



**Meeting of Full Governing Body  
29<sup>th</sup> November 2012  
6pm  
Library at Varndean School**

**MINUTES**

**Governors Present:** Julian Benkel, Barbara Cotter, Ann Cox (from 6.08pm), Jon Dee, William Deighan, Ray Gold (Chair), Richard Lumley (from 7.08pm), Robin Marin, Paul Offord,

**Officers Present:** Teresa Carter (Clerk)

<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Action</u>
<p>1 <b>Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) <b>Freedom of Information</b> - Governors were reminded that minutes from Full Governing Body meetings were published on the school's website.</li><li>b) <b>Apologies for Absence</b> - Apologies for absence received from Richard Beynon and Robbie Mitchell and for late attendance from Richard Lumley.</li><li>c) <b>Declaration of Interests</b> - None</li></ul> <p>6.08pm Anne Cox arrived at the meeting.</p>	
<p>2 <b>Last Meeting dated 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) <b>Acceptance of Minutes</b> - The Full Governing Body reviewed and approved four pages of minutes from the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012. The Chair signed them as confirmation of their accuracy.</li><li>b) <b>Matters Arising not Included Elsewhere on Agenda</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Item 1c - Not all Governors had completed an annual declaration of interest form.</li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>ACTION</b> - Clerk to email further form to those Governors who had not completed their annual declarations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Item 4c - The Chair proposed that Richard Lumley be included as a member of the commissioning hub, the Full Governing Body agreed this.</li><li>• Item 4d - The Chair proposed that the number of Associate Members be reduced and that the decision for Deputy Heads to be automatically appointed as associates reversed, the Full Governing Body agreed this. The one remaining Associate Member would be Jon Edgell as Helen Leigh-Phippard had resigned from her role as training and development link.</li><li>• Item 5c - Varndean Links had not been able to incorporate Governors questions and answer session into the agenda for their last meeting. This item would be carried forward to the next Varndean Links meeting, which Ray Gold and Jon Edgell would attend.</li></ul>	TC
<p>3 <b>Main Strategic Item</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) <b>School Improvement Plan</b> - Item discussed under 4a below.</li><li>b) <b>Equalities Training</b> - The equalities training was not completed due to absence through sickness of the two presenters.</li></ul> <p><b>ACTION</b> - William Deighan to identify whether equalities training was statutory for Governors and to reschedule the training session if necessary.</p>	WD

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

4 **Governance Items**

- a) **Headteacher's Report** - The Headteacher presented his report in a revised format as discussed at the joint leadership and commissioning hub meeting. Governors welcomed the structured method of reporting which provided clear data on the key reporting areas. The following points were noted and discussed:
- An update of the system used to produce the report would be available in January that would likely cover more of the statutory reporting areas.
  - Governors could be allocated to areas of responsibility within the school improvement plan for evaluation.
  - The data transfer to SIMS had been problematical due in part to compatibility issues with the schools ICT. This had put additional stress on the staff that had approached the Headteacher about the issues. A whole staff meeting had been held which had been purposeful and as an outcome a task group would be set up to investigate and take action to rectify the problems as a matter of urgency.
  - A Head of School had taken on the responsibility for behaviour management within the school and had in consultation with staff produced a revised set of procedures to introduce consistency and clearer guidance.
  - Four levels of progress from year seven to year eleven remained a priority objective for students and would require all teaching to be at least of a good standard.
  - The inclusion of summary data on students at risk of not achieving five grade A\* to C at GCSE was suggested for inclusion in future reports as was a report on how pupil premium funding had been allocated and spent.
  - A session for Governors on understanding Raise Online data was proposed for 10<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at 6pm.
  - Governors queried the teacher to student ratio within the report, as it was lower than the previous year despite the restructure, which was undertaken to improve teacher to pupil ratio.
  - There were two notifiable health and safety incidents recorded that Governors felt they needed further information on.

