

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a meeting of the GOVERNING BODY held at the School at 8.25am on Friday 6th July 2018

Present: Steve Miles Chair of Governors
Peter Cook Vice Chair of Governors
Nicole Chapman Headteacher
Mary Argent, Richard Brown, Sarah Clements, Ros Cornish, Jason Oster,
Lee Palmer, Mark Rowell, Lauren Smith, Duncan Stevens, Richard Vass,
Yvonne Wickers, Mike Worboys

In Attendance: Stephen Lawlor Deputy Head (Curriculum)
Maria French Deputy Head (Pastoral)
Susan Hoefling Business Manager
Wendy Newton Clerk to Governors

Apologies: Ruth Neave

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Ruth Neave.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2. There were no declarations of interest further to those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2017-18.

ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

3. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9th March 2018 were agreed and signed.

ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING

4. Item 4, Para 4 – Cambridge Contact - Decision. Contact had not been made with Churchill College as it had been agreed at the last meeting that the vacant Nominated Governor position should not be filled specifically by anyone from Cambridge. Lauren Smith agreed to pass details of a Cambridge contact for school visits to the Head.

5. Item 4, Para 7 – Training Certificate - Decision. The Clerk advised that ECC had been chased for the missing Certificates of School Governance but nothing had yet arrived. The Clerk agreed to contact EES once more. (**Clerk's Note:** Certificates have now been received.)

6. Item 8, Para 17 – Engineering Data - Decision. Information on university applications for engineering subjects had been circulated to the Management Committee after the last meeting and were tabled for general information. The names of the specific locations were requested and the Head agreed to send additional information to the GB.

7. Item 14, Para 31 – GDPR. The Business Manager tabled details of actions taken and planned in relation to new GDPR requirements. Staff GDPR training had been delayed by ECC and was now to be undertaken in the Autumn Term. It was reported that a number of new policies would need to be brought to the Full GB for initial approval in October before possible delegation to a GB sub-committee. There was discussion about the GDPR and the School's historic student data.

8. Item 15, Para 33 – Visits. The Head advised that a parent who had previously donated money towards the Bar Mock Trial competition in the UK had now made a second donation of over \$1000 to support a Bar Mock Trial trip to New York in November 2018 but wished to remain anonymous.

ACTION

L Smith

Clerk

Head

S Hoefling

ITEM 5 – MINUTES OF OTHER GB MEETINGS

9. **Decision.** After one typographic correction the minutes of the Governors' Strategic Planning Workshop on 24th April 2018 and the Public Consultation Review on 25th June 2018 were approved.

ITEM 6 – CHAIR'S & EMAIL ACTION

10. The Clerk advised that the School's Business Continuity Plan had been sent to the Full GB by email and sufficient responses had been received by May 2018 to approve the document.

ITEM 7 – GOVERNING BODY MATTERS

11. A summary of current GB membership was received for information and it was noted that no terms of office were due to end in the near future. The Clerk advised that following an email request for nominations for the roles of Chair of Governors and Vice Chair of Governors for academic year 2018-19, no nominations other than the current incumbents had been received. Members of the three GB sub-committees had subsequently been approached for nominations for sub-committee chairs and no nominations other than the current incumbents had been received.

12. **Decision.** The Chair of Governors, Vice Chair of Governors and the three current chairs of the GB sub-committees were happy to continue in their role and were therefore re-elected unopposed in their present positions for academic year 2018-19.

