

# 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 Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 7.00pm.

- Present: *Foundation Governors (9)*  
(LC) Laura Coughtrie (*Co-Chair*) (ER) Emma Roberts  
(DD) David Durie (*Co-Chair*) (LMF) Luci Mitchell Fry  
(KA) Kristen Anderson (*Co-Vice Chair*) (HC) Hatty Cadman  
(IH) Inga Hall (*Co-Vice Chair*) (CR) Caroline Roberts  
(NW) Father Nigel Worn
- Non-Foundation Governors (4)*  
(KB) Katie Bentham (*Headteacher*) (VON) Vicky O'Neill  
(LG) Lucy Gradillas (CC) Catherine Christmas  
(BD) Voulla Demetriou (*Deputy Headteacher*)
- Co-Opted Governors (1)*  
(JU) Jean Utshudiema  
(MO) Mark Ollard
- Non-Voting (1)*  
Philippa Anderson (*Clerk*)

*Opening Prayer (led by Father Nigel Worn)*

- 1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME**  
Apologies were received from Liz Holden Bithell. Lucy Gradillas and Kristen Anderson 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. Governors returned their completed and signed annual Registration of Governor's Interests forms to the Clerk.
- 3. TO SIGN THE STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**  
All governors signed and returned their annual Statements of Commitment to the Clerk.
- 4. APPOINTMENT OF FGB CHAIR AND VICE CHAIRS AND APPROVAL OF ALL COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND GOVERNOR ROLES FOR 2017/18.**  
No new nominations were received for either Chair or Vice Chairs and David Durie stepped down as Co-Chair. Therefore, LC continues as Chair and IH/KA continue as Co-Vice Chairs. All committee chairs and governor roles were confirmed (attached). It was noted that Data Protection responsibilities will need to be added shortly.
- 5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 27<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2017**  
The minutes were approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting and signed by LC.

Matters arising:

- Community Use Agreement meeting date should now be in early November.
- ICT Working Group are meeting next Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October.
- ER reported that following a meeting between ER/LC/KB the school will adopt the Safeguarding Report based on the very comprehensive LA model. This will be completed annually, date to be confirmed. Termly audits will take place which will feedback into the annual Safeguarding Report, the first of which will take place after half term.
- Positive Handling Policy is up to date and on the school website.

***STRATEGIC – Linked to Vision***

**6. TO REVIEW WRITTEN REPORT FROM EACH COMMITTEE CHAIR ON VISION 2015/17, FOCUSING ON ACHIEVEMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

The Chair commented that this document served well to highlight the achievements of the governing body over the past two years and noted that every item was either complete or continuing into the next Vision. It was agreed that the Report should be added to the school website with a brief explanatory note summarising the Vision. Chairs will advise the Clerk of any minor amendments required prior to this being added to the website.

**ACTION: Chairs to advise Clerk of any amendments to their report, after which Clerk will ensure this is uploaded to the website.**

**7. TO DISCUSS AND IDENTIFY VISION PRIORITIES FOR THE CURRENT ACADEMIC YEAR**

The Chair asked governors whether any priorities should be identified particularly for the current academic year only, but it was agreed that all priorities should continue over two years and that chairs will have to evolve and expand the actions at committee level.

BD drew attention to a typographical error which the Clerk will correct prior to the Vision Control document being uploaded to the governors' only area of the school website.

**ACTION: Clerk to amend typographical error and recirculate corrected version and add it to the governors' only area of the school website.**

**8. TO RECEIVE A WRITTEN REPORT AND PAPERS AND TO DISCUSS ADMISSIONS POLICY CONSULTATION**

LMF gave an overview of her tenure of the Admissions committee since May 2016 and how the decision to make changes to the current policy was arrived at, noting the previous consultation which took place in 2015, the outcome of which resulted in no changes being made to the policy. LMF has reviewed all the material relating to that consultation and read out to the committee an excerpt from a letter written by Bonney Venning, then Chair of Governors, giving a succinct explanation of the issue in 2015 (letter attached).

LMF then reported that over the past year, the admissions committee has created a working group to meet with the clergy, review the responses received from parents and stakeholders in 2015 and decide on whether there is an appetite to revisit the issues. Past data has been examined, where possible, to assist in this process. Subsequent to this, it was decided to draft a new Admissions Policy to deal with all concerns raised. This has resulted in two versions of the policy being prepared – a so-called “Waterfall Policy”, based on the existing policy, but incorporating many more criteria, and also a Foundation Places model, with the main change sought being to address the sibling priority issue. However, further issues have arisen, which have been incorporated into the “Waterfall” policy. The committee has met and reviewed the two draft policies and the view of the committee was that in attempting to deal with the issues, the policy became too complicated, creating further unintended consequences, as in 2015. LMF stressed the importance of the policy remaining as clear and simple as possible and

further stressed the level of consideration that has been given to all the issues that have arisen and the best way forward. The strength of feeling on the committee is therefore that the changes to address the sibling priority issue should not be made and that ultimately this is an issue broader than the school's admissions policy.

