

BEAUMONT SCHOOL (Company Number 8104190)
MINUTES OF MEETING OF GOVERNORS HELD ON
Wednesday 12th July 2017 at 6.30pm

Governors Present:

Alex Hall (“AHa”) (Chair), Liz Hitch (“EHi”), Martin Atkinson (“MAt”), Gary Kellett (“GKe”), Hannah Henry (“HHe”), John McAlister (“JMI”), Lianne Sherwood (“LSh”), Ian Johnston (“IJo”), Mike Cameron (“MCA”), Cate Davies (“CDA”), David Lee (“DLe”), Brenda Austin (“BAu”), Anna Battaglia-Geymonat (“ABa”), Alison Wallis (“AWa”), Alison Curran (“ACu”), Rena Prindiville (“RPr”) and Catherine Hopkin (“CHo”).

In attendance:

Alex Lewis (“Alex”)

Sam Carro (“Sam”)

Simone Kilka-Green (“SKi”)

Sixth Form Student – present for items 1 - 8

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Clerk to the Governing Body

Actions Agreed at the meeting:

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
1	LSh to organise for a Governor who is involved with a MAT to attend an FGB meeting.	LSh	Autumn term
2	SKi to deal with the necessary paperwork associated with the following changes in governors and memberships: a) RPr’s resignation with effect from 21 st July 2017; b) HHe’s end of term of office from 12 th September 2017; c) CHo’s end of term of office from 11 th September 2017; d) EHi’s resignation with effect from 31 st August 2017; e) the appointment of Yvonne Powdrell and Jonathan Mountstevens as governors and members with effect from 1 st September 2017 at Companies House and on Edubase, and also make the necessary entries in the school’s statutory books.	SKi	As the dates arise
3	The school to procure a review of site security and present it to the governors for consideration and agreement.	MAt	ASAP
4	As an interim measure, the school to remind the students of their need for vigilance, and to challenge anyone on the school premises without a school lanyard.	MAt	ASAP
5	CTL Committee to consider the request for a review of how students address female and male members of staff.	CTL	Autumn term

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Torie Stewart (“VSt”). Consent was given to her absence. All other Governors were present at the meeting.

AHa noted that the meeting was quorate.

2. Declaration of any conflict of interest foreseen in relation to agenda items and undertaking to declare any that arises in the course of the meeting

Governors were reminded that anyone with a conflict of interest must declare it, withdraw from the meeting and take no part in any discussion or decision on the matter. None was declared.

3. To receive notification of any other business for item 20

Two items of additional business were raised and accepted.

4. Approval of minutes of the meeting on 8th June 2017 (including Part 2 confidential minutes) and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting on 8th June 2017, including the Part 2 confidential minutes, were approved as drafted.

The action points from the non-confidential meeting were considered as follows:

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Update
1	LSH to organise for a Governor who is involved with a MAT to attend an FGB meeting.	LSH	Next meeting	LSH has discussed this action with AHa and it has been suggested that this is dealt with in the Autumn term.
2	MAt to pass the comments on the PSI for 2017-18 to the new Deputy Headteacher, Jonathan Mountstevens, when he joins in September.	MAt	Sept 2017	For Sept.

LSH

5. Student and House Leadership Update

Governors welcomed Alex and Sam to the meeting and noted that both are currently students in Year 12.

Alex explained that he was responsible for sales and marketing for Rob’s Festival in June. He reported that the event was a huge success and raised over £8,000 profit, which will be split between the school and the Prince’s

Trust. Alex said that it was a fun event to be involved in, but that upon reflection, the staff were possibly too involved and could hand on more to the students in future.

Sam said that he found the move to the sixth form to be a big step up, but the school gave very good guidance to the students. He said that the standard of teaching in the school is great, and he could not fault how the school deals with, and shuts down, any bullying very quickly. He is very happy to be at Beaumont.

Both students said that the opportunity to go to Canada this year was very important. Alex was on the trip, which he said was fantastic, and the pinnacle of the school year for him.

