

BEAUMONT SCHOOL (Company Number 8104190)
MINUTES OF MEETING OF GOVERNORS HELD ON
Tuesday 24th June 2014 at 7.00pm

Governors Present:

Alex Hall (“AHa”) (Chair), Alison Wallis (“AWa”), Liz Hitch (“EHi”), Martin Atkinson (“MAt”), John McAlister (“JMI”), Steve Jump (“SJj”), Catherine Hopkins (“CHo”), Chris Aikman (“CAi”), Mike Cameron (“MCa”), Karen Trounson (“KTr”), Natasha Armstrong (“NAr”), Kevin Doyle (“KDo”), Rena Prindiville (“RPr”), Lisanne Sherwood (“LSh”), Gary Kellett (“GKe”) and Carolyn Morris (“CMo”)

In attendance:

Mark Eustace (“MEu”) (items 1 – 5 and 9)
 Simone Kilka-Green (“SKi”)

Project Management Solutions
 Clerk to the Governing Body

Actions Agreed at the meeting:

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1	Admissions Group to consider the HCC modelling of the impact on Beaumont of the changes to Sandringham School’s admissions rules.	Admissions Group	Autumn term
2	SKi to draft terms of reference for each of the Governor roles on the ‘Roles and Responsibilities’ document and circulate for comments.	SKi	For September FGB Meeting
3	EHi to ask Charles Cross to circulate the testimonials from parents from the parent survey.	EHi	ASAP
4	SKi to send out the paperwork for the 360 review of the Chair’s performance.	SKi	ASAP
5	KDo and AWa to review the workload of the committees and Governors and prepare a paper for the September FGB meeting.	KDo/AWa	For September FGB Meeting
6	Governors to email SKi if they would like to be on the working party discussing the philosophy / mission statement.	All	ASAP
7	EHi to seek feedback from the Leadership team on the philosophy / mission statement document.	EHi	ASAP
8	<i>See actions in the Part 2 Confidential Minutes</i>	<i>Various</i>	<i>Various</i>
9	SKi to file the annual return with Companies House by 11 th July 2014.	SKi	By 11 th July 2014
10	Schedule of Financial Delegation to be reviewed in the Autumn term.	FGB	Autumn term

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Morag McCrorie (who was representing the school at the Herts Advertiser Awards that evening as the school has been nominated for several awards), Hannah Henry, Natalie Moody and Josephine Chu. Consent was given to their absence. It was noted that the meeting was quorate.

Governors thanked MEu, the appointed Project Manager on the FAB Project, for attending 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 was declared.

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

Actions

One item was raised.

4. **Approval of minutes of the meetings on 18th March 2014 and matters arising**

The minutes were agreed with one amendment to paragraph 9a.

The action points from the meeting were considered as follows:

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update	
1	EHi to chase up the HCC modelling of the impact on Beaumont of the changes to Sandringham School's admissions rules.	EHi	ASAP	See below.	
2	Detailed feedback on the "track a student" initiative to be discussed at the next committee meetings.	Committees	Next meetings	Completed.	
3	Governors to confirm any changes to the skills audit circulated to SKi by Weds 26 th March, if no comments are sent then the entries will be considered to be accurate.	All	By Weds 26 th March	Completed and on agenda.	
4	SKi to draft terms of reference for each of the Governor roles on the 'Roles and Responsibilities' document and circulate for comments.	SKi	ASAP	SKi will do this for the September FGB meeting.	<i>SKi</i>
5	EHi to liaise with Charles Cross on using testimonials from parents on the website and asking the parents of Year 13 students for comments about the school at the Awards Evenings.	EHi	ASAP	Completed, EHi will ask Charles to circulate the comments to Governors.	<i>EHi</i>
6	SKi to research and organise a 360 review of the Chair's performance.	SKi	ASAP	The research is complete and the documentation is ready to be sent out.	<i>SKi</i>
7	EHi to update the SED to reflect improvement in attendance of Pupil Premium students.	EHi	ASAP	Completed.	
8	EHi to consider with the Leadership Team whether to hold further information evenings for parents re online dangers facing students and report back to Governors.	EHi	ASAP	See below.	

