

# **CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

## **Minutes of a meeting of the GOVERNING BODY held at the School at 8.30am on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

Present: Peter Cook Chair & Vice Chair of Governors  
Nicole Chapman Headteacher  
Richard Brown, Ros Cornish, Margaret Cousins, Jason Oster,  
Lee Palmer, Mark Rowell, Duncan Stevens, Richard Vass,  
Yvonne Wickers, Mike Worboys

In Attendance: Stephen Lawlor Deputy Head  
Susan Hoefling Business Manager  
Wendy Newton Clerk to Governors

Apologies: Steve Miles (Chair of Governors), Mary Argent, Mitra Janes,  
Ruth Neave, Lauren Smith

1. In the absence of Steve Miles, Chair of Governors, Peter Cook, Vice Chair of Governors, took the chair.

### **ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Steve Miles, Mary Argent, Mitra Janes, Ruth Neave and Lauren Smith.

### **ITEM 2 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

3. There were no declarations of interest further to those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2016-17.

### **ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

4. The minutes of the Full GB meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2017 were agreed and signed as a true record.

### **ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING**

5. Item 7, Para 14 – Behaviour Figure. The Head confirmed that a figure quoted in the last Headteachers' Report for Year 7 behaviour incidents had been mis-typed, an email correcting the information had been sent to Governors directly after the last meeting.

### **ITEM 5 – MINUTES OF THE GB CONFERENCE & COMPANY AGM – 4<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2017**

6. After two typographic corrections, the minutes of the GB Conference and Company AGM held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2017 were agreed and signed as a true record.

7. GB Minutes, Para 21. The business case for a sixth form of entry had not been undertaken as the School had been advised that there was currently no funding available for grammar school expansion. Without additional buildings, any further expansion in pupil numbers was considered to be impossible. Governors questioned the decision to stop further expansion planning and the Head summarised the background to the expansion funding bid and reminded the meeting that the LA was not prepared to fund expansion for additional places in grammar schools. It was noted that the result of the CIF bid appeal was still awaited. The meeting discussed what the next steps should be in relation to further expansion and the need for a business case in case funding became available. The issue had been discussed at a recent Management Committee meeting and it had been suggested that a business case was not needed at this point in time.

### **ACTION**

8. The Chair advised that prior to the recent election indications had been that additional expansion funding would be forthcoming but that this no longer seemed to be the case. It was noted that without extra funding expansion to six forms of entry was not possible and hence the decision to put the expansion business case on hold. Governors suggested that there was a need for an overall strategic plan, irrespective of having funding or not, which could be reviewed periodically to assess what was possible. The Head reminded the meeting that further public consultation would be required if capital funding were to become available. It was suggested that Government funding might appear suddenly and that prior consultation and full planning need to be undertaken beforehand.

**ACTION**

9. **Decisions.**

- a. The meeting agreed that a plan for further expansion and how to achieve it was required.
- b. It was agreed that the topic of School expansion would be discussed again at the GB Conference in Spring Term 2018.

**Clerk**

**ITEM 6 – CHAIR’S & EMAIL ACTION**

10. There were no Chair’s actions or GB email approval actions to ratify.

**ITEM 7 – GOVERNING BODY MATTERS**

11. A summary of current GB membership was received for information and the ongoing Nominated Governor vacancy from Cambridge University was raised. The meeting was advised that a volunteer from Cambridge University had not been forthcoming and the actual need for a Cambridge representative was discussed. It was noted that the GB currently had a gap in experience from within the fund-raising, marketing or charities specialisms and that any new Governor needed to be beneficial to the School. The Clerk reminded the meeting that as a Nominated Governor position there was more flexibility to appoint someone with the required skillset. The concept of appointing a specific Parent Governor with the required skills was discussed.

12. **Decision.** The Head agreed to include an item in the School’s Summer Newsletter asking if anyone in the parent body had experience in the fund-raising, marketing or charities fields, and ask for the Chair of Governors to write a letter to the whole parent body in the Autumn Term requesting the same information.