ITEM 8 – HEADTEACHER'S REPORT TO GOVERNORS

13. The meeting received the Headteacher's Report to Governors dated July 2018 and Governors queried specific items. The relationship between Year 7 applicants to the School and the Year 5 Enrichment Day Masterclasses was noted and further details on the School's outreach work with local primary schools were summarised. Investigations were being made for the possible introduction of Extension/Challenge Clubs for local primaries. It was confirmed that there were no formal agreements with any specific school but that all the work undertaken was recorded and could be evidenced if required. The meeting was reminded that the School was minded to amend the School's Admissions Policy even further to assist under-privileged applicants. The School's figure of 3.5% Free School Meal (FSM) was noted against the National average of 28.5%, the local FSM average was not known. It was confirmed that the primary school masterclass attendees completed a feedback form after the events and that additional twilight workshops were to be held next year for local primary school staff. It was stressed that all the School's enrichment activities had been running prior to the current SSEF bid requirement. The meeting discussed the School's Year 7 application process and it was reported that there had been thoughts of going out to primary schools to assist parents with the online application process for the entrance test as it had been reported that some families may find it difficult to undertake it without assistance. The stringent nature of the School's application checking process was noted.

14. Governors noted that the 2017 KS5 data in the report showed a deterioration in results and the issue was discussed. The Head reminded the meeting that Governors had been pre-warned that poorer results were expected and advised of the circumstances behind the issue. The Chair thanked the Head and SLT for their preparation of the report which was considered very informative and useful.

ITEM 9 – CHINA CONSULTANCY

15. The Head summarised a report which gave details of her consultancy trip to China in June 2018. Details of possible further collaboration with the Chinese school entrepreneur were explained and it was stated that the main income stream for the School would be from consultancy fees. It was reported that the SLT of the Chinese school were due to visit CCHS in October 2018.

ITEM 10 – EXPANSION TO SIX FORMS OF ENTRY

16. The Head advised that the SSEF bid was currently being prepared by SLT for submission before the end of Summer Term. It was stressed that further school expansion was totally dependent on achieving SSEF funding and that Governors had received financial data to support the need for expansion to 6FE at their Conference in January 2018 and had agreed in principle to the expansion by instructing the School to proceed with the SEFF application at the GB meeting on 25th June. It was noted that if the bid was successful there would be need for an extraordinary GB meeting in order for Governors to formally agree expansion to six forms of entry (6FE) and that a review of all the previously received expansion arguments would be needed in the form of a full options appraisal in order to re-affirm that the financial arguments for expansion were still valid. The Head confirmed that SLT had considered, and included in the previous costings, all the possible structural staff changes required for having 6FE. The meeting discussed the expansion situation and were reminded that without expansion to 6FE major cuts in curriculum and staffing would be required. Expansion to 6FE would permit further economies and make the School more viable. Governors stressed that whilst they had received information on alternative cost-cutting options on various previous occasions they were obliged to undertake a full options analysis before making the decision to expand further to ensure that it was financially and operationally right for the School. It was also reported that a review of the prioritisation in the current Admissions Policy would be required and that outline proposals of future intentions would be included in the SSEF bid in order to strengthen the School's case.

17. Options to achieve a balanced School budget. It was noted that before any decision was made on expansion to 6FE, a full options appraisal was required to assess all other possible ways to achieve a balanced budget. It was stated that data had been received previously which showed that allowing the School to continue as at present and doing nothing would lead to even greater and growing deficits in spite of the current expansion to 5FE. It was noted that drastic measures would be required to balance the budget with the School's current situation. It was also suggested that the financial and operational impact of having increased to 5FE should be assessed before agreeing to expand the School further. It was noted that the School's current annual deficit was more than £(130,000) but that this amount would be covered if the School was full, the Sixth Form currently has 50 pupil vacancies. Governors recognised the challenge of achieving a full School and maintaining educational standards. The serious situation of having a forecasted increasing budget deficit was acknowledged and there was a prolonged discussion on the need to balance the School budget during which it was noted that funding for 6FE may not be received and that other options had to be considered. Governors recognised the implications of running out of money and the possibility of Government intervention, and stated that they needed to understand what could happen if the School had to cut its way out of its current financial problem. Governors stressed that there had to be real rigour in showing how and why a decision to expand further was made in terms of cost, revenue, logistical and operational implications for the School.

