



TADCASTER GRAMMAR SCHOOL LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD (LGB)

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27th March 2019 at 5.30pm

Present: Philip Turnpenny (Chair), Wendy Wilson (Head of School), David Gluck, Jon Bliss, Jeremy Airey (from item 2), Jess Ryan, Heather Smith, Mike Dunphy, Liz Wilson, Georgina Wright

In attendance: Iain Tessier (Clerk, Governance Advisor)
Martyn Sibley (Chief Education Officer, STAR MAT – until item 3)
Melissa Boyes (Chief Finance Officer, STAR MAT until item 4.5)
Cayte Mulhern (Deputy Headteacher)
Ria Hennessy (Observer)

1.0 Welcome, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

1.1 Apologies were received and accepted from Chris Burt.

1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

1.3 The Chair reminded governors of their duty of confidentiality.

2.0 New OFSTED Framework (was item 4)

The Chair invited the MAT CEO to make a brief presentation to governors.

2.1 The CEO began by noting that he had given a presentation on this matter at the recent STAR MAT Chair's forum. He wanted governors to be aware of the collaborative work going on across Trust re: curriculum development. Senior leaders across the schools were helping to develop curriculum principles that could be applied across the Trust. The new OFSTED framework, currently out for consultation, very much focussed on the importance of the curriculum. Thus, there was an 'amazing opportunity' right now for the Trust to shape its provision strategy.

2.2 OFSTED had concluded that children were lacking in curriculum knowledge and expertise. There needed to be a firm move away from 'teaching to test' and from narrowing the curriculum offer. A lack of 'rich input' particularly impacted on disadvantaged children. The CEO was pleased that the new framework was research based. He contended that children benefitted from having a deep body of knowledge, in conjunction with specific learning tools and skills. The STAR curriculum needed to provide these things. It was well understood that knowledge informed reading and the ability to read well massively improved a child's life chances.

Jeremy Airey entered the meeting

2.3 The CEO went on to speak about the cornerstones of curriculum strategy, namely: intent, implementation, and impact. What should be taught, how it was taught and how it was assessed were the key questions to answer. For a long time assessment had been the driver when it should not have been. All schools had been guilty of this to a greater or lesser extent. The CEO concluded his presentation by touching upon the factors identified by OFSTED as delivering good practice.

ACTION

3.0 MAT Matters (was item 5)

- 3.1 Governors were notified that, from September, Mr Sibley would become the permanent CEO of the Trust and relinquish his executive headteacher duties at the school. TGS would have a substantive headteacher from September. Work continued to build the Trust's back office structures and, to that end, the Trust was creating a Chief Operating Officer role (a second in command), to supersede the current CFO position. The implications of this move would be conveyed in due course.
- 3.2 The Clerk noted that he and his colleague were working on meeting schedules and agenda planning for the LGBs across the Trust. The details of this work would be shared in the first half of the summer term.
- 3.3 The LGB were advised of the option to utilise the newly agreed procedures concerning 'virtual attendance' at meetings.

Mr Sibley left the meeting

4.0 Committee Reports (was item 7)

- 4.1 Minutes from the recent Resources committee had been circulated prior to the meeting and governors noted decisions taken under delegated powers. The Chair invited the CFO to address governors in respect of the budget position and action required going forward.
- 4.2 Governors would recall that the Start Budget had indicated a negative in-year balance. Since conversion the school's finances (and indeed the Trust's) had been hit by several extraordinary items. Most of these had impacted on staffing costs but the school had also seen a hike in energy costs and of course the MAT top slice had come in higher than anticipated.
- 4.3 In view of the financial position, it was necessary to implement a cost improvement plan. The school had been through such an exercise previously. A draft plan had been shared at Resources and certain elements were already being implemented. There would need to be a focus on the associate staffing structure in due course. The LGB would be required to make a decision on any changes to the staffing structure and, at that point, would be presented with both the current structure and any proposals. Leadership were not in a position to move on this yet and the new headteacher would be consulted so as to take on board their views. Given that the Trust was also switching HR provider, it was envisaged that any staffing structure alterations would not take place ahead of September. The school had some breathing room due to the fact that cost savings of circa £150k were to be realised for the financial year and the expectation that the school would benefit from slightly better GAG funding next year.
- 4.4 The Chair added that steps had to be taken to assure the financial security of the school. The intention was to protect front line teaching as much as possible. The cost improvement plan could be implemented across a three year period with various phases. It was hoped that some phases might not be required if things like contract procurement realised substantial savings.
- 4.4.1 A governor referred to the mention of issues with the artificial pitch (which was a key source of income). The CFO acknowledged that problems persisted. The CFO was confident that lettings income would still match costs but because of the ongoing issue with the standard of the pitch one had to recognise that there was an inherent risk to the budget.
- 4.4.2 Were measures being taken to reduce energy costs? The CFO confirmed that the Trust was procuring an energy efficiency audit – chiefly to identify ways to reduce electricity and oil spend. The Trust also needed to look at using capital funding to make buildings more efficient. It was clarified that fuel costs had increased, not usage.
- 4.4.3 Given the budget pressures across the Trust, how was the COO post being funded? The COO post would replace the CFO post and all Trust level positions were funded by the top slice. The CFO assured governors that they were trying to build a prudent, cost effective structure but one that had

the necessary capacity to deliver the operations and savings that the Trust needed.

