

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

**Minutes of a meeting of the MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
held at the School and via Teams at 8.10am on Friday 7th June 2024**

Present:	Steve Miles Svetlana Warhurst Stephen Lawlor Andrew Bonwick Richard Brown	Chair of Trustees Vice Chair of Trustees Headteacher (T) Chair of Curriculum Committee Chair of Facilities & Finance Committee
In Attendance:	Jo Cross Fiona Harrison Melissa Mulgrew Wendy Newton	Deputy Headteacher (Academic) Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) Business Manager Clerk to Trustees (T = via Teams)
Apologies:	Sarah de Souza-Ingle	Chair of Staff & Student Matters Committee

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received from Sarah de Souza-Ingle due to illness and accepted.

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 2023-24, or conflicts of interest or receipts of gifts or hospitality reported.

ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 1st March 2024 were agreed as a true record.

ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING

4. Item 7, Para 9 – Minibus Lease. The Business Manager confirmed that the new minibus order had been placed but delivery deferred until Jul 2025 when the current minibus lease now ended after a one-year extension.
5. Item 7, Para 12 – Art Lift. The Business Manager advised that the repair of the Art Lift would be undertaken during the Summer holiday.
6. Item 10, Para 17 – Board Membership. The Clerk confirmed that the Academy Members had approved a further term of office for both Steve Miles and Andrew Bonwick.

ITEM 5 – CHAIR’S ACTION

7. There had been no Chair’s Actions since the last meeting.

ITEM 6 – FINANCIAL UPDATE

8. The Business Manager advised that finances were trending towards break even for the end of the current financial year and that the next financial year looked very challenging. The Government were not publishing the teachers’ pay recommendation or the Academies Handbook until after the election in July. The School was tightening all its expenditure next year and the 2024-25 budget was currently being prepared based on known income information and estimations for unknown income areas which mainly related to staff costs. A deficit was expected and would require drawing down on School reserves. Budget scenarios were being produced and the School would be working on the worst-case unfunded scenario. All the scenarios led to a deficit budget figure. The Committee were

ACTION

reminded that Government grants previously received were not enough to cover actual costs. It was reported that all schools were in a similar situation and that other schools were undertaking restructuring and redundancies in order to reduce costs. It was hoped that there may be some in-year funding after the election or if a new Government was elected. The Headteacher gave some context on the history of education funding and reminded the meeting that the School was still growing. The final Year 7 cohort of 180 would enter in September 2024, all of the five Main School year groups would then have 180 students. This increase would have an impact on Sixth Form figures and it was hoped that student numbers in the Sixth Form would settle at 320-340 students. As a growing school there would still be a need to recruit staff despite the reality of needing to strip back staffing costs. It was stressed that the School was being as efficient as possible with its timetabling and the skills of its teaching staff in order to minimise costs.

9. The Chair summarised the discussions of the meeting and confirmed that, in light of the lack of information, Trustees were happy for the School to take stock of the financial situation as it is during the next few months and that there would be a need to re-assess the situation once final figures were known. If funding did not appear, there may be a need to make some difficult decisions. The Headteacher confirmed that the SLT had begun to look at future options if funding did not appear. Trustees noted that the suggested low six-figure deficit figure represented less than 10% of the current reserves and could be accommodated, if necessary, but that a close watch was required if costs continued to increase.

10. The Business Manager tabled the following financial approval requests and explained the situation behind each request:

a. **Insurance Renewal – Decision.** Details of the School insurance renewal were received. The School uses the ECC framework which is re-tendered every three years. The other option was the Government Risk Protection Arrangement but that was more expensive. The Committee discussed the request and **approved** the continued use of the ECC framework and the expenditure of £37,052.83.

M Mulgrew

b. **Old Girls' Account – Decision.** An Old Girls' Association (OGA) bank account was now dormant with a balance of £9,210 in 2020, and the bank intended to close it. It was proposed that the funds should be moved into the CCHS Capital Development Ltd and the account closed as the Society was no longer running. The Committee **approved** moving the balance of the OGA into the CCHS Capital Development Ltd bank account and closing the OGA account.