*KA arrived at 7.26pm.*

LMF went on to highlight the minor statutory or linguistic changes that have been made and the reasons for this and furthermore, the experiences of the committee that have informed other changes, which are flagged. The substantive changes proposed are a) the introduction of a criteria on whether a child is eligible for a Pupil Premium Grant and, b) Children of a Member of Staff of the school, the latter with particular consideration of the current retention issues in schools and to support staff work/life balance.

**Q: How common a criterion is Children of a Member of Staff in other schools?**

**A: Not hugely common, but it is becoming more prevalent – Christ's and Holy Trinity have just introduced it. SDBE are happy with its introduction, with the suggestion of a cap being considered. This will be discussed further.**

*LG arrived at 7.30pm.*

The Admissions Chair went on to point out that the Clergy Form has also been under consideration, primarily due to SDBE guidance requiring some changes and also to reflect the experience of the committee in receiving Clergy Forms and noted what the proposed changes are.

LMF then summarised that what is required of the FGB is to focus on the proposed changes to the Admissions Policy, which if approved by the Board, will then go to a six week consultation period before the beginning of December in order to adhere to the SDBE timetable.

After noting that this is a very comprehensive piece of work, the governors then discussed in detail the various issues that may be thrown up at consultation and the concerns that this may raise and the possible outcomes and LMF responded to various questions from the governors. The Admissions Committee will come back to FGB at the end of the consultation period (and on or before 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018).

BD pointed out, that with regard to PPG, many parents are unaware that they are eligible and therefore it may be worth referencing the LA website, where information can be obtained.

The Chair minuted huge thanks to LMF for such a complex and important piece of work. A further meeting of the Admissions committee will take place on 19<sup>th</sup> October to address the more peripheral issues and then the consultation period will be decided.

**9. TO RECEIVE A PRESENTATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON AIR POLLUTION STUDY FINDINGS FROM LONDON SUSTAINABILITY EXCHANGE**

*C/F to FGB on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017.*

**10. TO NOTE THE RESULTS OF THE STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE AND TO DISCUSS ISSUES ARISING AND WAY FORWARD (questionnaire attached)**

HC gave background into the decision to commission the annual staff survey and the timing of this, noting the survey as a P&P committee responsibility. HC then noted three main areas in which governors hoped to gain understanding: staff morale; particular issues around CPD within the school and staff understanding of it; and where colleagues had concerns around the way in which things could be done differently. Anonymity was given particular emphasis and issues that have arisen from the survey have been analysed by P&P thematically rather than individually. HC reported that 33 responses were received and the headlines are very positive, with three main themes

identified which will be worked on substantively by P&P over the coming year (particularly the latter):

- Operational/logistical (largely new build related)
- Concerns regarding work/life balance; or related to staff well-being
- A sense of professional autonomy, with staff wanting more opportunity to shape decisions – being heard, not just listened to.

The next step will be for members of P&P to feedback at a staff meeting the seriousness with which the survey is taken by governors and the steps that will be taken to address the issues and to gain a greater understanding of them.

**Q:** Numerical answers have been made available to both staff and governors in the past. Is it the intention to do that on this occasion? The difference between 1 and 5 is considerable – 3 is neutral. Difficult to evaluate and uncomfortable not knowing the actual results.

**A:** Yes, following feedback to staff, a Summary can be brought to next FGB.

**Q:** What will the process be for exploring the staff perception in more depth with regards to the latter theme?

**A:** Various options, including possibly giving staff an opportunity to talk anonymously and off site to HC.

A governor expressed the view it was important to understand the demographic around the answers regarding autonomy and HC noted that questions around staff grouping were precisely the ones that then raised staff concerns around anonymity. It was felt that this is a worry from a trust perspective and where within the staff body this was a particular concern.

HC/CR were thanked by the Chair for the work done on analysing the questionnaire.

**ACTION: HC to circulate numerical / qualitative responses to FGB and then bring the data together with the feedback received from staff at the staff meeting to the Autumn 2 FGB meeting.**

BD noted that there is an open door policy and that staff do come and talk about their concerns.

#### **11. TO DISCUSS RECOMMENDATION FROM P&P COMMITTEE REGARDING WHOLE SCHOOL PAY POLICY AND REACH AGREEMENT/APPROVE PRIOR TO STAFF CONSULTATION**

HC gave overview of the process for annual review of the WSPP and the government recommendations for this year. HC reported on the discussions that had taken place within P&P and the discomfort felt by the committee at giving varying levels of increase to staff (either 0% or either 1% or 2% increase depending on their points on the pay scale). After considerable thought the P&P committee recommend to the FGB that the school awards a 2% increase at M1 and M6, with particular focus on attraction and retention, and in addition to this, to increase all other scales by 1%, which is slightly more expensive than the government recommendation, but is both equitable and demonstrative of valuing the staff. Furthermore, P&P recommend a small, one-off thank you payment to all members of staff in recognition of the extraordinary year the school has had, of £50 after tax.

