

Colyton Grammar School

Minutes of the Chairs Committee – Part One

Date of Meeting: Thursday 4 February 2016

Venue: Headteacher's Office

Present:

Governors	Dr C Bastin, Rev H Dawson, Lt Col T Dyer, Mrs L Linnell, Mr B Salter, Mr R Scott, Mrs J Wainwright, Mrs V Wells and Mrs F H Wilkinson
Staff	None
Visitors	None
Secretary	Mr S R Cook

1. Disclosure of Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

2. Apologies

None.

3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 22 October 2015

These were approved and signed.

4. Matters Arising

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

Mr Cook reported that discussions with the school's solicitors are continuing regarding the draft revised agreement, and that, through the Colyton Leisure Partnership Forum, East Devon District Council and Leisure East Devon are aware that a draft revised agreement has been prepared.

(b) Item 6: Articles of Association and Code of Conduct

Mr Cook reminded that the Committee that Code of Conduct had been approved by the Board. The revised Articles of Association have been submitted to the Charity Commission and the Education Funding Agency. The Charity Commission have come back with some questions for further clarification.

There were no other matters arising.

5. Celebration/Awards Evening Review

Dr Bastin indicated that the evening had been very successful. Mrs Wainwright reported that a number of staff and parents have commented very positively. Suggestions for possible improvements include:

- The inclusion of the sports prizes (including those from other years)
- Improvements in layout (e.g. the siting of the lectern, provision of flowers)
- Ensuring programmes are provided to all guests
- Investigating alternatives to paper weights currently presented
- The possibility of presenting book tokens or an equivalent, as with the former Speech Day
- The importance of identifying an appropriate speaker, even though a long formal speech is not appropriate to this event.

Lt Col Dyer reported that he had very positive feedback, but some parents from other year groups who were not involved did not understand the nature of the event.

Mrs Wells indicated that the Year 14 leavers may have appreciated a reception beforehand which could also be an opportunity to develop alumni links. It was suggested that a reception in Take Five at 6.30pm for Year 14 students, parents and staff might be possible.

It was noted that Mr Harris (Headteacher Designate) will have a view about this event next year.

It would be helpful to give information about the event as early as possible to Year 12.

Rev Dawson commented very positively on the pace and atmosphere of the evening.

6. Governor Succession Planning

Dr Bastin reported that two parents responded to the invitation to anyone interested in becoming a governor in the recent governors' update included in the weekly email bulletin. Both parents have financial expertise.

It was agreed that both parents should be invited to meet with Dr Bastin and Mrs Wilkinson.

Dr Bastin reminded the Committee of the role of individual committees in succession planning and ensuring that new governors are introduced to different roles.

In relation to the role of Chair, Mr Salter reflected on Dr Bastin's statement about his willingness to stand down, alongside ensuring some stability over the period of a new headteacher commencing. Dr Bastin suggested a greater role for the Vice Chair could help to make the role of Chair more manageable.

Lt Col Dyer reflected on the challenge of elected governors moving into position of chair or vice chair given the nature of the four year terms. It was noted, however, that the current Chair and Vice Chair of Governors and the Chair of Staffing were originally elected parent governors.

Other issues raised in discussion included:

- The differences between co-opted governors and appointed/elected governors
- The benefit of "staggering" terms of office
- The need to providing continuity
- The current mix of governors who have served for long, medium or short periods
- The challenges in finding Staff Governors

7. Governance Review

Dr Bastin reported that Mr Goscomb has commenced work on the review, and hopes to start meetings with individual governors after half term. He will be reporting to the Board on his progress.

Mr Cook agreed to send out the Twenty Questions again prior to half term.

8. Governors' Conduct and Grievance Policies

Dr Bastin drew the attention of the Committee to the revised drafts of the Trustees' Conduction and Grievance policies which had been circulated prior to the meeting. A number of changes proposed by the solicitor were accepted.

In response to Mrs Linnell, it was agreed that Mr Cook should look at aligning the opening paragraph of the Conduct Policy with the Code of Practice.

The following changes were also agreed:

- (a) To remove the requirement for the Investigating Trustees to recommend a course of action, but only to report the outcome of their investigation. The Board is then responsible for deciding on an appropriate course of action.
- (b) To remove "very serious" from the reference to gross misconduct in the Summary Action section, as the nature of the gross misconduct leading to potential summary action is already defined.
- (c) To change the reference to absence in the definitions of misconduct to "absence from more than 50% of relevant trustees meetings in a 6 month period without agreement"

The changes to the Grievance Policy proposed by the solicitor were accepted.

9. Fundraising and Alumni Development

Mr Scott briefed the Committee on the recent meeting of the Finance Working Party, focusing on the following:

- The BBC Any Questions event to be held at the school on Friday 13 May 2016. Arrangements for guests, including a possible drinks reception beforehand and a longer reception afterwards to meet Jonathan Dimbleby and the panel were discussed. It was agreed to reserve some tickets for staff and 6th form students.
- The proposal to hold a trial Celebrity Lecture in the summer term. It is suggested that this should be a high quality event involving food, with the option of guests being able to book a complete table.
- A proposed visit by Mr Scott and Mr Salter to meet the Development Director at Reading School.
- The possibility of funding a development officer/director post through the Bradbeer Fund. A part-time role, with costs of c£20k was discussed, on the basis of performance related pay. Mr Scott is currently drafting a Job Description.

10. Any Other Business

(a) Committee Meetings

Dr Bastin indicated that it would be best practice for the Chair of a committee to meet with Mrs Wainwright and/or Mr Cook prior to a meeting to discuss the agenda and any particular items, in order to ensure that meetings remain focused. This was agreed.

(b) Year 9 Curriculum

In response to Lt Col Dyer, it was agreed that in view of some of the letters received, the Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee should discuss any issues relating to the Year 9 curriculum following the recent change to a three year GCSE programme.

Mrs Wainwright briefly outlined the practical issues involved, and also the national move towards reducing the number of GCSEs which are taken.

It was agreed that this should be raised at the next meeting of the Admissions, Learning and Standards Committee, together with the possibility of some form of additional Maths qualification.

(c) Contacting Governors

In response to Lt Col Dyer, it was agreed to publish a contact email address for governors on the school website.

(d) Lockdown Procedures and Bomb Threats

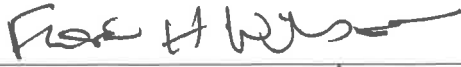
In response to Dr Bastin, Mr Cook confirmed that a lockdown procedure is under preparation. Mr Cook also reported that new DfE guidance has been issued on dealing with bomb threats and draft procedures are currently being considered.

(e) Secretary to Trustees Role
Taken under Part Two Minutes.

There was no other business.

11. Next Meeting

Wednesday 11 May 2016 at 6.30pm.

Signed:		(Chairman of Committee)
Date:	11/5/16	