EHi explained that this year was the first year that the Canada trip had been run, and it had made CED week a little tight for staffing. Consideration had been given to moving the timing of the trip, but the issue is that if it were at Easter that would impact on exams.

The Year 12 threshold exams were discussed, and both students said that they found them to be very hard work, but acknowledged that, in the absence of AS exams, they were very useful for them to be able to gauge how they are doing, and to form the basis of predictions of grades for next year.

Governors asked if all students took the exams seriously, and it was noted that most students could see the benefit and took them seriously. MAt explained that next year the exams will be over 2 weeks instead of there being 1 reading week and 1 exam week.

Governors thanked both Alex and Sam for attending the meeting and said that they could stay for all or part of the meeting as they wished.

6. Consideration of the report on the results of the stakeholder surveys carried out during the academic year

Governors had considered the two reports that had been distributed prior to the meeting, setting out the results of the parents Ofsted questionnaire, and the Kirkland Rowell student perceptions survey, both of which had been carried out during this academic year.

EHi confirmed that no staff survey has been carried out this year; one will be carried out next year as part of the biennial cycle.

It was noted that the parent survey is very positive. EHi reported that there are now 10 parents who have completed the ParentView survey, and one of those 10 is clearly very unhappy with the school, which means that the statistics are quite skewed. Parent governors were asked to complete the survey to attempt to balance the statistics.

On the student perceptions survey, it was noted that Yvonne Powdrell will lead a student assembly at which feedback will be given to the students. Governors questioned whether they should be concerned about the response to the question about identifying people in school whom students would be comfortable talking to, to which only 2-3% of students said Form Tutors, Heads of Year or any other teacher.

It was agreed that, given the link to students' mental health, this is an area for the school to look at and seek to identify how students feel about talking to staff. Governors reported that, when they had interviewed students as part of Department reviews, they had generally not found students to be reticent. It was agreed that the response probably also depends on what a student needs to discuss.

MA explained that there was a low response rate to the survey from sixth form students as there was a clash with a Geography field trip. Alex and Sam said that the survey was quite long, and that some students may have lost interest in the questions, particularly if they did not find them to be relevant to them. They suggested that a shorter survey may be more effective, as it could make the students think more carefully about their answers. It could also be in a Google format.

Alternative options were discussed. EHi confirmed that the school has used Kirkland Rowell for several years, although it is quite expensive and the school is limited in the bespoke questions it can ask. There are some advantages over producing an individual survey as the data is benchmarked against other schools. EHi explained that the leadership team will be looking at alternative options next year.

7. Committee reports and updates:

A. Resources

Governors had considered the minutes of the last Committee meeting which had been distributed prior to the meeting. There were no questions arising. EHi reported that she had completed her actions from the meeting and had sent comments to SKi for the next meeting in the Autumn Term.

B. Community, Teaching and Learning

Governors had considered the minutes of the last Committee meeting which had been distributed prior to the meeting. There were no questions arising.

8. FAB: update on the construction of the new junction and access road by Charles Church

Governors noted that the next meeting with Hertfordshire County Council (“HCC”) was on 18th July. Work is continuing apace on the access road on the old playing fields, which Charles Church continues to occupy under licence from HCC. AHa reported that there is a slight issue with the join between the new road and the school’s entrance. The school’s project manager is liaising with Charles Church to resolve that.

The date by which the access road can be used by the school was discussed. AHa reported that Charles Church is still intending to make an application to St Albans District Council to amend the sequence of the building project, although given the apparent progress on the access road, it is not clear what benefit that would give if it were successful. It was agreed that it would be very useful if the road were ready for use by the secondary transfer evening in October 2017.

Governors had noted at the last meeting that the new playing fields project had been signed off, but the final costs figures were still awaited from HCC. It was hoped that they would be provided by HCC at the meeting next week. In the meantime, the school had been considering what work it would like to fund out of the anticipated surplus.

With regard to the sports hall, AHa confirmed that the snagging work was to be completed over the Summer break.

Alex and Sam left the meeting.

