

## Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body of Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College held on 21 September 2017 at 17.00 hours

**Those Present:** Peter Sowrey (PS) (Chair), Ashley Harrold (AH), Addy Balogun (AB), Fiona Bauermeister (FB), Andrew Wallace (AW), Lee Redmond (LR), Gareth Chan (GC), Richard Goodsell (RG), Richard Mills (RM), Claire Harrington (CH) and Janet Such (JS).

**In attendance:** Lindsey Thompson (LT – staff) and David Harvey (DH – clerk).

**Also present:** None

**Quorum:** 11 out of 14 governors present with 1 vacancy – meeting was quorate throughout.

### 0. Apologies for Absence.

Peter Gerry (PG), Sally Hunt (SHu), Ruth King (RK – staff), Sarah Hextall (SHX – school business manager) and John Barker (JB) had sent their apologies for absence which were accepted.

### 1. Urgent business

PS welcomed JS and CH to the meeting, informing the FBG that both had been appointed as co-opted and staff governors respectively, with effect from 21 September 2017.

### 2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

DH reported that he had received nominations in support of PS and AB for the roles of Chair and Vice Chair respectively (noting that PG had signalled separately his intention to stand down as Vice Chair). DH invited PS and AB to leave the room whilst governors discussed and voted on their candidatures. The FBG unanimously decided to elect both PS and AB to these positions and invited them back into the room to be advised of these decisions and be congratulated on their appointments.

### 3. Declarations of interest – None.

### 4. Minutes

- 4.1. The minutes of the meetings of 13 July 2017 (main set and confidential annex) were agreed by governors as a true record and duly signed by the Chair.

### 5. Matters Arising

- Consideration of governor involvement in school equalities policy and work – done. LR agreed to become the link governor on equalities.

## **MAIN SET (of minutes)**

- Electronic circulation of H&S report and governor role paper to all – significant work in progress.
- Carrying out of risk assessments on e.g. school productions and sports activities – to be done.
- Devising of governors' school visit programme – to be discussed at present meeting.
- Reinstating of school events dates advisory system for governors – done.
- Post 16 report questions to DH for submission to AH – to be discussed at present meeting.
- Taking forward of collaborative agreement with HPS – to be done.
- Rescheduling of 9 November 2016 as first meeting of PPC – governors agreed that this be re-arranged to 6 November.
- Enquiry to the LA about the school complaints policy, with regard to an admission of handling a situation better – work in progress, linked to issues with regard to the school's Service Level Agreement (SLA).

### **6. Any matters arising not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda – None.**

### **7. Governing Board Code of Conduct**

DH explained that the draft circulated for governors' consideration was based on a generic text produced by the National Governor's Association (NGA) in July and had been adapted for use by the FBG. Governors declared the draft as approved for 2017/2018 and the Chair signed it on their behalf. The Chair asked that it be transmitted to the school for publishing on the school website

### **8. School Budget update**

On behalf of SHX, AH informed the FBG that the Finance Committee would be sent the latest outturn figures for their meeting of 25 September. AH reported that the budget was moving in the right direction, drawing attention to the licensed deficit figure of £220K. AH believed however that the school might not need to draw on this entire figure, given that school was working hard to identify savings in all areas.

AH reported that the current outturn forecast a deficit of £143K, which did not include payment of increments (estimated at £30K to £40K) – a truer picture of the estimated deficit by the end of the year looked like being £180K. AH warned governors that, although the picture was more positive, there would still be difficult decisions to take; not least because the school would be obliged to pay back this deficit over a three year period.

AH informed the FBG that the local authority (LA) had recently informed all schools in Brighton and Hove that it would no longer authorise licensed deficits from this year onwards.

## MAIN SET (of minutes)

Governors asked what figure the school was likely to carry forward into the next financial year. AH stated that this information was not yet available. AH added that most secondary schools in the city were carrying licensed deficits, the amounts of which ranged widely. AH also drew attention to the government's National Funding Formula (NFF) plans, which indicated a positive result for the school, i.e. a 1% increase.

### *Pay increase*

AH highlighted the fact that all schools in the city had budgeted for a 1% increase to pay, for all scales. AH informed the FBG that the LA had proposed an increase of 2% for teaching staff at the bottom and top of the main scale, i.e. M1 and M6, but had not made it clear whether this applied to the points in between, i.e. M2, M3, M4 and M5.

