

BEAUMONT SCHOOL (Company Number 8104190)
MINUTES OF MEETING OF GOVERNORS HELD ON
Wednesday 13th July 2016 at 7.00pm

Governors Present:

Alex Hall (“AHa”) (Chair), Liz Hitch (“EHi”), Martin Atkinson (“MAt”), Mike Cameron (“MCa”), Gary Kellett (“GKe”), Lianne Sherwood (“LSH”), Ian Johnston (“IJo”), Catherine Hopkin (“CHo”), Cate Davies (“CDa”), Natalie Moody (“NMo”), David Lee (“DLe”), John McAlister (“JMI”) and Hannah Henry (“HHe”).

In attendance:

Charles Cross (“CCr”) (items 1 – 6)
 Simone Kilka-Green (“SKi”)

Assistant Headteacher
 Clerk to the Governing Body

Actions Agreed at the meeting:

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1	AWa and JMI to discuss the best way to put the proposal on GB self-evaluation into effect.	AWa/JMI	For the Extended Meeting in March 2017
2	EHi to ensure that a statement is put on the website that parents should contact the school if they need any additional support in accessing school events and information and also that an up to date version of the Equality Objectives Action Plan is put on the website.	AWa/JMI	By the end of the summer term
3	AHa to insert provision for a change of the BeauSandVer name in the event that one of the schools were to withdraw from the Education Trust into the articles for the Trust and discuss it with the other schools.	AHa	ASAP
4	EHi to liaise with the Sandringham and Verulam on amending the letter to parents regarding the BeauSandVer Education Trust.	EHi	ASAP
5	Multi-academy Trust Working Party consisting of MCa, JMI, DLe, GKe, EHi and MAt to meet on 9 th September 2016 at 12.30 to discuss the school’s options on Multi-academy Trusts and report back to the next FGB meeting on 15 th September 2016.	MAT Working Party	9 th September 2016 at 12.30pm then report to the next FGB meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Alison Wallis (“AWa”), Torie Stewart (“VSt”), Karen Trounson (“KTr”) and Rena Prindiville (“RPr”); consent was given to their absence. All other Governors were present at the meeting.

2. Declaration of any conflict of interest foreseen in relation to agenda items

and undertaking to declare any that arises in the course of the meeting- Governors were reminded that anyone with a conflict of interest must declare it, withdraw from the meeting and take no part in any discussion or decision on the matter. None were declared.

Actions

3. To receive notification of any other business for item 17

No additional business was raised for the meeting but AHa asked Governors to consider whether it would be appropriate for a note to be sent to staff about the anticipated impact of Brexit and the desire to protect the school’s ethos.

4. Approval of minutes of the meeting on 26th May 2016 and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting on 26th May 2016 were agreed as drafted.

The action points from the meeting were considered as follows:

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
1	HHe to review the school's complaints file and report to the next meeting.	HHe	Next meeting	Completed and on agenda.
2	AWa to pursue the discussions further with JMI about the best way to put the proposal on self-evaluation into effect.	AWa/JMI	For the next meeting	It was noted that AWa and JMI will discuss this to put it into effect for the extended meeting in March 2017.
3	MCa to prepare a further paper for the July FGB meeting regarding the existing Multi-Academy Trust structures, to be circulated as an early paper so that questions can be circulated by email in advance of the meeting.	MCa	ASAP	Completed and on agenda.
4	EHi to ensure that a statement is put on the website that parents should contact the school if they need any additional support in accessing school events and information and also that an up to date version of the Action Plan is put on the website.	EHi	ASAP	EHi will carry this action forward and aim to complete it by the end of term.

AWa/JMI

EHi

5. Student and House Leadership Update

EHi reported that for next year the charities area of student and house leadership will be dealt with by Nick Woolley. Ed Panting will be in charge of houses and Paul De Kort will be in charge of 6th Form Captains.

It was agreed that this will continue to be a standing item on FGB agendas in case any students wish to attend or there are matters of note.

6. Consideration of the report on the results of the stakeholder surveys carried out during the academic year

Governors had considered the reports on the Ofsted questionnaires of parents and staff and noted that both were extremely positive.

EHi reminded Governors that the school used to carry out Kirkland Rowell surveys, but there are expensive and the questions asked were restricted, although they do have the advantage of being benchmarked nationally. Governors discussed this and it was agreed that although the current method of surveying is achieving a good number of responses across the school, it could be advantageous to carry out the Kirkland Rowell surveys periodically (every 3 years was suggested) in order to have the national benchmarking.

