

THE QUEEN'S SCHOOL BOARD OF GOVERNORS

THE QUEEN'S C OF E SCHOOL CUMBERLAND ROAD KEW SURREY TW9 4HF

Minutes of the Meeting of the Governors of The Queen's School
held at the school on Tuesday 28th June 2016 at 7.30pm.

- Present: *Foundation Governors (6)*
(BV) Bonney Venning (*Chairman*) (GH) Gail Hiscock
(DD) David Durie (*Vice Chairman*) (ER) Emma Roberts
(KA) Kristen Anderson (IH) Inga Hall
- Non-Foundation Governors (4)*
(KB) Katie Bentham (*Headteacher*) (VON) Vicky O'Neill
(LG) Lucy Gradillas (BB) Bernadette Bird
- Local Authority Governor (1)*
Liz Holden Bithell
- Co-Opted Governors (1)*
(JU) Jean Utshudiema
- Associate Governor (1)*
Phyllis Cunningham
- Non-Voting (1)*
(PA) Philippa Anderson (*Clerk*)

Opening Prayer (led by KA)

1. **APOLOGIES AND WELCOME**

Apologies were received from Laura Coughtrie, Hatty Cadman and Mark Ollard. David Durie, Phyllis Cunningham and Lucy Gradillas sent apologies for late arrival.

2. **DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL AND OTHER MATERIAL INTERESTS**

All Governors and Associate Members are reminded of the need to declare any direct or indirect pecuniary interest which might relate to any matter under discussion.

3. **APPOINTMENT OF FGB CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS AND APPROVAL OF ALL COMMITTEE CHAIRS FOR NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR AND EFFECTIVE APPOINTMENT DATES**

The Chair pointed out that historically elections took place at the first FGB of the academic year. However, when Standing Orders were recently updated, it was decided that it is more appropriate to conduct elections at the last meeting of the academic year for the year ahead.

BV formally resigned as Chair of the Governors with effect from the end of term. BV previously proposed DD and LC as Co-Chairs going forward and KA/IH as Co-Vice Chairs and this was unopposed. They are therefore appointed as Co-Chairs with KA and IH as Co-Vice Chairs from September 2016, with subsequent agreement that

DD/LC will take up office on the first day of the summer holidays, other than for the New Build for which BV will remain responsible.

BV noted that she is prepared to stay on either informally or as an Associate Governor linked to the Building Programme until that is complete. BV was subsequently appointed as Associate Governor responsible for the new build and given voting rights accordingly.

The following committee chairs were proposed and appointed as follows:
Hatty Cadman as Chair of Pay & Personnel Committee – with immediate effect.
Jean Utshudiema as Chair of Curriculum & Standards Committee – from September.
Inga Hall as Chair of Premises Committee – from September.
Lucy Gradillas as Chair of Pastoral Committee – from September.
Gail Hiscock as Chair of Finance Committee – no change.

Lucy Gradillas arrived at 7.47pm.

BV then proposed Luci Mitchell Fry as Associate Governor chairing the Admissions Committee, giving background into LMF's prior role on the governing body and her gradual return to the governing body now. It was discussed and agreed that LMF will have voting rights on FGB, Admissions Committee and Steering Group.

Therefore:

Luci Mitchell Fry appointed as Chair of Admissions Committee – in September following the resignation of Phyllis Cunningham from the governing body.

Phyllis Cunningham arrived at 7.50pm.

Fran West has been RE Co-ordinator and a member of Kairos Working Group and has already agreed to take on the role of Chair of Kairos and is currently in post, having taken over from KA at the last Kairos meeting on 9th June. It was agreed that FW will be invited to attend meetings it is appropriate for her to attend – currently Kairos and Steering Group.

4. **TO NOTE THAT JUDY PERKINS HAS AGREED TO JOIN KAIROS WORKING GROUP**
It was noted that Judy Perkins, an RE teacher at Hampton School and a member of St Anne's Church, has been invited and has accepted the invitation to join Kairos Working Group from September.
5. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 16th MAY 2016**
The minutes were approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

STRATEGIC – Linked to Vision

6. **TO NOTE MONITORING PROCESS AND SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ON VISION PRIORITIES FROM EACH COMMITTEE CHAIR (*written summaries circulated*)**
Premises (LG) – Gave brief update and thanked both staff and parents for support in managing PE at Westerly Ware.
Q: Are concrete plans in place for managing next year?
A: There is a need for communication re new build to evidence optimisation of internal learning environment going forward at Premises meetings in Autumn 1.

