

Please forward any matters relating to the Minutes below to: **THE CLERK TO THE GOVERNORS - ELIZABETH JAHN**

FULL GOVERNING BODY MEETING – TERM 5 Held at the school on Tuesday 17 May 2016 at 6.15pm

MINUTES

PRESENT:	Lawayne Jefferson (Chair)	Andrew Scoble
	Tim Whitaker (Vice Chair)	Ciara Campfield
	Sarah Baker (Headteacher)	Marilyn Barnard
	Catherine Hallam	Sarah Everett-Cox
	Kate Teal	Fiona Elder
	Rod Symmons	Louise Blundell (Deputy Headteacher)
	Rachel Richardson	Nicholas Lind (Deputy Headteacher)
	Rita Deegan	Wendy Bigwood (School Business & Operations Leader)
	Darren McKimm	Elizabeth Jahn (Clerk)

The meeting was noted to be quorate

ITEM	MINUTE	ACTION
1.	Welcome & Apologies for Absence	
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received and accepted from Barry Trahar, Marian Curran, Fiona Hallsworth and Naresh Rao. Governors were disappointed to note that Hilary Jeffkins had resigned from the Governing Body.	
2.	Attendance & Business/Pecuniary Interest Register	
	Governors were reminded of their responsibility to declare interests; the Register was circulated and duly signed.	
3.	Strategic Development	
3.1	Managing Change Proposal	
	<p>The Headteacher provided an overview of the managing change proposal and the financial position of the school, which was also detailed in the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) Working Group Minutes. Governors asked whether the Governing Body should have identified the financial issues earlier; the Headteacher advised that there were national and local indications that funding was likely to be cut, however, the school did not receive the actual funding details until the 1 March 2016, and as a result of that information, the school recognised that the financial picture moving forward was a concern. The Chair of the Finance Committee highlighted that the 2015/2016 end of year projections evidenced that the variance in the projected deficit was only 1% higher; this demonstrated that the main issue and the reason for the proposal was due to the funding cuts, which were not known until March.</p> <p>Governors were informed that the school would be able to manage the budget for next year, and possibly for the following year, however, after that the school would be facing a deficit budget that was not sustainable. The Headteacher also highlighted the discussion at the MAT Working Group meeting where the Governors discussed managing change and had agreed that whilst the timeframe for the process was being driven by the financial implications, it was also important for the school to review the staffing structure to ensure it was fit for purpose given the growth and changes that had occurred since the school started through to Academisation and onwards, and it was important for that process to take place regardless of any financial implications, as Governors were trustees of public funds and it was imperative that decisions were made in the context of value for money and therefore, previous decisions should always be reflected upon when changes had taken place.</p> <p>Governors asked if non-staff cost savings had already been made or identified; the Chair of the Finance Committee confirmed that cost savings were considered when the 2015/2016 budget was set, and included photocopying costs and other admin/resources costs etc, however, as the largest area of spend was staffing, this was the area that needed to be considered taking into account the level of the funding cuts.</p>	

Approval (Initials)

The Headteacher confirmed that she was investigating the cuts in post 16 funding as there appeared to be errors, but at this time, the school had to work with the information that was available. Governors were informed that savings needed to be realised before the budget moved into a deficit, ie the reserves exhausted, and with a staffing restructure, the changes needed to be implemented in advance of the savings being realised (due to redundancy costs and protected pay situations etc).

Governors asked whether other local schools were also considering making redundancies; the Headteacher confirmed that a number of schools were already holding meetings with staff to discuss managing change and some schools had already carried out a managing change process.

Governors asked whether it was sensible of the school to move forward with the expansion, given that the costs could be used to support the staffing structure; the Headteacher advised that, whilst this would have possibly delayed the restructure, the income generated from the expansion would have been lost and therefore, the restructure would still have been necessary; in other words, the loss and gain would have no material impact on the need for a restructure, although it might have impacted slightly on when the restructure took place.

Governors agreed that the letter to staff regarding managing change should include reference to the expansion and the points discussed above. Staff Governors also suggested that the rationale section of the letter should include more information regarding the cost-saving exercises that had already taken place, including through savings from 'natural wastage', ie some outgoing staff were not replaced. It was also suggested that the Headteacher/Strategic Leadership School (SLT) should offer another opportunity for staff to raise questions regarding measures that had already been taken and the background to the financial concerns to support their understanding.

Governors raised concern about the impact on the pastoral provision of the school; the Headteacher advised that teaching cuts had already been made (where 'natural wastage' was used). The Headteacher advised that it was preferred that redundancies at this time were not from the teaching staff, however, if the current cuts were indicative of future funding issues, the school could not rule out that the teaching staff structure might need to be reduced.

