

# Colyton Grammar School

## Minutes of the Governing Body – Part One

Date of Meeting: Thursday 17 March 2016

Venue: Room 16

### Present:

Trustees	Dr C Bastin, Mr G Davis, Rev H Dawson, Lt Col T J Dyer, Mr A Eaton-Hart, Mr M Goscomb, Mr G Hayne, Mrs L Linnell, Mr M R Marsh, Mr B Merrett, Mr B Salter, Mr R Scott, Mrs J Wainwright, Mrs V Wells and Mrs F H Wilkinson
Staff	None
Visitors	Mr T Harris (Headteacher Designate)
Secretary	Mr S R Cook

Dr Bastin welcome Mr Tim Harris (Headteacher Designate) to the Board meeting.

### 1. Curriculum Presentation: History

Mr C Harris gave a presentation on History, focusing in particular on the following:

- The members of the team
- A summary of the content at each Key Stage, including the new Edexcel GCSE course and the reformed AQA syllabus at A Level
- Guiding principles of the department, including
  - Active, inclusive and motivational lessons
  - Out of school learning, including visits to Totnes Castle, Bovington Tank Museum, and residential visits to Ypres (Year 10) and Berlin (Year 13)
  - Extra-curricular provision e.g. PSA video-making competition, European Youth Parliament etc
  - Stretch and challenge – “feed-forward” assessment, enrichment content, Oxbridge interviews
  - Independent learning
  - Embracing new ideas and technology
  - Rigorous assessment for learning
- A brief student revision activity including placing photographs in chronological order and then identifying the most significant event – and how this task would be used in the classroom
- The challenges facing the History department, including new exam specifications, pressures on teaching staff in a period of significant change, resources

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

### 2. Disclosure of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

### 3. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs S Burns-Price and Mrs S Hopkins.

### 4. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 20 January 2016

These were approved and signed.

## **5. Matters Arising**

### **(a) Item 4(a): Proposed Change to Articles of Association**

Mr Cook reported that the revised Articles of Association were submitted to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the Charity Commission in January. Since the publication of the model articles on which the proposed revision was based, it is clear that the Charity Commission had raised some concerns with the EFA, in particular with the additional object relating to running a leisure centre. A further set of model articles has subsequently been produced which do not include the additional object as standard. Other queries raised by the Charity Commission are more straightforward and in most cases relate to ongoing discussions between the Charity Commission and the EFA.

Just this week, the EFA have also indicated that it would be beneficial to update the school's Funding Agreement which is currently based on the 2010 model when academy conversion took place.

Mr Cook has undertaken an initial comparison of the current model Funding Agreement with the agreement signed in 2010. The document has been revised substantially in the intervening period, and he recommended that, in order to progress this matter expeditiously, a small group of governors should be asked to review the changes and their implications. He reminded the Board that a Members' Resolution is required to amend the Funding Agreement.

Following discussion, it was agreed that Dr Bastin, Mrs Wainwright, Mr Goscomb, Mr Eaton-Hart and Mrs Anne Robinson should meet with Mr Cook as soon as possible to:

- (i) Review the new model Funding Agreement and any further changes to the Articles of Association
- (ii) Circulate a written report to the Board for comment by email, including a recommendation to the Members regarding any changes

The Members would take into account the views expressed during the above consultation before agreeing any resolution to amend the Funding Agreement.

### **(b) Item 6: Admissions Policy Consultation**

Mr Cook drew the attention of the Board to the Minutes of the Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee meeting held on 25 February 2016, when the committee had reviewed the response from Devon Local Authority and 4 other responses, before approving the Admissions Arrangements for Entry in 2017.

He also reported that the application round for testing in September has already opened and 18 applications have been received to date.

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

Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Board to the report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Mrs Wainwright indicated that since the report was produced, Mrs Rew has resigned from her post in charge of Business Studies.

Mr Merrett thanked Mrs Wainwright for her lead over the past two terms.

