

HEXHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL AND QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL HARD FEDERATION

GOVERNING BODY MINUTES AUTUMN TERM 2015

**MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2015 AT 6PM –
A13, QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL**

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

ALSO PRESENT: Mr Andy Byers (Head of School - Associate Member)
Mrs Judith Minto (Head of School - Associate Member)

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. Apologies for absence

An apology had been received from Sarah Kemp.

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. Minutes Approval and matters arising

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

17 September 2015

Sandra Thompson's appointment with the local authority needs to be confirmed with the Local Authority.

Action by:

CG

Training course provided by Jan Corlett was very informative. Agreed to write to Jan thanking her.

SKi/ST

4. Membership update

SKi gave an update on the skills audit. This has not been scored since last November 2014 but there are no gaps or concerns. Governors thanked AB and JM for the recent RAISE training.

Governors discussed the existing co-opted governor vacancy. GA, SKi and ST met with Dan Thomas. Following the meeting DT has advised that he is unsure of his long-term work commitments and does not want to take on the role now as his circumstances may change over next 3 months. DT would still like to be involved either as a Governor in the future or, if that was not suitable, in project support.

Governors discussed the skills needed and the possibility of increasing the diversity of the governing body.

Agreed that JG and TB will present ideas relating to next appointments at a future meeting. 20 minute slot to be allocated.

JG/TB

Agreed to hold the position of co-opted governor open for 3 months and to reconsider DT's application with others in relation to requirements at that time. Letter to be drafted to DT thanking him for his frankness stating governors' intention to wait three months but to take up the offer of support in project management in the meantime.

SKi/ST

BH's term as Staff Governor ends on 31st October. ST thanked BH for her contribution over the last 4 years. The application process was discussed and governors agreed that the same process should be used as for other governors; however, the skills audit form should be amended so that the supporting statement asking what applicants could bring to the role has more prominence.

Agreed to start the process of recruitment, for the election to take place in early November. BH would be happy to continue in the role. Governing body meeting on 11 November would be a good opportunity to welcome the successful candidate.

GA/SKi/ST

5. Co-Chairing

The chair would normally have a casting vote for any difficult issues. It was suggested that the co-chairs should have one vote and that if the co-chairs did not agree they would abstain from their casting vote. Motion was agreed.

6. Living Wage

GA advised that living wage comes into effect at NCC from 1 October. There is money in the budget to accommodate this. Governors were asked to approve the introduction of the Living Wage. Unanimously approved.

7. Pay Policy

GA explained that the circulated pay policy is derived directly from Northumberland County Council's HR for Schools model pay policy, which reflects discussions between them and branch representatives of ATL, NASUWT and NUT. It is therefore identical to last year's policy with the additional accommodation of the following changes contained in the 2015 School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document, i.e.

- A 1% uplift to the minima of all the pay ranges and allowances in the national pay framework (unqualified teachers' range, main pay range, upper pay range, leading practitioner pay range, the three levels of teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payments and the special educational needs (SEN) allowances).
- A 2% uplift to the maxima of the main pay range; an uplift of 1% to the maxima of all other pay ranges and allowances in the national pay framework (unqualified teachers' range, upper pay range, leading practitioner pay range, the three levels of teaching and learning responsibility (TLR) payments and the special educational needs (SEN) allowances).

GA proposed that the FGB adhere to NCC's recommendation that schools comply with the national agreement between the National Employers Organisation for School Teachers (NEOST) and the nationally recognised Trade Unions including ASCL and NAHT in relation to the use of discretionary reference points, i.e. that they be subject to a 1% uplift.

Ian Harbottle at NCC's HR for Schools had advised GA that as a result of adopting the model policy and not making any material change to the previous year's policy, other than to accommodate the changes to the STPCD, there was no need to formally consult with staff. JG advised obtaining this in writing which GA agreed to do.

GA

8. Curriculum

AB presented an update for governors outlining changes to the curriculum offer.

The sixth form prospectus is to be released after October half term. In order to get a clearer indication of students' actual preferences, subjects which generally receive less than 8 applications will be listed separately to the blocks.

The governors noted SKe's email and indicated an intention to re-visit issues surrounding the curriculum offer in light of our financial position, early in the Spring Term.

9. Executive Headteacher's reports

GA informed governors that a final version of Chris Cottam's report had been received and would be circulated. CC had acknowledged misinterpreting requirements surrounding the SCR and has indicated full

approval of the SCR in her report.

JH asked about the current situation with seclusions for uniform. GA advised that although there are still some minor issues with uniform there was nothing like the amount of seclusions of the first few days of term.

JH asked about the behaviour policy. GA explained that an appropriate system was in place and, although there were occasional issues regarding the consistency of application by one or two staff, it was working well. At HMS last year there had been an issue with an over-dependency on supply staff; however, this has been resolved. In supply lessons behaviour was not so good so action was put into the development plan. The SIP noted exemplary behaviour at both schools when she visited.

10. Governor updates

GA advised that minutes from meetings of the HMS monitoring group, the QEHS monitoring group and the safeguarding group were due for circulation to wider GB. It was agreed that these would be circulated in good time in advance of FGB meetings where applicable.

CG

11. Any Other Business

DH asked that updated self-evaluation details be circulated following guidance from Jan Corlett. GA/AB/JM to action

GA/AB/JM

Governors moved to Part II of the agenda.

Chair
Date