Governors asked whether it was possible to increase the published admissions number (PAN) to support reducing the deficit; the Headteacher advised that if the PAN was increased following a request to take on more children from the Local Authority (LA), the funding would be required to support the growth, however, if the Governing Body agreed to increase the PAN then this would be lagged funding (ie funding paid at a later date). The Headteacher advised that she had already carried out some initial explorations around class numbers and costings, and this could be explored further to support the Governing Body making an informed decision regarding increasing the PAN further, however, it was acknowledged that this might be received negatively by teachers and parents as it was likely to increase class sizes.

Governors also asked whether it would be useful for the Governing Body to review its decision to continue with the STPCD re pay and conditions; the Headteacher advised that she had explored initial information regarding moving away from the STPCD but generally, Academies that had done so, had increased pay to attract better quality staff. Governors recognised that part of the TUPE agreement was that the school would endeavour to continue with the STPCD however, it was also acknowledged that less palatable options would need to be considered, even if it was unlikely to be pursued. Governors were informed that even if the school did move away from the STPCD, the potential savings would not bring about the level of cost-savings needed. Governors were reminded that the overall saving over the next few years should funding levels remain the same, would be approximately £400k.

Governors asked whether it was likely that anyone would come forward for voluntary redundancy or a sabbatical; the Headteacher confirmed that it was likely, although this would not be possible to consider until the consultation process begins.

Governors discussed the letter to staff (the business case) and questioned whether risks other than financial, should be included in the business case. Governors discussed the risks, eg deleting posts that might impact on the pastoral support etc, however it was recognised that the deletion of some posts would not necessarily mean that the processes would discontinue; it was likely that these processes/roles/responsibilities would be incorporated into other roles and responsibilities and this would mitigate the risks.

Governors raised concern that the letter did not specifically appear to be a business case that included the risks other than financial risks; the Headteacher and Chair confirmed that they had spoken to David Williams, Education Personnel Management (EPM), the school's HR advisers, regarding the business case, and he had confirmed that the letter was sufficient. Governors asked if the Headteacher and SLT had reviewed the non-financial risks and why those posts had been selected; the Headteacher confirmed that they had.

Governors agreed that each of the posts to be deleted should be considered by the Governing Body in terms of risks. In relation to the Enrichment/Events Manager post, Governors agreed that this was a 'nice to have' post but there was a lot of duplication of work since the school had developed over the last 10 years and therefore, this role could be combined. It was also agreed that it would be more efficient for one person to be responsible for trips as this prevented gaps where areas of responsibility were blurred.

Governors considered the risks of deleting the HR Admin post and agreed that, whilst this was necessary during the school's early growth period when approximately 30 staff per year were being recruited, the level of recruitment had reduced significantly and therefore, this post was no longer necessary and the workload had reduced to an extent that the role was being used to carry out other admin tasks that could be covered by the admin team. Should the post be deleted, Governors noted that the responsibilities would revert back to the Personnel Manager and other admin staff as appropriate.

Governors discussed the deletion of the Post 16 Data Manager post and noted that Cotham School would like to take ownership of data management as they want to streamline that role as well as offer an opportunity for career development. Governors agreed that the school would need to review Post 16 data and admin needs to ensure that any other risks were mitigated, however, Governors noted that the member of staff employed at RGS had tendered her resignation and therefore, there was no direct impact on a particular member of staff should the post be deleted. Governors recognised that the amount of data collection currently taking place was a burden that needed to be reduced for staff wellbeing and efficiency of service.

Governors considered the deletion of the Reception post, and noted that the Reception Team was currently overstaffed and therefore, there was slack within the structure that could be removed. Governors noted that there was a risk around cover for sickness etc however, the Headteacher advised that the School Business & Operations Leader had worked with the Reception Team over the last 18 months to implement a more robust cover structure for sickness.

Governors discussed the deletion of the ADT post risks and noted that the post was linked to food technology mainly and this had been reduced due to a lack of take-up. The Headteacher advised that the Premises Team shared the workload re cleaning etc, but would take over this role in the future should the post be deleted.

In terms of the deletion of the Science Technician post, Governors noted that there was a risk that staff would be unable to carry out as many practical tasks as they would like, however, this could be mitigated through an organisational review of the curriculum delivery and timetable.

Governors discussed the deletion of the four Heads of House posts and were informed that the posts would be replaced by 2 full-time student well-being leads attached to four teaching Heads of House. Whilst Governors raised concern that this could potentially impact on provision, it was also agreed that there could be a positive impact through the roles being carried out by teaching staff. Governors reflected on the Ofsted feedback that suggested that more support should be provided in class rather than through students being taken out of class and therefore, this model would address those recommendations together with a move towards individual tuition times being built into the timetable.