9. Update on the contracts for the replacement of the windows, roofing and guttering works in B Block using CIF funding

Governors had considered the email from Julie Wells in which she had set out the final position on these contracts, which had been distributed in advance of the meeting.

It was noted that, at the last meeting, in order to cater for some movement in the final prices, approval was given for the school to enter into the contracts, with it being noted that the final figures might vary, and giving the necessary approval, subject to the overall expenditure being within the available CIF funding. The intention was to give some flexibility to the school to negotiate the final terms of the contracts, and be able to place them (and secure the timescales for the works) without the need to come back to governors for further approval.

The final position was noted as follows:

Acclaim Contracts – Roofing and rainwater goods – the original tender price was £528,460, but the school had entered into a contract for £547,281 which included an additional £18,821 for the extra scaffolding needed for the window replacement works.

Euro Windows Ltd – replacement windows – the original tender price was £223,972.88 but the school had entered into a contract for £190,240.88 which reflected a reduction of £33,732 which was made up of the omission of scaffolding at £29,700 and a design change to remove external glazing bars at £4,032.

The contracts at these levels were approved and ratified. EHi reported that she had signed the contracts that day.

10. Chair's Update including:

Governors had all received the dates for the meetings next year, which followed the same pattern of meetings as this year.

AHa said that, at the end of last year, it had been agreed that the 6.30pm start time for FGB meetings would be reviewed. No comments or issues were noted, and it was agreed that the start times would remain as 6.30pm for next year.

a) Review of new governor induction pack and induction process

Governors had considered the standard letter sent to all new governors, and the index to the induction pack, both of which had been distributed prior to the meeting.

AHa confirmed that the new governors appointed during the year had been asked for their comments on the process and documentation. All comments received were positive.

It was agreed that the process and document pack will continue as drafted for next year.

b) Governor positions:

i) To note the resignation of Rena Prindiville with effect from 21st July 2017 and the end of the term of office of Hannah Henry as a community governor with effect from 12th September 2017

These were noted. *(see further agenda item 21)*

SKi agreed to deal with the necessary paperwork associated with that resignation, and end of term of office, at Companies House and on Edubase, and also make the necessary entries in the school's statutory books. SKi

ii) To note the end of the term of office of Catherine Hopkin as a staff governor with effect from 11th September 2017 and the need to hold a staff governor election in the Autumn Term

This was noted. *(see further agenda item 21)*

SKi agreed to deal with the necessary paperwork associated with that end of term of office at Companies House and on Edubase, and also make the necessary entries in the school's statutory books. SKi

iii) To note the retirement of Liz Hitch as Headteacher and governor with effect from 31st August 2017 and the appointment of Martin Atkinson as Headteacher, Yvonne Powdrell as Deputy Headteacher and Jonathan Mountstevens as Deputy Headteacher (and therefore their appointments as staff governors and members) all with effect from 1st September 2017

These were noted. *(see further agenda item 21)*.

It was noted that EHi would cease to be a governor and member with effect from 31st August 2017. SKi agreed to deal with the necessary paperwork associated with that resignation at Companies House and on Edubase, and also make the necessary entries in the school's statutory books. SKi

It was unanimously agreed that Yvonne Powdrell and Jonathan Mountstevens would be appointed as governors and also members with effect from 1st September 2017. SKi agreed to deal with the necessary paperwork associated with those appointments at Companies House and on Edubase, and also make the necessary entries in the school's statutory books. SKi

c) Discussion of succession planning, in particular the appointment of a Chair for the Resources Committee in September 2017

AHa reported that GKe had agreed to stand as the chair of the Resources Committee in September.

AHa raised an additional area of succession planning around the multi-academy discussions. He suggested the working party take on the further discussions with schools in order to reduce his own workload.

He indicated that he would be prepared to stand as Chair of Governors in September, but encouraged anyone else who would like to stand as Chair to come forward.

11. Head's Report

Governors had received and considered the Headteacher's report which had been distributed prior to the meeting.

EHi distributed to the meeting "The View from the 'Mount'" which had been published that day by students and staff.

