

# Capella House School

*Minutes of the meeting of the governing body held as a Virtual Meeting  
using Google Hangouts on  
Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at 6.30pm.*

## Attendance

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Andrew Whiteside (AW)

Peter Bailey (PB)

Naomi Greaves (NG)

Michele Coleman (MC)

Melanie Bywell (MB)

Don Blaylock (DB)

Vacancy (Co-opted Governor)

Vacancy (Staff Governor)

Vacancy (Parent Governor)

## Apologies

Peter Heyer (PH)

## Absent w/o apologies

None

## Also, attended

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

## Meeting Minutes

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**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. Peter Heyer sent his 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). 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 Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020**

3.1. There were no changes to the minutes of the GB meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020 - they were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and were signed by the chair.

3.2. 2.3/3.3/3.7– Actioned.

3.3. 3.8 – The chair noted that he has received completed governor self-evaluation forms and he will summarise and use the information to create a Governing Body Development Plan – carried forward.

**Action: AW**

3.4. 8.4/8.5 – Head recruitment ongoing.

3.5. 8.6 – Actioned.

3.6. 10.3/12.1/13.4 – Actioned.

3.7. 13.2 – Governors undertook to send a photo to the Head for the governor board in school – carried forward.

**Action ALL**

### **4. Chair’s Update**

4.1. The Directors Review Report 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021 was circulated in advance of the meeting (Attached at B).

4.2. The chair noted that there are 3 main areas of focus for the school –

Improvement - The chair noted that the school had a SIP visit today. He noted that improvements are progressing well.

Development – 2 main areas of development were agreed at the Governor strategy meeting – KS4 and the Primary site. MB/MC are lead governors on these 2 areas.

Recruitment – the first round of headteacher recruitment did not generate any suitable candidates. A second round of recruitment will be a key focus for the next 2 months.

### **5. Headteacher Report**

5.1. The head’s report to governors Spring 2021 was circulated in advance of the meeting (Attached at C).

5.2. The head noted that week 2 of all pupils being back at school has been more challenging than week 1. Attendance figures have been very good since lockdown.

**5.3. Q: What is the update on pupil numbers for the 2021/2022 academic year?**

The head noted that school will be full for year 7. A further 4 pupils have been identified for the year 5/6 class. The head noted that there has been a lot of interest from parents. AfC have verbally committed to running a year 5/6 primary class whilst acknowledging the fact that pupil numbers are not definite. The head noted that prospective parents can be anxious about a new special school that does not have a track record. AfC are confident that the primary provision will be full.

5.4. The head noted that the job specification for the primary head is being finalised with a view to advertising wc 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021.

5.5. The head noted that there has been a lot of interest from parents about pupils transferring across to the primary site before the end of year 6.

5.6. A potential candidate for the secondary head is to visit the school wc. 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

5.7. Governors noted that the profile of the school is being raised more by AfC and there has been subsequent interest from parents.

**5.8. Q: What staff are being recruited for the primary centre?**

The head noted that a primary head (who will have a teaching commitment) and a HLTA are being recruited.

5.9. Governors noted the difficulty in parents being able to get to know the school during the pandemic as they can't visit during the school day. The head noted that currently visitors arrive 10 minutes before the end of the school day to observe pupils leaving and then they enter the school to meet staff.

**5.10. Q: How is staff morale?**

The head noted that staff are tired but very supportive of each other. Staff feel they are supported by the trust. Staff have felt valued to have been able to receive the covid vaccine early.

**6. Safeguarding Update**

6.1. The safeguarding link governor commended the work of the school DSL and she noted that many outstanding actions from the safeguarding audit have been completed. The school website is up to date.

6.2. The school DSL organised an E-Safety training evening and there had been a 10% attendance from parents which was positive bearing in mind the size of the parent body. Follow up documentation has been distributed to those that couldn't attend.

6.3. The trust safeguarding lead is completing a trust safeguarding audit.

6.4. The specifics of child protection figures and exclusions have been incorporated into the head's report.

- 6.5. The safeguarding governor undertook to advise governors on relevant safeguarding training that they should be undertaking.

Action: NG

- 6.6. The head noted that some older pupils are taking part in travel training. This has been very successful and has increased the confidence and self-esteem of pupils. He noted the good partnership between the school and the travel training company.

**6.7. Q: Does there need to be a separate DSL for the primary centre?**

The head noted that there needs to be an additional person that is level 3 trained at the primary site.

**7. Finance Update.**

- 7.1. The minutes of the finance meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021 and the CHS P6 Management Accounts were circulated in advance of the meeting (Attached at D).

- 7.2. The CHS SBM noted that £34k of operational cost recharges from Clarendon school have been removed from the forecast.

- 7.3. There has been impact on the budget of £115k due to lower pupil numbers than expected. Also there has been additional leadership costs of £7.9k. £15k of additional income has been forecasted due to the covid catch up grant and 1:1 pupil funding.

**7.4. Does the lack of clarity on pupil numbers for September 2021 intake affect the budget?**

The trust FD noted that the trust is committed to supporting CHS. CHS is only being charged for principal direct costs and once the school is financially viable then they will be in a position to repay Clarendon school for monies owed for utilities. Pupil numbers are the key to making the school financially viable.

**7.5. Have there been any additional costs for staff cover during covid?**

There has been an additional cost of £12k for teaching staff and a TA up to May half term to cover shielding staff members.

- 7.6. It was noted that the estimate of covid costs to the end of May is £20k which includes teaching staff costs and premises costs e.g., cleaning.

- 7.7. Governors agreed the forecast as detailed in the P6 management accounts.

**7.8. How are the banding value negotiations progressing?**

The trust FD noted that AfC have suggested that bandings will be revised from September 2021 although there is no further information at present.

**8. Strategic Development – Primary Site/KS4**

- 8.1. Capella Primary - MC noted that she had not been able to visit the school due to lockdown however she had sent an email to arrange a visit before the Easter break to look at curriculum. The trust CEO noted that she should visit on a day when

external advisor, Janis Rogers, is doing group curriculum work. MC undertook to arrange this with the head.

Action: MC

8.2. ***Q: Is anything needed from the governing body with regard to the primary project?***

The trust CEO noted that he is due to meet with the headteacher at St Marys Primary School (with whom Capella primary will share a site) this week. Outcomes of this meeting will be shared with AW, DB and MC.

8.3. KS4 – There had been no further development since the strategy meeting.

**9. Governor Training & Development**

9.1. The chair undertook to circulate the self-review document that he had received from the Head that can be used as a prompt for questioning and challenge during visits.

Action: AW

9.2. Governors noted that there will be more opportunities to capture the voice of the pupils when governors are able to visit the school.

9.3. ***Should governors be involved in trust committees?***

9.4. The trust FD noted that LGB's and the trust needs to follow the scheme of delegation that lays out the different levels of governance. A new draft is being presented to the trust board on the 24<sup>th</sup> March and it will remain a working document. The scheme of delegation will be explicit in the delegation of responsibilities. She also noted that the trust risk register has also been reviewed and remodelled. There will now be just one risk register to promote communication between the trust and its schools. The risk register will drive the agenda of LGB meetings. The risk management policy is to be signed off at the trust board meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> March.

9.5. ***Q: Should the AfC CPD schedule for next term be reviewed and relevant training be split between governors?***

The chair undertook to look at this. The clerk undertook to send the GB training log to the chair.

Action: AW/HB

9.6. Governors agreed that key learning from training should be shared.

**10. Governor Visits**

10.1. A report of attendance by NG at a school e-safety evening was circulated in advance of the meeting (Attached at E).

10.2. The head noted that visits can currently be made to the school before the pupils arrive or after they have left. The school could arrange a covid test prior to a visit.

**11. Policy Approval**

- 11.1. The safeguarding governor noted that the Child Protection Policy needs updating. She undertook to review and circulate to governors for comment. The policy would be ratified by email and noted at the next FGB in July.

**Action: NG**

**12. AOB**

- 12.1. The head thanked the staff for all their hard work and commitment during the pandemic.

**13. Date of Next Meeting**

- 13.1. The next FGB meeting is to be held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021

The meeting ended at 8.00pm.

Signed by the Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_