4.4.4 So the priority was to achieve certain economies of scale? Yes. The current 3% top slice had been set because this was what had been affordable. However, this minimal top slice had affected the Trust's capacity to build back office capacity and attend to things like better contracts. Procurement was now a high priority.

4.4.5 Was SHS joining the Trust? A decision on this would be made at the Trust Board meeting in May.

Mrs Boyes left the meeting

4.5 Minutes from the recent School Development Committee meeting had been circulated.

4.5.1 The chair of the committee asked for an update on the situation re: the 26 SHS A-level students that wanted to study Psychology at the school. The Head of School had made it clear to her counterpart that SHS would need to fund this. There had been no response as yet.

4.5.2 Could the MAT help with the process of getting certain students an EHCP? Governors needed to understand that the process of obtaining an EHCP was complicated by the fact that the school admitted students from 3 different LAs, all with differing approaches to the application process. Applications were being rejected due to the process being made more challenging – ultimately because the LA was under pressure to reduce costs. The school worked closely with SENDCOs in the primaries and there were additional transition days for SEND children.

4.5.3 The Chair wanted to know if the committee felt that it was up-to-speed on the position re: Pupil Premium. The chair of the committee was content that they were.

5.0 Minutes of the Last Meeting – 5th December 2018

5.1 Resolved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th December 2018 were accepted as a true record of the meeting and the Chair was duly authorised to sign the minutes.

6.0 Action Points and Matters Arising

6.1	Pupil Premium 'catch-up'	Dealt with at SDC
	Send training link to Mr Bliss	Completed
	Circulate governors' contact details	Completed
	Cost comparison for minibuss vs. outsourced transport	Decision taken at Resources Committee
	Ascertain IP re: school crest	The IP for the school crest had been found. The school would make it clear to suppliers that they held the rights to the crest. Legal advice from NYCC would be sought as to the best way to proceed.
	Statement on 6 th form dress code for Appearance policy	Completed. The statement made it clear what was appropriate dress in the 6 th form.
	CLEEPS requirements reflected in H&S policy	Covered through local policies and through the NYCC SLA. A reference to CLEEPS did need adding to the MAT's overarching statement
	Equalities objectives and action plan. Accessibility plan drawn up from template	To be covered under the Head's report

CM

7.0 Headteacher's Report

The Headteacher's report and ancillary documentation had been circulated prior to the meeting.

7.1 The SEF judgements and overall school priorities had not changed since last meeting.

7.2 Governors were referred to the attendance data – like for like comparisons were now possible. It was noted that the persistent absentee rate was higher than in some previous years. The Head of School acknowledged that there were some challenges in that regard but it also needed to be noted that many schools were seeing a higher rate due to the change to the threshold (persistent absenteeism defined as an attendance rate of below 90%: previously 85%).

7.3 There was no comment on the Admissions data.

7.4 There had been 6 reported racist incidents in the year-to-date.

7.5 Complaints information was a new section in heads' reports. The school had resolved two complaints that had reached stage 1. However, two complaints had progressed to stage three and had been heard by a panel of governors. The Head of School also reported that a student had contacted OFSTED anonymously and the matter had been dealt with by the LA. There was no safeguarding issue to address.

7.6 Governors welcomed the PP and SEND information.

7.7 Achievement and standards data had been covered at committee, although the Head of School wanted to make further observations. The Spring Year 11 data compared favourably to the previous year in terms of the overall 'greens'. Whilst there were no concerns staff felt that some students were perhaps a bit 'complacent'. This situation was being monitored. PE outcomes remained a concern but there was lots of work going on within the department to address concerns. RE remained a problem and leadership needed to consider carefully how to plan for the future of provision in this subject. SLT felt that the Science department was being slightly pessimistic in terms of their predictions. This was understandable given the uncertainty over exam content and grade boundaries etc.

7.7.1 Were staff targets for students suitably moderated? The Head of School replied that they were and that all targets were as aspirational as possible and based on the relevant FFT benchmark.

7.8 Year 13 data was weaker than in the previous year. SLT had put that challenge back to teachers. The Head of School was concerned. The director of the 6th form was monitoring the subject action plans to ensure those concerns were being addressed. The school was supervising additional mocks.