In response to Mrs Linnell, Mrs Wainwright reported briefly on the South West Academic Trust meeting with Sir David Carter earlier in the week, against the background of a very clear government commitment to the majority of schools becoming MATs. Sir David indicated that he would have concerns about a SWAT MAT as it does not fulfil the criteria for "giving" and "receiving". He indicated that there was a clear role for SWAT in providing support to other schools, and that SWAT had agreed to compile a directory of potential areas of strength.

Dr Bastin expressed the thanks of the Board to Mrs Wainwright.

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

Dr Bastin reported that he had been in regular contact with the Headteacher and the Business Manager, including the appointment of the new Secretary to Trustees and supporting Mrs Wainwright and Mr Cook in dealing with a number of complaints. He also reported on a meeting with two parents who had some concerns and questions about governance.

Mr Merrett again raised the issue of limits on the terms of office of governors. Mr Eaton-Hart suggested that the Board should wait for the outcome of the very thorough review currently being undertaken by Mr Goscomb. Dr Bastin reminded the Board that the option of an external review remains, dependent on the outcome of Mr Goscomb's work.

Lt Col Dyer suggested that once the outcome of the review is known, the Board needs to move on swiftly and also to ensure that these discussions do not have an impact on the main business of the school which is teaching and learning.

Mr Merrett suggested that consideration should be given to expanding the school to six forms of entry but there was no support for taking this further.

## **8. Appointment of Secretary to the Trustees**

Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Board to the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting which outlined the selection process and the recommendation that Mrs Anne Robinson be appointed as Secretary to the Trustees.

In response to a question from Mr Goscomb about how soon Mrs Robinson would be in a position to provide advice to the Board on the full range of governance matters, Dr Bastin indicated that in addition to support from Mr Cook, Mrs Robinson has previous education experience, including in governance. He also indicated that Mrs Robinson is very keen to undertake the National College training course for clerks.

Mr Cook confirmed that all the necessary pre-employment checks have been completed satisfactorily, apart from the school having seen Mrs Robinson's DBS disclosure certificate.

Proposed by Mr Merrett, seconded by Mr Marsh and unanimously agreed that Mrs Anne Robinson should be appointed Secretary to the Trustees with effect from the start of the summer term, subject to sight of her DBS certificate.

## **9. Trustee Communication with Parents**

Dr Bastin drew attention to the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He explained that the proposals contained in the paper arise from the very positive responses to

the trustee information sent out to parents earlier this term as part of the Headteacher's regular "update" series, and other comments from parents.

#### *Annual Trustees' Report to Parents for 2014/15*

In response to Lt Col Dyer, it was agreed to add references to two significant decisions taken since August 2015 i.e. to increase the Planned Admission Number to 155 from September 2018 and to phase out the three year sixth form.

In response to Mr Eaton-Hart, it was agreed to add an explanatory note to the section dealing with the various balances held in school reserves.

It was noted that while this report draws heavily on the Annual Report and Financial Statements, in future years the report can be re-written more extensively with the target audience in mind.

Dr Bastin indicated that he recognised the need to improve governor communication with parents, and Mr Goscomb stated that the Annual Report is a good step forward.

It was agreed to approve the draft Annual Report to Parents for 2014/15 and publish it on the school website.

#### *Governor Profiles on the School Website*

Mrs Wells expressed some concern about the publication of photographs and reported on research of a number of school websites which indicates that only a minority include photographs of governors. Following discussion, it was agreed that each governor should provide a written profile as suggested in the paper together with an optional photograph on an individual basis.

#### *Governor Attendance at Parents' Evenings*

It was agreed to include the name of the governor attending a Parents' Evening in the email notification to parents and to display the governors' photograph and name at the signing-in table.

### **10. School National Funding Formula Consultation**

Mr Cook drew the attention of the Board to the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting, relating to the first stage consultation on a National Funding Formula announced by the Department for Education last week.

He drew attention in particular to the suggested responses provided by the Grammar School Heads' Association.

Trustees welcome the consultation, noting that the second stage of the consultation relating to the rates and proportions of funding to be allocated to each factor will take place in June.