Discussion took place re best date for next Premises committee in order to be able to provide the necessary evidence. LG pointed out that both Pastoral and Kairos had received some feedback, which had then been passed to Premises for noting.

It was noted that the impact of the move on existing policies e.g from the health and safety, fire, evacuation perspective, has already been addressed.

Concerns around more detail regarding plans for the learning environment were expressed, but the Headteacher pointed out that there is still no real clarity around the space available and that ideas are still very tentative until the contractors have provided more specific information.

Q: Is the timetable still on track?

A: Yes, up to a point. There have always been two handover dates – however, 22nd/23rd August have recently been confirmed as handover days, with staff being able to access the new building from 24th August, although even this is not completely final.

It was agreed that Premises role is in continuing to keep communication channels open in respect of the new build.

KB then noted that any help that the governors are able to give in packing up in the final week of term would be hugely appreciated.

ACTION: Clerk to Doodle Poll governors regarding availability to help pack – DONE.

Pastoral (LC) – no questions/comments.

P&P (DD) – no questions/comments.

Finance (GH) – requested that resourcing implications of each Vision Priority is added as an extra column to the Vision Control Document to headline the link between the budget and the Vision. Agreed.

C&S (KA) – highlighted primary and secondary responsibilities. Across the whole child, C&S evolved the Workflow around phases and data in order to better understand the ways in which assessments are executed and interventions realised and to see the way in which the children of all abilities and backgrounds are engaged in their learning. KA thanked the SLT and FGB for supporting these efforts across the entire academic year, with particular thanks extended to Jenny Stroud for her help across the very new assessment framework. This is all completely underpinned by regular data reviews and much more robust engagement within phase meetings. KA went on to outline further great progress around foreign language and learning certainties and, outside of the Vision, great work done by Katherine Matheson, supported by Voulla Demetriou in respect of EAL.

David Durie arrived at 8.10pm.

Admissions (PC) - BV noted that BV/KB had taken on responsibility for Admissions linked priority regarding secondary transfer, specifically in talking to external people. BV will formalise this report in writing and submit it for FGB. Secondary school offers have now gone out, Admissions Committee will review and feedback to the LA. Last year, BV and Eleanor Lamberton met with the LA on this issue and the same process needs to happen this year. Therefore, this priority is in progress but far from complete and is something for Admissions Committee to focus on under LMF's leadership next year.

BV thanked all the Committee Chairs for their reports and noted that these will be maintained as a record of where each committee is with its vision priorities. BV pointed out that the Governors' Newsletter (which goes out before Christmas and at the end of the academic year) will go out to parents before term end and that this will include a progress report against the vision priorities.

As a core function of the governing body is to set and review the vision priorities, the Chair pointed out that this was an opportunity to check that all governors are aware of where the FGB is, topline, across all strategic priorities. This was agreed.

7. TO APPROVE THE FINAL BUDGET PRIOR TO SUBMISSION TO THE LA BY 30th JUNE 2016.

The Finance Chair noted that the two versions of the budget had been circulated to FGB and highlighted various points from the school 'user-friendly' version, noting that it had changed very little from the presentation made at the last FGB. Changes have been made to PPA cover to ensure the best quality PPA cover that the school can afford.

GH went on to point out that five years have been laid out and that the income is prudent and conservative given the lettings opportunities that will be provided in due course by the 3G pitch. Pupil numbers are quite ambitious but the Headteacher is comfortable with them – as governors, those numbers will have to be closely monitored to avoid future budget shortfalls.

GH then discussed in some detail the new national funding formula and her understanding of its implications i.e. that LBRuT will be significantly poorer and that the school and governors need to carefully scrutinise all spending decisions in order to make best possible use of available resources.

It was noted that we currently ask parents for £35 per annum voluntary contribution (via the Governors' Appeal) for very legitimate reasons i.e. to support the maintenance and repair of our premises. The governors discussed alternatives to this and it was agreed that once the school has delivered on its funding promises, appropriate options would be further discussed.

Q: Is there still a squeeze on interventions with this budget?

A: Yes, and this area has been looked at in detail by P&P committee.

Various detailed issues around staffing were then discussed, including the level of understanding that the FGB has to have on how the budget is spent with regard to SEN/PPG and additional support.