**Head**

**S Miles**

13. The Clerk confirmed that following the request for nominations for the positions of Chair of Governors, Vice Chair of Governors and the three GB sub-committee chairs for academic year 2017-18, no nominations other than the current incumbents had been received. All parties were happy to continue in their present roles for a further year and the meeting ratified the continuing appointments.

**ITEM 8 – HEADTEACHER’S REPORT TO GOVERNORS**

14. The Headteacher’s Report to Governors dated July 2017 was reviewed and the Head clarified issues questioned by Governors. The number of successful Year 7 admissions from the Year 5 Masterclass Programme was queried and it was confirmed that numbers had not dropped. The Deputy Head summarised the work undertaken with local primary schools and advised that the Masterclass Programme will be developed next year to include CCHS teachers delivering workshops to primary teachers to support their work with the most able in their schools. The meeting was advised that some primary schools would not engage with grammar schools and Governors discussed the issue. The variation between the figures reported for the GCSE Maths progress (0.25) and the English progress (0.69) was questioned and the Head explained the reasons for the variation.

15. The Head summarised the staffing changes occurring at the end of the academic year and reported that one post was still unfilled. The excellent work of the School SENCO was highlighted along with the involvement of the new SEN Link Governor, Ruth Neave. Governors noted

comments in the report relating to the expected public examination results in August and the issue behind the form of new examination questions was explained. The Head advised that, prior to remarks, 85.2% of the IB results received that week were at Levels 5-7 and on par with previous years. The average point score was 34.5 and all students were awarded the IB Diploma. It was reported that this year's A Level results would not be representative or comparable to previous years as a number of A Level subjects had passed into the IB programme. The possibility of not publishing the public examination results was suggested. Governors noted the progress made in a couple of weaker subjects and thanked the School for the efforts made to improve. Additional information was received on specific subject areas.

16. The Chair advised the meeting of a proposal which had been received and approved by the Management Committee to re-grade the role of Assistant Head (Pastoral) to Deputy Head status with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017. The reasons behind the proposal and the related changes in responsibility were explained. It was noted that the areas of safeguarding, pupil premium and admissions were all major risks for the School and warranted a higher status.

### **ITEM 9 – FINANCIAL MATTERS – SCHOOL BUDGET 2017-18**

17. The meeting received the proposed School budget for 2017-18 for approval and the Business Manager advised of a recruitment adjustment which resulted in an overall deficit figure of £(179,922) which included a £40,000 contingency. Initial forecasts for 2017-18 had predicted a deficit of £(262,000) and much work had been done to reduce costs. It was reported that the revised forecast deficit for the current financial year had been brought down to £(20,000) and may even break-even; reserves had not been touched this year. There were known savings occurring in the future as a result of curriculum changes and more work was to be undertaken to reduce costs further. It was noted that an increase in Sixth Form numbers next September would greatly assist the financial situation.

18. Governors queried the benefit of the fifth form of entry and it was confirmed that there was a net benefit; a detailed analysis was still required in relation to having a sixth form of entry. It was noted that income versus expenditure for the fifth form of entry need to be kept under close review before decisions for further expansion were made. The pressure on School buildings and facilities was noted in relation to student numbers. The meeting was reminded that the GB had been made aware previously of the deficit situation and that reserves had been built up to cover them but that in-year deficits needed to be minimised. The effect of lagged income from student numbers was noted and the deficit situation was discussed in relation to reducing reserves. The GB praised the School staff for the current expenditure reductions. The delicate balance between cost-savings and the effect on staff and the education received by the students was stressed. It was suggested that the School had prepared itself as much as it could for hard financial times in the future.

19. **Decision.** With the one amendment discussed, the School Budget for 2017-18 was approved.

**S Hoefling**

### **ITEM 10 – CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT & SCHOOL EXPANSION**

20. The Business Manager summarised the programme of facilities projects to be undertaken during the Summer holiday which included: the installation of air conditioning in the School Hall, the conversion of the T4 food technology room into a classroom and seminar room, and the T1 technology room into a new Sixth Form common room. A programme of LED lighting upgrade was also due to begin financed by a Government loan; the cost of the remaining projects was to be covered by a contribution from CCHS Capital Development. The Head noted that it was hoped the new Sixth Form common room may aid Year 11 retention. Governors queried what was happening to the redundant technology equipment; it was stated that it was being offered for sale to other local schools and CCHS staff.

