

HEXHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL AND QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL HARD FEDERATION

GOVERNING BODY MINUTES SUMMER TERM 2016

**ADDITIONAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 JULY 2016 AT 6PM –
A13 – QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL**

PRESENT: Mr Simon Kitchman
Mrs Sandra Thompson
Mr Tony Brown
Mr Graeme Atkins (Executive Headteacher)
Mrs Barbara Hignett
Mr David Hartland
Ms Sarah Kemp
Mrs Jo Grey
Mr Jonathan Holmes
Mr Patrick Ferguson

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs Charlotte Gaines (Clerk to the Governors)
Mrs Sarah Sparke (Federation Business Manager)

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.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Mrs Judith Minto and Mr Andy Byers.

2. Declaration of personal or pecuniary interest in any agenda item

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

3. 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:

15 June 2016 (Part 1)

GA noted that the appropriate thanks had been passed on to HMS staff and the SIP.

GA spoke to Linda Vernon in NCC admissions. The admissions team is aware that HMS is not full and Linda apologised that someone had been told otherwise. CG has spoken to local estate agents who will only advise their customers of the school catchment areas that properties are in; they will refer any further enquiries to the schools.

Governors agreed that the working party should give consideration to the level of detail provided in the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2016 and that recommendations are made in September.

4. Development priorities

GA explained that he had met with each school's senior leaders and the QE monitoring group last week to identify the priorities, noting that these will also be influenced by summer examination outcomes. GA welcomed observations from Governors. SKe commented that HMS T&L appears more detailed than at QE and asked whether this was due to the nature of the schools. GA explained that this was the case. SKi asked if the improvement priorities should reflect educational experience. GA explained that the existing proposed priorities addressed aspects deemed not yet outstanding whereas educational experience opportunities we considered to be a strength; however, there is scope to re-visit in relation to participation. Governors agreed to discuss the priorities further at respective monitoring group meetings in the new term.

QEHS and
HMS MGs

5. Governor updates

HMS monitoring group

The group has not met since the last meeting of the FGB.

GA advised that the Ofsted report is now available and a press release has been sent to the Courant, with a letter due to be sent to parents. A letter was sent to parents last week regarding SATs results. The results appear underwhelming, however the marking of a sizeable number of reading and EGPS papers appears flawed. Papers will be submitted for re-marks and then more detailed analysis of the outcomes will follow. The disappointing results in Maths appear to reflect known issues with the teaching of particular Year 6 groups, which have now been addressed. A full analysis of the outcomes will be undertaken and considered with the HMS monitoring group next term.

GA / JMi /
HMS MG

PF asked why Maths was not included in the HMS priorities. GA explained that the main causal factors were known and had been addressed. However once further analysis has been done the priorities can be amended. The issues in history and geography have not been fully addressed as yet and so are included within the priorities.

SKi asked GA to convey governors' appreciation of their hard work to staff and SLT and their pleasure at the very good Ofsted report.

GA

TB advised that Ofsted had liked the presentation of evidence by AF cross referenced with the relevant Ofsted criteria and asked whether there was merit in rolling out this out. GA explained that this was now practice at both schools

QE monitoring group

JH advised that the PE report had been considered at the QE monitoring group meeting. Following the circulation of the report, GA, AB, SS and BM had met with acting head of PE to go through the issues. Some expenditure has been agreed relating to grounds maintenance, equipment and the pavilion.

SKe asked if sport premium funding could be used. GA explained that this is only available to primary schools so HMS receive it for years 5 and 6.

SKi asked if the issues raised reflected a wider problem regarding communication across school. GA explained that he understood this to be quite specific to circumstances in PE but that lessons needed to be learnt.

BH questioned why QE was paying for some services under particular service level agreements. SS is checking the requirements and services provided. Recommendations will be tracked through the Audit Committee.

SS/
Audit
Committee

JG asked whether a decision had been made regarding the use of staff titles in minutes. Governors discussed the issue. SS was asked to check the legal position with Browne Jacobson.

SS

JH advised that attendance is heading in the right direction.