9	JMI to find someone unconnected to the school to review the three BSV schools' websites (and possibly other schools) and provide feedback on the image projected and whether the school's ethos is reflected on the website.	JMI	ASAP	Completed, see below.
10	Resources Committee to consider whether to put in place a funding strategy and report back to the FGB.	Resources Committee	ASAP	This is being reviewed by the Resources Committee and is ongoing.
11	The philosophy of the school (including a "mission statement" of that philosophy) to be considered in detail at the next meeting.	FGB	Next meeting	On agenda.
12	CTL Committee to review the areas of the curriculum discussed at the extended meeting and report back to FGB.	CTL Committee	Next CTL meeting	Completed.
13	SKi to circulate the 'wordle' from the extended meeting.	SKi	ASAP	Completed.
14	The revised Governors' skills audit to be reviewed at the next meeting.	FGB	Next meeting	On agenda.
15	EHi to email Governors about the arrangements for Governors attending the feedback session at the end of the Ofsted inspection on the 20 th March.	EHi	ASAP	Completed.
16	SKi to send the adopted admissions criteria to County.	SKi	ASAP	Completed.

In relation to item 1 above, EHi had mentioned this in her Head's report for item 8. The admissions modelling has been received and will be reviewed by the Admissions Group next term.

Admissions Group

In relation to item 8 above, EHi reported that she liaised with Andy Goodwin on whether to hold further information evenings for parents re online dangers facing students. It has been agreed that a short Survey Monkey survey will be sent out to parents asking if they would like parent information on self-harming and also on-line dangers. That survey will inform the school's decision.

In relation to item 9 above, it was noted that following the review and analysis of the school's website changes have been made to make the website more professional and up to date. This will be looked at in the meeting as part of item 7.

5. Sixth Form Update

EHi reported that the Sixth Form students are very pleased with the new facilities. The Sixth Form induction day will take place tomorrow, attendance at which is a requirement of joining the Sixth Form. All local schools are holding their inductions on the same day to prevent students attending more than one school. This should give a very good indication of Sixth Form numbers for next year.

The anticipated student numbers are higher than previous years. 67 external students are expected to attend tomorrow which compares to 35 last year.

It was agreed that item 9 on the agenda would be dealt with next.

9. FAB:

a) Update on FAB and Project Milestones

b) Ratification of the appointment of the Architect

Governors had considered two papers which had been distributed before the meeting. EHi reported that she attended the Planning Committee meeting this morning to present the school's position to the Committee regarding the application for detailed planning consent for the replacement playing fields.

The application was unanimously approved which it was agreed is excellent news.

There are several conditions including woodland management and traffic management but these were expected.

Governors had considered the detailed milestones paper and queried the only red item on it being the date for the application for detailed planning consent for Project 2. It was noted that it is a conscious decision of the FAB Group to take the time to prepare a master plan for the whole site. It was agreed that this is sensible and it was noted that a master plan will also support the application for planning consent when it is submitted.

MEu introduced himself to Governors and explained his background and experience within the education sector.

MEu explained that he is currently engaged in building a team that suits the culture of the school. The appointments for the team (in addition to him as project manager) are: the architect, the costs consultant, the civil and structural engineer, and the mechanical and electrical engineer. The school's procurement processes are being followed for these appointments and from each consultant prices have been provided for each stage of the RIBA process. This means that the appointments can be terminated at any of these stages.

The current stage of the process is that all the consultants are being briefed.

It was noted that a key part of the project planning is the creation of the master plan and as there is some time within the project (as the school cannot commence building work until the funds from the sale of the land are available, which will not be until the school has moved off the current playing field and has occupied the new playing fields, i.e. September 2015 at the earliest), the master plan is the current focus for the design team. It was agreed that a good brief makes a good building.

The architect that has been appointed has lots of experience of master planning and has a good vision and commitment to the school. That, together with a productive tension between the costs consultant and the architect, makes a cohesive team.

AHa took Governors through the presentation which the architect gave to the school as part of the procurement process and Governors asked questions arising. It was noted that it will be necessary to have a new fire strategy in place for the new buildings. In due course the school and project team will liaise closely with the Fire Officer to ensure that regulations are met so that the school can self-certify compliance.