Mr Cook confirmed that responses have been invited from the following individuals with the following relevant roles:

- Governor
- Headteacher
- Parent

- Pupil
- School Business Manager
- Teacher
- Other

Trustees were strongly encouraged to submit individual responses. It was also agreed to circulate information about the consultation, including guidance on responding to the specific questions, to parents (for both parents and students to respond) and to all staff.

#### **11. Development Officer Proposal**

Mr Scott drew attention to the paper which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He reminded the Board of the visit of Elizabeth Cairncross in 2013 and developments since that time, including the work carried out by 3 students during the last summer holiday in developing the alumni database, the new Alumni and Friends website and the recent visit to Reading School. Mr Scott also reported on his conversation with Lancaster Royal Grammar School who have had a Development Officer in place for many years and now have an average annual income from donations in excess of £400k.

He outlined the proposal for a part-time post on a fixed term contract of 3 years, including some conservative financial projections. He emphasised that this development is not a “quick fix” and that it will take several years to build momentum in generating significant income.

Mr Salter and a number of governors indicated strong support for the proposal. In response to Mr Eaton-Hart, Mr Harris outlined the history of the appointment of a development officer at Reading and its contribution to a new refectory and additional Science labs. He commented on the importance of having the right personality in post. He also outlined current proposals for the Reading Foundation to invest in developing this role.

Mr Merrett indicated that general experience in the charity sector is that it can take 2 years for a post to become self-financing.

Mr Goscomb indicated that the inclusion of previous experience as “desirable” in the Person Specification is important, as the right candidate with this experience is more likely to be successful in generating donations.

Mr Harris also commented on the importance of nurturing key relationships among donors.

Mrs Wells indicated the importance of recognising potential conflicts of interest from donors who are current parents. Mr Goscomb also suggested that a clear sponsorship policy is developed to cover these concerns.

Mrs Linnell suggested publicising the appointment to parents, explaining the reasons behind the need for a Development Officer.

Proposed by Mr Salter, seconded by Mr Merrett and unanimously agreed that a part-time Development Officer be appointed in the summer term of 2016, initially on a 15 hours per week fixed term contract for 3 years. The post will be paid on Colyton Support Staff Scale 4 with a Management Allowance 4, subject to approval of the proposed Person Specification and Job Description by the Staffing Committee.

#### **12. Insurance Arrangements from 1 April 2016**

Mr Cook drew the attention of the Board to the paper which had been circulated prior to the

meeting, outlining the discussions at the recent meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee.

He reported that the Devon and Cornwall Scheme provided by Zurich Municipal and the Risk Pooling Arrangement (RPA) provided by the Education Funding Agency were the two top-scoring options. Both are based on an annual per pupil charge, but additional covers for motor, worldwide travel and engineering insurance/inspection were required for the RPA scheme. The judgement between the two options hinged on whether the significant costs savings of the RPA scheme outweighed the relevant policy, service and other advantages of the Zurich scheme

Subsequent to the meeting Zurich Municipal have confirmed the following:

- (a) The Devon and Cornwall Scheme is a rolling 1 year programme rather than a conventional Long Term Agreement
- (b) It is possible to extend our current cover until 31 August 2016, in order to take into account the outcome of the recently closed consultation on the RPA (including a proposal to reduce the per pupil charge from £25 to £20 per annum)
- (c) The Zurich scheme is also being reviewed, including a possible reduction in the per pupil charge, with the outcome likely to be published in late June.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Lt Col Dyer, seconded by Mr Scott and unanimously agreed to extend the existing cover with Zurich Municipal to 31 August 2016 to allow a further review of the RPA and the new Zurich Devon and Cornwall Scheme at the Finance and Resources Committee meeting on 23 June 2016. It was also agreed to seek feedback from other Devon and/or SWAT schools on their experience of the RPA scheme.

### **13. Governance Review**

Mr Goscomb reported on the initial preparatory work he has undertaken, and that he has now started individual interviews with governors and other contributors which will continue through the beginning of next term. He outlined some of the key issues he is exploring, using the Twenty Questions provided by the National Governors' Association (NGA) as a starting point, as follows

- How effective is the governance of the school?
- The quality of strategic planning
- How effectively the Board communicates and engages with stakeholders
- How effectively does the Board hold leaders to account?
- How has the Board improved outcomes for students?

