

CHELMSFORD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Minutes of a meeting of the MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE held at the School at 8.20am on Tuesday 7th December 2018

Present: Steve Miles Chair of Governors (by teleconference)
Mike Worboys Chair of Curriculum Committee & Meeting Chair
Richard Vass Chair of Facilities & Finance Committee
Yvonne Wickers Chair of the Staff & Student Matters Committee
Nicole Chapman Headteacher

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

Apologies: Peter Cook (Vice Chair of Governors)

1. The meeting was informed that Steve Miles, Chair of Governors and Chair of the Management Committee, was due to join the meeting shortly by teleconference. In his absence Mike Worboys, Chair of the Curriculum Committee chaired the meeting.

Part A

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Peter Cook.

ITEM 2 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

3. There were no declarations of interest further to those already stated on the Register of Business Interests for 2018-19.

ITEM 3 - MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

4. The minutes of the last meeting held on 25th September 2018 were agreed as a true record.

ITEM 4 – MATTERS ARISING

5. Item 12, Para 25 – Safeguarding Governor. The Clerk advised that Yvonne Wickers was still the Lead Safeguarding Governor but that Ros Cornish was considering taking over the role in the Spring Term 2019 subject to personal commitments.

6. Item 12, Para 27 – Governor Information Session. A date had not yet been set for a Governor Information Session; a session was due to be arranged for early in the Spring Term.

7. Item 16, Para 34 – HR Policies. The Chair of the Staff & Student Matters Committee advised that inconsistencies had been found in a recent ECC model HR policy and suggested that all new ECC policies needed to be reviewed thoroughly and any relevant issues brought to the attention of all Governors if appropriate. The Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy was due to be sent out to all Governors later that day as the policy contained responsibilities for all Governors.

ITEM 5 – COMPANY ACCOUNTS

8. The Consolidated Company Accounts for the year ending 31st August 2018 and the auditor's management letter and systems report were received for approval. The Chair of the Facilities & Finance Committee advised that all the accounts and auditor's reports had been presented to the

ACTION

**Chair
Head**

Facilities & Finance Committee recently and that the Committee had recommended them for approval. It was stated that the accounts had been prepared to an excellent standard by the School's Finance Team who were to be commended. A couple of minor issues had been reported in the auditor's management letter and it was noted that one was a recurring issue. The Business Manager explained the administrative actions which needed to be undertaken to address this issue which related to a matter of purchase order evidencing rather than any financial errors. The second point related to obtaining proof of technical competency within the School's tendering process. The Clerk stated that the Chair of Governors had confirmed that he was happy to approve the accounts.

9. **Decision.** The Company Accounts for the period ending 31st August 2018 were approved as presented.

ITEM 6 – TA1 DATA

10. TA1 data for Years 10 to 13 was tabled and discussed. It was reported that targets for Year 10 were missing due to the fact that they are formulated from external data which had not yet been received by the School and only TA1 data was presented. Only one subject was highlighted with a question, PE, given that all students were given a grade 6, which was being queried by the Deputy Head (Curriculum). Overall the GCSE average was 82.7% 7-9, which equates to the previous GCSE A-A* grades. Year 11 had an overall GCSE target of 93% 7-9 and Year 11 TA1 data currently had an average of 82% 7-9, but this was not deemed an issue. Computing and Art figures were to be followed up by SLT.

8.30am – Steve Miles joined the meeting by teleconference.

11. The system of using aspirational targets was queried by a Governor in relation to them not being realistic and the issue was discussed by the meeting. It was stated that having high targets was motivational for the students and was used by most schools. The Year 12 target grades were produced externally by the A Level Information System (ALIS) based on the GCSE grades attained by each student and this year had produced a target of 96.7% A*-B. It was noted that producing TA1 grades for the new Year 12 external students was difficult after only one term. The figures for Music and Physics were queried and explained. It was confirmed that the exam board for Music had been changed this year. The Head advised that some Year 13 students had dropped their fourth A level after Year 12. The targets for Year 13 had been adjusted to take into account the dropped subjects and raised the overall A*-B to 96%, with TA1 data suggesting 90.1%. It was reported that the Sixth Form leadership team now took a tougher line with Sixth Form students and students now seemed to be far more focussed on their studies.

12. **Decision.** The Head agreed to ascertain the TA1 data figure for 2017 for comparison.
(Clerk's Note – November 2017 Year 13 TA1 overall A Level figure was 86%.)

Head

13. Governors queried what was being done to address the low Year 13 TA1 figure for Physics and the Head informed the meeting of a current staff issue which affected the Department. The Head of Physics had analysed the data and reported that five girls (out of the cohort of 11) were working at grade C or below which caused concern. It was stated that synoptic questions were causing difficulties for the students but that extra lunchtime sessions had been arranged as well as more targeted work in class. The impact on the figures of having a small subject cohort was noted. The effect of the headline examination figures on the School was noted.

ITEM 7 – YEAR 7 COMPARISON DATA

14. An analysis of the 2018 Year 7 Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT) undertaken shortly after their arrival at the School was received. The effect of introducing 'Spatial Ability' testing into the overall figures in 2015 was noted as it reduced the average mean score down significantly. The CAT tests identified the students at the top and bottom of the range which ensured that they were sufficiently stretched or properly supported, as appropriate. The consistency of the scores over recent years was noted. The Head stressed that weaker girls were still present within the school, but reducing in numbers over the years. Comparison results data for students entering from inside and outside the Priority Area was

Head

discussed and it was suggested that it would be useful to see similar data on their final GCSE outcomes.