MEu emphasised the need to have a strong control over the budget and all spending will be carefully planned within a detailed costs matrix.

Governors unanimously ratified the appointment of Design Cubed as the architect to the project in line with the authority given by email on 12th May 2014.

Governors thanked MEu for his time and he left the meeting.

6. Committee reports and updates:

A) Resources

Governors had considered the minutes of the last Resources Committee meeting which had been circulated before this meeting.

RPr reported that the Committee has been focusing on the FAB Project and the budget, both of which are on the agenda for this meeting.

B) Community

Governors had considered the minutes of the last Community Committee meeting, which had been circulated before this meeting.

KDo reported that the Committee had considered the SEN review which was very positive. The staff survey was reviewed which was very positive and the Committee also received a review of the school's complaints file which is all working very well.

C) Curriculum Teaching and Learning

Governors had considered the minutes of the last Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Committee meeting, which had been circulated before this meeting.

AWa reported that the Committee has completed the annual Department review cycle and has also closely monitored the progress in the D&T Department which is looking very positive.

There has also been extensive debate about the allocation of time within the curriculum to English and Maths. It was agreed that this also affects the school's philosophy which is to be discussed under item 7c) on the agenda but that a decision needs to be made on this in September so that the new timetable can be planned.

7. Chair's Update including:

AHa stated that, although this now felt historic, as it was the first FGB meeting since the March Ofsted inspection, he wanted formally to minute thanks to various people and groups.

It was noted that the Ofsted report is fantastic and demonstrates the team and community effort by the school as follows:

- Parents were thanked for completing the ParentView survey, an extraordinary number of parents completed it overnight when the inspection was announced and the Ofsted Inspectors commented on that. The comments were overwhelmingly positive.
- The students were thanked for their behaviour during the inspection which was noted by the Inspectors as at no time being less than outstanding.
- The staff were thanked not only for their efforts during the inspection but their work for several years to get the school to where it is now. AHa reported that it was noticeable that, on the first day of the inspection, the attitude of the staff was very positive: they believed that the school was outstanding and were determined to show it.
- The leadership team were thanked for taking control of the inspection (so far as possible) to

ensure that the Inspectors saw what they needed to see and for making the inspection enjoyable for the Ofsted team.

- The Governors were thanked for their involvement, and in particular the Governors who met with the Inspectors.
- EHi was thanked for her outstanding leadership through the inspection.

It was agreed that the inspection report has had a very positive impact for the school and, in particular, how the school is perceived externally.

AHa showed Governors the updated school website and the changes were noted. AHa encouraged Governors to have a more detailed look at the website outside the meeting.

a) Review of Governors' skills audit to identify any skills gaps

Governors had considered the updated skills matrix which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that there is no area of the matrix where no Governor has any experience and it was agreed that this will be reviewed on an annual basis.

AHa reported that there is one vacancy for a community Governor and although previous attempts have been made to find an architect to fill that role, AHa suggested that is no longer necessary now that an architect has been appointed on the project. This was agreed.

b) Discussion of Community Governor positions and vacancy

It was noted that RPr's term of office as a community Governor ends on 6th July. RPr has agreed to renew her appointment and this was unanimously agreed for a further 4 years to end on 6th July 2018.

AHa therefore proposed that as AWa's term of office as a parent Governor ends in November (as do JMI and KDo's terms of office), and she is then not eligible for re-election (as she is no longer a parent at the school), that the vacant community Governor position be kept open for her to move into with effect from November. That was agreed. AHa indicated that he was willing to be re-appointed as a community Governor when his term ends, also in November.

The end of KDo's terms of office has led to a discussion about the next Chair for the Community Committee, which the Committee has already been discussing. It was noted that EHi has suggested that the SEN role be moved from the Community Committee to CTL which would inevitably have an impact on the work of the Community Committee. EHi explained that this suggestion has arisen as the school is looking at SEN more broadly across the school in terms of teaching and learning and, as SEN will be line-managed by Yvonne Powdrell, it would make sense for it to be monitored by the CTL Committee. It was noted that there are some big changes coming into effect for SEN from September and the full impact of those is not yet known.