7.9 There was a brief staffing update. John Wagstaff had returned to SHS. Mrs Northrop-clay and Mrs Boyes were overseeing the estates management role. The Trust would be looking at recruitment in this area. Certain long-term absences were outlined. A governor asked if the long-term absence rate was 'normal'. The Head of School said that it was in line with the previous two years. Incidentally, the school was not renewing its staff absence insurance scheme premium because absence was, on the whole, far less of an issue than it had been.

7.10 Ms Mulhern welcomed comments and questions in relation to the Safeguarding report that had been circulated. Those governors specifically monitoring safeguarding needed to go through this report with the school ahead of submission of the annual safeguarding audit. Ms Mulhern added that she felt that the whole LGB would benefit from some refresher training around safeguarding, particularly in light of the updated KCSIE procedures. Responding to a query from the Chair, Ms Mulhern confirmed that the school did need more governors to undertake safer recruitment training. Mr Bliss indicated that he would be looking to complete this training.

7.11 Governors welcomed the SEND presentation that had been circulated for information.

Various

ALL

JB

- 7.12 Referring back to the attendance data, a governor asked if the school was concerned by the attendance trend in Y9. The Head of School replied that this year group had presented challenges in this regard since arriving in Y7. There were issues with parental engagement (and therefore pupil engagement) in some quarters.
- 7.13 The narrative on the KS5 governor immersion morning had been included in the meeting pack. The director of the 6th form had welcomed the ideas and comments from governors and these had been fed into the phase's improvement plans etc. Mr Airey commented that he would be visiting shortly to look at developments. Given the benefits of the immersion mornings, it was regrettable that the KS4 immersion morning had been postponed twice due to lack of governor availability. The Head of School requested governor engagement on this. A brief discussion followed. SLT would propose some possible dates. **JA**
WW
- 7.14 The Head of School announced that the school was considering a new school trip (to Rome). Governors were assured that all the correct processes were in place with regards planning, staffing and risk assessments. The Clerk advised that whilst governors did not formally approve school trips they did have a duty, from a health and safety perspective, to be certain that the school had taken all necessary steps to suitable safeguard all children.
- 7.15 The IDSR report had been circulated for information. The report provided an overview of the school's current position; key trend data etc. The Chair asked if it had provided any new information that SLT were not aware of. No, however, governors were encouraged to digest its contents. **ALL**
- 8.0 Headteacher Recruitment**
- Mrs Wilson was asked to withdraw. The LGB was content for other staff members to remain.*
- 8.1 The LGB had been contacted about the process for recruiting a new headteacher and the Chair indicated that this was the governors' opportunity to lodge any comments or questions. There were no comments or questions.
- Mrs Wilson was invited to return*
- 9.0 Governance Matters**
- David Gluck withdrew from the meeting*
- 9.1 The Chair was happy to endorse Mr Gluck's reappointment by the Trust Board given the skills, experience and commitment he brought to LGB. The LGB was equally happy to endorse his reappointment.
- David Gluck re-entered the meeting*
- 9.2 The Chair noted that the terms of office of several other governors were also coming to an end before the end of the year. He would be having various conversations with these individuals about their intentions. **PT**
- 10.0 Policies**
- 10.1 **Resolved:**
Governors approved the Anti-Bullying policy, which remained substantively unchanged from previously.
- 10.2 Mrs Northrop-Clay was working on both the equalities objectives and the accessibility plan. Governors could see the drafts thus far. Final approval was carried over to the next meeting. **Agenda**

11.0 Health and Safety Update

Covered at Resources.

12.0 Chair's Correspondence

Nothing to report.

13.0 Matters for Escalation to the MAT Board

None.

14.0 Any Other Urgent Business

- 14.1 The Clerk offered to upload the MAT Development Plan and Growth Strategy to MinutePad.

Clerk

Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday 3rd July 2019 at 5.30pm

The meeting closed at 7.25pm

	Action Points from the Meeting	Agenda Item	Person(s) Responsible	Date for Delivery
1.	Seek legal advice re: school crest next steps	6.1	CM	Update next meeting
2.	Governor visit re: safeguarding report and audit	7.10	Various	Before next meeting
3.	Refresher safeguarding training	7.10	ALL (CM to arrange)	Summer term
4.	Complete safer recruitment training	7.10	JB	ASAP
5.	6 th form visit	7.13	JA	Due course
6.	Propose dates for KS4 immersion morning	7.13	WW	ASAP
7.	Read IDSR report	7.15	ALL	By next meeting
8.	Conversations with governors to ascertain their intentions re: fresh term of office	9.2	PT	Through summer term
9.	Approval of the equalities objectives and the accessibility plan	10.2	LGC (LN-C)	Next Meeting
9.	Upload MAT documents to MinutePad	14.1	Clerk	ASAP