

## Colyton Grammar School

### Minutes of the Governing Body – Part One

**Date of Meeting: Thursday 9 July 2015**

**Venue: Room 16**

**Present:**

Governors	Dr C Bastin, Rev H Dawson, Lt Col T J Dyer, Mr A Eaton-Hart, Mr P Evans, Mr G Hayne, Mrs S Hopkins Mrs L Linnell, Mr M R Marsh, Mr B Salter, Mr R Scott, Mrs V Wells and Mrs F H Wilkinson
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Staff	Mr A Gregson (Item 1 only)
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Visitors	None
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Secretary	Mr S R Cook
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#### **1. Curriculum Presentation: Year 11 Independent Learning Project and the Extended Project”**

Mr A Gregson gave a presentation on the Year 11 Independent Learning Project and the Extended Project, including a short Powerpoint and video presentation (see the attached slides). He focused on the following:

- The benefits of the project, both in terms of gaining experience for the Extended Project and preparing for university
- The role of the Learning Journal
- The Year 11 Independent Learning Award in recording and reflecting on progress
- A range of students speaking about their projects and what they have gained from the experience, including developing independent research skills
- The challenges in terms of planning and managing the project through to successful completion
- The importance of the process as well as the final outcome
- The use of the online classroom
- Project grading in 2013/14, and the reasons why some students do not achieve an outcome
- Grades submitted for the Year 13 Extended Project this year
- Future developments, including the move from AQA to WJEC examination board, Mr Gregson’s appointment to the WJEC English Advisory Board, the introduction of an e-portfolio, changes to the team of supervisors, the impact of the dropping of Critical Thinking by exam boards and changing the timing of the project so that it is completed in Year 12.

In response to Mrs Wells, Mr Gregson explained the rationale for staging the changes in the timing of the Extended Project. In response to Mrs Linnell, Mr Gregson indicated that a time commitment of 120 hours is realistic, and explained the ways in which timetabled periods are currently augmented by study days etc. Mr Evans pointed to the advantages of Year 11 having the opportunity to develop and display high order research skills.

Dr Bastin thanked Mr Gregson for his helpful and informative presentation.

## **2. Disclosure of Interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

## **3. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mr P Anderson, Mrs S Burns-Price, Mr G Davis, Mr B Merrett and Mrs J Wainwright. It was noted that Mr Anderson has resigned from the Board and Dr Bastin expressed the Board's thanks for his contribution.

## **4. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 25 March 2015**

These were approved and signed.

## **5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

## **6. Headteacher's Report**

Mr Evans drew the attention of the Board to the report which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Dr Bastin pointed to the remarkable achievement of the students who had recently won the international PolyU Global Challenge in Hong Kong.

## **7. Chairman's Report**

Dr Bastin reported that he had been in regular contact with the Headteacher and Business Manager.

Dr Bastin also reported on a meeting with Mr Martin Goscomb who had expressed an interest in becoming a governor. It was agreed that Mr Goscomb should be appointed an "Other Governor" under Article 50.

In the light of Mr Anderson's resignation, Dr Bastin encouraged governors to bring forward suggestions for possible governors. In response to Lt Col Dyer, Dr Bastin agreed that there are benefits of attracting governors from the local area, but noted that the school also draws from a wide area beyond the immediate locality. The number of Parent Governors on the Board was also discussed.

## **8. Budget for 2015/16 and Three Year Plan**

Mrs Wilkinson drew the attention of the Board to the main budget document which had been circulated prior to the meeting, together with the minutes of the discussion at the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 22 June 2015. She pointed to the projected surplus/(deficit) figures, the savings already made and a range of other issues which had been highlighted at the Finance and Resources Committee meeting.

Mr Cook gave further detail on the following issues:

- Recent press coverage of the growing crisis in school funding across many areas of the country
- The recent survey of 87 Devon schools, 85% of which are predicting deficit budgets within three years
- The decreased funding and additional costs which have contributed to the crisis
- Recent predictions of surplus and deficit budgets for Colyton
- The significant cost savings made to date – in the region of £160k
- Other areas for exploration, as discussed at the January Training Evening and outlined in the main budget document

- Specific issues relating to IT spending

Mrs Hopkins suggested the potential for further investment to produce income e.g. through an extension of the PV system, and Mr Eaton-Hart urged a creative approach towards investment.