AHa reported that he, AWa and SKi had a meeting with Herts For Learning this morning to discuss what has made governance at the school outstanding and one of the areas that was discussed was Governors operating through working parties that feed into committees. It was agreed that the structure of the committees will be reviewed in September and in the meantime the dates for the Community Committee meetings will stay in the diary for 2014-15.

One option discussed was for the overview of students with a statement to stay within Community Committee, to ensure that they continue to have a 'voice', and for general SEN matters to move to CTL. The distribution of the workload amongst the committees needs to be carefully considered, as does the workload amongst Governors, including the new parent Governors elected in November. Governors were asked on a show of hands to indicate if they feel that they have a specific role on the Governing

Body. Approximately 50% indicated that they felt that they had a specific role.

It was agreed that KDo will review the position and with AWa prepare a paper for review in September. *KDo/AWa*

c) Discussion of the philosophy / mission statement for the school and agreement on how to progress this

Governors had considered the paper prepared by AHa which had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

The rationale for a philosophy document was discussed and it was noted that it is intended to be used to inform the difficult decisions that the school regularly has to make, particularly in relation to government initiatives and tightening budgets. It was intended to be a guide and not be too strict so that it could be used to restrict the school's discretion in decision-making. The audience for the document was discussed. It was intended for the Governing Body and the school's Leadership Team, and it was queried whether it should also extend to all staff and possibly students.

It was agreed that the draft AHa has produced is a good basis for discussion, although ideally it would be shorter. Part of the document is general to all schools but there are also elements which are specific to Beaumont. The Ofsted grading has given the school the confidence to say that what it is doing is the best thing for the students, and the philosophy document was intended to reflect that.

EHi queried whether it is for the GB or the Headteacher to set the vision for the school and it was agreed that the intention is to reflect in this document the current ethos of the school (which is what has made it outstanding) which has been created by the Head's vision.

It was agreed that this needs further discussion, and as it is such an important document it is not something that can, or should, be put together quickly. It was agreed that a working party will be set up to discuss this and report back to the extended meeting in February. Governors were asked to email SKi *All* if they would like to be part of the working party. EHi agreed to seek feedback on the document from *EHi* the Leadership Team.

d) Discussion of the Herts for Learning AGM on Monday 7th July at 5pm

AHa reported that this is on the agenda as the school is a shareholder in Herts for Learning. No Governor indicated that they would like to attend the AGM.

8. Head's Report including:

- a) Actions following Ofsted inspection 18/19th March 2014**
- b) Approval of the Plan for School Improvement for 2014-17**

Governors had considered the Head's report and updated Plan for School Improvement ("PSI") which had both been circulated in advance of the meeting.

EHi reported that in relation to the overspend on the Sixth Form works, MCa and RPr are due to meet with her and Julie Wells to go through it in detail and identify the lessons for the FAB project.

It was noted that the Teachmeet planned for 10th July has had to be cancelled as it clashes with a planned strike day for NUT and Unison members. It has been agreed that the Year 6 transition day will still go ahead as that has been planned for that day across Hertfordshire.

In relation to the Maths Hub, the school was disappointed to have been unsuccessful in that bid. It was awarded to a school in Bishops Stortford. Feedback on the school's bid has been requested and it was noted that the school is looking at setting up something similar anyway.

EHi distributed to Governors a confidential staffing update and took Governors through it. It is confidential as the staff choose when they inform the students of their leaving/retirement. It was noted that this has already been reviewed in detail by the Resources Committee.

The actions within the Ofsted report were discussed. These have been considered in detail already by the CTL Committee.

The PSI (which had already been reviewed by each Committee) was noted and approved with the addition of a section on the FAB project and 2 minor amendments to Key Priority 2 which had been discussed at the recent Community Committee meeting.

9. FAB:

- a) Update on FAB and consideration of Project Milestones**
- b) Ratification of the appointment of the Architect**

This was dealt with after item 5 above.

10. Approval of the budget for 2014-15 as recommended by the Resources Committee

Governors had considered the draft budget and notes which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the key point on the budget is that the budget is a deficit budget of £314,000.

