

**Meeting of Full Governing Body  
25<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 4.30pm  
Training Room**

**MINUTES**

<b>Governors Present:</b>	Mick Baker, Richard Bradford, Jane Dickson, Alison Frost, Vanessa Hickey, Jennifer John, Dick Knight, Jenny Poore (Chair)
<b>Associate Members Present:</b>	Sue Middleton
<b>Officers Present:</b>	Teresa Dee (Clerk)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Roshan Dias

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p><b>a) Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies for absence received from Les Gunbie, Reg Hook, Rosie Reekie and Derek Swindells. There were two other Governors not in attendance which was thought to be due to confusion over change of date. The Clerk confirmed that the meeting was quorate with eight out of fourteen Governors present at the start of the meeting.</p> <p><b>b) Declarations of Interest</b> The declarations register was circulated. There were no declarations made relating to items on the agenda.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Last Meetings Dated 10<sup>th</sup> December, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019</b></p> <p><b>a) Approval of Minutes</b> The Full Governing Body reviewed and approved three sets of minutes: One page from the extraordinary meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Seven pages of minutes from the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2018. Two pages of minutes from the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019. The Chair signed all three sets of minutes as confirmation of their accuracy.</p> <p><b>b) Matters Arising Not Included Elsewhere on Agenda</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers Pay Policy - The Chair confirmed that this had been approved under her delegated authority.</li> <li>• Headteacher Appointment - Matt Hillier had accepted the position of Headteacher from 1<sup>st</sup> September and pre employment checks had been completed,</li> </ul>	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Chair's Update</b> The Chair updated Governors on business conducted on behalf of the Governing Body since the last meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and Safety - Instruction had been received from the Local Authority regards adoption of the revised health and safety policy by 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The Chair confirmed that she was happy to take Chair's action on approving this. There was a question regards the changes to policy and in response it was advised that there were changes around risk assessment, logging of training, record keeping and instructions from management. Another requirement was for a health and safety committee to be established in school.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A discussion followed about the serious case at another school that had led to the changes to health and safety policy, this covered various issues arising from the coroners' report and what changes to practice were being put in place at Dorothy Stringer in response. This included a review of the appraisal process for non teaching staff.</li> <li>• Governors asked about insurance arrangements for covering accidents and were advised that the Local Authority policy arrangements were in place. Separate insurance for Dolawen Centre was held.</li> <li>• A whole Governing Body training session on health and safety responsibilities was being arranged.</li> <li>• The Chair had several discussions with the incoming Headteacher who was very pleased to be joining the school. The two deputy heads had met with him at his current school.</li> </ul>	
4	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>The Headteacher presented his report to Governors in the usual format covering all aspects of the school development plan. The following points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student progress data from data collection five showed predicted GCSE grades 4+ in English and Maths dipped from 79% to 74%.</li> <li>• Main concern was around Maths following the first mock exam. A second mock had just been completed and it appeared that there had been improvement. School leaders remained concerned, however. It was noted that the amount of content in Maths GCSE was too great to cover it all within lessons and that this would most likely create some uncertainty for teachers when making predictions.</li> <li>• The effect of taking out students with attendance lower than 85% from the data was that predictions rose to 82% for GCSE grades 4+ in English and Maths.</li> <li>• Some good news within disadvantaged student data with an improved predicted progress 8 score.</li> <li>• School would be fully staffed from September with some good appointments made.</li> <li>• Student attendance remained an issue, the year started well and then was impacted by the split Christmas holiday and the student climate change protest. Governors asked about the school policy on dealing with students leaving school to attend the protest. In response it was advised that absences could not be authorised but if parents gave permission students would be allowed to leave site. They would be expected however to do something more and make some personal changes to impact positively on the climate. Around 600 students had left site for the first day and all parents had been contacted creating a significant amount of work. The second time parental permission was required to leave site and around 300 students were signed out on the day, a further 300 were attending the dance show that afternoon.</li> <li>• Further information was given about the five looked after children on role as requested by Governors. This included their backgrounds, personal needs and progress at school both in behaviour and learning. There was one student within the group that was being educated offsite. There was a brief discussion about students that were unable to attend school due to anxiety noting that there were around 20 at Dorothy Stringer including around seven in year 11 that the School had not seen since key stage 3 and one that had never attended the school. These students remained on school role as a policy of Brighton and Hove that differed from other Local Authorities.</li> <li>• School leaders were looking at assessment within key stage 3 as an additional item to the original school development plan. Also looking at further development of the use of attitude for learning.</li> </ul> <p>Governors commented on frustrations with the fundraising strategy for the school which was essential in view of the school's financial restraints. The parent that had been supporting with fundraising had commented that engagement of a dedicated part time staff member would be</p>	