M Mulgrew

c. **Disposal of Mower – Decision.** An offer of £1500 had been received for the School's old ride-on lawn mower which was no longer working and had not been used for the past 5 years as the task of grass cutting was outsourced. The equipment was fully depreciated in 2022 and had a net book value of £0. It was confirmed that the Site Manager had undertaken internet price comparisons for the mower. The Committee **approved** the sale of the lawn mower and its removal from the fixed assets register.

M Mulgrew

ITEM 7 – CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

11. The CIF bid had been successful for the Art Block window replacement/asbestos removal and survey work had begun that week. The finance scope request had been denied and left a shortfall. The total value of the project was £215,000, of which £64,000 was to be funded by the School. The variation on the contract was an additional £35,000, £25,500 of this was to come from Capital Formula grant and the remaining balance of £2000 - £10,000 (depending on how much of the contingency already included is used) was to come from School reserves. The Committee had previously approved the additional funding by email. It was reported that the main work would start in the Summer holidays and should be finished by the October Half Term. Plans were in hand for any School disruption in the Autumn Term, this was deemed to be minimal. The second CIF bid for the Main School boiler replacement had been rejected and an appeal had now been put into the DfE. It was suggested that nothing was likely to be heard until after the election.

ITEM 8 – DATA

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12. The draft CCHS Achievement Strategy for September 2024 was presented and the Headteacher highlighted the timelines relating to the Covid pandemic and the different issues which affected the different cohorts. It was noted that next Year 7 cohort in September 2024 were in Year 2 during Covid, and that the only students in CCHS when the pandemic hit will be those in the Sixth Form. The issues around these situations were outlined and discussed. It was stated that there were different impacts for different year groups as they move through the School and that the School addressed the issues of each year group individually. Year 10 was noted as being a cohort with specific issues and that the usual Year 11 intervention programme was now being introduced in the Year 10 Summer Term rather than wait until the Autumn Term of Year 11. Attention was brought to the pastoral actions, academic actions and School Development Leaders' pages which were currently being completed for the next academic year.

12. The Deputy Headteacher (Academic) advised that Years 11 and 13 students were currently undertaking public examinations and that feedback so far was good. Year 11 TA2 data was positive and in line with last year's cohort. Additional mocks had been held in March, and academic and pastoral support had been put in place for any students with difficulties, details of which were summarised. Year 13 TA2 data was very slightly higher (2.7% A*-B) than last year. It was stressed that students are encouraged to come to school during their study leave either just to revise or if additional support was required. Details of the additional academic and pastoral student support available were received. It was reported that this year's public examination timetable was such that some students had almost finished their public examinations whilst others had not yet started, this had a detrimental effect on some students and plans were being made to address this issue next year.

13. It was stated that the School's focus was now Years 10 and 12 and their TA2 data was received. A particular focus was on Year 10 in light of their Covid experience, particularly for the SEND and Disadvantaged students, and especially on Maths and Literacy. Additional support was in place to assist this particular year group and close any academic gaps, and the methods of assistance were discussed. Welcome meetings were now happening for the new Year 7 intake in September 2024, and additional interventions were available from now until they arrive. It was reported that next year's SDP addresses the specific requirements of these students and each of the cohorts.

8.50am – The Headteacher left the meeting to attend the SSGS Conference.

14. Trustees queried how many of the eighteen September 2024 Year 7 PPG students would have been successful without the lower Admissions score for PPG students; it was suggested about two. It was stated that additional interventions were to be put in place to address any academic gaps for these students. The meeting discussed the effect of the change in Year 7 Entrance Test and how it may show itself in the new cohort. Specific queries were raised on the TA2 data and additional clarification was received. The use of 'Elevate' training was queried. It was stated that the system was expensive and so only used at key points during a student's time at the school.

ITEM 9 – ACADEMY BOARD MATTERS

15. The terms of office and committee membership of the Trust Board as at 27th April 2024 were reviewed and discussed. The Clerk highlighted the three Trustee positions currently vacant, and reported that Priya Rangaswamy was due to come to the end of her term of office in December 2024. The Clerk confirmed that as Priya is a Parent Trustee, she would need to formally re-stand at a Parent Governor election next term if she wished to continue. This situation would be reviewed at the next Management Committee meeting. A summary of the current Link Trustees and the volunteers for new Link roles was reviewed. It was agreed that the person taking on the Health & Safety Link Trustee role required specialist knowledge in the field.