It was agreed that the staff survey is extremely encouraging, particularly in the current financial climate of the school.

Governors thanked CCr for attending them meeting and indicated that they had few comments or questions on the papers as the surveys were so positive. CCr left the meeting.

7. Committee reports and updates:

A. Resources

Governors had considered the minutes of the last Committee meeting which had been distributed prior to the meeting. It was asked whether the grant from Wolfson was announced after the meeting, it was noted that it was after the meeting. There were no further questions arising.

B. Community, Teaching and Learning

Governors had considered the minutes of the last Committee meeting which had been distributed prior to the meeting. There were no questions arising.

8. FAB Project

a) Update (verbal) on the progress of the FAB Project

b) Consideration of the updated Project Budget

Governors had considered the updated Project Budget spreadsheet which had been distributed prior to the meeting.

AHa reported that the sports hall is still on track for the school to take beneficial occupation on 15th August 2016 with the formal handover on 3rd September 2016.

On the latest costs position, it was noted that there are ongoing discussions with the costs consultant, the project manager and the contractor about the claimed additional costs resulting from the matriculation error. They are meeting on 22nd July to discuss that further, and the school's position is that nothing is agreed until there is clarity on the costs and design impact. That is demonstrated by the minutes of the CPT meetings.

AHa confirmed that those discussions will not delay completion of the project and the school has been ensuring that the proposed mitigation does not affect the quality of the build. It was noted that the experience and recommendation of other schools is to carefully review the final elements of the build such as doors (including openers), carpets and lighting as these are often areas where contractors will seek to cut costs but these are also very visible items in the finished building.

AHa informed Governors that Charles Church has gone very quiet after having signed the S106 Agreement just before the last FGB meeting. It was noted that many housing developers are in a difficult position post Brexit, and the impact of that on the school is the continuing interest on the sums drawn down from HCC.

Governors noted the remaining contingency within the project budget and discussed the perceived level of risk in the remaining works. A question was raised about the school's response if the handover is later than expected. MAAt confirmed that although it would involve him in a lot of work on the timetable, the school could manage.

Governors also questioned the risk of the access road not being built by Charles Church. It was noted that the impact of that on the school is the restriction on the community use of the new sports hall which is part of the S106 Agreement. If necessary the school could seek to amend that restriction in due course.

AHa reported that on the playing fields, the school has been pressing HCC to ensure that its contractor finishes off all the snagging work and completes the sand grooving works (to improve the drainage on the natural pitches) during the summer break. The school has made clear to HCC that it is unhappy with the delays on that to date.

AHa informed Governors that the school has been asked to be party to a licence granted to Taylor Wimpey (the developer on the proposed Oaklands College development) to carry out remedial works in the Beaumont Wood area. The licence is to be given by HCC but the school will be a party in order to have the benefit of

warranties etc. That was noted and agreed.

MAAt reported that he has recently visited the sports hall and was delighted with the build and the finish.

9. Chair's Update including:

- a) Update on BSV discussions on Educational Trusts
- b) Review of new governor induction pack and induction process
- c) Update on the work of the 80 in '18 Steering Committee on the Beaumont School Sponsorship Catalogue
- d) To note the new obligation on the school to register Governors' details on the new National Database of Governors with effect from September 2016

Governors had considered the Chair's Report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting and which dealt with all the items set out on the agenda in a different order as follows:

1. Start time for Governing Body meetings

The start time of meetings had been debated at the last meeting and a compromise of 6.45 for FGB meetings was agreed. Various views on that decision were expressed and it was noted that the start time is a balance between the various pressures on Governors but that Governors with childcare issues or travel delays should be able to send apologies for later arrival at meetings.

AHa proposed that Governors vote on a proposal to change FGB meetings to commence at 6.30pm. 8 Governors voted in favour with 5 abstentions. The vote was therefore approved.

It was agreed that the position will be reviewed at the end of the next academic year, or earlier if Governors feel it appropriate to do so.

2. Governor Visits Procedure

Governors had considered the procedure which had been circulated in advance of the meeting and had noted the comments in the Chair's Report about the importance of visits. It was agreed that the procedure was approved as drafted.

