

Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held in School 16th October 2018 at 6.00pm

Present: Shaista Ahmed (SA); Tony Atherton (TA); Zed Aziz (ZA); Derek Cross (DC); Liz Currie (ESC); Jane Dixon (JD); Stuart Eakin (SE); Debra Glover (DG); David Hall (DH); Gareth Harris (GH); Malcolm Pinder (MP); Keith Wilson (KW); Mr N Bulley (NDB)

Non-voting: Mr J.Flynn (JMF), Mrs J Dunn (JDN) ;) Mr P Roberts (PDR) Mr S Taylor (SAT); Callan Redfearn (CR – Head boy).

The Chair welcomed Callan, the Head boy, to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence: Jonathan Hodgson (JH); Mrs C Proud (CEP);

2. Declaration of Interests: None

3. Committee Membership and Election of Chairs

The Clerk ran through the document prepared, detailing the current membership of the FGB and the F&R and C&S sub-committees. All governors were in agreement that they were happy with their current committee memberships and the chairs of those committees. No other nominations for chair were put forward.

A discussion was had around the other committees listed, and how these members are elected etc. It was decided that these committees would be established as and when there is a need. The Clerk will circulate an email asking governors if they would like to be involved and when they are available.

Link governors were then discussed. DG asked about former governor Sue Doubell and her SEN link. NDB explained she is still our SEN link and will report to governors annually.

DG asked about a safeguarding link and offered to take on this role. NDB thanked DG for her offer and said he would be in touch to discuss.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

All were in agreement that these were a true reflection of the previous meeting.

5. Review of sub-committee meetings/minutes

F&R – JMF picked this up in JH's absence. He explained that the items brought forward from the F&R meeting would be addressed under the finance item, therefore we would just talk through it at that point.

C&S – PDR showed a briefer version of the results presentation presented at the C&S meeting. He explained the headlines of both the GCSE and A Level results and how we compare to other schools. Any questions?

Q – I assume there are differences between students admitted in Year 7 compared with those admitted in Year 12? Yes, and these are mainly attitudinal. The Deputy Director of Sixth Form: Transition (currently temporary Deputy Head of Sixth) has done lots of work on an induction programme this year in an attempt to iron these out in the first two weeks of

term.

PDR: as you will see from the School Development Plan (SDP) later on, we are looking at ways in which to do retain our Year 11 students. Our new Subject Leader for Biology has brought some new ideas that he used in his previous FE college. This includes more assessment and development techniques.

DH – In order to play to our strengths, should we be raising entry requirements? PDR: We are looking to tweak these slightly, to make them higher. This is again going to be a key focus for this year (see the upcoming SDP item). This is a chance for us to look at where we want to be, what kind of sixth form we want to have.

DH – Have we got something in place to close the disadvantaged gap? PDR: We have been discussing this among staff, and all staff are being asked to write a summary about the assessment results that they have to input 4 times a year. Then say what we are going to do to address any issues etc. Subject leaders will check that interventions are happening and that we are doing what we say we are going to do. Again we will be discussing this later.

Governors thanked students and staff for the great results.

DC then moved on to give governors an update of the rest of the C&S meeting. Staffing update, review of Discover Faculty etc.

6. Safeguarding

SAT gave a verbal report on the facts and figures relating to child protection referrals. The support provided by the counsellor, school nurse and pastoral team in school continues to be widely used and provides an essential support service for the students and some staff.

An update was given on child protection training – all of the new teaching and operational staff have been provided with induction safeguarding training. Governors will be sent the updated version of Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' representing revised safeguarding guidance for staff in schools and colleges issued by the DfE on 1st September 2018. Please read this document and return the receipt to JDN as soon as possible. Any questions?

Q. How do we measure our stats against what other schools experience? SAT: I have been interacting with other secondary DSLs and it seems pretty much the same across the board, though it is hard to compare raw data. I think it shows strength that students do report concerns and show we have detected things. NDB added from his experience at Westborough, ours seem less in terms of quantity, sometimes in terms of severity. The issues our students face seems more anxiety related etc.