16. **Decision.** It was **agreed** that Priya Rangaswamy would be the Careers Link Trustee; Melanie Gulliver would be the Wellbeing Link Trustee, and Niamh Dobson would be the Sustainability Link

Trustee, and the Clerk **agreed** to advise them of the decision. The three Trustees were thanked for volunteering for the roles. It was also **agreed** that a discussion would be held with Manish Unhale concerning a Link Trustee role.

**Clerk
Chair**

ITEM 10 – ACADEMY BOARD MEETING

17. The proposed agenda for the Academy Board GB meeting to be held on Friday 7th July 2024 was reviewed and with one date correction was **approved** as presented.

ITEM 11 – TRUSTEE MEETING DATES

18. The first draft of proposed Academy Board and sub-committee dates was presented for consideration. The Clerk had not received any adverse comments from the School on the proposed dates. One problem concerning the date of the Curriculum Committee meeting in the Autumn Term still needed to be resolved, this was due to the absence of the Clerk. The Clerk **agreed** to liaise with the Deputy Headteacher (Academic) on a possible date for the Curriculum Committee meeting. Committee members were requested to review the proposed dates and **advise** the Clerk of any problems. The final list of meeting dates would be presented for approval at the Board meeting on 5th July 2024. It was **agreed** that Academy Members' meetings would also be added once known.

Clerk**Clerk**

ITEM 12 – SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

19. The Mid-Year Review of the School Development Plan (SDP) 2023-24 and the SLT planning document for SDP 2024-25 were received for information. The Final Review of SDP 2023-24 would be received at the Academy Board meeting on 5th July 2024. Trustees requested that any material changes be highlighted for ease of reference.

ITEM 13 – POLICIES

20. Item 13.1 – LGPS Discretions Policy - **Decision**. The LGPS Discretions Policy, a Juniper Education model policy, was presented for review and **approved** as presented with a 4-year review. The Business Manager **agreed** to distribute the policy to all Support Staff to ensure their knowledge of the change in Minimum Pension Age from 55 to 57 years with effect from April 2028.

21. Item 13.2 – Staff Redundancy & Restructuring Policy - **Decision**. The Staff Redundancy & Restructuring Policy, a Juniper Education model policy, was presented for review and **approved** as presented with a 2-year review.

ITEM 14 – GDPR

22. The annual ECC IGS Information Governance Audit had been undertaken in May 2024 and their report was received. The School had 'Good Assurance' overall and no adverse issues had been identified. Trustees queried one item relating to permission to publish staff photographs on the School website. The Business Manager **agreed** to investigate and address the issue. Freedom of Information requests had increased significantly, all related to admissions and movement on the September 2024 Year 7 waiting list, and background information was received on the issue. Trustees queried specific items in the report and the Business Manager gave further clarification. The Committee were advised that a recent data breach at a local Essex school could have been avoided if they had been using multi-factor authentication, CCHS already has this in place. The Business Manager confirmed for Trustees that the School's insurance covered cyber insurance and first response, and that a separate cyber security audit had been undertaken a couple of years ago. The Business Manager **agreed** to look at the cost of having a separate higher level of cyber insurance. The meeting was advised that the School was in the process of migrating a lot of information to the Cloud as it gave multiple back-up options and reduced cyber risk.

ITEM 15 – RISK REGISTER

ACTION

23. **Decision.** The Management Committee section of the CCHS Risk Register was reviewed and **approved** as presented.

ITEM 16 – PARENTAL FEEDBACK

24. The Committee were advised that the Year 11 leavers event and the Speech Day reception had both been good sources of information and much positive feedback had been received. It was reported that there was currently a lot of parental interaction relating to the exam cohorts with some parents needing basic support for their daughters. The level of support for examination students had been quite different this year, including the need for the School to provide equipment and food before exams, and even students not arriving at the correct time for examinations. Expanded guidance on such issues was to be given to parents next year. Trustees thanked the Deputy Headteachers and all the staff involved for their commitment to the girls and asked for their thanks to be passed on to all concerned.

ITEM 17 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

25. No other items of business were raised.

ITEM 18 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

26. **Decision.** The date of the next meeting was agreed as 8.00am on Friday 27th September 2024, subject to Full Board approval on 5th July 2024.

All

The meeting closed at 9.37am.

S Miles, Chair

27th September 2024