

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a meeting of the MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE held remotely via Zoom at 8.00am on Friday 17th June 2022

Present:	Steve Miles Stephen Lawlor Andrew Bonwick Sarah de Souza-Ingle Richard Vass	Chair of Governors Headteacher Chair of Curriculum Committee Chair of Staff & Student Matters Committee Vice Chair of Governors & Chair of Facilities & Finance Committee
In Attendance:	Melissa Mulgrew Fiona Harrison Wendy Newton	Business Manager Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) 8.00 to 8.35am Clerk to Governors
Apologies:	Emma Matthews	Deputy Headteacher

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Emma Matthews.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2. There were no declarations of business interest further to those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2021-22, or conflicts of interest, or receipts of gifts or hospitality.

ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 4th March 2022 were agreed as a true record.

ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING

4. It was confirmed that all actions from the last minutes had been completed.

ITEM 5 – CHAIR'S ACTION

5. It was reported that approval of one Year 9 overseas History trip to Ypres in October 2022 and one Year 13 residential Biology trip to Flatford Mill in October 2022 had been given by Chair's Action since the last meeting. Both trips were regular curriculum trips prior to the Covid pandemic and administrative action needed to be started by the School.

ITEM 6 – HEADTEACHER'S UPDATE

6. The Headteacher reported that attendance for both students and staff remained very good with fewer Covid-related absences. Public examinations were underway and would finish on 28th June. Examination boards had acknowledged some errors and had apologised to schools. The situation was stated as being unacceptable by the Headteacher but luckily CCHS had not been as adversely affected as other schools. Running the public examinations had been operationally challenging for the School due to staffing issues, and the expansion in student numbers had raised rooming issues for the exams. It was reported that the Sports Hall has not been used for examinations but this was to be reconsidered in the future. The School is fully staffed for September 2022 despite late resignations, a temporary solution was in place for Computer Science whilst ongoing recruitment takes place. There had been no contact from Ofsted although an inspection could still take place during the examination period. The School was considered to be near the top of the Ofsted inspection list and likely to visit before the end of this Summer Term. The train strikes due to occur the following week were deemed unhelpful in relation to both school and public examinations. Parents and students had been given additional advice about getting to school during the train

ACTION

strikes and non-examination students had been given the option to use remote schooling if totally necessary.

ACTION

7. **Item 6.2 - CCHS Entrance Test.** The Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) advised the Committee that the CEM (the current Year 7 Entrance Test provider) was stopping the test and that it would not be available after the test in September 2023 and the School would need to change provider. The School was currently investigating three available options (Reading School, GL Assessment and CSSE - formerly used by CCHS) and was to meet with all three providers. It was suggested that it was a good opportunity for the School to assess how the various tests could address the School's Fair Access Plan and assist disadvantaged students. Brief details were given of the alternative examination providers. Governors requested that each company should be asked to give details of any Freedom of Information and OSA complaints that may relate to their specific tests. Company data was also requested to back up any statements made relating to increased Fair Access for students. Governors queried why the School was considering returning to the CSSE test which had been previously dropped. At the time it was considered that the CSSE test was deemed excessively tutorable and that the CEM test was a better test of a child's innate academic ability. It was stated that three possible options all needed to be considered for completeness of investigation. The results of the entrance test investigations would be fully presented to Governors in due course.

8. **Decision.** It was reported that the School intended to move the Year 7 Entrance Test from a Saturday to a weekday as this would allow the School to use staff to run the test on the day. It was therefore requested that Monday 19th September 2022 become an additional School INSET day to cover the Year 7 Entrance Test, this request was **approved** by the Committee. It was confirmed that as an academy we are able to have additional INSET days.

S Lawlor

8.35am – Fiona Harrison left the meeting.

ITEM 7 – SSEF BUILDING PROJECT & CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

9. The Business Manager advised that the School was still working through defects at the end of the SSEF building project, most were minor apart from problems relating to the Sports Hall ventilation system. The contract retention period runs until the end of August 2022 and so the situation was being closely monitored by the School. The final accounts for the project had not yet been agreed but would be presented once finalised. Governors questioned whether the number of SSEF defects were within the bounds expected of a large project and it was confirmed that they were.

ITEM 8 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

10. The Business Manager reported that School finances were in a good place in relation to year end and were trending towards a reasonable surplus although some additional expenditure was to be presented to the Facilities & Finance Committee the following week. The budget surplus was being used to cover early expenditure relating to the next academic year in order to allow greater flexibility next year, particularly in relation to future changes in energy costs.

ITEM 9 – CYBER SECURITY AUDIT

11. A cyber security audit report, for an external audit undertaken by Secure Schools in April 2022, was received for information. The Business Manager advised that whilst the audit had identified a significant number of areas of non-compliance the audit deemed CCHS 'above average' in comparison to other schools. The auditor had been impressed that multifactor authentication was already in place for both staff and students. The audit report included an action plan with detailed recommendations for the School. It was stated that many of the recommendations were easy to address and the School had already begun to address them. Some of the actions, such as policy writing, would be addressed during the Summer holiday. The Business Manager stated that it was a productive audit and would take the School forward in relation to cyber security and make the School even more secure. Governors noted a comment about staff training and details of the current cyber security training were received. It was confirmed that a new system of signed-off video training was to be implemented via the School's online appraisal system. It was reported that MATs are far less secure and more likely to be hacked than SATs as most SAT IT actions were internal.

ITEM 10 – GDPR

ACTION

12. The annual IGS Information Governance Audit had been undertaken on 6th May 2022 and the audit report was received for information. The audit outcome remained as being 'Good Assurance'. There were only a few minor actions, and the audit was deemed to be very constructive. The one area which needed improvement related to suppliers.