ACTION

ITEM 8 – BUDGET DEFICIT STRATEGY

15. The Business Manager advised that the budget deficit plan was work in progress and had been looked at recently in more detail by the Facilities & Finance Committee. The Sixth Form curriculum was being studied more closely in order for it to be more efficient. It was explained that the savings figure received previously was now considered to be on the high side and was being looked at in detail by the SLT. Updated, refined figures would be presented at the next Facilities & Finance Committee meeting. Governors noted that very high savings had been quoted previously and suggested that they were likely to be unrealistic.

16. **Decision.** In light of the recent news of the successful SSEF bid the Committee agreed that future budget deficit forecasts should only be prepared for 6FE.

**S Hoefling
(M Mulgrew)**

ITEM 9 – CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

17. The Business Manager advised that a Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bid had to be submitted by 13th December and that one bid had been prepared for replacement windows in the Quad. It was felt that it was unlikely to be successful in light of the School's reserves. The outcome of the bid would be known in March or April 2019. Governors queried whether financial support could be obtained in retrospect for the replacement Science ramp but advised not. The actual condition of the windows was summarised for the meeting and it was noted that the work would need to be done at some stage.

ITEM 10 – WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

18. An ECC HR model Whistleblowing Policy was presented for approval. The new stand-alone policy, which had previously been contained within the School's Financial Regulations, had recently been received by the Facilities and Finance Committee but they had decided that it was more appropriate for the policy to be overseen by the Management Committee as it covered all areas.

19. **Decision.** The Whistleblowing Policy was approved as presented with an annual review.

ITEM 11 – GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE

20. **Decision.** The topics for the Governor Conference to be held on 26th January 2019 were agreed as: (1) the Determination of the Admissions Policy for 2020, (2) the timeline for implementing the SSEF to show how the School intended to deliver what had been set out in the SSEF application, including admissions, campus development, operational issues, outreach work and (3) the Strategic Plan to include a discussion of the Admission Policy Priority Area,. It was stated that the Conference was too soon to be able to present any further information on the proposed cost reduction strategies and that this would next be presented at the Facilities & Finance Committee meeting on 6th March 2019.

Head

ITEM 14 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Taken out of order)

21. **SSEF Grant and Admissions Policy.** The Head tabled a copy of the DfE communications received by the School since the announcement of the successful SSEF bid for information and summarised their content. One letter referred to the School's current Admissions Policy and highlighted some areas which needed to be amended by the School, details of which were explained and discussed. It was reported that the DfE communication only spoke about a 'successful' bid and 'funding in principle' but details of exactly how much money was to be awarded or when had yet to be received. It was noted that the School's Fair Access and Partnership Plan (FFAP) needed to be reviewed and expanded in order to support what the School had outlined in the SSEF bid.

22. The Clerk advised that an Admissions Policy for 2020 had been sent out by email recently to all Governors and approved but that the recent DfE communication now required additional changes. An amended 2020 Admissions Policy was received and the Deputy Head (Pastoral) explained the additional changes. For the sake a clarity an additional appendix had been created which contained

a list of definitions for some specific terms used in the policy. As agreed by the Full GB at the recent EGM, the method of allocating places to Looked After, Previously Looked After and Pupil Premium applicants had been redefined and expanded in line with the SSEF bid and details of the allocation method itself was now contained in the policy. Governors queried some of the amendments and further explanation was received. The meeting discussed the requirements of the public consultation in relation to the Admissions Policy. The Chair of Governors thanked the SLT for their work on the Admissions Policy.

23. **Decision**. The Admissions Policy for 2020 was approved as presented and the Committee agreed that the policy could now go out to public consultation as required by the Admissions Code. It was also agreed that the Head would send more information on the Year 7 applicant data to DfE to explain the positive effect the policy changes would have on Pupil Premium applicants.

9.38am – The Deputies and Business Manager left the meeting. It was noted that this was the last meeting of the Business Manager and the Chair thanked Susan Hoefling for her hard work and wished her well in her new employment.

ITEM 13 – COMPLIMENTS & COMPLAINTS

24. The Head advised that she had received some verbal compliments and a few complaints. The complaints concerned: similar theatre school lettings from one of the external hirers; a Freedom of Information request from the parent of a Year 9 student who had not been offered a place on the School's Duke of Edinburgh Scheme; the standard of communications sent out by the School during recent the swimming pool incident; parking in Rectory Lane, and one further complaint about the swimming pool incident. Governors noted the issues and supported the responses taken by the School.

ITEM 12 – HEADTEACHER RECRUITMENT PROCESS

25. The meeting were advised the three people had come to visit the School in relation to the advert for the position of headteacher, two men and one woman. The current application situation was summarised by the Clerk and the method of how and when applications would be reviewed was discussed. The Clerk advised that the 'Safer Recruiting' training course required to be taken by Management Committee members was being arranged through the NSPCC and that Governors would be contacted directly by email in the very near future.

ITEM 14 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

26. **Lord Agnew Letter**. The meeting received a copy of a letter sent to the Chair of Governors from Lord Agnew, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the School System, which raised the suggestion of the School setting up a MAT. Governors discussed the content of the letter and it was agreed that in light of the forthcoming expansion it was not the right time to consider this topic.

27. **HR Issue**. The Head informed the meeting of a confidential HR issue concerning a Science Technician and employment probation. ECC HR and Occupational Health had been involved in the situation which had eventually ended with the person choosing to resign his position at the School.

ITEM 15 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

28. **Decision**. The date of the next meeting was agreed as 7.45am on Friday 1st March 2019.

All

Part A of the meeting closed at 10.20am. At this point, Part B of the meeting was held and is minuted separately.

Agreed as a true record.