

BEAUMONT SCHOOL (Company Number 8104190)
MINUTES OF MEETING OF GOVERNORS HELD ON
Wednesday 18th March 2015 at 7.00pm

Governors Present:

Alex Hall (“AHa”) (Chair), Alison Wallis (“AWa”), Liz Hitch (“EHi”), Martin Atkinson (“MAt”), Chris Aikman (“CAi”), Mike Cameron (“MCA”), Karen Trounson (“KTr”), Natasha Armstrong (“NAr”), Gary Kellett (“GKe”), John McAlister (“JMI”), Carolyn Morris (“CMo”), Catherine Hopkin (“CHO”), Hannah Henry (“HHe”), Rena Prindiville (“RPr”), Ian Johnston (“IJo”) and David Lee (“DLe”).

In attendance:

Simone Kilka-Green (“SKi”)
 Lewis Curtis-Thomas (“LCa”) (items 7 – 12)

Clerk to the Governing Body
 Chair of the Sixth Form Council

Actions Agreed at the meeting:

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1	MMc to give a 15 minute training session on the new SEN Code of Practice at the start of the next FGB meeting.	MMc	Next meeting
2	AHa to check with HCC that the costs of any remedial works to the playing fields after their handover to the school would be paid out of FAB project funds.	AHa	ASAP
3	SKi to circulate to all Governors the boards showing the proposed Phase 2 FAB works.	SKi	ASAP

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Morag McCrorie (“MMc”), Steve Jump (“SJU”), Natalie Moody (“NMo”) and Lianne Sherwood (“LSH”). Consent was given to their absence. It was noted that the meeting was quorate.

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 was declared.

3. To receive notification of any other business for item 13

Actions

EHi raised one confidential item.

4. Presentation on the new SEN Code of Practice

It was agreed that, as MMc was absent from the meeting, this presentation will be given at the next FGB meeting. *MMc*

5. Approval of minutes of the meetings on 15th January 2015 including Part 2 minutes and matters arising and the notes of the Extended Meeting on 26th February

The minutes of the meeting on 15th January 2015 were agreed as drafted. A Governor sought confirmation about the statement in the minutes on page 3 that “*HCC is secure with the contractual position with Charles Church*”, AHa confirmed that the statement is an accurate reflection of the position stated by an HCC Officer.

The action points from the meeting were considered as follows:

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
1	MCA to send out links to some useful background reading for Governors on becoming an Academy Sponsor.	MCA	ASAP	Completed.
2	MMc to give a 15 minute training session on the new SEN Code of Practice at the start of the next FGB meeting.	MMc	Next meeting	To be given at the next meeting.
3	AHa to check with HCC that the costs of any remedial works to the playing fields after their handover to the school would be paid out of FAB project funds.	AHa	ASAP	To be confirmed at the next FAB meeting.
4	Questions on the SED for the Extended Meeting to be emailed to SKi by Friday 13 th February.	All	By Friday 13 th February	Completed. EHi urged Governors to review the SED again and raise any queries they may have.
5	DLe to book new Governor training and safeguarding training.	DLe	ASAP	Completed.

AHa

The Part 2 minutes of the meeting on 15th January 2015 were agreed as drafted.

The notes of the Extended Meeting on 26th February 2015 were agreed as drafted.

6. Committee reports and updates:

a) Resources

Governors had considered the minutes of the last meeting which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. RPr reported that the accounts were filed by the deadline and there were no significant issues arising from the matters discussed.

b) Community

Governors had considered the minutes of the last meeting which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. HHe reported that there were no major items to report to Governors. One area discussed by the Committee was the low numbers of responses from parents on ParentView which the school is trying to encourage parents to complete.

The Committee also discussed the school's complaints file on which there was nothing to report apart from thanks to Mandy Watt for keeping the file in excellent order.

c) Curriculum Teaching and Learning

Governors had considered the minutes of the last meeting which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. AHa suggested that, as the Chair of the Committee, LSh, was absent from the meeting, Governors should email any questions to her. As a member of the Committee, AHa reported that one of the main discussion areas for the Committee is the co-teaching of AS and A2 courses which the school is planning carefully.

7. Chair's Update including:

- Update on FAB

Governors had considered the updated FAB milestones document which had been distributed before the meeting from which it was noted that the biggest challenge affecting the project at the current time is the detailed

planning consent for the school's work. AHa reported that the school's retained planning consultant has been doing a fantastic job in trying to move HCC on to make its application to amend the conditions within the outline planning consent. Both HCC and St Albans District Council (to whom the application will be made) fully appreciate the school's need to move this on as quickly as possible; the current discussions with the planning officer are intended to achieve that.