ITEM 11 – SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS

13. The meeting received the headlines overview document for SDP 2022-23. The Headteacher advised that the structure of the next SDP would remain the same and that SLT would develop and amplify the headlines into next year's SDP which would be presented to Governors at the Autumn Term Full GB meeting. There were a few items which would be carried over into the next plan. A draft version of the School Strategic Development Plan for 2022-2026 was also received for information. Some data targets were still to be populated, once thorough data trends were reviewed by SLT and SDL colleagues, and the final document would be received next term.

ITEM 12 – GOVERNING BODY MATTERS

14. Item 12.1 - GB Membership. The current GB sub-committee membership was reviewed. The Clerk advised that Dr Svetlana Warhurst had been the successful candidate at a Parent Governor election ending on 10th June 2022. It was **agreed** that Dr Warhurst should be asked to join the Staff & Student Matters Committee as it was currently one member short. The Clerk reminded the Committee that two Nominated Governor positions were also still vacant.

15. Item 12.2 – New Academy Articles - Decision. The CCHS Articles of Association had been revised by the Clerk to reflect the new DfE-preferred model articles of association for academies. The new DfE articles had an academy structure with Members being a separate level above the Governing Body. The revised Articles had been reviewed by Andrew Bonwick in his professional capacity and he was thanked for his work on the document. The proposed Articles were presented to the Committee for their consideration of two specific areas. The meeting reviewed the Articles and discussed its content. The meeting was reminded that the CCHS GB had previously agreed to keep Staff Governors in the new Articles. Challenge was made concerning the power of the Company Members and their control of the School against the power of the Governing Body and the issue was discussed. The Committee **agreed** that the new CCHS Articles of Association should be presented to the Full GB for approval in July 2022. Once approved the new Articles would be passed to DfE for their approval and then be filed at Companies House. It was hoped that the new structure would be in place by September 2022.

Clerk

ITEM 13 – GOVERNING BODY AGENDA

16. **Decision**. The proposed agenda for the Full GB meeting to be held on Friday 8th July 2022 was reviewed and it was noted that approval of the new Articles would need to be added to Item 6.2 of the agenda. With that addition, the agenda was **approved**.

ITEM 14 – GOVERNOR MEETING DATES 2022-23

17. The proposed dates for GB meetings in academic year 2022-23 were received for consideration prior to presentation at the Full GB meeting on 8th July 2022 and no amendments were proposed. Committee members **agreed** to review the proposed meeting dates and advise the Clerk of any unsuitable dates prior to the Full GB meeting.

All

ITEM 15 – RISK REGISTER

18. **Decision**. The Management Committee section of the CCHS Risk Register was reviewed and **approved** as presented. It was noted that a specific cyber security risk would need to be added to the Facilities & Finance Committee section of the School Risk Register and the Business Manager **agreed** to address the requirement. The cyber security audit had also suggested a dedicated cyber security link governor was required, although this was not mandatory. It was **agreed** that the Facilities & Finance Committee would discuss the suggestion at their next meeting.

M Mulgrew

ITEM 16 – POLICIES

19. **Decision.** The following policies were reviewed and **approved** as presented with the review periods shown:

- 16.1 – Staff Redundancy & Restructuring Policy (Juniper HR-model) with a 4-year review,
- 16.2 – Teachers’ Severance Policy (Juniper HR-model) with a 4-year review, and
- 16.3 – LGPS Discretions Policy (Juniper HR-model) with a 4-year review.

ITEM 17 – MATS

20. The Headteacher advised that the Government was progressing, via a White Paper currently going through Parliament, with its plan for all schools to be in a MAT, or heading to join a MAT, by 2030. It was reported that there were grave concerns about the issue in the Grammar School Heads Association (GSHA), and it was now considered that the MAT issue would not be going away. The Government suggestion was that MATs would contain 10 schools and 7,500 to 10,000 students. Details of GSHA’s position on the issue was summarised by the Headteacher. Whilst the Schools Bill contained a guarantee for selective education, GSHA were being very pro-active about the situation and were looking at options in relation to MATs, including a grammar school MAT. It was necessary to wait for the formal legislation to be passed which would then dictate what the next step might be. The Committee put forward questions as to how the MAT issue could affect the School and it was agreed that the School needed to know its options and have a plan for the future. It was **agreed** that the Clerk should add the MAT issue to the next Full GB meeting agenda. It was also suggested that there may be a need for a separate Governor meeting to discuss the issue more fully. Numerical data on grammar schools was received: 90 out of 163 grammar schools were already in a MAT; 41 out of 97 GSHA schools were already in a MAT; and 8 out of 20 SSG schools were already in a MAT. It was noted that having so many schools in a MAT already reduced the pool of remaining SATs. The Headteacher suggested preparing a paper summarising the key information on the MAT issue for the next Full GB meeting. (**Clerk’s Note** – After the meeting the Clerk sent the Management Committee members a link to a White Paper/MAT webinar and the Chair requested that the Clerk should send the link out to the Full GB for their information).

Clerk

S Lawlor

Clerk

ITEM 18 – COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS

21. The Headteacher advised that the School and individual teachers had been receiving compliments from Year 11 and Year 13 students and their parents for the work undertaken by the School in relation to public examinations and particularly to the extra set of mocks which had helped in preparation for the real examinations. There had been one Freedom of Information request and there was one ongoing complaint from a parent who had now been called into the school to discuss the issue directly with the Headteacher.

ITEM 19 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

22. No other items of business were raised.

ITEM 20 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

23. **Decision.** The date of the next meeting was **agreed** as 8.00am on Friday 23rd September 2022.

All

The meeting closed at 9.25am.

Steve Miles, Chair

23rd September 2022