Governors noted that the shortened day for students that day had enabled staff to work within departments (including new staff) to plan for next year. EHi reported that it had been a worthwhile exercise.

EHi reported that the work on SEC2 was progressing well, and she was pleased with what the appointed architects had produced. It was noted that the end date for the build project (including the new science block and also a pavilion structure on the back playground) was expected to be March 2019.

On SEC3, EHi reported that HCC was still engaged in discussions with all the local schools and no decision had yet been made. EHi confirmed that the school needed to look carefully at its systems and processes to ensure that consistency and standards would be maintained. The developments at other local school were discussed and noted.

Governors noted the exclusions data, which had been distributed prior to the meeting. EHi confirmed that there has been a rise in the number of fixed period exclusions, each of which in her view had been justified. It was noted that the annual report on exclusions would be considered next term, at which point the comparisons to previous years would be considered.

Governors asked how the exclusions data compared to other local schools. EHi explained that this data is not compared with other schools nor at STASSH meetings.

Governors noted EHi's comments in her report and in particular her thanks to all governors, past and present who had given their time so generously to the school. EHi thanked her five chairs of governors and also AHa and SKi for their work on the FAB project and their support of EHi. She thanked RPr for stepping in to act as chair at a difficult time.

As a last word EHi asked that the school continue to focus on improving teaching, being at the heart of all the school does, and looking after the staff, particularly MAt as he takes on the role of Headteacher.

12. Update on staff recruitment

EHi handed to the meeting a confidential note of the staffing changes for September 2017 and took governors through it.

It was noted that the school is fully staffed, but it is tight. Governors congratulated the school on the recruitment that it had done.

13. Multi-academy trusts - update

There was a discussion on this agenda item which is recorded in Part 2 confidential minutes.

14. Approval of the budget for 2017-18 as recommended by the Resources Committee

Governors had considered the draft budget which had been distributed in advance of the meeting. It was noted that the Resources Committee had considered the budget in detail and had recommended it for approval.

RPr confirmed that the budget is a deficit budget, which is supported by the reserves that are carried forward. The year end reserves are to be finalised at the year end, but are expected to be higher than initially predicted.

It was noted that the latest recommendation on teachers' pay from the School Teachers' Review Body is for a

1% uplift generally, with a 2% uplift to the minimum and maximum of the main pay range. It was noted that this will be discussed in September with other local schools, and that the proposed budget includes a 1% increase for all teaching staff.

The budget was approved as presented. Governors thanked Julie Wells, the School Business Manager, for all her work on this.

15. Safeguarding – update

EHi reported that there was no safeguarding update, other than that there had been recent changes to the Single Central Record which had caused a lot of additional work for Sue Parsons.

16. Discussion of site security

Governors had considered the exchanges of email between AHa, MCa and EHi relating to site security which had been distributed prior to the meeting.

It was noted at the last meeting that this was a country-wide concern after the Manchester bomb, when the police contacted the school to discuss the school's lockdown procedure. It was noted that Ofsted was also looking at this carefully in schools.

This was discussed at length and Governors expressed various concerns, particularly on the question of whether students would challenge a stranger on the school premises and also the accessibility of the classrooms to anyone wishing to enter them. It was agreed that the school needs to have a clear response to such a situation and this should also be on the school's risk register.

It was noted that the school is in a difficult position at the current time as it is waiting for the new access road to be constructed by Charles Church, as discussed at agenda item 8. Once that road is completed, then the school can take the planned steps to install gates and close the current entrances.

It was agreed that a risk assessment is a balance between risk versus consequences, and it is important that the school undertake that risk assessment in a formalised manner. Governors expressed support of the school on this as the issue of site security was already being considered, but they asked that the school undertake a formal review of security and present it to the governors for review and agreement. It was noted that a review of that nature was carried out by an independent Ofsted Inspector several years ago, but that the climate has changed since that was carried out.

MAt

In the meantime it was agreed that, as an interim measure, the school would remind the students of their need for vigilance and to challenge anyone on the school premises without a school lanyard.