3. Fundraising and Sponsorship

Governors discussed the 'catalogue' of sponsorship products and noted that the fundraising strategy group (formed of IJo, AHa, EHi, MAAt, Julie Wells (School Business Manager) and a parent at the school - Strafford Watson) would make decisions on what sponsors are appropriate to accept bearing in mind the school's ethos and reputation. Certain categories of advertising would not be acceptable, for example tobacco, alcohol, fast food, loans etc.

The question of whether the consent of Governors should be obtained was debated and it was agreed that the strategy group will have the authority to make those decisions, on the understanding that the group will consult the FGB if there are any areas of concern, and the terms and conditions of the advertising will permit the school to terminate the arrangements at its discretion.

4. Multi-Academy Trusts

It was noted that this is on the agenda for later in the meeting.

5. BeauSandVer Education Trust

Governors had considered the articles of association for BeauSandVer Education Trust and the letter to be sent to parents the following week, both of which had been distributed prior to the meeting.

AHa explained that he had been involved in drafting the articles of association and had negotiated them with

the other two schools. The structure will be that the Headteachers and Chairs of Governors from each school will be directors and the three schools will be the members of the Trust. It was noted that the articles contain various safeguards in relation to the decisions made by the Trust and that the protocols which will bind each of the schools have to be unanimously agreed – there are existing protocols in place which have been agreed. EHi confirmed that there should be no significant changes to the current arrangements.

Governors queried the purpose of the Trust and it was noted that it is largely for branding, to cement the existing relationship and give the consortium an updated feel. The formation of the Trust would not prevent any one of the three schools joining or forming a Multi-academy Trust.

Governors asked how the Trust can be dissolved and it was noted that any of the schools could withdraw but if that were to occur then the name BeauSandVer would remain within the Trust company.

It was agreed that continued use of the BeauSandVer name, if one of the schools were to withdraw, would not be acceptable and AHa agreed to insert provision for that into the articles and discuss it with the other schools. *AHa*

It was noted that the letter which had been circulated will be sent out to parents at all 3 schools on Monday 18th July 2016. The timing was discussed and it was noted that although the end of term is a busy time for parents, it was the best time for it to be sent. It was agreed that the first part of the sentence about reassuring parents will be deleted. EHi agreed to liaise with the other schools on that amendment. *EHi*

6. Review of new governor induction pack and induction process

Governors had noted the content of the standard new governor induction pack which it was agreed was comprehensive and there were no comments arising.

7. National Database of Governors

Governors noted that the school will be required to include Governors' personal details on the newly created national database of governors. All Governors consented to their details being included.

8. Community Governors

It was noted that there are currently two community governor vacancies and one parent governor vacancy for which there will be a parent governor election in the autumn term. AHa suggested that the community governor vacancies be discussed further in the autumn term.

9. Committee Structure

It was noted that it had been agreed that the new two committee structure would be reviewed at the end of this academic year to ensure that the structure is working. It was agreed that generally the structure is working well and, although some meetings do exceed the 2 hour maximum, that should be reduced next year if Governors are able to email comments on policies that are due for review in advance of the meetings.

Governors noted that the strategy group, which meets once per term, reviews all the agendas for that term and it was suggested that the group could also consider themes for the whole year.

10. Review of the year

AHa thanked Governors for all their work during what has been a very successful year. It was agreed that the all weather pitch and MUGA are excellent additions to the school's facilities and the school is looking forward to taking possession of the new sports hall.

Governors thanked AHa for all his work over the year both for the governing body and also the whole school.

10. Head's Report including approval of the Plan for School Improvement for 2016-17

Governors had considered the Head's report which had been circulated in advance of the meeting together

with the fixed period exclusion data, the content of which were noted and on which there were no questions arising.

EHi circulated to the meeting a confidential report on staffing changes for September 2016 and took Governors through the changes. Governors queried whether the retention of staff in light of the nationwide issues with teacher recruitment should be a strategic priority for the governing body. That was discussed and it was noted that the staff turnover figures are very low, that staff may leave for promotion and that staff leaving does create opportunities for the progression of more junior staff.

It was agreed that staff retention is an operational matter for the school rather than a strategic matter but that the strong teaching and learning in the school is an excellent indicator that there is no issue with staff retention, and the staff surveys indicate that staff enjoy working at the school.

It was noted that the school priorities are the budget and staff recruitment which is assisted by a healthy School's Direct scheme within the school.

