

**Meeting of Full Governing Body
11th January 2018
Room D35
6pm**

MINUTES

Governors Present:	Julian Benkel, Jon Dee, William Deighan, Judith Ford, Di Francombe, Alex Marsh (Chair), Rob Reed, Ian Rodgers, Emma Warde-Robinson
Officers:	Teresa Dee (Clerk)
Others:	Simon Davies, Hilary Goldsmith, Jo Meloni

	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
1	<p>Introduction</p> <p>a) Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair advised that Simon Bowes had been elected as Parent Governor the previous week but unfortunately was unable to make the meeting. An induction process would commence by the Clerk with Di Francombe as the “buddy governor”. • Also in the past week Oliver Cattermole’s term of office as a Co-opted Governor had expired. There had been some recent discussion with him about being reappointed and he had indicated that he might be interested in upcoming recruitment <p>ACTION - Clerk to invite Oliver Cattermole to complete an expression of interest in being appointed as a Co-opted Governor for a further term of office alongside placing an advertisement for the vacant position.</p> <p>b) Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence received from Simon Bowes and Giovanni Franceschi.</p> <p>c) Declaration of Interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair confirmed that the process of review of the annual declaration forms had been completed and that he had signed the individual forms with the Headteacher. • The completed declarations register was circulated. • Rob Reed declared a potential conflict of interest regards item 3 - Admissions consultation. 	
2	<p>Last Meeting dated 5th October 2017</p> <p>a) Acceptance of Minutes The Full Governing Body reviewed and approved six pages of minutes from the meeting held on 5th October 2017. The Chair signed the minutes as confirmation of their accuracy.</p> <p>b) Matters Arising not Included Elsewhere on Agenda All matters arising had either been completed or were on the agenda for discussion later in the meeting.</p>	
3	<p>Chair’s Update</p> <p>a) Governors Work Plan and Responsibilities Two documents had been circulated in advance for this item one detailing the expectation of all governors, different categories of governors and the lead governor roles.</p> <p>ACTION - The final allocation of lead governor roles to be confirmed outside of the meeting.</p> <p>The other document was the annual agenda plan for the year spread over five meetings instead of four as in previous two years. The Chair explained that the additional meeting would incorporate an end of year close and look forward to the next academic year including the School Improvement</p>	AM

Signature.....Date.....

