

Capella House School

*Minutes of the meeting of the governing body held as a Virtual Meeting
using Google Hangouts on
Wednesday 2nd December 2020 at 6.30pm.*

Attendance

Andrew Whiteside (AW)

Peter Heyer (PH)

Naomi Greaves (NG)

Michele Coleman (MC)

Melanie Bywell (MB)

Don Blaylock (DB)

Vacancy (Co-opted Governor)

Vacancy (Staff Governor)

Vacancy (Parent Governor)

Apologies

Peter Bailey (PB), Rebecca Graham (RG)

Absent w/o apologies

None

Also, attended

Helen Bridge (HB) – Clerk, Ivan Pryce (IP)), Susie Connor (SC)

Meeting Minutes

All meeting attendees agreed to conduct the meeting as a virtual meeting.

1. Welcome

1.1. All attendees were welcomed to the meeting

2. Apologies/Declarations of Interest

2.1. Rebecca Graham and Peter Bailey sent their apologies for the meeting.

2.2. Governors were asked to declare any interests relating to any item of the agenda for this meeting. None were declared.

2.3. The AAT Register of Interests had been circulated in advance of the meeting (Attached at A). The clerk noted that this would need to be circulated and updated at every FGB going forward. Governor acceptance and any amendments to this were noted and will be reflected on the register.

Action: HB

3. Approval of Minutes/Actions Arising from the Meeting held on Tuesday 13th October 2020

3.1. There were no changes to the minutes of the GB meeting held on the 13th October 2020 - they were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the chair.

3.2. 2.3 – Actioned.

3.3. 4.3 – Parents group – to be an open action for 2020/21 academic year when pupils are back in school – carried forward.

Action: DB

3.4. 4.8/5.1/6.2 – Actioned.

3.5. 8.2/8.5 – On agenda.

3.6. 8.7– Actioned.

3.7. 9.3 - It was noted that a longer-term development plan needs to be put together – the head and the chair undertook to liaise about a date for another strategy session to be held in school – carried forward.

Action: DB/AW

3.8. 12.1 - The chair noted that he has received completed governor self-evaluation forms that were completed and he will summarise and use the information to create a Governing Body Development Plan – carried forward.

Action: AW

3.9. 14.2 – Actioned.

4. Chair's Update

4.1. The Directors Review Report 2nd November 2020 was circulated in advance of the meeting (Attached at B).

4.2. The chair noted that both himself and other governors have recently visited the school.

4.3. The recent Directors Review report reaffirms the SDIP priorities and governors were pleased to note the coherence between the external assessor's report and the SDIP.

4.4. Leadership recruitment is to be covered later on the agenda.

4.5. Headteacher objectives for 2020/21 have been agreed and assigned as follows:
- Curriculum (covering Intent, Implementation and Impact)

- Leadership (developing distributed leadership capacity)
- Succession planning
- Safeguarding (establishing an outstanding safeguarding culture)

4.6. All covid procedures are working well at school.

5. Headteacher Update/SEF

5.1. The head's report to governors Autumn 2020 was circulated in advance of the meeting (Attached at C).

5.2. The head led governors through the key highlights of the report.

5.3. *Governors raised the question of whether the family support worker will form part of the social domain overseen by the senior teacher?*

The head noted that the family support worker is in place to act as a link between the home and school – family partnership work will be reviewed after Christmas..

5.4. MC noted that she had recently visited the school and found it to be a calm and positive environment with a high level of pupil engagement. The situation had much improved since her last visit. She congratulated the head and his team on their hard work and dedication.

5.5. *Governors raised the question of whether there are likely to be mid-year pupil admissions and whether the school is likely to be full in September 2021?*

5.6. The head confirmed that it is expected to be full with a capacity increase from 24 to 28 pupils. The trust CEO noted that due to the nature of the profile of CHS pupils, it would be unusual for a Richmond borough pupil to move mid-year – a move from outside of the borough would be more likely.

5.7. *Governors asked whether curriculum planning is up to date?*

The head noted that an external consultant is working with the curriculum lead on curriculum development and intent. The bulk of curriculum planning will be completed by Christmas. Day to day curriculum work is going well. MC noted that she will be visiting the school before Christmas to review this and hopes to meet with the external consultant.

6. SDIP Update

6.1. The CHS SDIP Summary 2020/21 was circulated in advance of the meeting (Attached at D).

6.2. The head noted that social curriculum and therapeutic curriculum work stalled due to the loss of the SaLT. He noted that he is impressed with the calibre of the applicants for the position. In the absence of a SaLT, the OT is working well with the therapy assistant and staff are implementing well the advice of the OT.

7. SIP Update and Discussion

7.1. The SIP Autumn Term Report to Governors had been circulated in advance of the meeting (Attached at E).

7.2. The CEO noted that the current SIP is leaving and an interim SIP has been appointed. He noted that the school can decide on what SIP arrangements it would want going forward. The school currently subscribes to a local package that includes SIP involvement – the role of the SIP is to give support and advice and to provide governors with an external view of the school’s effectiveness. The CEO noted that there are benefits of having LA input however this could potentially be blended with input from a neutral external party.

7.3. ***Governors asked about the benefits of working with a LA SIP?***

The CEO noted that local knowledge is useful and the trust is involved in meeting a local need however he recommended a blended approach with an individual with national experience.

7.4. Governors agreed that a good working relationship between the SIP and the head is key and the interim head noted that if the new head comes from outside the local area, the input of a LA SIP would be important. Governors agreed that the SIP is there to support and improve, not inspect.

8. Leadership Recruitment Update

8.1. The Head of Capella House Person Specification and Head of Capella House Job Description were circulated in advance of the meeting (Attached at F)

8.2. The focus of the role will be strategy & direction, curriculum management, staff management & development, organisation management, accountability and community engagement.

8.3. The head will be supported by and report to the trust CEO.

8.4. Next steps are to agree timings and personnel involved in the recruitment process before advertising the role. MB noted that she has met with the current interim head and has put together a checklist of what is required in the recruitment process. The head and CEO are to give feedback on this.

Action: DB/IP

8.5. ***Governors asked whether there is a desire amongst the parent body to be involved in the selection process?***

The head noted that there is some concern amongst the parent body over a new head so some low-level involvement in the process could be appropriate. MB undertook to draft a communication to parents explaining the process and detailing any required parental involvement.

Action: MB

8.6. It was noted that the trust is to be updated on leadership recruitment at the board meeting on the 9th December.

Action: IP

9. Finance Update

9.1. PH noted that noted that the school financial situation remains unchanged with pupil numbers below target however the expected increase in pupil numbers for September 2021 is encouraging.

9.2. The head noted that staff are aware that school is not currently breaking even due to reduced pupil numbers and they are concerned about job security. He noted that staff are mindful of day-to-day expenditure – supply cover has not been used as any gaps are covered by existing staff and staff are backfilling when colleagues are undertaking CPD.

9.3. **Governors questioned the viability of the primary site?**

9.4. The trust CEO noted that the original proposal for the primary site is no longer relevant. The LA has proposed that the primary site should run as an assessment centre for young pupils up to the level of KS1. Some of these pupils will feed into CHS and some into other trust schools or mainstream settings. This proposal will help the trust and CHS to develop their outreach provision. The CEO and the trust finance director are to meet with AfC on Monday 7th December to agree timescales.

10. Safeguarding Update

10.1. The safeguarding governor raised the issue of website maintenance. The head noted that this is work in progress. The trust FD noted that a trust policy document is to be issued on website maintenance and that school administrators are to update and annually audit the website.

10.2. The head noted that his DSL status should be moved to Ciaran McKeever – governors agreed with this.

10.3. It was noted that governors are responsible for their safeguarding training. It was noted that the school admin officer had sent details on Educare training packages to governors. The safeguarding governor undertook to email governors a list of essential safeguarding training.

Action: NG

11. Governor Visits

11.1. A report on a visit to the head and school by the chair was circulated in advance of the meeting (attached at G)

11.2. The chair reminded governors of the visit protocol.

12. Governor Training and Development

12.1. The chair noted that he is to arrange a date for a strategy meeting in January.

Action: AW

13. AOB

13.1. The chair noted that he is to provide a CHS update for the trust board meeting on 9th December 2020. He is also to attend the AAT AGM on the 10th December 2020

13.2. The head noted that he would like to display a governor photo board at the school – governors undertook to send photos to the head.

Action: ALL

13.3. The head noted his thanks to all staff for their hard work and dedication this term in difficult circumstances.

13.4. The CEO noted that the joint trust inset today is to be held on 4th January 2021. Governors are to contact him if they would like to join curriculum leadership morning workshops on the day.

Action: ALL

13.5. It was noted that the Head Teacher's Performance Management Review had been recently undertaken.

14. Date of Next Meeting

14.1. The next FGB meeting is to be held on Wednesday 17th March 2021

The meeting ended at 8.05pm.

Signed by the Chair _____

Date _____