Mrs Wilkinson outlined the discussion at the recent Finance and Resources Committee regarding the establishment of a separate charitable trading company as a vehicle for providing services to other schools. Mr Marsh emphasised the importance of careful consideration of any further decisions on cuts. Mrs Wilkinson reminded the Board that the only cut to date to directly affect students has been the loss of Y13 games. Lt Col Dyer reflected on benefit of using reserves to provide a period of stability.

Mr Evans commented on significant number of schools, including highly prestigious institutions, already facing deficits and having to make serious cuts to their provision. There is already evidence of a serious concern developing nationally about challenges facing schools.

In response to Mrs Linnell, Mr Cook outlined the limited information available about the implementation of a national funding formula, with a consultation likely to be announced in the Autumn, followed by clear proposals in 2016 for implementation from April 2017. It is clear, however, that the implementation will be staged over a number of years.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Mr Marsh, seconded by Mr Hayne and unanimously agreed:

- (a) That the budget for 2015/16 should be approved
- (b) To continue to examine future cost savings and increased income generation, but to delay implementation of these for up to twelve months pending clarification of key decisions about a national funding formula and post-16 funding
- (c) To be prepared to use some of the existing available reserves (currently c£650k) to provide a period of stability over the next three years. It was agreed to leave the current designation of the Bradbeer Fund unchanged for the time being and to use other available funds in the first instance
- (d) That the current five year replacement programme for IT be extended to six or seven years as appropriate, with the exception of equipment required to deliver the Computer Studies programme
- (e) That the laptop replacement programme be severely curtailed as outlined in the budget report
- (f) That a working group be established to look in further detail at deficit reduction measures prior to the Training Evening in October. Mrs Hopkins and Mr Scott agreed to serve on this group, with a third governor available if possible.  
[POST-MEETING NOTE: in addition to Mrs Hopkins and Mr Scott, Dr Bastin and Mr Merrett have also agreed to serve on this this working group.]

Mr Evans asked for Item 23 to be brought forward. Although the Educational Visits policy had recently been reviewed by the Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee, the Senior Leadership Team have since discussed a number of additional changes to ensure costs to the school and disruption to the curriculum are minimised. The revisions also clarify supervision arrangements. Field work and other examination requirements would be exempted.

It was noted that charges for educational visits remain voluntary, although it would be necessary to cancel an activity if insufficient funds were available. Mr Evans reminded the

Board that the Bradbeer Fund subsidises many activities to the benefit of all students, and that the Pupil Premium Fund provides support for those students from families with low income.

Lt Col Dyer reflected on potential cost savings on transport for school visits, including considering alternative forms of transport and planning well in advance.

Proposed by Mr Salter, seconded by Mrs Wells and unanimously agreed that the revised Educational Visits policy should be approved.

#### **9. Alumni Relations and Fund Raising**

Mr Scott reported on the recruitment of database assistant to assist developing the alumni database.

Mr Scott then proposed a number of developments, all of which were agreed, as follows:

1. That the school becomes a member of CASE, with benefits such as access to focused, expert advice, training courses and research materials, at a cost of £295 per year. It was agreed that the school should become a member of CASE in the Autumn once the alumni database is more established.
2. A series of celebrity lectures in the Cottrill Hall. Rev Dawson pointed to the success of the Friends of St Andrews lecture series, with contributors drawn from a variety of backgrounds attracting audiences across a range of ages. It was agreed that Mr Scott should continue to develop these proposals.
3. The school to host Question Time, Any Questions or a similar national media event to celebrate the 470th anniversary of the foundation of the school in 2016. Mr Scott undertook to make the initial contact with the BBC. It was also agreed that the Alumni and Friends Fund should be used to underwrite any shortfall on the lectures on a trial basis.
4. That a working group be established to consider further strategies for income generation. Mr Scott and Mrs Hopkins offered to serve on this group, and other governors were invited to consider volunteering for this group.

Mr Cook reported that the new Alumni and Friends website went live at the beginning of June. To date there are 162 new registrations, and two donations totalling £5,223.10 have been received.

Proposed by Mrs Wilkinson, seconded by Mr Scott and unanimously agreed that the new Alumni and Friends Fund should be designated for special projects as agreed by the Board.

#### **10. School Futures Group Report**

Taken under Part Two Minutes.

#### **11. Governors' Succession Planning**

Dr Bastin indicated that he is meeting with the Business Manager to review the committee structure, as discussed at the recent Finance and Resources Committee. Mrs Linnell suggested that a period of stability is important during the period before a permanent head is appointed.