	<p>Plan.</p> <p>ACTION - Clerk to confirm date of the final end of year meeting.</p> <p>b) Admissions Consultation The Chair of Governors had been involved in a number of meetings as part of the admissions consultation and had shared with Governors earlier in the week a proposal to offer to increase the pupil admission numbers (PAN) by 30 on a permanent basis.</p> <p>c) School Finances The Chair reminded Governors that at the last Full Governing Body a budget outturn report was provided indicating a deficit position at the end of the current financial year. The finance working group had therefore carried out some detailed analysis to look for ways to eliminate the deficit and to reflect on the impact on future years against a background of flat income and rising costs.</p> <p>Note - Items 3b & c were discussed further under item 7.</p>	TD
4	<p>Headteacher's Report The Headteacher presented his report to Governors on an assumed read basis. The school improvement plan had been updated to incorporate annual targets and success measures as requested by Governors at the previous meeting. Simon Davies talked Governors through the proposed student progress and attainment targets for 2017/18. These had been set using the Fischer Family Trust (FFT) benchmarks.</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the school improvement plan as presented.</p> <p>Governors received the department raising attainment plans with current data for noting.</p> <p>The Headteacher highlighted the following school successes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two teachers had qualified as coaching and mentoring managers. • Over £5,700 had been raised for charity during the school year to date. Each of the four schools had a chosen charity. • Varndean goats had made the TES top 10 list of most influential "people" in education for 2017. 	
5	<p>School Improvement Item - Quality of Teaching Learning and Assessment (TLA) Simon Davies presented the "deep dive " report on the school improvement area of quality of teaching, learning and assessment highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overarching vision for TLA was to develop world class students. • The main school focus was on formative assessment and responsive teaching developing further what happens in class to aid student progress and the use of clear and directed feedback. • Department improvement plans had been identified and fed through individual appraisal targets. Each teacher had three appraisal targets linked to TLA and with a focus on departmental and individual research based developments. • Four learning cycles throughout the year focussed on the school vision. • Continuing professional development and learning (CPDL) programme in place targeted to needs being evidence based, collaborative and sustainable throughout the year. • Two twilight sessions had been held so far focused on the school world class vision. These were two hours after school and there were five planned for the year. • A targeted workshop had been held on the INSET day based on teacher needs in relation to the school improvement priorities. • There were set classroom expectations to support TLA the "Varndean Way". • A number of interventions were continuing including the brilliant club. Governors asked whether the name of this intervention was helpful as those students not included might be in demotivated. The Headteacher explained that the name brilliant club related to the company that provided it. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy was big whole school focuses with drop everything and read (DEAR) sessions embedded within the school calendar. Governors asked about DEAR and were advised that it was a dedicated time to reading for everyone in school. Assessment work with was being undertaken within department to ensure that the data was accurate. Two associate assistant heads had been appointed, one allocated to a 360 learning initiative and the other to newly qualified teaching training. Governors commented that it was their understanding that a newly qualified teaching programme was already well embedded in the school and heard that the initiative was to develop what was in place further and would be looking at impact on learning. The teaching school alliance had appointed specialist leaders in education (SLE)s. Governors asked how this might work in practice and were advised that the specialist leaders would initially be advisory only and would not be required to be out of school for extended periods. There was a further question about the type of support that Varndean was receiving through the alliance and it was advised that support was being received for both science and geography. Departmental reviews of TLA had been completed for all departments and a summary of the outcomes from theses reviews had been included with the meeting papers. There was a question about the reference to consistency in the science and geography summaries resulting in school leaders providing further information specifically relating to the challenges within those departments. <p>Governors asked further general questions summarised with the responses below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How confident were subject leaders with the new subject specifications? There was some uncertainty but lessons had been learnt from the maths and English departments resulting in more individual question analysis. There was also concern about getting through the content of subject specifications. Why had maths and English been successful with new specifications? Because they had taken the question by question analysis approach. When a department had been on a raising attainment plan (RAP) for a while was there anything else that could be done? There was teaching mentoring under a RAP that had been quite successful and coaching was being used with heads of department becoming coaches themselves after having been recipients of coaching. 	
6	<p>Reports and Recommendations</p> <p>a) Headteacher Review Panel The Chair of Governors confirmed that the process for the Headteacher’s appraisal and objective setting had been completed. An explanation of the process was provided for the benefit of the newer Governors.</p> <p>b) Pay Panel The Pay Panel had provided Governors with a report following its meetings of 13th October and 8th December 2017. Governors asked whether the additional agreed 1% pay increment applied to all teachers and were advised that it was only those on the main pay scale that were affected and that the additional cost to the School was around £15,000. As a follow up from the pay panel the Chair of Governors carried out a review of the appraisal process with the school lead and was able to confirm that it was a robust process from what he had observed. There was a question on whether pay progress was tracked by different groups such as gender, part time workers and the response was that it was not but the data was easily available electronically to carry out such an analysis.</p> <p>c) School Trips Julian Benkel as lead governor for school trips presented his report confirming that an overview of the process had taken place and that risk assessment had been carried out for all trips through the evolve system. Nine residential trips were planned for the year including the more expensive Iceland and ski trips. Governors asked about available subsidies for pupil premium students and were advised that 70% of the costs were subsidised by the school and several pupil premium students were attending the trips.</p>	

	<p>d) Health and Safety Audit Ian Rodgers as lead governor for health and safety presented the executive summary following a recent health and safety audit. He emphasise that the audit had been completed at the school's request. There were six key issues arising from the audit some relating to process such as physically signing the health and safety policy in addition to approving it at Full Governing Body. Governors specifically discussed risk assessment noting that the audit had highlighted inconsistencies in the way they were undertaken, as specific subject templates had been used. There was further discussion about the recommendation for a formal risk register with the conclusion that risk assessment was inherent in Governance procedures at Varndean School and that a separate register as used previously had not added any benefit. It was noted that the overall audit opinion was that reasonable system controls were in place.</p> <p>ACTION - Next report on Health and Safety to include an update on the actions taken as a result of the Health and Safety Audit. Due meeting 4.</p>	IR
7	<p>Finance Report</p> <p>a) Finance Group Report Julian Benkel as lead governor for finance presented the report to Governors following two meetings of the governors finance group. The notes from these meetings held 13th October and 8th December were included within circulated meeting papers. A terms of reference document for the finance group was proposed for approval.</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the Finance Group terms of reference as presented.</p> <p>b) Financial Audit The Director of Finance and Operations confirmed that the majority of actions from the financial audit had been completed and only the business continuity plan was an ongoing piece of work.</p> <p>c) Financial Projections - Outturn Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governors heard that despite additional unexpected central costs there had been significant savings reducing the previous reported budget deficit to a very modest level. The Director of Finance and Operations explained that all opportunities to reduce staff costs had been acted on, that roles have been absorbed and that all non staffing cost lines had been trimmed as far as possible. Expenditure was robustly controlled and there was awareness throughout the school of tight finances. Whilst front line services were protected there was some concern on the impact on IT and premises. • There was a question regards supply arrangements and whether teachers under allocation were expected to do cover and in response Governors were advised that there were five faculty assistants that provided short term cover and that teachers were generally not used in line with "rarely cover" guidance. • Governors asked how the local authority would see the latest projected outturn and what the consequences were on the next financial year. They were advised that the additional £15k cost for teachers would be agreed as a deficit leaving an amount that the school would have the capacity to manage in 2018/19. The Headteacher proposed that the school requested a visit from a senior finance officer to carry out a scrutiny of the schools finances to provide some further assurances. <p>ACTION - The Senior Accountant at Children's Services to be requested to visit to carry out a review of the Schools financial projections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In light of the cost of supply Governors asked whether consideration had been given to providing staff with a flu jab as a way of mitigating the risk. School leaders 	WD

	<p>responded that these had been offered in the past but due to cost these had not been offered recently but would be revisited..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking forward the Headteacher commented that there were areas to look at where further savings might be made to ensure that the school had some contingency for unexpected centrally charged items such as the additional 1% pay rise and apprenticeship levy. These savings were possible as the school had evolved from its position back in 2012 and there was less demand for some areas following management of behaviour and changes to specialisms. Building in some capacity for the word class aspirations was proposed with Governors support for some localised remodelling requested, The effect of targeted cost savings on staff morale was discussed and it was concluded that staff were aware of funding pressures and might be expecting changes having seen many local schools go through restructures. <p>AGREEMENT/ACTION - The Full Governing Body agreed with the cost savings proposals by the Headteacher and the Director of Finance and Operations were appropriate and that this should be sufficiently wide scale to avoid the need to do further deeper cost savings in the near future. The Headteacher was delegated with the authority to Governors agreed to work up the proposed cost savings for Full Governing Body approval via the finance group.</p> <p>d) Insurance Arrangements The contents of a report on current insurance arrangements were noted.</p> <p>At this stage there was a further discussion on admission numbers and the School's recent offer to increase the PAN. The Headteacher opened with an apology for a request by email ahead of the council's committee meeting. He provided a recap of what had happened so far and the threats of the recent admissions proposals to the Varndean/Dorothy Stringer catchment area. Following the offer by both schools to take additional students in 2019 and 2020 meetings had been held to look at required resources. This followed on from a curriculum audit in 2012/13 when capacity to increase PAN was being explored. There had been a suggestion if the schools could take extra in 2019 then they could do the same for 2018, however the school believed that without additional resources having been agreed this was not possible. Appeals for 2018 admissions would be completed in June and by then the staffing structure would be set. Others schools would not find out their lost numbers until September which was not acceptable from their planning perspective. The decision had therefore been taken to offer an increase in PAN by 30 on a permanent basis from 2018 to help satisfy the need in the catchment. The current PAN was 270 over 10 forms and an increase by 30 would be possible without any restructuring of forms. It was noted that Varndean was already a large school though with the four school structure in place it felt smaller. There was some concern from Governors about the increase in class sizes and the short notice around the decision but overall the Full Governing Body was in support of the proposal.</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body agreed to formally apply for an increase in the PAN to 300 from September 2018.</p>	WD
8	<p>Policies and Other Documents for Approval</p> <p>a) Data Protection Policy</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the data protection policy pending the introduction of a revised policy incorporating the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)</p> <p>ACTION - GDPR readiness to be a reporting item at next Full Governing Body Meeting.</p> <p>b) Staff Grievance Procedures</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the staff grievance procedures as presented.</p> <p>c) Teachers Appraisal Policy</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the teachers' appraisal policy as presented.</p>	HG/JD

	<p>d) Teachers' Pay Policy</p> <p>AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the teachers' pay policy as presented.</p>	
9	<p>Governance</p> <p>a) Skills Audit & Governor Recruitment</p> <p>Jon Dee as lead governors for governor development and evaluation presented the completed skills audit and provided an update on governor recruitment. It was concluded that the Governing Body had the required breadth of skills but did not reflect the diverse school community and lacked active links with the community and local businesses.</p>	
10	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>None</p> <p>Meeting ended at 8.10pm Date of next meeting - 8th March 2018</p>	