It was noted that there are a number of reasons for this:

- A reduction in funding.
- Increased staff costs due partly to very low staff turnover (which is beneficial from a teaching perspective, but has a significant impact on the budget), pay awards, pay increases of 1%, increases in employer pension contributions and maternity costs. In some departments, it has not been possible to recruit staff to cover maternity leaves and the school has had to use expensive agency staff for the whole period – although the school has done what it can to avoid that. Staff costs are budgeted to be 86% of income whereas they have been 80% in the past.

It was noted that there will be some revenue carried forward from this year which will cover this deficit (the exact amount will not be known until the end of the current financial year) but this is a situation which cannot be sustained in following years.

It was agreed that it is imperative that ways are identified to increase income and reduce costs and it was noted that there was a long discussion on this at the recent Resources Committee meeting. AHa reported that, following that meeting, MCa had put forward a paper with some thoughts and that needs to be considered in greater detail.

EHi informed Governors that, having discussed budgets, with lots of other schools, many are in a similar position and will only be able to sustain the next financial year by using their carry forward. It was noted that there is a Schools Forum meeting tomorrow at which the views of schools will be taken.

EHi reported that the school has been awaiting benchmarking information from the DfE; in the meantime, JWe has met to benchmark informally with other schools. Staffing costs will worsen next year when the employer's national insurance contribution increases – this would take the current staffing costs to 89% of revenue, although if the anticipated numbers of students join in the Sixth Form this September then there will be increased revenue to the school in the following year. There are issues with the way in which Sixth Form funding is being calculated (in terms of what is treated as being sufficient teaching time) to receive revenue for a fulltime student.

It was agreed that a funding strategy is necessary; this was also discussed at the Resources Committee meeting. Student numbers impact on funding and EHi confirmed that the school manages the continuing interest list to ensure, so far as it can, that there are no spaces in the school. The funding strategy should look at this and also at the impact of increasing the school's PAN, which in turn impacts on the priorities within the FAB project.

Governors asked about the funding projections and it was noted that no increase in funding per student is anticipated due to the large numbers of children needing primary school places.

It was agreed that the budget position is accurate and the budget was approved.

11. Report on the audit of the school's single central record and compliance with appropriate legislation

AWa reported that she attended school in March and met with Sue Parsons to review the school's single central record. AWa informed Governors that the records are excellent and Sue does a fantastic job keeping them up to date, notwithstanding regular changes in the requirements.

12. Confidential items

The discussion on this agenda item is recorded in Part 2 Confidential Minutes.

13. Note the need to file the annual return with Companies House by 11th July 2014

Governors noted this requirement and confirmed that none of their personal details have changed. SKi SKi agreed to file this by the deadline.

14. Review of the new governor induction pack contents and covering letter

Governors had considered the new governor induction pack contents and covering letter which had been circulated before the meeting.

It was noted that these were significantly amended recently and it was agreed that they are much improved. It was also noted that it had been previously agreed that, when parents are invited to be nominated for future parent Governor positions, they will be encouraged to meet with existing Governors to discuss the role before being nominated, so that they are aware of the commitment involved.

15. Policies – consideration and approval of:

a) Whistleblowing Policy as recommended by the Resources Committee

Governors had considered the draft policy which had been recommended by the Resources Committee and circulated in advance of the meeting.

The policy was approved as drafted.

b) Schedule of Financial Delegation as recommended by the Resources Committee

It was noted that, as indicated by email prior to the meeting, Julie Wells and SKi are still working on this document and the Resources Committee has agreed that it is better to make sure that the delegations are correct and the auditors are happy with it before it is presented to the FGB for approval.

This will be reviewed in the Autumn term.

*Autumn
term*

c) Behaviour Principles as recommended by the Community Committee

Governors had considered the draft principles which had been recommended by the Community Committee and circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that there are no changes to the previous version.

The principles were approved as drafted.

16. Governor Development Co-ordinator Update

LSh confirmed that, as all Governors have either attended or have booked Safeguarding and Exclusions training, there was nothing to report on training. It was noted that in the Autumn term the in-house training session will need to be booked.

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

Governors had considered the draft policy on the exercise of employer discretions under the Local Government Pension Scheme which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. It was noted that this had been recommended for adoption by the Resources Committee.

The policy was approved as drafted.

18. Date of next meeting: Thursday 11th September 2014 7pm

There being no further business AHa declared the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Signed:
Chair of Governors

Dated:.....