

Tadcaster Grammar School Governing Body

Wednesday 27 June 2018

Minutes

Present: Philip Turnpenny (Chair), Martyn Sibley (Headteacher), Mike Dunphy, Liz Wilson, Georgina Wright, Ria Hennessy, David Gluck, Jon Bliss, Jeremy Airey, Jess Ryan, Heather Smith

In attendance: Wendy Wilson (Head of School), Cayte Mulhern (Deputy Head), Siân Henderson (Clerk)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Chris Burt

2. Confidentiality & declarations of interest

Governors were reminded of the confidential nature of discussion at board meetings. No declarations of interest were made.

3. To note the Governing Board meeting held on 25 April 2018

An information meeting for governors was held on 25 April.

4. Minutes of the meetings held on 28 March 2018

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair

5. Matters arising

- (i) [minute 4v] the annual governor report will be prepared by Jeremy Airey by October half term.
- (ii) [minute 4vii] the catch-up premium discussion did not take place at the last SDC meeting; it will be carried forward to the next meeting.
- (iii) [minute 5vi] safer recruitment training has yet to be undertaken by Georgina Wright and Jon Bliss
- (iv) [minute 5vii] all governors should now be using school email addresses; these will soon be changing to reflect MAT status

6. STAR MAT

6.1 Update

An update from the CEO was circulated prior to the meeting; a more complete version will be emailed following this meeting. A conference will be held in July for Chairs, Trustees and Headteachers to formulate a strategic plan for the Trust. Chairs of Governors will meet together once each term.

Governors asked the following questions:

Will all schools be converting on 1 July?

The remaining primary schools will convert on that date. Sherburn High School's conversion has been delayed for further due diligence to take place.

How will HR support be provided to Trust staff?

The contract with NYCC for HR support will continue for the current year.

6.2 Scheme of delegation

The scheme of delegation had been previously circulated to governors. The Chair noted that the TGS board is compliant with the scheme and the Business Manager has taken responsibility for monitoring this.

6.3 Local Governing Board membership

The Trust is recommending that local boards take the opportunity to reconstitute, seeking to ensure a good skills mix. A template for board composition was circulated and discussed. The current governing body consists of 14 members and governors expressed some concern about reducing the number drastically fearing that there would be insufficient members to staff committees and small groups. **After discussion, it was agreed to form a new governing board consisting of 11 members, according to the formula laid out in the Trust template.** There will be 2 parent governor positions and 7 members appointed by the Board, plus the headteacher and one staff governor. It was agreed to conduct a skills audit using the NGA tool to assist in identifying skills gaps and training needs. The Chair will seek advice on the most appropriate means of reducing the size of the Board. It was confirmed that governors' terms office will continue.

[Heather Smith joined the meeting at this point]

7. Head of School's report, including safeguarding and inclusion

A written report was circulated prior to the meeting covering the following items:

- Staffing, including leavers and new appointments
- Staff turnover – 2016-17: 14.6%, 2017-18: 10% with a significant drop in teaching staff turnover; data from the staff questionnaire will be collated with this information. Governors welcomed the stability among teaching staff.
- Staff absence due to illness and maternity
- The governing board wished to pass on thanks to George Middleton for winning the NYCC NQT of the Year award.
- Student tracking – a governor asked a question about pinks exceeding greens in English and maths, and it was reported that this is partly due to changes in assessment and conservative judgments by staff in relation to high performing pupils. The improvement in Pupil Premium performance was welcomed.