18. Decisions. It was agreed that:

- a. The Head would circulate the SSEF bid to Governors for review prior to submission.
- b. An additional GB meeting would be held early in the Autumn Term to receive a full financial cost appraisal from the School on the options available to achieve a balanced budget. The options to be covered in the cost appraisal are:
 - i) Expansion to 6FE (assuming a successful SSEF bid outcome),
 - ii) 5FE with a full Sixth Form as well as Lower School,
 - iii) 5FE with current pupil levels to show future deficits, the 'do nothing' option, and
 - iv) Substantial cost reductions in order to produce a balanced budget with 5FE based on the current situation.
 - v) Information to be received at the meeting would also include: the financial impact of 5FE on the School; the 2015 expansion documentation, and previously forecast deficits for comparison with the current financial situation.
- c. The Admissions Policy for entry in September 2020 would be reviewed in the Autumn Term in relation to the Pupil Premium prioritisation criterion.

**Head
All
SLT**

M French

ITEM 11 – SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

19. The proposed School Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 had been recently reviewed by the three GB sub-committees and a few revisions had been incorporated. The document was presented for final GB approval.
20. **Decision**. The School Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 was approved as presented.

ITEM 12 – FINANCIAL MATTERS – SCHOOL BUDGET 2018-19

21. The meeting received the proposed School Budget for 2018-19 and the Business Manager summarised the information given in the document. A deficit of £(130,094) was expected, this was a reduction from £(169,786) reported to the GB in March 2018, the improvement of £39,000 was due to additional lettings income, consultancy income and increased show revenue. Some savings had been achieved in staff costs by appointing NQTs for the next academic year. All budgets within the school had been reviewed and most figures had been reduced, the only exception was for purchased services and this related to having a new GDPR contract with ECC and a new Payroll provider. The proposed budget included a contingency of £40,000.

10.00am – 10.10am – The meeting adjourned briefly for a formal farewell to previous Governor, Mitra Janes.

22. The meeting resumed and Governors questioned specific figures in the budget. The Business Manager summarised a situation relating to the HMRC VAT threshold and the School lettings income. It was confirmed that next year's deficit would be covered by the current School reserves. The School was praised for the budget situation and the work undertaken to achieve it.

23. **Decision**. The School Budget for 2018-19 was approved as presented.

S Hoefling

ITEM 13 - CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

24. Peter Cook advised that an appeal had been put in for the unsuccessful CIF bid; the outcome was still awaited but was thought to be unlikely to succeed. The new SSEF bid is to be submitted before the end of the Summer Term and the outcome was expected in the Autumn Term. Projects for the Summer break included a £160,000 conversion of the old Technology rooms into two general classrooms and a lecture space. The two technology technicians were commended for their work and flexibility of redeployment within the School, and the plans of how they would continue technology work through STEM projects were summarised. It was reported that the conversion of the Sixth Form canteen was on hold pending catering contract discussions.

ITEM 14 – ADMISSIONS

25. The meeting was informed that no further information had been received from the Office of the Schools' Adjudicator concerning the appeal to the Admissions Policy 2019.

ITEM 15 – CCHS RISK REGISTER

26. **Decision**. The GB section of the CCHS Risk Register was presented for termly review and approved as presented.

ITEM 16 – DATE APPROVAL

27. **Item 16.1 - GB Meeting Dates 2018-19 - Decision**. The proposed dates for GB and GB sub-committee meetings for academic year 2018-19 were presented and approved as presented.

Clerk

28. **Item 16.2 – School Term Dates 2019-20 - Decision**. The proposed School term and INSET dates for academic year 2019-20 were presented and approved as presented.

Head

ITEM 17 – GB SUB-COMMITTEES

29. **Decision.** The minutes of the following GB sub-committees were presented and approved:
- Curriculum Committee meetings held on 16th May 2018,
 - Facilities & Finance Committee meeting held on 14th March, 2nd May and 20th June 2018,
 - Staff & Student Matters Committee held on 21st March and 13th June, and,
 - Management Committee meetings held on 21st May 2018.