BV pointed out that the process for this is a triangular discussion between Finance, P&P and C&S committees with good governor overlap – the Chair of Finance always sits on P&P for this reason. This enables a three-way discussion, with Finance tasked with reigning in spending; P&P who allocate staffing budget and resource each area; and C&S whose remit is to ask questions regarding impact of budget allocation and how it affects actual provision. This is generally carried out effectively through use of the For/From Other Committees item on each agenda.

It was however agreed that it would be good practice, especially at a time of budget pressure, to cost out expenditure in each area in a more detailed manner.

ACTION: GH/LHB to liaise with VT/BD and bring back a practical proposal to FGB in the Autumn.

The budget was then approved by FGB. However, the Chair drew attention to the discussions had two meetings ago regarding the collective responsibility of the FGB to understand and approve the budget and reminded governors that this is their opportunity to scrutinise the numbers and ensure that they are corporately comfortable with them.

Q: Do GH/BB feel that FGB has a clear picture of the financial implications of the budget?

A: BB has done a fantastic job of providing excellent five year projections, given imperfect information in an uncertain world.

It was then noted that, although the figures are heading in the wrong direction, the assumptions regarding income are deliberately very conservative and that a year from

now FGB will know whether the income projections should be very different and different decisions may therefore be being taken. The projections provide a warning that unless something good happens the FGB may have to make difficult decisions in the future.

Significant further discussion was had regarding future decisions depending on future outcomes and it was noted that Finance would highlight issues to FGB, whose responsibility would be to give direction to Finance regarding the particular way in which issues identified should be addressed, starting in Spring 2017 and ending at this time next year.

It was agreed that in the current environment a much more robust process for evaluating budget requests should be in place and that each request will need to be evaluated against other budgetary needs going forward. The Headteacher noted that the same message has been given to staff members.

BB in particular and GH/KB were thanked for their work.

8. TO CONSIDER A PROPOSAL FOR MOVING FORWARD WITH THE 3G PITCH (JU)

JU started by pointing out that a 'minor material amendment' is required to the planning permission, including submission of revised drawings, for the 3G pitch and that this will be a 6-8 week process. JU went on to note that the working group had arrived at a short list of two contractors (thanking IH for her considerable input) and provided details of the pros/cons of each contractor, including maintenance implications in the future.

In terms of the overall financial picture, the working group has reviewed the PSBP budget, which FGB has seen and which BB is in the process of finalising, after which it will be circulated. The key point is that due to the large donation received, the school is now able to go forward with a bigger pitch (which will benefit the children and also increase revenue potential). The working group is therefore requesting approval from FGB for a greater allowance to be spent on the pitch.

It was noted that IH has covered all the legal/contractual issues and analysis of T&Cs and that all specification compliance issues have been addressed and that the actual specification follows that supplied by the main contractor and has therefore been scrutinised by the EFA and Bowmer and Kirkland and FA guidelines on pitch specifications have also been referred to.

JU pointed out that at handover an independent certification for the pitch will be required which will ensure that it is up to standard and that the preferred contractor will offer a 10 year warranty of both their workmanship and materials (standard in construction industry is 12 month liability period). Installation period is also critical and wording of the contract will be amended to reflect this.

It was noted that there is no fundamental objection from the LA at this stage.

On the assumption of the large scale pitch being granted planning permission, JU noted that the upper limit of the budget request (including VAT and rebound fencing) is £142k and the currently preferred contractor has come in at @ £94k. Governors expressed concerns regarding the difference in these figures and it was noted that the original budget approval was for £96k. IH highlighted further detailed differences between the two preferred contractors and noted that JU/BV/BB had judged the cheaper (and most preferred) contractor competent and pointed out that the more expensive contractor of the two was less willing to negotiate. Deliverables were also confirmed. The recommendation of the cheaper, preferred contractor is still very much subject to an audit trail being delivered.

The risks of the decision were discussed in detail and it was pointed out that the greatest risk lies around the base left by B&K for the contractors to build on and that,

provided the necessary contractual wording is in place to cover this, there is not a great deal that can go wrong.

BV then gave detailed clarification of the cost saving implications from B&K, of £23k, that the bigger pitch ensured, which could be offset against the cost of tarmac on the back playground.

A governor expressed concerns around voting on this where there is no data/ROI to enable clearer understanding. JU pointed out the projected figure of between £50k-£70k rental income p.a. and also highlighted the necessity to ensure that the cheaper contractor is able to complete the work perfectly in order to avoid on-costs in the future.