The information collected will be used to make an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the current arrangements which will form the basis of any recommendations. Mr Goscomb thanked contributors for the time they are giving to support the review and indicated that he is hopeful of producing a final report for the Board meeting in July.

Mr Eaton Hart expressed the thanks of the Board for Mr Goscomb's very significant contribution in undertaking this review.

### **14. School Futures Group Report**

Mrs Wilkinson drew the attention of the Board to the work of the School Futures Group in relation to Item 8, the appointment of the Secretary to Trustees.

## **15. Finance Working Party Report**

Mr Scott reminded the Board of the BBC Any Questions broadcast from the Cottrill Hall on Friday 13 May, including a short reception prior to the event for invited guests and a further reception afterwards with the panel. In response to Mr Eaton-Hart, Mr Cook agreed to check the BBC guidance in relation to opportunities for the Parents' Association, for instance, to sell refreshments.

Mr Scott also informed the Board of the Celebrity Dinner and Lecture event with Bob Champion event on 15 Jul 2016.

Dr Bastin reminded the Board that the original terms of reference of the Finance Working Party had been established at the Board meeting in July 2016 with a focus looking in further detail at deficit reduction measures prior to the training evening in the Autumn and to consider further strategies for income generation.

Mr Goscomb indicated that working parties generally are probably best established on a "task and finish" basis, with clear delegated powers if appropriate, and information about the frequency of meetings etc. He indicated this aspect will be included in his review of governance.

It was agreed that the terms of reference for the Finance Working Party should be revised as follows:

- (a) The Finance Working Party should continue to meet to develop and examine in detail proposals for both income generation and cost reduction measures during the current period of financial challenge, and to bring proposals to the Finance and Resources Committee or the Board as appropriate.
- (b) Meetings should be held at least termly.
- (c) The Terms of Reference should be reviewed on at least an annual basis at the summer term meeting of the Board.
- (d) The Development Officer, when appointed, should join the current membership of the Finance Working Party which consists of Dr Bastin, Mrs Hopkins, Mr Merrett and Mr Scott.

## **16. Financial Statements for Period Ending 29 February 2016**

Dr Bastin drew attention to the financial statements which had been circulated prior to the meeting, including the detailed narrative.

Mr Cook drew the attention of the Board to the following:

- (a) The sum received from the Axe Valley Learning Community to cover the potential redundancy of the School Sports Coordinator following the demise of the Learning Community on 31 March 2016. This sum will be held in the Restricted General Fund.
- (b) The indication that the final settlement on the Cottrill Hall will be slightly over budget, mostly due to the significant additional costs relating to utilities and services at the beginning of the project, and a number of mechanical and electrical issues. It was noted, however, that this will be more than covered by the underspend of over £80k on the Take Five Extension and East Wing/Site Accommodation projects.

- (c) The impact of some significant food price increases from major suppliers on the trading margin in Take Five. It was noted that the Finance and Resources Committee had recently agreed to increase prices (for the first time since September 2013) by 5% from the start of next term.

Governors expressed satisfaction with the statements.

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

In the absence of Mrs Hopkins, Mrs Wilkinson drew attention to the Responsible Officer's report for the Spring Term 2016 which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

She confirmed that there were no issues to report. Dr Bastin expressed the Board's thanks to Mrs Hopkins for her contribution.

#### **18. Capital Projects Update**

Mr Cook reminded the Board that the outcome of the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bids for the Staff House and Feoffees' Roof and Windows projects is expected by the end of March.

Mr Cook reported on a meeting between TFQ Architects and the school (represented by Mrs Wainwright, Mr Cook and Mr Hutchings) to explore initial options for the capital development related to the expansion to five forms of entry on a rolling programme from September 2017. The Board examined a plan for siting up to 7 additional classrooms, including:

- A 2 storey extension at the rear of IT1 and IT2, and an additional storey above IT1 and IT2
- Options for building over Rooms 1-3 and/or Rooms 10-12.