Governors considered the deletion of the Learning Support Assistant (LSA) Level 4 post and noted that, as above, the school wanted to focus on individual tuition times rather than extracting students from other subjects which means that the Mathematics team would have more flexibility on which students were taken out. There was a lot of work for staff in timetabling individual students and this was becoming a burden; it was felt that this strategy would impact positively on progress. Governors also noted that this was a different cohort with a lower level of need that did not require key working. Progress Mentors at Key Stage 3 (KS3) and KS4 had previously been appointed to support those students and this was proving more effective and these roles were funded through Pupil Progress funding. Governors recognised that the school currently spent over double the amount of Pupil Progress funding received and a review of the impact of the funding allocations was currently taking place to ensure that it was having the desired impact; this was likely to result in other cost areas being reduced. Governors noted that Ofsted had recently confirmed that the Progress Mentors were very effective at supporting progress.

Governors recognised that there was a risk in carrying out the managing change process in itself because it could encourage staff to seek jobs elsewhere, however, it was acknowledged that the structure would be reviewed following the consultation and any requests for voluntary redundancy, reduction in hours etc, would be taken into consideration and this would inform the finalised staffing structure. Governors also acknowledged that the school did not want to lose staff in key posts and there was a risk that the managing change process might mean that staff not affected by the process might leave.

	<p>Governors asked whether the risk to staff's wellbeing had also been mitigated; the Headteacher confirmed that staff would have access to a 24-hour helpline for up to a year to support staff affected, and face to face support was available upon request.</p> <p>Following discussion, Governors agreed by a majority decision the managing change proposal and that it should move to the consultation stage with staff. Governors also agreed the timeline for the process contained within the letter to staff. Catherine Hallam, Kate Teal and Fiona Elder agreed to consider voluntary solutions on Monday 20 June 2016 supported by the Headteacher and School Business & Operations Leader; Andrew Scoble, Sarah Everett-Cox and the Headteacher volunteered to carry out the selection process should this be necessary; and Catherine Hallam, Darren McKimm and Rod Symmons volunteered to hear any appeals. The dates for the selection process and any appeals would be confirmed at a later date; it was recognised that it would be a very tight timeframe for appeals to be heard before the end of Term.</p>	
3.2	<p>Ofsted Inspection Feedback & Next Steps</p> <p>Governors were pleased to hear that Ofsted was very impressed with the school during the recent inspection, particularly the students' leadership qualities and confidence. Governors noted that the Inspectors mainly spoke to disadvantaged students. The full report would be published shortly, in the meantime, the outcomes were confidential.</p> <p>The Chair reported that Ofsted Inspectors felt that Governors knew the school well and were impressed by school leaders. The SLT found the process very useful and would be reviewing steps to take the recommendations forward, which as discussed earlier in the meeting, would focus on ensuring quality first teaching and withdraw of the support systems.</p>	
4.	Routine Governing Body Business	
4.1	<p>Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting, Carried Forward Matters & Matters Arising</p> <p>The Minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record. There were no carried forward matters or matters arising that were not already included on the Agenda.</p>	
4.2	<p>Policy Adoption/Review</p> <p>i) Managing Change Policy</p> <p>Governors considered and agreed the updated Managing Change Policy.</p> <p>ii) The Working Arrangements Policy</p> <p>The Chair and Ciara Campfield agreed to review the updated policy and bring recommendations to the Leadership Committee.</p> <p>iii) Pensions Discretions & Severance Policy</p> <p>The Chair and Ciara Campfield agreed to review the updated policy and bring recommendations to the Leadership Committee.</p> <p>iv) Pay Policy</p> <p>Governors noted that this policy would need to be reviewed in September when the new School Teachers' Pay & Conditions Document (STPCD) was published.</p>	
4.3	<p>Other Matters / Updates</p> <p>i) Correspondence</p> <p>There was no correspondence to consider.</p>	
5.	Information Sharing	
5.1	<p>Governors' Report Including:</p> <p>i) Committee Chairs' Reports</p> <p>i) Leadership</p> <p>The draft Minutes had previously been distributed; Governors noted the contents.</p> <p>ii) MAT Working Group</p> <p>This was discussed as part of item 3.2.</p>	

	ii) Governor Visits There was nothing significant to report at this time.	
	iii) Training There was nothing significant to report at this time.	
5.	AOB	
	There was no other business to consider.	
6.	Date & Time of Next FGBM	
	Tuesday 12 July 2016, 6.15-8.15pm	

Minutes agreed by the Governing Body and signed by the Chair of Governors:

SIGNED: **DATE:** 12 July 2016