#### **12. Governors' Yearbook for 2015/16**

Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Board to the draft Yearbook which had been circulated prior to the meeting, including the committee structure, terms of reference and membership, together with the calendar of governors' meetings. He also drew attention to the list of changes from last year's publication.

Following discussion it was agreed to change the dates of the following meetings:

Meeting	Original Date	New Date
Staffing Committee	Thu 11 February 2016	Wed 10 February 2016
Board Meeting	Thu 7 July 2016	Thu 14 July 2016

A correction to Mrs Linnell's email address was also noted.

It was unanimously agreed that the Governors' Yearbook for 2015/16 should be approved, subject to the changes listed above. Mr Cook agreed to circulate both a paper and electronic version of the final document to all governors.

### **13. Proposed Changes to the Articles of Association**

Dr Bastin drew attention to the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting and asked Mr Cook out outline the background to this proposal.

Following the circulation of the paper, a number of governors had already indicated that the wording of the section regarding the proportion of governors required to support a resolution needed further clarification.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the word "present" should be removed and that the right to vote by proxy should be made explicit. The draft article should therefore read as follows:

*"A governor will cease to hold office if, in the opinion of the Governors, s/he is guilty of conduct detrimental to the interests of the Company and the Governing Body resolves by a 75% majority of the Governors voting either in person or by proxy that s/he should be removed provided that the Governor concerned has first been given an opportunity to put his/her case to justify why s/he should not be removed as a Governor."*

It was also agreed that the amended draft article should be sent to Foot Anstey for checking prior to submission to the Education Funding Agency.

### **14. Register of Interests**

Mr Cook reported that all but one governor have completed the Related Parties and Declaration of Interests form. The website will be updated accordingly.

### **15. School Calendar for 2015/16**

Dr Bastin drew attention to the draft school calendar for 2015/16 which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed by Mr Marsh, seconded by Mrs Linnell and unanimously agreed that the school calendar for 2015/16 should be approved, subject to changes agreed above to governors meetings.

### **16. Rota for Attendance at Parents' Evenings**

Mr Cook drew attention to the rota for governors to attend parents' evenings in 2015/16, and asked governors to indicate which meetings they could cover.

### **17. Responsible Officer's Report**

Mrs Hopkins drew attention to her report for the Summer Term 2015 which had been considered by Finance and Resources Committee at the meeting held on 22 June 2015 and circulated prior to the Board meeting.

She confirmed that there were no issues to report.

### **18. Financial Statements for Period Ending 31 May 2015**

Mr Cook drew attention to the financial statements which had been circulated prior to the

meeting, including the detailed narrative. Governors expressed satisfaction with the statements.

### **19. Capital Projects Update**

Mr Cook drew the attention of the Board to Item 14 of the minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 22 June 2015, focusing in particular on the following:

- The outstanding snagging work on the Cottrill Hall, Sports Centre Changing Rooms, Take Five, East Wing/Site Workshop which Devon Contractors have agreed to complete during the summer break
- The unsuccessful appeal on the Condition Improvement Fund bid for the Staff House
- The decision to delay any further decision on the proposal to phase the Staff House project, due to the overall funding situation
- The decision to go ahead with a modified proposal for the redevelopment of the West Court at a cost of £22k, plus a contribution from the Parents' Association. Work has already commenced on this scheme.

Mr Cook reported that a Stage Two grant application has been submitted to the Wolfson Trust for a £48k contribution towards the building and equipping of an additional Science Laboratory. The Trust will make a decision in December 2015.

### **20. Link Governors' Report**

Reports were received as follows from Link Governors:

(a) Business and Enterprise (Mrs L Linnell)

Mrs Linnell reported on her meeting with Mrs Rew which covered the recent success in the PolyU Global Challenge in Hong Kong, and the recent Enterprise Days. Following a suggestion from Mr Scott, Dr Bastin agreed to write to the students involved in the PolyU Global Challenge, congratulating them on their success.

(b) Creative and Expressive Arts (Mrs V Wells)

Mrs Wells reported on some of the recent Drama performances prior to the A Level and GCSE examinations. She also complimented Mrs Brownley and students on the Guys and Dolls production before Christmas, and noted the outstanding quality of the work at the recent A Level Art Exhibition.

(c) English (Mr R Scott)

Mr Scott reported on a visit to the English department when some of the work involved in preparing for the new examination specifications was being undertaken. He also pointed to the need for new full sets of books for supporting the new terminal English examinations.