Following questions, HC confirmed that 1% has been budgeted for. The initial recommendation takes the school £1682.00 over budget, therefore together with the ex gratia payment to all staff, this will take the school c. £4k over budget. In the context of the last year it was agreed that it is the right thing to do. The Finance Chair discussed ways in which this amount can be saved elsewhere e.g. recruitment, and LC further pointed out that income generation will be a major topic of consideration in the coming year and in years to come and the school is very aware it is living on its reserves, with

tightening budget lines and looking outside the school for grants and trusts and also through capitalising on lettings opportunities when possible.

The FGB accepted and approved the recommendation from P&P.

**12. TO NOTE THE HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

Noted.

**Q:** Will there be a financial impact following the departure of the seven PPG pupils in Year 6?

**A:** Yes, however there are new PPG registrations, so a current deficit of three. Funds are ring-fenced to support those pupils on a needs basis, but it can be used to support other children at the same time.

With regards to INSET days, KB will circulate a timetable showing days on which the governors are invited to attend INSET and also confirmed a Maths Mastery Workshop on 28<sup>th</sup> November for parents, to which all governors are invited.

**ACTION: KB to circulate INSET timetable to all governors.**

Following a question, KB confirmed that the boy/girl ratio in Year 5 is an anomaly.

KB's temporary secondment to Kew Riverside School for two half days per week was raised and it was noted that this had been discussed between the Co-Chairs and the Headteacher with regards to impact on Queen's school and that it is manageable at present and that KB will communicate with the parent body as and when possible should this continue.

The view was expressed that both from a Christian perspective, and from the point of view of the new Vision, this is the right thing to do – the school has benefitted from a similar situation in the past.

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

One child in need at present. No child protection plans. KB continues to attend Core Group meetings.

- 14. a. TO NOTE KA WILL BE TAKING OVER AS PHASE LEADER – noted.**  
**b. TO RECEIVE VERBAL UPDATE ON SUMMER 2 GOVERNOR VISITS –** took place during art week. Governors asked to ensure Visit Reports are first approved by Phase Lead and KB, then sent to Phase Lead and Clerk. Clerk will circulate prior to FGB papers.  
**c. TO NOTE THE PROGRAMME OF GOVERNOR MEETINGS AND VISITS 17/18 –** incorporated into the calendar.

**15. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CHAIRS, INCLUDING ITEMS OF GENERAL SIGNIFICANCE CONSIDERED BY THEIR COMMITTEES SHOULD BE DRAWN TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FGB AND TO NOTE THE MINUTES CIRCULATED.**

- i. Premises – not met, but hole in 3G pitch has been repaired, Community Use Agreement ongoing, priority at committee is to finalise update to TOR.
- ii. Pastoral – not met. Nothing to report. E-Safety policy is ongoing but needs finalising.
- iii. Kairos – CR will be taking over as Chair. The intention is to create more rigour around the Kairos remit.
- iv. Finance – MO noted the importance of looking at the long term budgetary issues. Year to date is on budget. Governor's appeal letter to go out after half term, with improvements to the appeal discussed by the governors. Increased from £35 to £50.
- iv. C&S – not met. Looking at Vision, Maths mastery and writing. APs will be presented.
- v. P&P – covered in 10. and 11. above.
- v. Admissions – covered in 8. above.

## **STATUTORY**

### **16. FOR NOTING:**

i. Co-Chair's Report, including correspondence.

The Official Opening of the new school must take place early in 2018 and LC will be forming a Working Group of staff and governors. KA agreed to be involved and asked that outline plans are sent to Phyllis Cunningham for her review in due course. KB proposed a formal opening and blessing by the Bishop, followed by a tie-in to the Yellow Brick Road with a Wizard of Oz party.

ii. To note verbal Policy Progress Report – E-safety is still under review. Equalities Statement was due for review in May 2017. BD/CR to liaise.

**ACTION: BD/CR to liaise and review Equalities Statement.**

iii. To note final version of Annual Schedule of Work for 2017/18 – noted.

iv. To note final version of Annual Schedule of Dates for 2017/18 – version 5 circulated.

### **17. GOVERNORS' TRAINING (*Standing Item*)**

IH reinforced governor obligations with regards to training and reminded governors to update the training log as appropriate. A training document giving structure to training needs by committee and by individual, depending on governor responsibilities, has been put together by IH/KA and will be added to the Governor Only area of the website. All governors asked to refer to this, as it is a very useful document.

**ACTION: IH/KA to circulate training document via email to FGB.**

## **OTHER**

### **18. AOB**

LC reported that LHB is resigning from FGB due to huge personal and work commitments. LC will be meeting to discuss timescales for this and the FGB will then be looking for a new LA governor. LHB has done an outstanding job with policies and with the school website and also with her SEN responsibilities. Thanks are minuted to Liz for all the work she has done – LC will be asking her to continue with policies and the website until a replacement governor takes on these responsibilities and a replacement is found as SEN governor. Governors agreed that LHB is a beacon for the community and will be a huge loss to the governing body.

### **19. Date of next meeting: Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017, 8.00am-10.00am.**

*The meeting concluded at 9.00pm.*