Mr Cook confirmed that the current projections indicate a need for 1 additional classroom in 2018/19, 2 rooms in 2019/20 and 1 in each of the following 3 years, although these projection will need to be amended in the light of decisions about the curriculum. Mrs Wainwright explained that the architect had highlighted the likely need to provide additional parking as part of a planning application.

Mr Cook explained that TFQ have agreed to provide a feasibility study for the Finance and Resources Committee, with the potential for submitting a CIF bid in December this year.

In response to Mrs Linnell, it was agreed that further developments on the expansion proposals will be reported at the Board meeting in July. In response to concerns about the potential disruption from a major building project in the centre of the school, Mr Salter suggested that the use of SIPS panels should be explored.

#### **19. Link Trustees' 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 and a Year 10 group who were being introduced to the controlled assessment unit of their GCSE programme. After the initial briefing the class moved to an IT room to begin research and planning, and Mrs Linnell had the opportunity to speak with each student to ascertain their plans and the reasons for their choices.



Mrs Linnell had also discussed with Mrs Rew general matters relating to Business Studies/Economics at GCSE and A level. Mrs Rew will be leaving her post as Head of Department and the vacancy will be advertised shortly.

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

Mrs Wells reported that she has made contact with the relevant subject departments, but this has not yet resulted in meetings. She indicated that she is happy to continue as the Link Trustee for Art, but suggested that another trustee may like to take on Music and Drama when the link programme is reviewed in July. She reported on her visit to Newton Abbott Mock Trial competition.

(c) English (Mr R Scott)

Mr Scott reported on the day he had spent in school in February, including a visit to a Year 12 group studying King Lear, a Year 9 group studying World War 1 poetry, a drama lesson and a Year 7 PSHE session on anti-radicalisation. The latter had involved using online training and Mr Scott commented on the maturity of discussion between Year 7 students.

(d) Humanities (Mrs S Hopkins)

In the absence of Mrs Hopkins, there was no report for Humanities.

(e) IT (Lt Col T Dyer)

Lt Col Dyer reported on the e-mapping system being used by Mr Cronk as part of the DofE programme and the slightly different scheme used by the Ten Tors teams.

He indicated that he is planning to become more familiar with how IT is used across the curriculum.

(f) Maths

It was agreed to keep the Maths Link Trustee role vacant for a new governor.

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

Mr Eaton-Hart reported on his recent visit which had included observing a Year 8 French group using the Language Lab, another Year 8 group in a conventional classroom and a small Year 12 group which included a visiting French student.

Mr Eaton-Hart indicated that there are ongoing problems with the Language Lab software which need to be explored.

He also reported on the department's enthusiasm for the curriculum and examination changes, and comment briefly on the challenges faced by the new Head of Department.

(h) Science (Mr B Merrett)

Mr Merrett reminded the Board of his report last term on the problems with exam marking last summer.

(i) Sport (Mr M Marsh)

Mr Marsh reported that he had attended a number of school sporting fixtures.

(j) Technology (Mr B Salter)

Mr Salter reported that he had not met with the department since the last Board meeting.

## 20. Committee Reports

Dr Bastin and Mrs Linnell drew the attention of the Board to the need to appoint a Safeguarding Governor to replace Mr Hayne, including a requirement for undertaking the necessary training, and Mrs Wainwright emphasised the importance of the role.

It was agreed that Rev Dawson should be appointed as Safeguarding Governor from the beginning of the summer term and that safeguarding should be a standing item on Board agendas. Dr Bastin thanked Mr Hayne for his service in this role.

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

## 21. Any Other Business

### (a) Mr Hayne

Dr Bastin reminded the Board that Mr Hayne is retiring as a trustee from the end of this term. He thanked Mr Hayne warmly for his contribution to the Board since his appointment in 2005.

Mr Hayne thanked the Board for making this period such a positive experience and wished the school the very best for the future.


### (b) Education White Paper

Dr Bastin drew attention to the summary of the key proposals in the Education White Paper published earlier in the day, which had been circulated at the beginning of the meeting.

There was no other business.

## 22. Next Meeting

Thursday 14 July 2016 at 6.30pm.

Signed:		(Chairman of Governors)
Date:	14.7.16	