JH has investigated circumstances surrounding inappropriate items being brought into school, in response to a request made to JG relating to a grievance. JH reported that matters had been handled appropriately. JG has fed back to the complainant.

Audit Committee

PF summarised the decisions made:

- £33k has been approved for the wireless system which will provide additional leverage to the existing equipment.
- HMS heating will go ahead with a £5k contribution from county councillors through their discretionary fund.
- HMS biometric system will be purchased.

The pension contribution is to rise by £70kpa at QE and £10k at HMS which is acceptable given impending increase for all NCC schools.

JH commented that he would like to see minutes circulated, PF advised that minutes are taken but that due to the timing of the meetings they have not be available to circulate for the next FGB meeting. CG will circulate minutes.

CG

Safeguarding Committee

The safeguarding group has not met since the last meeting of the FGB. The only issue which has been raised is the complaint about inappropriate items, referred to above.

6. MAT Conversion

Developments since last meeting

GA and SS advised that there had been very little response from stakeholders. One e-mail was received, however this was more of statement and has not been responded to yet.

PF asked whether there had been any further feedback from staff. GA advised that the only responses had been through ad hoc individual conversations with staff who had indicated that they appreciated the letter and the meeting. GA advised that Unison were in the schools holding drop in meetings with support staff today.

SS advised that NCC has returned their version of the Commercial

Transfer Agreement which disregards the one sent to them. Browne Jacobson have never seen this level of detail before. SS outlined some matters of concern:

- Some parts will be raised with the recruitment specialist.
- SKi questioned clause 3.4 stating that one of the objects seemed inappropriate
- NCC intend to retain the Gatehouse

SS advised that Browne Jacobson had suggested getting further clarity from NCC regarding these issues.

GA advised that a decision needed to be made about whether to dispute NCC retention of the Gatehouse. Consideration should be given to the condition of the building's future potential use, safeguarding concerns relating to sharing the site and whether the process should be delayed until the issue is resolved.

TB questioned whether the services to the Gatehouse are metered separately to the school. SS advised that the plans will be checked to confirm.

Working Party

JH asked if there were any other issues that would delay the process. SS advised that the Commercial Transfer Agreement had just been received and was being considered. BH questioned the reference to Clerk to Governing Body within the SLA. SS advised that this was for advice and support.

Governors discussed the issues and concluded that the Working Party should continue with the academisation process unless any further significant issues arose with the transfer agreement, which would be brought back the FGB for consideration.

Working Party

Governors agreed that conversion should continue with the Gatehouse in dispute. If this is not possible, conversion should continue with additional negotiation around access and usage of the Gatehouse. Governors agreed that issues arising should be delegated to the Working Party and that conversion should take place at the earliest possible date.

Working Party

Members

Stuart Todd's resume was circulated to governors. GA advised that Stuart will be attending a meeting of the proposed Members on Friday. Members' Letter of Appointment will require by the full governing body who can delegate authority to sign the terms of appointment. Governors agreed that the Letter would be circulated for comments to all governors and that responsibility for signing would be delegated to the Working Party.

Working Party

BH asked whether any outstanding grievance would delay conversion. JG advised that the grievance she is investigating has not yet been resolved GA advised that there were no other grievances outstanding.

7. Any Other Business

PF commented that the transfer evening at QE had been informative and well managed with AB's contribution particularly impressive. SKe commented that the parent tours were well run and a good opportunity to see the school. The governors asked that their thanks be relayed for the organisation of transfer day.

GA advised governors that an e-mail praising the high standard of the work displayed Art Exhibition at the Queens hall had been received. The comments were from professional artists from outside the area who had been impressed that such a high standard of work was being achieved within school. SKi reported that the architect from the EFA's PSPB2 team had praised the very high standard of artwork around the school. These comments to be passed on to the Art Department.

GA

PF commented that he had attended a number of events at HMS recently and noted that GA had been present and that this had been appreciated by parents.

SKe asked that governors be advised of any events that are taking place. CG agreed to ensure this.

CG

Part 1 of the meeting was concluded.

Governors moved to Part 2 of the agenda

Chair
Date