

Colyton Grammar School

Minutes of the Chairs Committee – Part One

Date of Meeting: Wednesday 12 November 2014

Venue: Headteacher's Office

Present:

Governors	Dr C Bastin, Mr P Evans, Mrs L Linnell, Mr B Salter, Mr R Scott, Mrs V Wells and Mrs F H Wilkinson
Staff	None
Visitors	None
Clerk	Mr S R Cook

1. Disclosure of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr B Merrett and Rev H Dawson.

3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 10 June 2014

These were approved and signed.

4. Matters Arising

(a) Item 4(a): Sports Centre Arrangements

Mr Cook reported that a draft revised agreement will be available shortly.

(b) Item 4(c): Governors' Code of Practice

Mr Cook confirmed that the Governors' Handbook for 2014/15 included a revised Code of Conduct. He also confirmed that he will write to the Education Funding Agency to explore the possibility of amending the Articles of Association, as discussed at the last meeting.

(c) Item 11(b): Ofsted

Mr Evans outlined the plan for Alistair Brien (Headteacher of Bournemouth School for Girls) and a colleague to undertake a "pre-Ofsted" trial inspection prior to Christmas.

(d) Item 11(c): Three Year Sixth Form

Mr Evans briefed the Committee on the publication of "Beyond The Curriculum" which aims to assist students to be aware of the additional features of the three year Sixth Form curriculum. This document will, for example, be made available to Year 10 students at next week's Sixth Form Information Evening.

He also outlined recent positive discussions with Birmingham University.

There were no other matters arising.

5. Headteacher Recruitment Update

Mr Cook confirmed that the printed advertisement had appeared in TES Leadership on Friday 17 October. The vacancy also continues to be advertised online.

To date, there have been 11 expressions of interest and 3 applications. Barry Sindall has checked with a number of other schools who are also recruiting headteachers and this low response rate is typical for current vacancies.

Two prospective candidates have visited the school, including one who has already applied, and a further request was received yesterday.

Dr Bastin expressed the Board's appreciation of Mr Evans giving so much notice to enable the Board to plan for and recruit a replacement.

6. Year 11 and Year 13 Celebration/Award Events 2014/15

Mr Evans indicated that the Year 11 event will take place in a whole school assembly on the morning of 1 December, and governors are invited to attend.

The Year 13 event is booked for Seaton Town Hall on 19 December 2014, but it has proved difficult to find an appropriate speaker. It was agreed that Dr Bastin would present the awards, and that the focus of the evening would be on a social gathering for the Year 13 leavers.

Mr Evans also suggested that governors may wish to reconsider the format of the leavers' celebration event, bearing in mind the opportunity to inspire younger year groups.

7. Review Governor Attendance for 2013/14

Deferred to the next meeting.

8. Governor Succession Planning

Dr Bastin reminded the Committee of the current vacancy for an "Other Governor" following the resignation of Prof Jackson, and Mr Cook explained that the following governors terms' office also come to an end on 31 December 2014:

- Dr C Bastin (Other Governor)
- Mrs S Burns-Price (Staff Governor)
- Mr G Davis (Staff Governor)
- Mr G Hayne (Other Governor)
- Mrs L Linnell (Other Governor)
- Mr M Marsh (Other Governor)
- Mr B Salter (Other Governor)
- Mr R Scott (Other Governor)
- Mrs F Wilkinson (Other Governor)

Mr Cook confirmed that all the current "Other Governors" had indicated their willingness to stand for a further term.

A number of options were discussed for the "Other Governor" vacancy. Factors to be considered included the need for an additional governor with a financial background, the opportunity for a link with the University of Exeter and the need for a balance between employed and retired governors. It was agreed that the vacancy should be considered again at the next meeting, and in the meantime members of the Committee would attempt to identify possible candidates.

It was also agreed that Mr T Dyer, who was recently elected as a Parent Governor, should serve on the Finance and Resources, and the Admissions, Learning and Standards Committees.