### **ITEM 11 – ADMISSIONS**

21. The Chair summarised the situation concerning the Admissions Policy for entry in September

2018, an objection to which had been sent to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) after the GB determination. The Clerk explained the appeals process set out in the 2014 DfE Admissions Code and the required actions which had been undertaken by the School. The decision of the OSA adjudicator was currently awaited, the result of which may require an amendment to the 2018 Admissions Policy. The meeting was reminded that it had been agreed at the determination meeting in February that further revision of the Admissions Policy may be necessary and that this appeal had delayed the timeline for this discussion. The Head advised that 1150 girls had expressed an interest in sitting the entrance test in September, 850 of whom wished to take the test at CCHS. The concept of holding the entrance test on a school day was being investigated in order to manage the increase in numbers and to save on the cost of invigilation.

### **ITEM 12 – RISK REGISTER**

22. **Decision.** The GB-section of the CCHS Risk Register was presented for termly review; the document was approved as presented.

### **ITEM 13 – DATE APPROVAL**

23. **Decision.** The dates for GB and GB sub-committee meetings for academic year 2017-18 and School Term dates for academic year 2018-19 were received for approval; both documents were approved as presented. Governors were requested to inform the Clerk if any of the proposed meeting dates were not convenient.

**All**

### **ITEM 14 – SCHOOL ACTIVITIES – VISITS & TRIPS**

24. An updated list of Residential & Overseas Trips for 2017-18 and an initial list of Residential & Overseas Trips for 2018-19 was presented with minor amendments. The Deputy Head summarised the changes: one expedition weekend and one school trip had been cancelled, some trip dates had been finalised but no new trips had been added.

25. **Decision.** The list of Residential & Overseas Trips for 2017-18 was approved as presented.

### **ITEM 15 – GB SUB-COMMITTEES**

26. The following GB sub-committees minutes were presented for formal approval and no questions were raised:

- The minutes of the Curriculum Committee meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2017,
- The minutes of the Facilities & Finance Committee meetings held on 25<sup>th</sup> April and 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017 (tabled item),
- The minutes of the Staff & Student Matters Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March and 7<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

27. **Decision.** The minutes listed in Paragraph 26 above were approved as presented.

28. In the absence of minutes, the Chair summarised the topics covered in the Management Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017 for the benefit of the meeting.

### **ITEM 16 – GOVERNOR REPORTS**

29. **Item 16.1 – Governor Visits.** The meeting received Governor Visit Reports for visits to the School by Jason Oster on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and Duncan Stevens on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017.

30. **Item 16.2 – Governor Training.** Mike Worboys, Training Link Governor, emphasised the need to increase the number of Governor visits to the School, ideally at least one per year. It was also reported that the number of Governors undertaking ECC training was particularly low this year and encouraged Governors to attend the training available as there was a cost involved for the School, irrespective of take-up. It was reported that the next ECC training hot topic was 'Using the

*Governors Competency Framework*'. It was noted that Ros Cornish had complete the Certificate of School Governance three years ago but had not received a certificate.

**ACTION**

31. **Decision**. The Clerk agreed to contact ECC about the missing certificate.

**Clerk**

32. **Item 16.3 – Safeguarding**. An annual Safeguarding Report had been circulated by email and tabled and was summarised by Safeguarding Governor, Yvonne Wickers, on behalf of herself and Deputy Safeguarding Governor, Ros Cornish. The safeguarding provisions of the School were commended and Maria French, Assistant Head (Pastoral) and School Safeguarding Lead, thanked for her impressive work in this field. Two particular issues were raised for GB discussion. It had been noted from the Single Central Register that Priti Patel, Associate Member, had not been DBS checked and the issue was discussed in relation to her attendance at the School.

33. **Decision**. It was agreed that Priti Patel did not need to be DBS checked but that if visiting the School she would always be supervised.

