Temple</p> <p>Health and Safety – Robin Spicer</p>	
10.	<p>Review of Governing Board Effectiveness</p> <p>NOTED: the Chair’s satisfaction with the effectiveness of the Governing Board as a whole. He felt members were engaged and questioning. The Headteacher valued the work of the Board, which he felt to be both supportive and challenging. Governors as a whole felt that they were working better as a group, with individuals feeling able to contribute. Meetings were relaxed but “got the job done”.</p> <p>NOTED: the Clerk queried whether the Board was happy to evaluate its own effectiveness using just subjective measures or whether it wanted to use more fact-based, measurable evaluation tools as part of its self-evaluation, for example, the attendance record that would be prepared at the end of the academic year and the log of governors using Moodle.</p>	

	<p>The meeting discussed the possibility of using evaluation forms, as had been done in the past, but there was little support for it. The possibility of the Chair meeting with individual governors to obtain feedback was raised. The previous drive to make the Governing Board paperless, requiring a greater use of Moodle by governors, was also highlighted, but a number of governors favoured a move back towards printed meeting papers.</p> <p>AGREED: once meeting attendance figures for 2017/18 were available, the Chair would meet with individual governors for ten minutes each to discuss individual attendance levels, use of Moodle and overall Board effectiveness.</p> <p>AGREED: The Chair and Headteacher would meet to discuss the circulation of hardcopy agendas and reports for meetings.</p>	<p>Chair/ Clerk</p> <p>MH/ Chair</p>
11.	<p>Election of Chair 2018/19</p> <p>NOTED: the Clerk led on this item. She asked governors to confirm the time period for the election of Chair.</p> <p>AGREED: the Chair should be elected for a period of approximately twelve months, with a fresh election to be held at the last Governing Board meeting of the 2018/19 academic year.</p> <p>NOTED: the clerk asked for nominations for the position of Chair.</p> <p>AGREED: to nominate Peter Heppelthwaite for the role of Chair. This was unanimously seconded by all present. There being no other nominations, Peter Heppelthwaite was returned as Chair for the forthcoming academic year.</p>	
12.	<p>Election of Vice Chair(s) 2018/19</p> <p>NOTED: the newly re-elected Chair led on this item. He asked governors to confirm the time period for the election of Vice Chair and whether there should be one or two Vice Chairs for the period.</p> <p>AGREED: two Vice Chairs should be elected for a period of approximately twelve months, with fresh elections to be held at the last Governing Board meeting of the 2018/19 academic year.</p> <p>NOTED: the Chair asked for nominations for the two positions of Vice Chair.</p> <p>AGREED: to nominate Steven Chown and Robin Spicer for the roles of Vice Chair. This was unanimously seconded by all present. There being no other nominations, Robin Spicer and Steven Chown were returned as co - Vice Chairs for the forthcoming academic year.</p>	
13.	<p>To Agree the Minutes of the Previous Meeting of The Board held on 13 June 2018 and discuss any matters arising, including actions from the tracking sheet</p> <p>AGREED: the minutes of the Governing Board Scrutiny meeting held on 13 June 2018 as a true and correct record. These were duly signed</p>	

	by the Chair.	
14.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>AGREED: the date of the next meeting of the Board of Governors as Wednesday, 10 October 2018 at 6.30pm.</p> <p>NOTED: the final meeting of the Foundation Committee in 2017/18 would take place on Wednesday 18 July 2018 at 6.30pm at the school. Also, in keeping with the proposed changes to the annual meeting schedule, the first meeting of the Foundation Committee in 2018/19 would provisionally take place on Wednesday 19 September 2018, before the first meeting of the Governing Board.</p>	

Drafted by: Jacquie Watts
Clerk To The Governors
6 July 2018

Approved by The Board of Governors on:

Date:10 October 2018.....

Signature (Chair):.....