LCa arrived at the meeting.

Governors are aware of the public consultation meeting being held at the school on Friday 20th March 2015 from 2-7pm, and it was noted that there is a rota for attendance by Governors. AHa reported that lots of leaflets have been sent out to local residents informing them of this meeting; also, parents, staff, local councillors and the local MP have all been invited. There was not enough time to place a press notice, but there has been lots of other publicity about it.

It was confirmed that the focus for the meeting is the school's work and not the residential development – although Charles Church will attend the meeting to support the school and answer queries on the residential development. AHa confirmed that the school's application is for the detail of its works; the outline permission has been granted and there is no ability to re-visit that as part of this process. The focus will be on how exciting this project is for the school and how it will enable the school to meet the needs of its current students. It was agreed that the boards showing the proposed works will be circulated to all Governors.

SKi

It was noted that residents are likely to be concerned about the noise from the community use of the sports hall which is controlled by the planning conditions and also the terms of the Community Use Agreement that has been approved as part of the planning process. If there are any major concerns arising, then Governors will be informed after the meeting.

In relation to the new playing fields, AHa reported that work is ongoing and work on the new construction access off Hatfield Road has commenced.

Governors asked about the anticipated completion date for the playing fields. AHa confirmed that the information from HCC still indicates a July 2015 handover. The delay in obtaining planning consent for the school's works is the significant risk to the timing of the commencement of the sports hall building work.

Governors had also considered the EU Procurement Summary document prepared by Craig Pullen (the school's retained OJEU adviser) which had been distributed before the meeting. Governors expressed concern that the timetable proposed is very tight. EHi confirmed that the latest discussions with the school's project manager have indicated that the work on the sports hall is unlikely to start until mid-August but that completion by September 2016 is still possible. EHi assured Governors that, if there is a short overrun on the works, then the school can manage for a short period of time.

Governors discussed this timescale and noted that ideally the major foundation works would be carried out when there are no students on site over the summer break. Although this is the ideal position, it was noted that the work can still be safely managed when the students are on site.

Governors also asked about the process for evaluating tenders over the summer break. EHi confirmed that she is reviewing who will be around over the summer break, but that the aim is to evaluate the tenders in June 2015.

Governors queried the costs implications of a delay to the commencement of the works and asked whether it is possible to have details of how much each month of delay is likely to increase the costs. EHi reported that the project manager is very aware of this and is keeping a detailed risk register, part of which includes the increasing costs of steel and bricks (some of which also have a 6 month lead time). If the increase in the costs is significant and exceeds the contingencies that have been built into the budget, then the project will be cost-engineered to ensure that the budget is not exceeded. The school has engaged an experienced costs consultant as part of the team to keep on top of this and it was noted that the industry's price index is at around 5-10% increase a year, which means that the impact of a few months delay will not be significant.

This was debated at length and it was agreed that, at this stage, the detailed analysis of increasing costs will not be requested. This is because, until the work is put out to tender, it is not possible to assess exactly what the

project will cost as compared to the costs plan, and therefore what costs impact any delays will have. It was also agreed that work will be done now on the ‘what if’ scenarios to ensure that the school is able quickly to modularise the project and is prepared in the event that the costs when put out to tender are higher than anticipated.

EHi and AHa confirmed that the school is working closely with the project team to ensure that this project is delivered within budget and that, at this stage, there is nothing particular to concern Governors.

EHi also reported to Governors that there will be some archaeological trenches dug on the current playing fields over the Easter break. This is necessary following some survey work carried out by consultants engaged by HCC which showed up some areas that require further investigation. It is hoped that the trenches will not reveal anything of significance and Charles Church is aware of this and not concerned by it.

- **Feedback from Extended Meeting on 26th February and actions to be taken forward**
- **Approval of the Governing Body Strategic Action Points and Work Plan 2015-16 to be included within the Plan for School Improvement for 2015-16**

Governors had considered the draft plan which had been circulated before the meeting. AHa reported that he prepared this following the Extended Meeting on 26th February 2015 to capture the points discussed. The document was discussed and it was agreed that it reflects what the Governing Body should be focussing on and will be included within the Plan for School Improvement for next year so that it is all within one coherent document.

EHi reported that the leadership team is working on the Plan for School Improvement and that it is hoped that there will be a skeleton draft ready for the next round of committee meetings.