	<p>ideal to keep the momentum going. There were suggestions to consider a university student on a work placement for fundraising or have a commission-based salary.</p> <p><b>ACTION - The lead governor for fundraising requested that the notes from recent meetings with staff on fundraising be sent to him.</b></p>	RBr
5	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p><b>a) Business Manager’s Report</b></p> <p>The Business Manager presented his report to Governors supported by a written analysis of the 2018/19 overspend position which detailed the various factors that had impacted on the overall position and a first draft budget plan for three years from 2019/20. The following points were included in discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current overspend forecast £377k. This had arisen from previous incorrect accounting procedures and set budgets.</li> <li>• The main impact on budget had come from catering. An independent catering consultant had projected income and expenditure, but these had not been replicated in the school’s financial management system (FMS). The figures that catering team had been working to were accurate and they maintained good records. Governors expressed concern at the amount of variance on the catering accounting figures within FMS.</li> <li>• Free school meals and parental deposits for meals had not been drawn down monthly which was also a concern for Governors who asked about the checks and balances in place and external audit processes. It was advised that the Local Authority provided an audit process for schools. It was stressed that there was no loss on catering. Going forward the catering manager’s figures would be reconciled with FMS on a regular basis. The same would happen for lettings and uniform sales where there were also current issues in accounting procedures.</li> <li>• Income codes had been set up in budget based on historic transactions that were one off such as the teaching school alliance grant. There were some additional income items such as the teachers’ pay grant that had not been expected.</li> <li>• Staffing currently over just two cost centres that had made it difficult to analyse what spent on areas such as invigilators. Separate lines would be incorporated into the 2019/20 budget.</li> <li>• The Local Authority had been made fully aware of the recent findings and had been supportive and helpful in working towards a budget recovery plan.</li> <li>• The expectation was that the deficit would be eliminated within three years. A multi-year summary had been provided within the report based on current known figures. Governors noted a reduction in year 1 and 2 and then an increase in year 3. It was advised that year 3 was the first year that the school would not have the additional students through the agreed temporary increase in admission numbers.</li> <li>• Governors queried that on face value it appeared that no savings were being made in year 1 as the deficit reduction was equivalent to the one-off costs identified in the current budget. In response it was advised that there was an increase in staffing costs within the year 1 budget due to inflation. In addition, there would be an increase in teachers pensions that had not been incorporated yet as these were to be reimbursed. The Headteacher advised that a retiring senior member of staff was not going replaced and that this would bring about a saving.</li> <li>• The target for 2019/20 budget was for the deficit to reduce to £250k.</li> <li>• Use of artificial turf pitch for the school to run their own league might be financially beneficial.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes being made within the caretaking arrangements to create for efficiencies relating to the lets. There was scope to make reductions within the caretaking team through a restructure resulting in potential cost savings of £60k pa. A consultation was being prepared for this which would require governor involvement.</li> </ul> <p><b>AGREEMENT/ ACTION - Consultation on caretaking team structure to commence 10<sup>th</sup> April with meeting of a governor panel on 17<sup>th</sup> May and 31<sup>st</sup> May. Appeals panel meeting if required to be held on 17<sup>th</sup> June. Jenny Poore and Dick Knight to be on the first panel and Mick Baker on the appeals panel. Further members required to bring each panel to three governors.</b></p> <p>The Headteacher commented that when the Teaching School Alliance was set up it was not done as a trust and instead Dorothy Stringer School took on responsibility for Alliance staff contracts.</p> <p>Governors noted the first draft three-year budget and looked forward to receiving the final budget for approval before revised deadline set for submission.</p> <p>Roshan Dias was thanked for the work that he had undertaken in clarifying the budget and uncovering the accounting anomalies. A regular update was requested. There was a discussion about getting support for the Governing Body with budget monitoring. There were currently two co-opted vacancies which could be filled by someone with appropriate business and financial expertise.</p> <p><b>b) Notes from Business Group Meeting</b> Notes from the Business Group meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> February had been circulated. The contents of these were noted.</p> <p><b>c) Financial Projections</b> A projected financial outturn summary based on the available data to period 10 was considered by Governors under item 5a above.</p> <p><b>d) Schools Financial Value Standard</b> A school's financial value standard (SFVS) return was proposed for approval subject to the completion of two questions relating to financial experience and expertise within the Governing Body. It was agreed that financial expertise could be improved across the Governing Body and that actions relating to recruitment and training should be incorporated within the SFVS return prior to submission.</p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the SFVS as presented subject to the addition of actions relating to the first two questions. The Chair would sign a final copy as confirmation prior to submission.</b></p>	RD, JP, DK, MB
6	<p><b>School Visits</b></p> <p>It was mentioned that the electronic log of governor visits was not being maintained and that it did not accurately reflect the activity of Governors who were regularly visiting. Jane Dickson advised that she had visited the school as a new Governor and Alison Frost advised that she had met with school lead on safeguarding.</p> <p>There was also comment that the Governors' SLG could do with some updating to make easier to use for Governors along with the Governor pages on the website.</p> <p><b>ACTION - Clerk to meet with IT school lead to review the Governors SLG and website pages, facilitated by the Headteacher. Updates to be made by 1<sup>st</sup> September.</b></p>	RBr/TD

7	<p><b>Policies Approved of for Approval</b></p> <p>a) <b>Charging &amp; Remissions</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the charging and remissions policy without amendment to the main body of the policy.</b></p> <p>b) <b>Staff Discipline</b> c) <b>Staff Grievance</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved both the staff discipline procedures and staff grievance procedures without amendment to the Local Authority model documents.</b></p> <p>d) <b>Equality Policy (incl. Accessibility Plan)</b> e) <b>Equality Information &amp; Objectives</b></p> <p><b>AGREEMENT/ACTION - Approval of the equality policy and information and objectives was postponed to the next Full Governing Body meeting as the link governor was not available at the meeting to propose them for approval.</b></p>	LG/JP
8	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>a) <b>Artsmark</b> Jane Dickson was meeting with Chris Lee regards the school's application for an artsmark award.</p> <p>b) <b>Link Governors</b> New Governor roles for new Governors requiring confirmation.</p> <p>Meeting ended at 6.45pm Dates of next meetings - Strategy 20<sup>th</sup> May, Full Governing Body 8<sup>th</sup> July.</p>	