The Plan for School Improvement for 2016-17 was noted and was formally approved.

11. Discussion of papers on Multi-academy Trusts

Governors had considered the papers prepared by MCa and EHi both of which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

Each of the papers was discussed and Governors noted the points of view expressed in each of the papers and the reasons for, and risks of, converting to a Multi-academy Trust. The impact of the recent change of Prime Minister was discussed and it was agreed that it could impact on the Government's deadlines, but is unlikely to alter the final intention.

The points agreed during the discussion were that the school would not want to delay and be 'left behind' and overall the intention is that the school should be in control of its own future.

It was agreed that further detailed consideration should be given to the options open to the school in terms of what type of school, their location and their status (outstanding/good/requires improvement or a mix thereof) etc. the school could contemplate forming a Multi-academy Trust with. It was noted that a discussion or meeting with Martin Post, the Regional Schools Commissioner for North West London and South Central England (which includes Hertfordshire), could be useful to ascertain what he envisages for the St Albans and Harpenden schools. It was noted that the Regional School's Commissioner is a very powerful position and EHi reported that Martin Post has asked all schools in the area to confirm to him by 22nd July 2016 what their position is on Multi-academy Trusts.

MCa informed Governors that the Government's Education Committee has opened a Parliamentary inquiry on Multi-academy Trusts and has invited written submissions on various areas including their role and how their performance should be assessed. It was agreed that the results of that inquiry would be very useful in assessing how the school should approach this question.

It was agreed that a MAT Working Party consisting of MCa, JMI, DLe, GKe, EHi and MAt will meet on 9th September 2016 at 12.30pm to discuss the position further and look in particular at the rationale for forming a Multi-academy Trust. Individual members of the MAT Working Party will collate information prior to that meeting and then the working party will report back to the next FGB meeting on 15th September 2016.

*MAT
Working
Party*

Governors thanked MCa and EHi for their excellent papers.

12. Approval of the budget for 2016-17 as recommended by the Resources Committee

Governors had considered the budget and accompanying report both of which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the budget had been considered in detail by the Resources Committee and was recommended to the FGB for approval.

It was noted that the budget contains an in year deficit of £180,000 and that the school has been doing all it can to reduce that deficit. Governors thanked the Senior Leadership Team and the School Business Manager for all their work on that whilst ensuring as little impact on teaching and learning as possible. It was noted that many other schools are in the same position and that Schools Forum has already had to bail out other schools in a worse financial position. The budget was approved as drafted.

13. Safeguarding – update

EHi reported that there are no issues on safeguarding which Governors need to be aware of.

14. Report on Governor review of the school’s complaints file

HHe reported that she has attended school to review the complaints file for the period January to June 2016. During that period there were 7 complaints (compared to 17 in the previous 6 months), there were no recurring themes to those complaints and all were well documented, addressed and closed.

HHe thanked Mandy Watt for all her work on the complaints file.

15. Policies – consideration and approval of the following policies (bearing in mind the responsibility to carry out an equality impact assessment in accordance with the school’s Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010):

a) Policy on the Exercise of Employer’s Discretion (due July 2016) (recommended by the Resources Committee)

Governors had considered the Policy on the Exercise of Employer’s Discretion which had been distributed prior to the meeting. It was noted that the policy was recommended by the Resources Committee and it was approved.

b) Governors Visits Procedure (due June 2016)

It was noted that the Governors Visits Procedure was approved under agenda item 9 above.

It was agreed that the policy and procedure approved at the meeting do not have any disproportionate benefit or detriment and do not contain any discriminatory statements or adverse impacts. A statement to this effect will be included in the policy and procedure as confirmation they have undergone an equality impact assessment in accordance with the school’s Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

16. Governor Development Co-ordinator Update

LSh reported that exclusions and safeguarding training is mostly up to date, those Governors who need training have either booked a course or plan to do so.

17. To receive any other business as notified in item 3

There was no additional business raised. AHa thanked all Governors and the Senior Leadership Team for their continued diligence excellent work for the school. He also thanked NMo for her contribution as a staff Governor as it was noted that this was her last meeting before the end of her term of office.

18. Date of next meeting

Staff room drinks – Friday 9th September 2.30 – 3.30pm

FGB - Thursday 15th September 2016 6.45pm

Secondary Transfer Evening – Wednesday 5th October 5.45 – 8.45pm

There being no further business, AHa declared the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Dated:.....