**Clerk**

**10.15am – 10.30am - The meeting adjourned as a result of a fire alarm sounding.**

**10.30am – Mark Rowell left the meeting.**

34. The second issue raised related to whether the School should repeat DBS checks Governors and permanent staff on a regular basis, this was currently not undertaken. The cost of rechecking and the legal requirement behind the issue was discussed. It was stated that the new DBS system was such that if any adverse situation arose the School would be alerted. The DBS annual update service was explained and Governors were asked to inform the Clerk if they had registered for the service. The concept of including a safeguarding question within Governor visits was proposed but discounted after discussion. The Chair thanked Yvonne Wickers and Ros Cornish for the work they had undertaken.

35. **Decision**. The Clerk agreed to:

- a. Find additional information on the DBS reporting process and inform Governors.
- b. Check that all Governors had been checked via the new DBS system.

**Clerk**

**10.40am – Mike Worboys left the meeting.**

36. **Item 16.4 – Parents' Association Matters**. Ros Cornish, PA Link Governor, advised that the PA Ball had been cancelled due to poor ticket sales and that numbers joining the Wish List lottery had also declined. The sum of £3,700 had unexpectedly been received from the Co-op, and the second-hand uniform and used clothes recycling continued to be very lucrative for the PA. The PA had agreed to fund: the furniture for the new Sixth Form common room, replacement dining and picnic tables and had supported the charity Bluefest in the School. It was noted that the small PA continued to work very hard to raise additional funds for the School.

37. **Decision**. The Head agreed to arrange for a brass plaque to be sited on the new Sixth Form common room to acknowledge to financial support of the PA.

**Head**

38. **Item 16.5 – Better Buildings Committee**. Jason Oster, Link Governor to the Better Building Committee, reported disappointing numbers of contributions from Year 7 parents this year with only 51 out of 150 families contributing, with only 20 regular donors. A new approach was planned for the next academic year with clearer communication and smaller projects to try and encourage more donations. The Head commended Jason Oster and the work of his team for their hard work.

## **ITEM 17 – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

39. **Item 17.1 – School Development Plan 2016-17**. The Final Review of the School Development Plan for 2016-17 was received for information.

40. **Item 17.2 – School Development Plan 2017-18**. The Key Objectives of the School Development Plan 2017-18 were tabled and reviewed. The Head advised that the new format

relate to the new Ofsted headings for easy reference if required. The new SDP containing the new headings would be received next term. A new heading relating to the Equality Act was queried by Governors and the Head advised that LGBT was now a protected characteristic within the Act and that a new staff code of practice was currently being produced. The meeting discussed the implications for the School and how they would be addressed. It was confirmed that if a student in the School decided to transition to another gender, the School was obliged to keep them on role. It was noted that the situation could be hard to manage and had implications for relationships within the student body. Jason Oster offered his support in relation to the IT review SDP objective.

41. **Item 17.3 – Kirkland Rowell Parent Survey**. The meeting received an executive summary of the Kirkland Rowell Parent Survey dated April 2017. The report was overwhelmingly positive with many compliments. The Head summarised some of the concerns which had appeared more than once and gave additional clarification when necessary. Governors discussed specific comments. The need to obtaining feedback from Year 11 leavers was raised and it was suggested that a formal survey of leavers may be valuable to the School. It was agreed that the issue would be revisited next term once the number of Year 11 leavers post July 2017 was known.

### **ITEM 18 – ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

42. **Languages Centre Naming**. The Head informed the meeting that the formal naming of the Languages Centre to the '*Dame Margaret Anstee Languages Centre*' was to take place on the afternoon of Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017. The Head detailed the invited guests and outlined the plans for the event. Full details would follow next term.

43. **School Website**. The Business Manager advised that the new secure area on the School website for Governor information was to be populated during the Summer holiday and that an access password would be communicated to Governors in due course.

### **ITEM 19 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

44. **Decision**. It was agreed that the next Full Governing Body meeting would be held at 8.15am on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

**All**

The meeting closed at 11.15am.

Agreed as a true record.

P Cook  
Vice Chair of Governors & Meeting Chair on the day

13<sup>th</sup> October 2017