Governors discussed the working party model that has been used recently and it was agreed that it works well.

8. Head’s update including update on Plan for School Improvement and ratification of the Self-Evaluation Document

Governors had considered the Head’s Report which had been circulated before the meeting.

EHi informed Governors that in relation to the Secondary Expansion Programme 2 (“SEC2”), HCC has indicated that it is now looking at secondary school expansion in the north of St Albans which includes Beaumont with 4 other schools.

SEC2 (which covers the whole of Hertfordshire) will go to Cabinet in December 2015 with a view to starting the expansion programme in September 2017 to accommodate the anticipated need for places from September 2019.

EHi explained that the potential costs savings of tying any expansion into the FAB project has already been brought to HCC’s attention – without any response to date. The Place Planning Officer is due to take maternity leave and EHi reported that she is hoping to speak with her again before she leaves, to emphasise the school’s timing on this.

On staffing, EHi reported that Sarah Hosegood has been appointed as an Assistant Head from September. The recruitment process was well conducted and the school is delighted with the appointment.

In relation to recruitment generally, EHi informed Governors that there are often low numbers of applicants for positions, which is a nationwide issue for schools. A Governor raised issues from a radio programme he had heard about the numbers of teachers leaving the profession due to stress and the lack of support from their managers. It was noted that this is less of an issue within the school as (although staff work incredibly hard) staff turnover is very low and the feedback from the staff as part of the ethos project was that the school is a very good place to work and staff are happy, feel supported, and so therefore want to stay at the school.

The tension with the budgetary constraints faced by the school was discussed and it was noted that one issue with staff recruitment is that the school is in an area of high house prices but salaries do not have a London weighting. It was noted that the school’s excellent reputation and National Leader in Education (“NLE”) status

do assist with recruitment, and the job adverts are very well written.

In relation to the school's budget, EHi reported that the school continues to do what it can to manage the budget without having an impact on the school's ethos.

EHi informed Governors that she had NLE training last week and the various options going forward were noted. EHi recommended that this should start on a small scale initially and she has had early informal discussions with the Heads of other local schools about how this can be taken forward. Governors agreed that they like the idea of supplying central services to other local schools to provide economies of scale and that it would be good to start this, if possible, whilst the Government is asking schools to participate.

9. Working Party reports and updates:

A. Governor roles and responsibilities and committee structure

AWa reported that the first meeting of this working party has been fixed for Friday 20th March 2015, at which the roles and structure will be reviewed and moved forward.

B. Ethos and Philosophy

JMI reported that the next meeting of the Ethos working party is planned for 26th March 2015. At that meeting, the feedback from the Extended Meeting will be reviewed and the document will be tested against the 'Doyle Test' discussed. Consideration will also be given to sharing the superb feedback obtained with staff. He asked for any further input or comments by email.

C. Budgeting and Fundraising

MCa confirmed that following the discussions at the Extended Meeting the working party will set another meeting date to continue with the discussions.

AHa encouraged any Governor who is not on any working party to join any if they wish. DLe agreed to join the Budgeting and Fundraising working party.

10. Ratification of the contract entered into with Cleantec Services Limited

Governors had considered the note from Lyndsey McCutcheon setting out the procurement process for the cleaning contract and a recommendation on the appointment which had been circulated by email in advance of the meeting.

Due to the level of financial commitment, the agreement of the full Governing Body was required and, as the contract is due to start on 1st April 2015 and the successful company needed to deal with the TUPE Regulations for the transfer of staff to them, the appointment of Cleantec had been approved by Governors by email.

That approval and appointment was unanimously ratified.

11. Policies – consideration and approval of the Investment Policy as recommended by the Resources Committee

Governors had considered the Investment Policy which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that it had been recommended for adoption by the Resources Committee. The policy was approved as drafted.

12. Governor Development Co-ordinator Update including feedback from the training session on 25th February

LSH was not at the meeting but SKi confirmed that she had reported before the meeting that all Governor training is up to date.

LSH had asked for feedback on the in-house training session on Exclusions on 25th February. Governors confirmed that the course was good and it was agreed that using the in-house training session is preferable to Governors having to attend training individually. It was agreed that consideration will be given on using this model for Safeguarding training.

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

LCa left the meeting – Governors thanked him for attending.

EHi raised an item which is recorded in Part 2 Confidential Minutes.

14. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 7th July 7pm

There being no further business, AHa declared the meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Signed:
Chair of Governors

Dated:.....