

**HEXHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL AND QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL HARD FEDERATION**

**GOVERNING BODY MINUTES AUTUMN TERM 2015**

**MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER 2015 AT 6PM –  
A13, QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL**

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

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mr Andy Byers (Head of School - Associate Member)  
Mrs Judith Minto (Head of School - Associate Member)  
Mrs Sarah Sparke (School Business Manager)  
Mrs Charlotte Gaines (Clerk to the Governors)

**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 Jo Grey and Sandra Thompson.

**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:

11 November 2015 (Part 1)

**Matters arising from the minutes:**

TB advised that there had been initial correspondence regarding the involvement of the wider non-staff governing body in contributing to the Pay and Performance Committee's target-setting for the Executive Headteacher. An update will be provided at the January meeting.

TB/JG/ST

SKi requested confirmation that the racist incidents reports submitted to the local authority were for the last academic year. CG confirmed they were.

#### 4. Reflections on QEHS's short inspection

Governors discussed the short inspection. There was a brief consideration of the informal perspectives that had been shared by staff and parents. GA/AB believed that generally staff were disappointed but had moved on, but that the few parents who had fed back had felt reassured.

Governors felt that the letter, although positive throughout, was not as positive as the lead inspector had led Governors to believe and asked if the amendments requested by school had been included. GA confirmed that the first paragraph had been amended as had one other piece of detail.

Positive aspects with the impending HMS inspection in mind are that the text on governance is very positive as is the text on safeguarding.

PF observed that similarly ranked schools in The Sunday Times league tables were also rated Good with the exception of those with much older inspection results.

Governors discussed whether it would be appropriate to send a personal message from the governors thanking staff. GA/AB felt that linking this to Ofsted was not necessary but thanking staff would go down well. AB/GA/ST/Ski to discuss the possibility of sending Christmas cards or other alternative.

AB/GA/ST/Ski

Governors discussed whether achieving Outstanding was a realistic objective given the current Ofsted approach. GA stated that it was important to continue to use the inspection framework and the outstanding criteria as reference points in order to assess where the schools are at, and for the SIP to quality assure our self-evaluation.

#### 5. Governor Updates

It was agreed that questions in relation to the recently circulated minutes of the meetings of the HMS Monitoring Group, the QEHS Monitoring Group and the Safeguarding Group would be held over to the next meeting

Audit Committee papers were circulated this afternoon and not all governors had the opportunity to read them prior to the meeting. A full discussion of the implications of the budget forecasts will take place at the next governing body meeting.

Some items over £10,000 have been purchased - astro turf and SIMS - which will affect the QEHS outturn. Part of the expenditure on SIMS has to come from this year's budget, which had not been anticipated when the budget was originally prepared.

BH questioned whether previous budgets were accurate and asked if the replacement of the astro turf had been signed off. GA advised that SS had picked up some issues with budgets set before she took up post and was working through these with the Audit Committee. GA stated he is more confident in the appropriateness of budget setting as we go forward although noted that unexpected items will inevitably arise during a year. SKi stated that it was reassuring that SS was identifying the issues. SKi confirmed that correct procurement procedures have been followed for the replacement of the astro turf and SIMS.

## 6. Curriculum

AB advised of changes in curriculum. Almost all GCSE option subjects have new specifications from September 2016 making them more challenging, with a linear structure involving examinations at the end with very little coursework. Maths and English already had more time than other subjects because requirements in these subjects changed earlier. Looking ahead to 2016-17, the time allocation for subjects and the number of options to be undertaken by students will need to be determined. AB informed governors of his intention to obtain perspectives from curriculum leaders and to draw up models to bring to governors in January with a view to decisions being taken prior to the options process.

Governors decided to allocate some time during the next FGB meeting on 13 January for initial discussions, with a view to having a fuller discussion at a second meeting, date t.b.c. It was agreed that AB would circulate a briefing paper in advance of the 13<sup>th</sup>.

AB

## 7. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.

Part 1 of the meeting was concluded.

Governors moved to Part 2 of the agenda.

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**Chair**  
**Date**