AH stated however that this increase had not been funded and headteachers had told the LA that this needed to happen if it were to be paid. For Blatchington Mill, such an additional payment would amount to a bill of approximately £30K. AH stated that the LA would be making a decision on this issue very shortly; meanwhile circulation of the model pay policy (normally due at this time) had been delayed because of this difficulty. AH reiterated the school valued teachers, and agreed that nationally and locally pay rises were vital for teaching staff whose wages had not matched inflation.

## 9. Headteacher report

(Note – This section of the minutes appears in a confidential annex)

## 10. Long Term Financial Strategy

- 10.1. AH stated that an update on the Teaching and Learning Responsibilities (TLR) would be provided to the Finance Committee, for it to consider at its meeting of 25 September. AH added that this review had been an opportunity to resolve a number of inconsistencies across the school.
- 10.2. The Chair recalled that a similar review had been conducted of the administrative section of the school. Now other structural issues were being examined, of which TLR was one aspect.

## 11. Teaching School Alliance (TSA)

- 11.1. AH informed the FBG that there would be an official launch of the TSA at the school on 29 September, to which all governors were invited. AH spoke briefly of the Strategic School Improvement Delivery (SSID) hub and coordinating bids to access funding.
- 11.2. Governors asked for what purpose this money could be used. AH stated that it could be spent on maintaining higher staffing levels to allow outreach work with other schools, or hiring experts to improve teaching outcomes.

## 12. Safeguarding

- 12.1. AH asked that this item be deferred to the next meeting, given the absence of RK. The Chair agreed this request.

## **MAIN SET (of minutes)**

### **13. Committees' membership**

- 13.1. The Chair noted the FBG's agreement to keep the membership the same as the previous year. In addition, the Chair welcomed LR's to join the Pay and Personnel Committee (PPC); also JS to join the Finance Committee; finally AB's decision to step down from the Recruitment Committee. The Chair recalled too that AB, JB and FB were members of the headteacher appraisal committee.
- 13.2. Governors suggested forming a working party to take forward the Sixth Form proposal. The Chair noted that FB, RG, RM, AB, CH, AH, and RK would take part. AH informed governors that he would be meeting Hove Park on 22 September to take forward the Post 16 issue.

### **14. Renewal of Co-opted Governors Terms of Office**

- 14.1. The Chair noted the imminent expiry of AB, JB, FB and PG's terms of office as co-opted governors (8 November 2017) and that all four wished to have these renewed for another four years. Acknowledging the FBG's support, the Chair approved renewal of these four terms of office; i.e. 9 November 2017 to 8 November 2021.

### **15. School Visits Programme**

- 15.1. The Chair spoke of the importance of putting in place such a programme, linked to the school development plan. This term, these visits could be linked to 'getting to know you' – to allow a group of governors to see how the school was run; e.g. attend classes and speak to the students. The Chair agreed that these visits could take place in either the morning or afternoon, to best suit governors' availability. AH suggested this programme start after half term. Governors agreed that dates for a morning and an afternoon visit in November would be circulated to all, for them to sign up.

### **16. School policies**

- 16.1. AH noted that the pay policy was not yet approved, which was based on the LA model template. AH asked that the PPC be delegated authority from the FBG to approve this policy, when it was issued. The Chair noted the FBG's support for this proposal and agreed the request.

### **17. Governor training**

- 17.1. The Chair noted that the LA Governor Support Unit summary of training for the next two months had been circulated to all governors. AH highlighted the one on disadvantaged students and recommended attendance.

### **18. Any other business**

- 18.1. None.

### **Actions**

- Transmission of Governing Board Code of Conduct to school for

## MAIN SET (of minutes)

publishing on website – DH

- Recirculation of Committee membership list to FBG members – DH
- Notification of co-opted governors' terms of office renewal to LA – DH
- Circulation of dates morning and afternoon visit to the school by governors

**Next meeting** – Thursday 14 December at 17.00 hours (Exam data – full picture)

These minutes are an accurate reflection of the meeting.

Signed ...

Position ...

Date ...