DG pointed out that we only have one child in need and one looked after child; this is really minor in terms of numbers.

Q. Has bringing the Student Support Managers on board helped with things like this? SAT: Yes – they are far more accessible. This is very beneficial and positive.

Thanks to SAT for his report. *SAT left the meeting.*

7. Terms of reference

These have been re-written for FGB and for both sub-committees, so there are lots of significant changes.

All governors were in agreement to accept these.

8. Governor Development Plan

NDB explained that this had come about following the governance review with an ASCL consultant last year. JDN organised a meeting with the Chairs of the committees to discuss the identified points of development and establish an action plan to address the areas for action. NDB talked through the conclusion and key areas for action and the action plan.

DG asked about faculty links and if this was still on the cards. NDB: Faculty leaders said they would like to see more governor presence in school; but they don't think faculty links is the best way. What about thematic governors as these are far more common? Is this something governors would be interested in? What would the themes be? Would governors be happy for us to make a list of themes?

Yes – all were in agreement. The Chair requested that NDB bring a list of possible thematic links to the next governor meeting.

Q. Do faculty leaders think governors would be checking up? NDB: Maybe, but I think it is more about how it would work in practice, and what the explicit purpose would be. It would need to be clear and guidelines would have to be provided.

ESC added that staff would like to see governors take more of active role.

DG said that since the governance review she felt it has become more acceptable to challenge, be a critical friend. Challenge is valued and very much welcomed.

JDN circulated the governor's protocol document created in response to one of the action points and explained this had been pulled together using the governor code of conduct, approved at the last FGB, but abridging it to create a single page document. JDN asked governors to read and sign this and said she would send an electronic version to governors.

9. HT Report

NDB firstly addressed the questions sent in prior to meeting and thanked governors for sending these in.

GH asked the following questions:

- a. Recruiting our own Yr11 students – what were the comparable numbers of retention in the last 2 years (we retained 96 of 162 this year – 59%), how does that compare?
- b. I cannot see anywhere in item 12 anything about the reasons why we did not retain those Yr11 pupils – do we know the key reasons why they did not stay? If we do – then what are we planning to do differently to retain the next year group? We discussed at previous Governors that we were taking on more Yr7s each year so that we had a higher cohort that went on into Yr12 eventually – but if we cannot retain them then this may not work.

These questions were answered in paper 14b.
DH asked the following questions:

- a. How many pupils from the catchment are to get a place, how many applied and how many passed? 122 applied, 108 sat the test, and 29 got in.
- b. The other thing was about the sixth form recruitment, to ask about the forecast grades for our 12 and 13 cohort, compared to this year's results and what the ongoing effect of taking more from outside, maybe less academic students, will be.
A broad statistical analysis was shared, demonstrating that there is a challenge here around ensuring students achieve well.

SA asked the following questions:

- a. Do we know why we weren't able to retain all 162 of our own Year 11 students?
No – competition, distance, college environment etc. We are looking to address this for next year. (also answered in paper 14b)
- b. How long is a fixed term period for exclusion; does the offence determine the length of exclusion?
The fixed term is whatever we say it is, usually 5 days or less. Yes: this depends on the offence.
- c. Are the students that have been excluded so far acting alone or together in groups?
All individual incidents.
- d. Are the offences similar or related?
Can be a variety of things, usually for similar types of things.
- e. How many times are students excluded for a fixed term before being excluded permanently?
Extremely rarely: it's not really seen as good practice. Really only if an incident is still being investigated and new information comes to light once they have been excluded for a fixed term.
- f. Is Greenhead more selective with its recruitment than HGS?
We are more increasingly more selective than Greenhead; looking at last year, only slightly more so- but the intention is to make the difference more obvious.
- g. Have we looked at the facilities etc. at Greenhead and tried to mimic anything in order to make HGS just as appealing for our and other 6th formers?
The two institutions are not like for like. We don't want to mimic them; we want to be unique and different, a grammar school sixth form. Our retention rate is also much higher than theirs- 98%, roughly, compared with 85%.