9. Fundraising Issues and Alumni Development

Mr Scott reported that the Supported Department Self-Reviews considered at the recent Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee had identified some possible opportunities for sponsorship. Mr Scott also reported on contacts with former Colytonians.

Mr Evans reported that the Parents' Association have committed £20,000 to the Staff House project bid.

In response to Mrs Linnell, Mr Evans reported that Ms Roper continues to work on developing the alumni database.

Other ideas discussed included:

- The possibility of sponsorship from Ashfords (Mrs Wilkinson)
- Advertising e.g. on buses to raise public awareness
- Making the termly short films available to alumni
- Increasing the number of "alumni" snapshots displayed around school
- Poole Grammar School's link with Waitrose
- Sponsorship from Lloyds Bank
- Links with major organisations where existing alumni are employees

10. Budget Update

Mr Cook reported on the GSHA Seminar held at Westminster on 15 October. In the region of 20 MPs had been present, together with other Westminster staff such as researchers. The session, which involved presentations from the GSHA, headteachers and also Mr Cook, had been useful in raising awareness among MPs about the ways in which academies are funded, and also about the special pressures on selective and successful schools.

MPs expressed a commitment to taking these issues further, and Mr Sindall has subsequently outlined a proposal to limit the flexibility of local authority School Forums to shift money away from core pupil funding by setting a national minimum funding level.

Mr Evans reported on the recent DASH meeting where serious opposition was voiced about the changes to post-16 funding to support schools with large programmes.

11. Capital Projects Update

Mr Cook outlined a series of concerns with the current performance of Devon Contractors, which are shared by the school's architects. These included:

- Significant, unexplained slippage in the timetable for the completion of the Cottrill Hall
- A delay of at least three weeks on the new changing rooms
- The very poor quality of finish to Take Five and the East Wing project, which led to the architect discussing condemning some of the work
- A recent accident involving a piece of timber falling on a member of staff due to Devon Contractors working outside Take Five without any barrier fencing in place, and the lack of an effective response to this incident

The Committee agreed that Dr Bastin and Mr Salter should seek an urgent meeting with Devon Contractors to address these, and other concerns, and seek effective assurances that their performance will dramatically increase

It was noted that Devon Contractors, together with R G Spiller, have been asked to submit updated Stage One tenders for the revised Staff House project to be submitted under the new Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) arrangements which have replaced the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund (ACMF).

12. Any Other Business

(a) Examination Appeals

In response to Dr Bastin, Mr Evans outlined the recent discussions at the Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee regarding the whole school Stage One Appeal against the very significant problems with the Extended Project results in the summer. These changes had resulted in some extreme changes e.g. an internal moderation result of A* which had been downgraded to a U. Mr Evans outlined the points made in

reports already received which do not address the school's concerns or accept that there are issues to be addressed.

As a result, the school is submitting a Stage Two Appeal, although Mr Evans is not hopeful of a successful outcome. In addition, Mr Gregson is investigating moving to another examination board for the Extended Project for 2016, as a result of the problems with AQA.

Mrs Wells agreed that the Stage Two Appeal is unlikely to lead to a change, but suggested that the school should pursue a judicial review, starting with seeking an opinion from a London chambers. The possibility of submitting a complaint to Ofqual was also discussed. It was agreed that these options should be considered following the outcome of the Stage Two Appeal.

Dr Bastin expressed concern at the impact of this experience on students, both current and past, and also on staff.

(b) Staffing Issues


Mr Evans outlined the arrangements that have been put in place to cover a maternity leave in Chemistry and the provision of an agency supply teacher for two terms to cover a vacancy in Design and Technology from Christmas 2014. A long term solution to the latter vacancy will need careful consideration.

Mr Evans also outlined possible changes within the English department, as the current Head of English has indicated that she would like to relinquish this responsibility.

There was no other business.

13. Next Meeting

Wednesday 14 February at 6.30pm.

Signed:		(Chairman of Committee)
Date:	4.2.15	