MAt

17. Policies – consideration and approval of the following policies (bearing in mind the responsibility to carry out an equality impact assessment in accordance with the school's Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010):

- a) Behaviour Principles (due June 2017) (recommended by CTL Committee)**
- b) Fixed Asset Policy as (new policy recommended by Resources Committee)**

Governors had reviewed both the principles and the policy, both of which had been distributed by email before the meeting.

Governors noted their responsibility as part of the review and approval of all policies and procedures to ensure that none of the policies/procedures approved had any disproportionate benefit or detriment and did not contain any discriminatory statements or have an adverse impact on any disadvantaged or vulnerable group.

The Behaviour Principles were approved as drafted.

Governors queried whether the Fixed Asset Policy should specify that, when computer equipment is disposed of, all data must be removed. The Policy was approved with that amendment.

It was agreed that the documents approved at the meeting did not have any disproportionate benefit or detriment and did not contain any discriminatory statements or adverse impacts. A statement to this effect would be included in the Behaviour Principles as confirmation they had undergone an equality impact assessment in accordance with the school's Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. This statement was not necessary for the Fixed Asset Policy.

18. Report on Governor review of the school's complaints file and agreement on who will carry out this review from September 2017

HHe confirmed that she had attended the school to review the complaints file. There were 9 complaints since her last review in March; all of them were dealt with by the school. 3 or 4 of those complaints were about bullying, which seemed slightly more than usual, although it was agreed that 9 complaints in total was a small number. Governors agreed to keep this under review.

A volunteer to take on this role from September 2017 was requested. It was agreed that AWa would take on this role.

19. Governor Development Co-ordinator Update – Hertfordshire Governors' Annual Conference, Governance and School Leadership – Working together to navigate change - Saturday, 11th November 2017, Robertson House, Stevenage

LSh confirmed that training was all on course and up-to-date. Governors noted the date of the next annual conference.

20. To receive any other business as notified in item 3

Governors had considered the detailed email from Julie Wells regarding the proposals for the gas and electricity supply to the school, which had been distributed in advance of the meeting.

It was noted that the school was using the services of an energy broker, Zenergi, for the renewals and they were seeking prices from the market. The prices set out in the email were valid on 4 July 2017 and Zenergi would go back out to the top three companies following the meeting to ask for a re-quote as at that date. It was noted that governors' agreement was therefore requested to contract at the values re-quoted the next day within a tolerance of 5% on the original prices.

Governors discussed the fact that entering into a contract period of longer than 12 months for both electricity and gas would be at a higher annual cost, however, the school would benefit from greater budgeting certainty over the contract period. Governors noted that the broker was of the view that uncertainty around Brexit negotiations would potentially result in prices increasing.

Governors agreed to enter into contracts for both gas and electricity for two years and approved the entering into of contracts as follows:

- Electricity across a 24 month period at an estimated cost of £145,575.32 (£72,787.66 per annum) + or – 5% - which it was noted was below OJEU thresholds.
- Gas across a 24 month period at an estimated cost of £71,761.04 (£35,880.52 per annum) + or – 5% - which it was noted was within the headteacher’s authority under the Schedule of Financial Delegation.

SKi reminded governors to go into school to have their new security passes printed. It was noted that these were done by Maureen Hamer on the main reception and the best times to attend were 8am - 8.30am, 1.20pm to 2.30pm any day or 3.30-4.30 Monday to Thursday.

A governor raised an additional item of business which was to ask for a review of how students address female and male staff. It was agreed that this would be considered by the CTL committee next term.

CTL

There was no additional business raised.

21. Dates of next meetings - FGB meeting – Wednesday 12th July 2017 at 6.30pm

AHa declared the meeting closed at 8.25pm following which there were informal drinks and AHa thanked CHo, HHe and RPr for all their work as governors.

AHa gave a heartfelt speech thanking EHi for her invaluable work as Headteacher and the huge contribution she had made to Beaumont School, and she was presented with a gift from the governors.

Signed:
Chair of Governors

Dated:.....