10. Financial matters

JMF talked through papers provided explaining the following:

Revenue Budget Monitoring - draft Revenue Outturn 2017/18
Revenue Budget Monitoring – new arrangements for 2018/19
Budget forecasts 2018/19 to 2020/21
Academies Financial Handbook – key changes
Annual Report and Statement of Accounts 2017/18

Any questions?

DC asked how much extra work is involved in preparing management accounts every month and sharing them with the chair and with other governors six times a year? JMF: We were

doing this anyway, but now we just have to make it more presentable and circulate. So not much extra really.

11. Buildings

The main thing is obviously the annex.

Work is progressing well at the annex and the re-modelling and expansion work is now nearing completion. Our current foci are:

- Ensuring work meets our needs as the client
- Final design elements
- Creation of a viable link between the school and the annex
- Building access, security, fire alarm, CCTV
- Procurement of furniture and other equipment
- Design, decoration, finishes, features
- Kitchen installation (due 15/10/2018)
- Relocation of staff
- Operational issues linked to the new school day

With the agreement of Governors, the proposal is to call the new sixth form building 'The Jo Cox Centre' after our former Head Girl – all governors were in agreement.

Arrangements will be made to show Governors round once it is safe to do so.

We have working party meetings weekly, and JMF has weekly visits.

GH asked when will it be finished. JMF: It has slipped to mid-November.

The other main item under 'Buildings' is the replacement of the CCTV. Our network manager has done a great job.

ZA: will there be a ceremony when the centre opens? NDB: there will be. But we need an absolutely defined handover date before we can organize anything. We need to make a huge deal about it. The Leadbetters will be coming in to open it.

ESC asked about the year 11s, do we have any plans to show them the new centre? NDB: Yes we do – Head of Sixth Form is working on a plan. We will hold a taster day down there. We will need to get permission from parents as it is offsite. ESC: we have missed an opportunity really with bring the open evening forward and the delay in the opening of the centre.

12. School Development Plan

NDB addressed the School Development Plan document and explained the difference between improvements and developments. Each member of the SLT has a project that they will lead on, but all will be involved in working towards meeting the central improvements. Each priority was explained and details were given around the actions to be taken in order to meet this.

13. Policies for approval

The policies taken to governors were:

- a) Pay Policy
- b) Developing Performance and Capability
- c) Disciplinary
- d) Grievance
- e) Staff Attendance

The policy with the most significant changes is the pay policy. The HR Director sends her apologies for this being a little all over the place in terms of formatting as it was a rush to get it completed. The information in relation to the pay award was only released in September therefore we were unable to do anything with it over the summer. We are supportive of the recommended pay increases. If governors adopt this, increases will be paid in October and backdated to 1st September.

Do governors adopt it? Yes, all governors agreed to adopt and approve these.

SE left the meeting at 7.24

14. Development Session: Admissions

Sixth Form Recruitment

Does anyone have any questions on this having read the supporting paper?

- Q. How did we survey the retention of HGS Year 11 students? NDB: Last year, we ran a survey but got very limited responses. This year we did a paper version on GCSE results day.

Governors asked Callan his opinion on why he felt students were choosing to go elsewhere.

Callan said he felt for a lot of people it was the college environment, and that the teaching staff in a college are more A level focused. Where people live will also have a big impact.

NDB told governors he had looked back at postcodes over the last 5 years, and numbers going to Greenhead are disproportionately influenced dependent on the quantity of students travelling to the school from Huddersfield. At the moment our year 7s come from all over with some travelling quite a distance.

GH felt that the Sixth Form uniform policy is something that contributes to the Y11s not staying. He feels it is too restrictive, not being able to wear off shoulder tops, leggings etc. Things like this do have an influence people's choice. The students want to feel like adults.

It is also felt that the facilities we currently have put students off, but obviously when we have the new centre this won't be so much the case. We really should delay open evening to show off the new centre.

ZA added that he felt from his son it was pretty much the same reasons: students were moving on, more freedom etc. Also the students feel the changes, and are affected by teachers moving on, getting new teachers etc. We also need to market better than we do

now.

NDB added that this year's year 11s seem more positive about staying here based on feedback so far.