ITEM 18 – SCHOOL ACTIVITIES – VISITS & TRIPS

30. An updated list of Residential & Overseas Trips for 2018-19 was presented for review; the trips had been previously approved by the GB in March 2018. The Head gave information on a late invitation to attend a Bar Mock Trial competition to be held in New York in November 2018, further details would follow and would require Chair's Action before the next GB meeting.

31. **Decision.** The list of Residential & Overseas Trips for 2018-19 was approved as presented.

Head**ITEM 19 – GOVERNOR REPORTS**

32. Item 19.1 – Governor Visits. Since the last meeting, formal Governor visits had been undertaken by Jason Oster (22 May 18) and Mike Worboys (5 Jun 18) and their visit reports were received for information. The Governors summarised their visits and thanked the School for valuable and informative visits. The Chair encouraged Governors to undertake formal visits to the School at least once a year. Staff were thanked for their involvement with the visits.

33. Item 19.2 – Governor Training. Mike Worboys, Training Link Governor, reminded Governors of the DfE Competency Framework questionnaire undertaken earlier in the year and encouraged Governors to undertake training in any areas in which they lacked knowledge. Use of The Key website was reported to be a useful source of information.

34. Item 19.3 – Safeguarding. Yvonne Wickers, Safeguarding Governor, gave an annual safeguarding report to Governors and summarised the work undertaken by herself and Ros Cornish, Deputy Safeguarding Governor. The meeting was reminded that the Staff & Student Matters Committee received safeguarding information at each meeting. The progress on transferring the Single Central Record into the SIMS system was queried, it was reported as being an ongoing task. The new concept of having mental health first aiders within the School was noted and commended.

35. Item 19.4 – Parents' Association Matters. A report summarising PA fundraising activities and donations to the School was received from Ros Cornish, PA Link Governor. The items purchased for the School were noted and the Chair of Governors thanked the PA for their efforts and generosity.

36. Item 19.5 – Better Buildings Committee. Jason Oster, Link Governor to the Better Building Committee, advised that contributions to the Fund were similar to last year, around £70,000. The impact of introducing smaller scale projects in order to encourage more donations was less than had been hoped. Chris Wickers and Alan Smith, parent volunteers who were coming to the end of their terms, were thanked for their hard work over the past years. There was discussion on how to attract new members to the committee and on how to encourage parents to donate.

10.40am – Richard Brown left the meeting.

ITEM 20 – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

37. Item 20.1 – School Development Plan (SDP) 2017-18 End of Year Review. The End of Year Review of the SDP for 2017-18 was received for information. Governors noted that it was a good working document and thanked the SLT for their work on the document. The meeting was advised that the new Strategic Plan was to be integrated into next year's SDP for ease of reference.

38. Item 20.2 – Child Protection Policy - Decision. A revised ECC model Child Protection Policy was presented for review and was approved as presented.

ITEM 21 – ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

39. Staffing. The Head advised that the current Careers Co-ordinator had resigned and that interviews for a new Co-ordinator were to take place on 13th July, post the meeting Steve Miles, Careers Governor, had agreed to assist in the interview process. The School had not yet been able to replace a Mathematics teacher who resigned at the last minute but a contingency plan had been devised using two experienced supply teachers until the vacancy is filled.

40. SSEF Information. As part of the SSEF work, the Head had obtained new information on which local state schools CCHS students were most likely to have gone to if they had not obtained a place at CCHS. Figures were received for various mid Essex schools and it was noted that the impact on local schools was minimal in relation to their total intake numbers. It was noted that there had been no responses from local state schools to the expansion consultation.

41. Cabaret Concert. The outstanding standard of music in the recent Cabaret Concert was commended and the involvement of School teaching staff noted. Compliments were made on the transformation of music productions and the staff of the Music Department praised. The date of the music event was questioned in the hope that the event might not clash with those of other schools.

ITEM 22 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

42. Decision. The date of the next meeting was agreed as 8.15am on Thursday 18th October 2018.

All

The meeting closed at 10.55am.

Agreed as a true record.

S Miles
Chair of Governors

18th October 2018