It was pointed out that FGB need to make a commitment to this by 30th June as on that deadline B&K need the school's commitment to undertaking to put in a pitch in order for them to release the monies to go back into the main project in other areas.

Therefore, FGB need to authorise the worst case scenario of, over and above the £96k already approved, and in a position very close to end of due diligence, an upper ceiling for the cost of the more expensive of the preferred contractors ie. £46k for the bigger pitch. It was noted that this will be largely PSA funded via the CABF campaign.

It was then noted that the 3G pitch, and indeed all lettings, will have to be run as a separate, stand-alone cost centre, which will need to be run effectively. The research that has already taken place into the projected income was clarified for the governors.

Further elucidation was then given regarding the detailed implications of all the various cost scenarios (depending on planning permission etc).

After further discussion it was agreed that complete clarity must be ensured in communications to the PSA regarding the items on which all monies fundraised or donated are spent.

FGB approved commitment to the funding of a 3G pitch (with a top ceiling of £142K plus a further potential £23k) with one abstention.

9. TO NOTE THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT (SEF UPDATE)

KB drew attention to error re number on roll of 406 not 398. No further comments.

10. TO RECEIVE A VERBAL REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING FROM THE HEADTEACHER (*Standing Item*)

Verbal report noted.

STATUTORY

11. TO NOTE VERBAL UPDATE FROM HT/CHAIR ON SDBE APPROACH TO ACADEMISATION AND AGREE NEXT STEPS.

C/f to next meeting in Autumn 1.

The Chair pointed out that the committee are therefore effectively deciding not to be part of SDBE's early adopter group. However, it was noted that LC/DD are meeting with Colin Powell, SDBE Director on 14th July when the issue will be raised. KB noted that CP has requested rough timescales for academisation and that this should be an agenda item at next FGB.

ACTION: Clerk to add discussion of Academisation timeframe to FGB Agenda in Autumn 1.

12. FOR NOTING

i. Chair's Report – no comments. Chair drew attention to anonymised email correspondence between BV and a parent. Following discussion regarding the issues raised, it was agreed that any governor concerns should be added to next FGB agenda. It was also noted that NUT have given formal notification of strike action on 5th July.

ii. Policy Progress Report (verbal report from LHB) – LHB pointed out that Assessment Policy on the website is out of date. It was agreed that this will be taken to next C&S agenda by JS.

ACTION: Clerk to add Assessment Policy to C&S Agenda on 14th July- DONE.

iii. To note progress on Governor Away Day outcomes, reporting and actions (ER) Feedback has now been circulated. *C/f to next FGB meeting in Autumn 1.*

ACTION: Clerk to add c/f item to next FGB agenda in Autumn 1.

13. GOVERNORS' TRAINING (*Standing Item*)

- i. Noted.
- ii. Noted.

14. FOR NOTING – COMMITTEE & PHASE REPORTS

No comments other than Admissions Committee, on which PC reported as follows:

14.7 Admissions

All timetables met for admissions in September 2016. The current list (still subject to change) is as follows:

Criteria 1 – 0

Criteria 2 – 1 + 1 child subsequently admitted following LA confirmation

Criteria 3 – 29

Criteria 4 – 15

Criteria 5 – 9

Criteria 6 – 6

Total: 61

Currently two appeals outstanding which are arranged and managed by the LA with KB attendance at the Appeals on Friday 1st July. Neither case met the school's criteria, so PC expressed the view that they will not be successful. Clarity was given regarding the consequences for the school if either appeal is won.

OTHER

15. AOB

- KA gave out information regarding logistics of Governor/Staff Party on 29th June.
- PC queried communication given to the wider community regarding Open School Sunday on 10th July to which KA responded.

The meeting concluded at 10.00pm followed by a farewell presentation to the outgoing Chair of Governors, Bonney Venning.

FGB Meeting, 28th June 2016

ACTIONS:

GH

With LHB to liaise with VT/BD and bring back a practical proposal to FGB in the Autumn regarding costing out expenditure.

LHB

With GH to liaise with VT/BD and bring back a practical proposal to FGB in the Autumn regarding costing out expenditure.

Clerk

To add discussion of Academisation timeframe to FGB Agenda in Autumn 1.

To add Progress on Governors' Away Day Outcomes to FGB Agenda in Autumn 1.