- Student attendance – although Y12 & Y13 data circulated only covers the period to December, no concerns were reported by staff.
 - Exclusions and sanctions – exclusions have been high this year but several were related to three particular incidents. A governor asked about measures taken to raise awareness of substance abuse dangers and consequences; Miss Mulhern outlined the comprehensive response and noted that the police contribution was particularly valuable.
 - Pupil Premium
 - Safeguarding – a report was circulated prior to the meeting and no questions were raised. Miss Mulhern explained the terms employed in reporting.
 - Governor engagement
 - Parent engagement – attendance at parents' evenings has improved and feedback has been excellent
 - Student numbers on roll and recruitment – good numbers for Y7 and Y12. 129 students are confirmed for Y12 with 13 still undecided. Recruitment of is expected to meet the target of 54%
 - School visits – the following future visits were approved by the governing body:
 - November 2018, Y7 Transitional Residential to Grantham
 - 8-12 July 2019, Y10 MFL visit to Normandy
 - February 2020, Y8 ski visit to, Italy
 - March/April 2020, Y8 & 9 Pro- Football Match Day Experience to Ipswich Town FC
 - April 2020 (Easter Holidays) Y10 ski visit to Canada or USA
 - July 2020, Y9 visit to Wimbledon Tennis Championships
 - July 2020, Y9 watersports Visit to Spain
- Governors thanked the leaders of school visits, and other staff who give up their own time to support students.
- Policies
 - The Equality and Diversity Policy was approved
 - Diary dates – governors were requested to make every effort to attend the whole school celebration evening
 - Annual report on racist incidents – a paper was tabled reporting on 6 individual incidents.

[Martyn Sibley left the meeting at this point]

8. Committee reports

8.1 School Development Committee

- Minutes of the most recent meeting were circulated.
- A governor asked about the 6th Form collaboration with Sherburn High School. It was reported that there are fewer courses and students this year, but the collaboration is valuable for the students concerned and for maintaining 6th Form recruitment.
- A full governing board session on the School Development Plan will be scheduled.

8.2 Resources [including approval of the Start Budget]

- Minutes of the most recent meeting were circulated.
- The in-year deficit has been reduced to £26k which represents excellent progress from the deficit of £350k a few years ago. Staff were congratulated for their support of cost-saving measures.

- The budget within the MAT will run within the academic year (rather than the financial year) so a transition budget has been prepared. The Governing Board approved the Start Budget.
- Chromebooks – the introductory parents’ meeting has taken place, with the expected small number of parents expressing their opposition. 40% of next year’s Y7 parents have committed to the scheme at this point. With a breakeven point of 60% take-up, a final decision will be reported at the next meeting.
- The artificial pitch will be replaced by Notts Sports on a lease basis. It is expected that additional costs will be covered by lettings.

[Mike Dunphy left the meeting at this point]

8.3 Headteacher's Performance Review

The review group has met with both Martyn Sibley (Headteacher and Trust CEO) and Wendy Wilson (Head of School). Mr Sibley’s current objectives will be carried forward with new targets set in November with support from Keith Worrall from the Trust. Wendy Wilson’s objectives are being derived from the headteacher’s current objectives.

9. Group update: Appearance Policy

Results from the open questions in the student survey were tabled along with an initial draft of a list of uniform items. The high level of response to the survey was noted. In answer to a question about the introduction of a non-gender specific uniform, 32% were in favour, 28% against, and 39% of no opinion. The intention is to maintain blazers as a compulsory part of the uniform for all students. The PE department have already instituted some changes to kit requirements in response to student requests and the governors’ group will arrange a further meeting to discuss the detail of further changes. Following this meeting the group will prepare a full proposal to be considered at the next governing board meeting early in the new academic year. Conversations with Chalks uniform supplier will begin as soon as possible. Although it is hoped to introduce the new uniform for Y7 in September 2019 it was acknowledged that long lead-in times for suppliers might force a 2020 launch. Although the fine detail of the policy has yet to be worked out, the governing board affirmed its commitment to a gender-neutral school uniform.

10. 6th Form

Nothing additional to report.

11. Governance

11.1 Committee membership

The current membership will continue, including Jess Ryan, Chris Burt and the Chair forming the Headteacher’s Performance Review Group.

11.2 Governor links

Existing links will continue with the addition of Liz Wilson as 6th Form link.

12. Health & Safety

A meeting will be arranged between the link governors, Business Manager and the caretaker. A new MAT post with responsibility for H&S has been created and will be filled by September.

13. Correspondence

The Chair has received three complaints from parents. These were dealt with by the Headteacher/Head of School and successfully resolved, without recourse to the Complaints Procedure.

14. Any other business

None

15. Dates of meetings for 2018/19: To be advised

Governing board meetings will continue to be held at 5.30 pm and committee meetings at 5.00 pm. One governor noted her difficulty in attending meetings scheduled for Wednesdays.

As the clerking service contract is transferred from NYCC to York City Council, the current clerk was thanked for her work over recent years.

NOTEC