KW – I do worry that this is an accelerating trend; however we are taking action to change it so hopefully we will see increased recruitment moving forward.

ESC said she felt some students had lost the link with school in terms as loyalty. Continuity is a big thing for the students, if they were going to keep the same teachers I think more would have stayed. Students do ask what teachers they will get. Stability is a big factor and change is a risk for students. Focus on what we do well.

NDB then moved on to talk through the presentation and proposed the following to governors for authorization, giving background, explanation and justification:

- increase Year 7 PAN to 210
- set the PAN for Year 12 at 100. Remove o.s. criteria and partner schools.

The room occupancy has dropped due to the drop in sixth form numbers so we do have space for 210 in each year. The dining facilities will be impacted but with year 11s moving to the common room when the new sixth form centre is open so should free up space.

TA asked if we have a decrease in funding, how will this affect us?

JMF responded by explaining that it will depend on the size of any funding drop and the timescale over which it occurs. Sixth form funding has already seen a significant drop because of the fall in student numbers, this was managed effectively and the loss was mitigated to an extent by growth in 11-16 pupil numbers. We used to do well in terms of sixth form funding but the funding system was changed and funding protection no longer applies.

It is likely also that we will lose funding through implementation of the National Funding Formula (NFF) for schools. This is now to be implemented in full by 2021/22 (was 2020/2021) and we are dependent on the LA's Schools Forum who will determine the rate of implementation and impact on individual schools and academies. If historic trends are anything to go by we will be hit hard when the NFF is implemented in full. Funding coming in for year 7 pupils does provide greater stability in the longer term.

DH – Should the year 7 increase be linked to changing admissions criteria? If we increase the PAN then students will then come from further afield. Are we not trying to avoid this? NDB: This will be addressed later, in PDR's section.

GH – We do need a plan for the dining room as the feedback I have had is poor. There are huge amounts of students to get through and it isn't working effectively at the moment. Also, the food offer has changed and students are dissatisfied. I have heard students are starting a petition to bring back the old chicken burger.

JMF explained the food offer had changed so that we are compliant with nutritional standards. We are trying to serve much healthier options. The new chicken burger is significantly better than the previous one in terms of quality; but it is hard to change habits.

DG said her daughter at the school is a vegetarian and she feels the offer has improved. SA said her son doesn't agree and there is often nothing he likes.

JMF thanked governors for the feedback - we really do need to know in order to get things right. Our income is 2% down and we should be 5% up. We want to encourage sixth formers to stay in and the new Centre will encourage this with its specialised kitchen and offer.

Q. What will happen for y11 when they go into the common room? Will they get the same food?

JMF: We are still working on the plan, as the current sixth form common room doesn't have full kitchen facilities, it's more snack-orientated. They will still be able to use the dining hall.

Governors asked what Callan's thoughts are about the food offering?

CR: We have been asked for suggestions for the menus down at the new centre, and sixth form team ask what we would like to see being served in there. The head chef is speaking to students lower down the school too, so it is very consultative.

It tends to be y12 students that go out at lunch times; the novelty of being able to go out does wear off. Sixth form food is improving and it is cheaper.

NDB asked governors to take a vote on both above adjustments to the PAN. Governors voted yes to both. All were in agreement.

PDR then took over the presentation and moved on to talk about the selection test. He explained how things had gone this time with it being the first time we had had the sporting and musical ability criteria. It has been complex and hard work. 9 different letters have gone out and we have been very reliant on our third-party who processes the outcomes for us.

Q. What does the fitness test involve and how is it accessed? PDR explained the different parts to the test and that students don't have to pass each section. We assessed based on the bleep test which we had national data for and then they had to pass 3 other parts.

PDR then proposed the following to governors for the 2020 intake and explained how this might work and the reasoning behind it.

- 5% for Music
- 5% for Sport
- Elite athletes invited to provide evidence

Governors discussed the proposal and expressed a number of concerns around the final 'elite athlete' suggestion:

- Could we be opening up a can of worms?
- What is classed a sport?
- How do we ensure credibility?
- How do you compare difference in these sports?
- How much will it influence music and sport?
- It could make a lot of work for minimal effect.

