

**THE GOVERNING BODY OF HEXHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL AND QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH  
SCHOOL HARD FEDERATION**

**MEETING: WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2009 AT 5.00 PM**

**Present:** Mr David Watson (Headteacher)  
Mrs Jane Wrigley  
Mrs Kate Gessey  
Mr J B Jonas  
Mrs Rosemary Theobalds  
Mrs Sandra Thompson  
Mr Adrian Woolley  
Mrs Sarah Buchan  
Mrs Alison Killen  
Mr Alan Lynch  
Mr Peter Maxwell  
Mr Simon Kitchman  
Mr Andrew Hedley  
Miss Christine Carruthers  
Mr Neil Morrison (Headteacher)  
Mrs Sue Boath  
Mr Roland Beevor  
Ms Helen Gray  
Mr Robin Hodnett  
Mr Bill Wilson (Associate member)  
Ms Di Harris (Associate member)  
Mr Andy Byers (Associate member)  
Ms Helen Bailey (Associate member)  
Mrs Susan Hope (Associate member)

**Also present:** Mrs Helen Pye (Clerk to Governors)

**Prior to the meeting, Governors received a short briefing session on Governor Self Evaluation.**

**Following discussion it was agreed that Governors should look towards Governor mark accreditation. The Clerk would discuss further training requirements with Mr P Oliver.**

**PART 1 (Classified non-confidential)**

**Items discussed under Part 1 of this agenda will not be classified as confidential: consequently the minutes and supporting documents should be made available to any person wishing to inspect them.**

**REGULAR ITEMS**

**1. Election of Chair**

In accordance with the election process, as previously agreed, Mr A Woolley was re-elected Chair of Governors for the next year.

**2. Apologies for Absence and their acceptance or otherwise**

Apologies were received and consent given for the absences of Mrs Annette Bedson, Mr Neil Watson, Mr Neil Cassidy, Mrs Angela Mole and Mr Peter Oliver.

**Action by:**

### 3. Election of Vice-Chair

In accordance with the election process for Vice Chair, Governors considered the election address that had been submitted for consideration. On this occasion it was decided to decline acceptance of the nomination. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the actual election process. It was agreed in future for Chair and Vice Chair elections, nominations would be invited at the commencement of the meeting – proposer or self nomination accepted with the requirement for a seconder. On this basis, a nomination was put forward and seconded for Mrs Thompson to be appointed as Vice Chair. Mrs Thompson accepted the position.

### 4. Membership Update

- i) Governors noted the appointment of Mr N Cassidy, Deputy Headteacher, Hexham Middle school, as Associate Governor.
- ii) The resignation of Mrs Alderson, Staff Governor (Teacher) Hexham Middle school was duly noted. The Chair had written to Mrs Alderson to thank her for her service to the Governing Body.

Consequently a vacancy would exist for a Staff Governor (Teacher) for which Mr Watson would organise an election process.

- iii) It was noted two vacancies remained for Community Governors. No Nominations were submitted for consideration.

**Mr Watson**

### 5. Declaration of personal or pecuniary interest in any agenda item

Governors declared that they had no pecuniary interest in any item on the agenda.

The Register of Governor interests would be updated by Associate Governors.

**Mr Watson  
Mr Morrison**

### 6. Consider & Adopt Minutes of Governing Body Meetings

Minutes of the following meeting, having been circulated to the Governors, were adopted and signed as a true record:

- 30 June 2009.

(Subject to a correction to item 2 – Membership update – Both Mr Wilson (HMS) and Mrs Hope (QEHS) were to be appointed as Associate Governors.)

### 7. Matters previously referred or delegated to individuals or committees

Item 8 (Matters Arising)

Item 12 – Link Governors report

No formal process had as yet been agreed for governors' visits. Visitors were encouraged to discuss the process / objectives with the Headteacher prior to their visit. (Refer to notes of Governors working party preliminary report – 23 September 2009 – copy filed in Minute Book).

Mr Beevor volunteered to replace Mr Edwick and accompany Ms Gray on her ICT visit (Mr Lynch withdrew from the visit).

Item 7 (Minutes 17 June 2009) Governors Communication.

Mr Woolley circulated a document for discussion in relation to Governors Communication.

Arising from discussion:-

Whilst it was felt that communication should be on a formal basis there was no conclusive decision as to whether a communications policy was required but Governors felt that a Governors code of conduct should be looked at. Ms H Gray and Mrs J Wrigley volunteered to form a working party to look at relevant documentation in relation to a code of conduct. A report would be given at the next Governing Body meeting.

**Ms Gray**

**Mrs Wrigley**

Furthermore it was noted that 'usage of email policy' was being looked at in school by a group of staff.

Item 9 (iii)

Mr Woolley updated Governors with regards to the siting of a new Tynedale virtual college's New Skills and Media Centre. A site in Prudhoe had been identified.

Item 10 – Governing Body Decision Planner

Mr Woolley circulated a paper for consideration.

The Clerk was asked to seek clarification of Part 14 – Dismissal of Headteacher – as to whether this should not be the responsibility of the full Governing Body and not a decision for committee level.

**Clerk**

Item 16 – Governor support and Development Needs

Chair to liaise with Mr P Oliver to arrange 'e' learning session for Governors with Ms H Bailey.

**Chair**

The Chair would discuss training requirements with Mr Oliver and would ask Mrs Shevlin to circulate a response.

**Chair**

## **8. Other Matters Arising**

There were no other matters arising from the minutes.

