

The Harvey Grammar School

Minutes of a meeting of the Full Governing Body number A5 held on Thursday 12th December 2013 at 5.00 p.m. in the Trafalgar Room

Present: Present: Mr J Dennis (JD) (Chair), Mrs P A Garrard (PAG)(Vice-Chair), Mr K Bridgland (KCB), Mr W Dawson (WD), Mrs J Reynolds (JMR), Mr A Scott (TS), Mr J Smith (JS), Mrs A Shone (AS), and Mr W T Wright (Principal) (WTW)

In attendance: Mr S Norman (SN) (Senior Vice-Principal), Mrs A Silk (Bursar) and Mrs Alyson Howard (Corporate Services Director, Williams Giles)

Clerk: Mr M Hydes (MCH)

No.	Item/detail	Action
1.	Chair's Introduction	
	<p>The Chair requested that all present should observe a few moments' silence in memory of the late Mr Alan Philpott who had served faithfully on the Governing Body as both a Staff and Local Authority Governor.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting and, in particular, a new Parent Governor, Mr Anthony Scott.</p> <p>The Chair also welcomed Mrs Alyson Howard of Williams Giles (Chartered Accountants).</p> <p>The Chair noted that the meeting would be Mr Bill Wright's last attendance as Principal prior to his retirement on 31st December 2013.</p> <p>The Chair also noted that Mr Eddie Howard (Parent Governor) would be stepping down as from 31st December 2013.</p>	
2.	Apologies for Absence	
	<p>Apologies had been received from Mr J Batten, Mr E Howard and Dr K Whitby, all of whom had business commitments. All apologies were accepted.</p>	
3.	Presentation on the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements of The Harvey Academy for the period ending 31st August 2013.	
	<p>The Chair explained that, for the benefit of Governors, Mrs Howard of Williams Giles would be giving a presentation on the Academy's first set of accounts as a company limited by guarantee.</p> <p>Mrs Howard commented on aspects of the Trustees' report and financial statements as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual report and financial statements complied with current statutory requirements, the requirements of the academy's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting & Reporting by Charities" issued in March 2005. • Williams Giles's role as auditors was to ensure that the financial statements were free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. In addition, all financial and non-financial information in the Trustees' report had been checked to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements (The tolerance level for fraud/error was £4k). • 10 The auditors' role additionally included giving advice on financial matters and performing a range of checks on the Academy's financial 	

	<p>systems. On a termly basis the auditors reported to the Board of Trustees on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board's financial responsibilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17-19 The Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) showed a healthy picture. Both cash at bank and net assets figures at £727,000 and £786,000 respectively exceeded the threshold of £600,000 recommended by Williams & Giles. • 21 (1.6) The total net worth of the Academy was £10,853,000. The valuation for leasehold property was based on figures provided by Mouchel who were retained by the Educational Funding Agency (EFA). Academy land was held leasehold and not freehold. • 22 (1.9) and 28 (34-39) The defined benefit scheme liability of £1,100,000 was an accounting entry reflecting the Academy's share of the assets and liabilities of the Local Government Pension Scheme. In practice, outstanding local government pension scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education as per the agreement drawn up on 18th July 2013. • 24-29 (3-16) A distinction was made between unrestricted and restricted funds with the former being applied to the general work of the Academy to support activities inside and outside the curriculum and the latter funding provided by the DfE/EFA for the Academy's educational operations. The discrepancy between school trip income and costs was on account of the fact that there had been no cut-off point on conversion. • 26 (9) The two entries for 'Pension cost' were for different items and a note would be added to clarify this. • 28-29 (13-14) The disclosure of individual Trustees' remuneration was recognized as an irritation and a potential deterrent to staff members volunteering to sit on Governing Bodies. The reimbursement of expenses to Trustees mainly comprised expenses reimbursed to the Chair of Governors for Kent County Council related activities. • 32 (21) A note would be added indicating the provenance of 'Endowment funds'. • 34 (27) The Academy had a capital commitment of £139,000 for building work contracted for but not provided in these financial statements. <p>Mrs Howard noted that the Academy's finance team had adapted very effectively to the demands of a completely different way of financial reporting and this would be reflected in her report accompanying the accounts to be sent to the EFA. Governors were reminded of the emphasis that the EFA was placing on procurement protocols and that this should be reflected in minutes of meetings.</p> <p>The Chair ascertained that all Governors were content with the answers to questions they had raised including depreciation policy, pension liabilities in respect of the LGPS, voluntary funds and endowments, capital commitments and the risk and control framework.</p> <p>Governors congratulated Mrs Alison Silk and Miss Alex Marchant of the Finance Team for their hard work throughout the year and thanked Mrs Alyson Howard for the clarity of her presentation on the accounts.</p> <p>The Chair proposed and the Vice-Chair seconded that the accounts be adopted</p>	
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	and a vote proved unanimous in favour of the proposal.	
4.	Declaration of Business Interests	
	Mr W T Wright (Principal) advised that he had been appointed a Director of Wrihteous Solutions Ltd as from 1 st November 2013. Governors noted that Wrihteous Solutions Ltd would be providing on-going IT support to the school for the Talisman system on a fee basis. Other than this, Governors confirmed that they had no business interest to declare other than those already registered.	
5.	Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body Number A4 held on 26th September 2013	
	6.3 The indefinite article at the end of the penultimate line was deleted 8.3 The phrase 'to have had the opportunity' in the first line was deleted Subject to these corrections the minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.	
6.	Matters arising from the Minutes	
	8.7 Admissions	
	SN reported on admissions number for 2014-15. There had been a 35.0% increase in the number of parents placing the school as their first preference. A Governor ascertained that 19.0% of the first preferences were from outside the school's traditional catchment area. In response to a Governor's enquiry about the school's willingness to exceed the Pupil Admissions Number (PAN), SN commented on the short-term impact that additional pupils would have on resources although this would be mitigated in the longer term by the forthcoming bid to the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund (ACMF) to build a new classroom block.	
6.2	10.Principal's Performance Management review	
	PAG reported that both a review of the performance of the retiring Principal (Mr W T Wright) and target-setting for the incoming Headteacher (Mr S Norman) had taken place.	
7.	Governing Body items	
7.1	Annual Accounts Y/E 31st August 2013	
	See above item 3.	
7.2	Governor details	
	The Clerk circulated a list of Governor details and requested that each Governor should confirm his/her details and amend as appropriate.	Clerk
7.3	Governance Calendar,2013-2014	
	The Clerk informed Governors that the calendar was available on the Intranet and would be regularly up-dated.	Clerk
7.4	Committee Structure and Membership, 2013-2014	
	The Chair confirmed that Mrs Angela Shone had agreed to take over from Mr Eddie Howard as Chair of the SPPC committee following his retirement (see 1 above). Further details on committee membership would be available in the new year.	JD
7.5	Governance Communications	
	The Chair announced that from 1/1/14 only notices of meetings would be circulated by e-mail. Governance documentation would only be available from the Governors' site on the school intranet. Hard copies would continue to be available at meetings if required.	Clerk
7.6	'Governor Mark'	
	A memorandum on the Governor Mark award providing information and how to apply had been circulated to all Governors with the agenda.	

	PAG and JMR outlined the extensive preparation needed to achieve Governor Mark status. This included the creation of a comprehensive evidence base and self-assessment by individual Governors. PAG/JMR explained that they would be producing a draft submission during the Summer term 2014. WTW undertook to provide useful links on the Governors' website on the Intranet.	PAG /JMR WTW
7.7	Governor Training and Visits	
7.7.1	Pay Policy seminar	
	A report on 'Developing a "Fit for Purpose" Pay Policy' seminar attended by PAG and JMR had been circulated to all Governors with the agenda. Governors' attention was drawn to pay and conditions issues in the report that were likely to come before them in the forthcoming year. Governors acknowledged the contribution of many staff to the school's excellent progress in recent years and anticipated that this would be taken into account in line with the criteria in the school's Teacher Pay Policy when considering pay progression.	
7.7.2	School Forum	
	AS and JD reported on the inaugural meeting on 27/11/13 of the Parents' Focus Group on the subject of Year 7 transition and subsequent Learning Walks around the school on 5/12/13. Parents had expressed their enthusiasm for the initiative and some very useful feedback had been received from the parental perspective. As an example, parents had commented on the dichotomy between the information written by their sons in Homework Diaries and the information recorded by teachers on the school's Talisman information system. As a consequence of this a decision was likely to end the use of Homework Diaries and rely solely on Talisman (which could be accessed from home). Governors ascertained that in those cases where a family did not have access to a computer a Homework Diary would still be used. SN undertook to provide further information on the next meeting of the PFG which was likely to be on the topic of Careers Advice.	
7.7.3	The Harvey Environmental Network (HEN)	
	PAG and JMR reported on the on-going work of the school's environmental group - HEN - and their attendance at monthly meetings. The pupils' latest project was to construct a greenhouse out of recycled bottles. Full details of all the group's activities could be found on the school website.	
7.7.4	Showcase Concert (26/11/13) and School Pantomime 5/12/13 and 6/12/13	
	Several Governors reported their attendance at either or both events and commented on the excellence of the events and capacity audiences.	
8.	The Harvey Academy	
	Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of the Harvey Academy Joint Board held on 21/11/13 had been circulated to all Governors with the agenda. In respect of item 5.1- Joint Board Protocols - a Governor enquired as to which 'confidential items' in the minutes would not be published. The Chair noted that discussions about Governor appointments were confidential to Members but no precedent had been set for any other matter that might be deemed confidential. Should such a situation arise Governors agreed that the matter should be looked at again. Governors were advised that the next meeting of the HAJB would be on 16/12/13 at 1.00 p.m.	
9.	Policies	
	A memorandum on policies together with a spreadsheet of existing policies had been circulated to all Governors with the agenda.	

The Chair outlined the rationale used in devising the spreadsheet noting that 'orange' and 'red' items on page 2 were essentially 'procedures' either stand alone or already incorporated into another document e.g. curriculum – Teaching and Learning Handbook. 'Green' and 'orange' policies on page 1 were policies that were in the process of final approval or which needed up-dating. Governors discussed various items on page 2 as follows:

- **Food Policy/Nutritional Standards Policy**

There was concern that since the policies were no longer required by the DfE they would be removed. Governors considered that that since they had been part of the wide-ranging 'Healthy Foods' initiative they provided an important mechanism for monitoring the quality of food provided in the school. Governors acknowledged that school catering had now been out-sourced to Innovate but suggested that the Innovate contract should be examined to see what it said about food standards. Governors acknowledged that there was useful information in the Parents' Handbook about healthy eating and suggested this guidance could be made available on the website reinforcing, for example, the link between healthy eating and good behaviour. Governors concurred that the existing policies should be retained but amended to reflect new catering arrangements.

Confidentiality Policy

- Governors agreed that the **Confidentiality Policy** should be retained.

- **Lone Working Policy**

Governors noted that this would be incorporated into the Health & