

## COTHAM SCHOOL

### Meeting of the Academy Governing Body

Tuesday 2 July 2024, 5.00pm

#### MINUTES OF MEETING

**Governors Present:**

Sandra Fryer, Chair of Governors	Jenny Campion-Smith, PG	Ruth Thomas, PG
Jared Rufus, Staff Governor	Richard Puttick, PG	Jack Barber, Staff Governor
Peter Huckle, Chair of L&WB Committee		Graham Nutbrown, CG
Dora Alderson, Community Governor		Isabel Tobias, MG
Rebecca Reid, PG & Chair of FPGP <i>arrived just before 6pm</i>		Sophie Hamilton, PG <i>arrived at 6pm</i>
Jo Butler, Headteacher/Accounting Officer		

**In Attendance** (non-voting)

Allison Crossland, Director of Finance and Resources  
Chris Reed, Deputy Headteacher  
Aimi Potter - Post-16 *arriving after 6pm as attending Year 12 Parent/Carer evening*  
Owen Morgan, Assistant Headteacher  
Gosia Dreissig, Governance Professional

**Apologies**

Ian Spencer, CG  
Lucy Hunt, MG  
Domini Leong  
Emma Smith, PG  
Jakub Wilczewsk  
Isabel Tobias, MG

**Absent:**

Emma Smith, PG

Governors in Post: 14/20  
Quorum = 5 (1/3 rounded up)  
MG = Member Appointed Governor  
CG = Co-opted Governor  
PG = Parent Governor

Item	Minutes of Meeting
1	<p><b>Welcome, Apologies for Absence, declarations of interest and notification of AOB</b></p> <p>SF welcomed everyone. Apologies received. No declarations of interest or AOB. SF welcomed Gosia Dreissig new Governance Professional.</p>
2	<p><b>Minutes of Last Meeting - 21 March 2024</b></p> <p>Minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the last meeting.</p>
3	<p><b>Matters Arising and Actions</b></p> <p>No report provided. SF asked if there were any actions from the last meeting. None mentioned.</p>
4	<p><b>Headteacher's Report</b></p> <p>SF asked for any questions regarding this report. CR shared a confidential update on the student being hurt in the last week attack. Discussion around the incident. Governors asked for some procedures / guidance on how to manage critical incidents communication. Director of Finance and Resources pointed to working closely with the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher on emergency planning. Action: Director of Finance and Resources to share the school emergency plan with governors</p>

	<p>The Headteacher shared information regarding Cotham Bristol Education Partnership (BEP) membership. Main points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Voice 21 is working with BEP</li> <li>● BEP supports Cotham Students with a wide range of projects</li> <li>● Headteacher met with students across the city as a result of some Climate Change projects</li> <li>● membership of BEP supports school with network connections across the city</li> <li>● some benefits for staff as well including Mental Health First Aider course and CPD events</li> <li>● moving away from Local Authority as they were disinterested and working more with local charities.</li> </ul> <p>Action: Headteacher to upload and share BEP Report with Governors</p> <p>The Headteacher pointed out today's school mock-up election taking place in the Main Hall to mirror the main election process.</p>
5	<p><b>Management Accounts</b></p> <p>Management Accounts for March and April were approved by all. All governors had the opportunity to ask questions and read relevant documentations. CoG confirmed their approval in addition to FGB.</p>
6	<p><b>Approval of the Three Year Budget</b></p> <p>All governors received a set of papers to read.</p> <p>RR explained how the school budget works and that the school needs to follow the requirements from the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESF). There are 3 iterations: March, May and June. The school has agreed with the Local Authority to take 18 additional students in Year 7 this year to assist with the demand for secondary school places - taking the year group from 243 to 261, BCC will provide growth funding should those numbers be realised in the autumn census. There are contingency plans embedded in the third year of the budget that may need to be implemented should the government three year spending review for schools not include any increases in per student funding and a positive uplift for the overall budget. RR noted that these contingencies may include increased class sizes, though it was noted that class sizes at Cotham are smaller than at other local schools e.g. 27 students at Cotham, where RGS already has 30 students in a class. The outcome of the next spending review by the Government in Spring 2025 will shape these changes to the three year budget and what we will need to implement.</p> <p>SF thanked the Director of Finance and Resources for putting together the budget overview. The Director of Finance and Resources pointed out massive savings on energy costs due to fixing contracts at a very attractive rate and the use of the biomass boiler which has enabled the school to make large savings in its use of gas.</p> <p>SF thanked the Director of Finance and Resources and the Finance Team for their hard work.</p> <p>Discussion about School Recruitment Strategy, filling vacancies, supply teachers question about actual cost versus budget (school expenditure in the supply line but savings in the payroll lines, Teacher, etc.) and fixed term contracts.</p> <p>RR advised governors that the FPGP Committee had approved the budget and as the Chair was now recommending approval of the Three Year Budget. <b>All agreed.</b></p>
7	<p><b>Feedback from Governor Conference</b></p> <p>There were no papers or minutes provided. Governors were asked to reflect on the Governor Conference. All agreed that it was a fantastic event.</p> <p>SF proposed having a session on strategy in the autumn and asked for help with planning this session.</p>

	<p>Discussion around the proposed school strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● looking at some other school strategies</li> <li>● looking at vision, values, and key objectives</li> <li>● run an internal event</li> <li>● Noted RP has already drafted a demonstration strategy document with a content and a structure and is happy to share this draft document with governors</li> <li>● questions around a purpose of the school strategy and audience</li> <li>● suggestion on lighter communication rather than improvement plans</li> <li>● suggestion of sharing strategy ideas on GovernorsHub</li> </ul>
8	<p><b>Governance- Vacancies, Recruitment Succession Planning, and Compliance</b></p> <p>Noted the updated Governors list circulated on the GovernorsHub.</p> <p>SF went through the proposed Governors structure for the next school year. There are 2 new Governors. There is a need to replace a governor who resigned. SF asked if a second accountant is needed.</p> <p>SF thanked Peter and Isabel for standing for another term, and that this will need to be approved by the Members of Cotham School.</p> <p>SF asked if everyone is clear which committee they are joining next year. Three of the FPGP meetings will be more in person for some of the year, i.e budget setting, this will be March, May and June - comprehensive papers will be printed by the Governance Professional in a booklet and distributed at the meeting. (electronic on Governorhub as usual seven days prior to each meeting).</p> <p>Noted that there will be additional IT support for governors who need enhanced access to governor hub and linked papers</p> <p>Action: SF to set up governors one to ones, annual review in the next academic year term .</p>
	<p><b>Break</b></p>
9	<p><b>Cotham Playing Fields Stoke Lodge update</b></p> <p>SF updated all on the legal matters in process with regard to the Town and Village Green designation of Cotham Playing Fields, Stoke Lodge.</p> <p>For now and for the next academic year the school is hiring Shine sport facilities at Shine Sports Ground, Golden Hill.</p> <p>Governors asked about the present situation with the playing fields at Stoke Lodge since the school is not using them. A governor had visited and fed back on their observations.</p> <p>The Director of Finance and Resources was asked to clarify how the fields are currently being managed and who is using them.</p> <p>It was noted that the school had previously informed all hirers, in writing, that the facilities at Stoke Lodge cannot be let until the current legal matter is resolved.</p> <p>It was agreed by the Commons Regulatory Authority (Local Authority - Bristol) that the school would ensure all entrances were unlocked and open in line with the registration of the Town and Village Green; the school has done this.</p> <p>It was noted that there has been considerable criminal damage to the fence, with most of the fence now being removed, and that the Police are aware, it is on their records and the school has crime reference numbers.</p> <p>Insurance remains in place for Stoke Lodge, and the school use of Golden Hill is also insured.</p>
10	<p><b>Committee Chairs Updates and Minutes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Learning &amp; Wellbeing</b></li> </ul> <p>PH shared the committee update:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- looking at prospect of public examination</li> <li>- gaps for pupil premium were larger than last year</li> <li>- school values progress</li> <li>- having data which give more comprehensive picture thanks to OM and CR; looking at attainment for current students</li> <li>- increase in parents and carers engagement</li> <li>- engagement of SEND parents is bigger</li> <li>- on 11 June governors received a superb report from the SLT. Good progress of reducing concerns especially with reporting online incidents. More incidents are logged on CPOMS, which gives an idea of the SEND staff workload. DL was praised for her SEND work.</li> <li>- introduction of Accelerate Centre</li> <li>- School of Sanctuary</li> <li>- Stakeholders engagement - there are a lot of activities. A STRIDE meeting quote from a student was shared.</li> <li>- Governors would like to know more about Artificial intelligence: threats and opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>SF thanked PH for all the work done on this committee.</p> <p>Questions around data analysis. AP commented on the initial work being done on integrity of assessment, the way school assesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Finance, Premises &amp; General Purposes Management Accounts Approval</b></li> </ul> <p>RR shared the committee update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- annual review of catering budget: children are happy with school meals, and the contract was extended for 5 years, modest price rise will take place for the main meal and individual items from september</li> <li>- implementation of an electric car scheme for staff benefit with a launch date of tomorrow. To look at the charging points in the future, what possible given the current infrastructure and what funding is available. School pays commercial rates for charging at school, it would be more cost effective to charge at home using the special EV rates available, the scheme offers at a cost a home charging option</li> <li>- H&amp;S policy annual review approved. Thanks to DdoFR and DoFR for their support</li> <li>- Special thanks to the Finance Manager as they leave us for the huge amount of support that they have dedicated to the work of this committee over more than 11 years</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Personnel and Training</b></li> </ul> <p>Not discussed by the committee as the chair was not in attendance.</p> <p>There were no questions.</p>
13	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sports Days on 18 and 19 July. Governors to email CR if they would like to attend.</li> <li>● SF thanked EM for her work as a Governor in the present and previous years</li> <li>● Steel Pans concert tomorrow - Governor welcome to attend</li> <li>● Legally Blonde performance next week - Governors welcome to attend</li> <li>● SF thanked all for their hard work this school year.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Dates of next Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 9 September 2024 - Chairs Meeting</li> <li>● 19 September 2024 - FGB</li> <li>● 24 September 2024 - L&amp;WB</li> <li>● 11 November 2024 - FPGP and Personnel and Training</li> <li>● 12 November 2024 - L&amp;WB</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 21 November Remuneration (tbc)</li><li>• 25 November 2024 - Chairs Meeting</li><li>• 2 December 2024 - Finance, Premises &amp; GP</li><li>• 12 December 2024 - FGB</li><li>• AGM to be agreed but will need to take place in the academic year 2024 - 2025</li></ul> |
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**Meeting closed at 7:52pm**