NDB added that all this does is bump students up the list; but we do want the community to know that we are not an exams factory.

KW proposed we stick to the same as this year, adapting only the 10% criteria to 5% and 5%, and see how it goes.

Governors decided to take a vote on this, with the majority voting in line with KW's recommendation, leaving out the elite athlete option for now.

NDB then moved on to discuss disadvantaged students – explaining the current stats displayed on the PowerPoint and how he is concerned about the decline in numbers and the ethos of this school: social mobility. This is particularly in the light of 25% of our sixth form being bursary students (broadly equivalent to the free school meal funding 11-16) and the current strategy being to reduce the number of Year 12 admissions.

Resulting proposal: to lower the pass mark for disadvantaged students from 107 to 105, increasing the maximum number of places to 10% (21 students). Free School Meals is an objective criteria for disadvantaged. Research on this shows it is being done already elsewhere; and the risk to our results is minimal in terms of progress 8. NDB explained the graphs and the two differing matters of principle.

What are people's views? Some discussion was had around the following points:

- Does it mean we would not offer places to up to 21 students who got 106? – Technically yes; however, they would not have received an offer of a place anyway.
- What are the criteria for pupil premium? Where do we stand if they are not on Free Schools Meals any more (ever 6)? – They are still classed as disadvantaged.
- From an appeal point of view, for those 21 who don't get in: how do we justify this? We don't get the scores; we get the ranking so we wouldn't need to.
- Would we have more local children? This is negligible, but cross-referencing of the catchment against disadvantaged students on this year's test indicates an increase of local children, were this to be an oversubscription criterion.
- At some point there is likely to be an attempt to remove our selective status, and social mobility is one of our motivations – is there anything else we can do? All these would involve cost; and there is no funding for it. However, NDB has this as his priority area on the SDP.
- Are we advantaging the advantaged by having music as a criterion? Is this not sending mixed messages by dropping the pass mark for disadvantaged?
- Is the problem the nature of the exam and the coaching? Only 5% who registered were disadvantaged compared with an LA average in schools of 25%. Disadvantaged students don't seem to be even registering.

A vote was then taken on dropping the pass mark. Of the 12 voting governors (minus NDB) 7 voted for lowering the pass mark to 105 for disadvantaged students, and 5 abstained from voting, therefore motion carried.

KW said we need to track this to make sure we do a good job of it and these students do well, closing the gap.

GH explained he was struggling with this; it is a big decision to make without having the time to think about. He would like more time and notice in future when making big decisions. It is also hard to argue against the moral case.
NDB took this on board.

After further discussion it was decided that the vote would remain as yes; however, governors have a further 7 days to think about it before confirming their vote or otherwise at the training session next week. NDB would send an email round to governors with the draft policy attached for consideration.

Time was given for reflection due to it being such a major policy decision, and governors requested to let NDB/JDN know if they wished to change their vote over the next nearly two weeks prior to the policy having to go to public consultation.

[Two governors later confirmed their yes vote by email; no other responses were received]

PDR then moved on the catchment area and explained the current stats of students currently from the catchment area compared to previous years. In 2019 we will have 29 (13%) students joining us who live in the catchment area. Do we wish to do something to increase this? Currently we have an unusual catchment area and it is likely that some people outside catchment think no point in applying. Despite the percentage seeming low, the quantity is similar to previous years- it's just that our numbers have increased in each year group making the proportion less.

Choices: do we leave it as is, get rid of the catchment area completely, or extend it so more students have more of a chance. The disadvantage to the latter would be that it may upset other schools, but there would be lots of advantages. Other schools have changed their catchment areas significantly.

Dropping it completely would give no advantage to Heckmondwike and to local children.

Some discussion was then had around this and the possibilities around each option.

Could we do living area distance from school? Radius from a fixed point? Can we see from the data we have what the likely impact would be?

It was then agreed that we would bring this item back to the next FGB having had more time to think about it. Any changes wouldn't be implemented until 2021 entry anyway.

15. AOB - None

The meeting closed at 9.15.