(d) Humanities (Mrs S Hopkins)

Mrs Hopkins reported on conversations with Mr Gregson and a planned visit next term.

(e) IT (Lt Col T Dyer)

Lt Col Dyer reported on a visit to a Year 7 lesson using the Python programming language. He commented on the contrast between the new focus on programming and the previous concentration on applications. He also commented on the difference between Year 7 and Year 8, and the hardware and software challenges.

In response to Lt Col Dyer, Mr Evans reported on the significant progress made by the IT Working Party on ensuring that the full range of IT skills and opportunities are addressed across the curriculum, and drew attention to the Computing and Information Technology policy.

(f) Maths and Science (Mr B Merrett)

In the absence of Mr Merrett, Mr Cook read a written report provided by Mr Merrett, focusing on the delay in the national approval of the new arrangements for A Level practical work, Dr Stanbridge's appointment as Edexcel's principal examiner for Chemistry, the new GCSE syllabi, a number of staff changes and the current Key Stage 3 review.

He also drew attention to a report from Mr Davis outlining a range of curricular and extra-curricular activities in Maths, including the UK Maths Challenge, participation in the "Win At School" final at the International Centre for Statistical Education, the Decision Maths Day, the Jurassic Coast Teaching School Alliance Maths Hub and preparation for the new GCSE syllabus.

(g) Modern Foreign Languages (Mr A Eaton-Hart)

Mr Eaton-Hart reported that four exchange visits have been completed (two language and two work experience exchanges) in France and Germany. There is continuing lack of clarity about the detail of the new GCSE exams.

Mr Eaton-Hart commented particularly on the very significant contribution that Mr Love has made to the exchange programme.

Mr Sam Banks takes over as Head of Department in September, and Miss Melanie Clayton has been appointed on a 1 year fixed term contract.

Mr Eaton-Hart also commented on the recent Routes into Languages Day and the important contribution of the Modern Language Assistants, and repeated the invitation to governors to participate in exchange visits.

(h) Sport (Mr M Marsh)

Mr Marsh reported on his meeting with Miss Shute who indicated on a very positive year despite disruption due to the building projects. The PE department are very pleased with new changing rooms and PE Office. It was noted that the additional paths to the west of the new Changing Rooms and the storage shed are awaiting completion.

He also drew attention to the 100% score in the recent H&S Review undertaken by Devon Health and Safety Service.

Governors were invited to attend Sports Day on Friday 10 July.

(i) Technology (Mr B Salter)

Mr Salter indicated that there were no developments to report.

## **21. Committee Reports**

Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Board to the minutes for the following Committee meetings which had all been circulated prior to the meeting.

(a) Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee

(b) Chairs' Committee

(c) Finance and Resources Committee

(d) Staffing Committee

Mr Evans reported on the consultation with teaching staff regarding the proposed 1% pay award. Proposed by Mr Marsh, seconded by Mr Eaton-Hart and unanimously agreed that the proposed 1% pay award for teaching staff (from 1 September 2015) and support staff (from 1 April 2015) should be approved.

**22. Policies for Review**

Proposed by Mr Marsh, seconded by Rev Dawson and unanimously agreed that the following revised policies which had been circulated prior to the meeting should be approved subject to the changes noted below:

(a) Media Relations

(b) School Aims

(c) Special Educational Needs

Mr Evans indicated that the revision takes into account the changed arrangements for students with a Statement or Education, Health and Care Plan. It was agreed to move the definition of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to an earlier position in the policy.

**23. Any Other Business**

(a) Educational Visits Policy

Taken under Item 8.

(b) Flt Lt Jonny Downen

Mr Hayne drew the attention of the Board to the role played by Flt Lt Jonny Downen in a number of recent local displays by the RAF Typhoon Team, Flt Lt Downen is a former student of the school.

(c) Paul Evans' Retirement

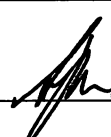
Dr Bastin reminded the Board of Mr Evans' retirement as Headteacher from the end of August, and commented on the outstanding contribution he has made to the school. Among many other achievements, Dr Bastin focused particularly on the contribution Mr Evans had made to the education and training of the Board.

The Board unanimously expressed their gratitude to Mr Evans, together with best wishes for his future.

There was no other business.

**24. Next Meeting**

Thursday 10 December 2015 at 6.30pm.

Signed:		(Chairman of Governors)
Date:	10/12/15	