## **9. Receive Minutes of Committee Meetings**

Governors received Minutes of the following Committee meetings:-

i) Staffing Committee – 30 June 2009

It was noted that the group had met further to this. A copy of the minutes would be made available at the next governing body meeting (Mr P Maxwell to forward minutes to Clerk).

**Mr Maxwell**

ii) Community Engagement Committee – 30 September 2009  
It was pointed out that the date for the next meeting should read Wednesday 13 January 2010 at 6.00 pm.

iii) Pupil and Curriculum Development Committee – 7 October 2009.

Arising from the minutes:-

Item 4 Mr Watson updated Governors in relation to 1:1 tuition which had now commenced.

Item 5 Discussion ensued regarding the new Ofsted framework. Mr Morrison would circulate a response sheet to Governors and deliver training if considered appropriate.

iv) Finance and Premises Committee – 4 November 2009

Minutes circulated at meeting (copy filed in minute book).

Arising from the minutes:-

FMSiS training – expression of interest for training to Mrs S Hope.

## 10. **Review of Committee Membership and Terms of Reference**

Governors considered committee membership and terms of reference and amended as per the attached sheets.

Both Mr Watson and Mr Morrison would review the terms of the Pupil and Curriculum Development Committee and advise the Chair accordingly.

The decision on whether or not Associate Members should be given voting rights on Committees was deferred at the present time.

**Mr Watson/  
Mr Morrison**

## **SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY ITEMS**

### 11. **Headteacher's Report**

Governors considered the report from the Headteachers.

#### **Hexham Middle School (Mr Watson)**

Arising from the report:-

Noted staffing changes.

Parent / carer consultations – very positive.

Performing Arts – Priority is to work with primary partners.

Premises issues – noted.

John Froud to send out information in relation to risk assessment of school site.

New style SEF (Self Evaluation Form) presently being written. School Development Plan will be re-written as a result of this.

New SIP, Paul Lawrence (Headteacher of Newminster Middle School, Morpeth).

Performance Management – scheduled for 16 November 2009.

### **Queen Elizabeth High School (Mr Morrison)**

Admission Numbers considered (and budget implications as a result of number of tutor groups).

Pleasing attendance figures (significant proportion of time invested in managing this).

Noted Exclusions and Racist Incidents.

Exam Results circulated.

Development Plan update.

Behaviour Management policy – new policies and procedures are being implemented and monitoring data indicates improvement.

Homework Policy – Revised and implemented.

Premises issues noted.

Astro Turf Pitch – only 6 – 12 months lifespan remaining. Significant cost to replace.

Furthermore, in response to a question from Mrs J Wrigley, Mr A Hedley spoke about the school's contact with Connexions.

## **12. School Development Plan**

Item deferred at present time.

## **13. Budget Update**

Hexham Middle School – Refer to Finance and Premises Committee minutes dated 4 November 2009.

Updated report from Headteacher – Potentially looking at substantial deficit next year. Presently examining different curriculum models and to consult with committees as appropriate.

Queen Elizabeth High School – Refer to Finance and Premises Committee Minutes dated 4 November 2009.

Update by Mr Morrison – some particularly volatile budgets – supply / property. Potentially facing some difficult issues. Again will consult with committees when appropriate.

## **14. Governing Body Decision Planner**

Adopted by the Governing Body.

## 15. **Data Protection and Data Security Policy**

Policies presented by Hexham Middle School and Queen Elizabeth High School were duly adopted by the Governing Body. It was noted that supplementary policies would be subject to review.

## 16. **Link Governors' Report**

Arising from discussion:-

Safeguarding Policy – Awaiting Local Authority information to enable finalisation of policy (to co-ordinate between Hexham Middle School and Queen Elizabeth High School).

Health and Safety Policy - Queen Elizabeth High School's almost complete – will present at next curriculum and Development Committee for consideration.

Each school to have individual policy.

## 17. **School Voluntary Accounts**

### Queen Elizabeth High School

Governors agreed to adopt the school's voluntary account, a copy of which had been presented at the summer termly meeting.

## 18. **Governor Support and Development Needs**

Item deferred until further discussions could be held with Mr P Oliver.

## **LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORTS –**

**Copies of documents available on [www.northumberlandlea.net](http://www.northumberlandlea.net)**

### **Community Leadership**

As agreed at the 2009 Governor Conference no Local Authority Reports were presented at the meeting in order to allow Governing Bodies to spend a significant proportion of their time considering a specific topic. The topic recommended by the conference was Community Leadership.

The Chair spoke briefly on the subject of Community Leadership and circulated a handout for information.

## **CONCLUDING ITEMS**

## 19. **Admissions Consultation**

Governors agreed how they would consider and respond to the expected consultation on the Admissions Policy for 2011/2012 that was expected between November 2009 and March 2010. It was agreed that the Pupil and Curriculum Development Committee would respond on behalf of the Governing Body.

## 20. **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business for discussion.

## 21. **Dates of Future Meeting**

Governors agreed the date of future meeting as follows:

- Wednesday 3 March 2010 at 5.00 pm.  
(By previous agreement the Spring Term meeting to be held at Hexham Middle School).

### **INFORMATION – Governors noted items sent to Chairs of Governors:**

- Termly Briefing Paper to include guidance on moving forward the community leadership agenda (following on from the annual governors conference)
- Copy of 'Improving Economy & Efficiency in Schools'
- Copy of Circular Letter G110/09 – Safeguarding and Vetting Checks on Governors

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**Chair**  
**3 March 2010**