**ACTION - Jon Dee agreed to take an action to identify what type of accidents were reportable and to whom in reference to the health and safety policy and report back to Governors.**

JD

- The data on school performance for current year to date was examined and Governors were advised that assessments were undertaken at four points each year. Following the next data collection there would be some reliable indication of year end results.
- Target for quality of teaching met with 85% of lessons judged as good or better.
- Governors requested that the reported data on exclusions be extended to include information on internal exclusions of at least one day.
- It was noted that financial data had not been included within the report, though a separate report to Governors was included under item 5.

b) **Policies**

- **Appraisal Policy** - The appraisal policy based on the Brighton

and Hove model policy was considered.

**AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the appraisal policy as presented.**

- **Smoke Free Policy** - This policy had been brought back for consideration in light of incidents at the beginning of term when members of staff were seen smoking just outside the school gate which was considered to not set the right example to students. The difficulties of implementing a no smoking policy to include areas off the schools premises were discussed. The wording of the policy was reviewed and agreement reached on the removal of one sentence in section two of the policy.

**AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body approved the smoke free policy subject to the removal of the second sentence in section two.**

- **Policy Reviews and Approval** - Governors considered the process for approval of policies following the removal of the committee structure. All draft policies would go to the clerk and the Hub would task an individual or group to review the policy before it was submitted to Full Governing Body for approval.

5 **Reports and Recommendations** - The Full Governing Body received reports from the Hub and reports produced as a result of commissioned work and the recommendations within the reports were noted.

- a) **Commissioning Hub** - There was some lack of clarity for Governors on the restructured Governing Body and the role of the commissioning hub. It was emphasised that the expectation had been that the Full Governing Body would provide the steer for the hub to commission work relevant to the areas of priority agreed at Full Governing Body meetings. This had happened to some extent but there was concern that some of the statutory and detailed examination previously undertaken by committees could get missed. It was suggested that a list of governing body tasks and responsibilities similar to the previous committee terms of reference be drawn up as guidance.

**ACTION - Full Governing Body terms of reference to be drafted for approval at next meeting.**

Hub to commission

- b) **School Trips** - The report included the list of residential and high risk school trips that had been reviewed and approved.
- c) **Finance Report** - Financial budget to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012 and been reviewed and reported.
- d) **Varndean Links** - The Governors question and answer session had been postponed to the next Varndean links meeting.
- e) **Staff/Governors Meeting** - Staff Governors provided feedback from the meeting with staff during which some issues of concern were raised. The meeting had been attended by relatively few staff members but since then a letter signed by sixty three staff members had been submitted to the Headteacher highlighting four areas of concern. The Headteacher reported that a whole staff meeting had been held to discuss the issues to provide some reassurance to staff.

**ACTION - Governors requested further feedback on staff views and asked that the staff governors undertake further work to gather views from the wider staff body.**

PO RMi

- f) **Results** - This area was discussed at the previous meeting in September.

**ACTION - All reports to Governors to be sent to the staff lead/contact for review before sending to the Clerk for distribution.**

All

6 **Any Other Business**

- a) **Ofsted Trial** - Governors were advised that an ex HM Inspector had been invited to the school to carry out some mock Ofsted interviews. The Chair was keen for Governors to be involved with this and asked for his contact details to be passed on for contact to be made.
- b) **Parent View** - The use of parent view questionnaires was discussed and it was noted that only seven responses had been recorded for Varndean on the parent view website. There were mixed opinions on whether this should be used prior to an Ofsted inspection only and whether it might provide useful ongoing information to the school outside of the inspection period.

**AGREEMENT - The Full Governing Body agreed that a link to parent view should be included on the school's website.**

- c) **Special Educational Needs Governor** - Richard Lumley agreed to take on the role of SEN link governor.
- d) **Awards Evening** - All Governors invited to attend
- e) **Website** - More information on the website from each of the four schools was requested.
- f) **Documents** - Governors requested that documents continue to be sent by email attachment and not as links to Google documents.
- g) **Governor Vacancy** - The Chair reminded all that there was a vacancy for a co-opted governor.

Meeting ended at 9.07pm

Date of next meeting - 17<sup>th</sup> January 2013

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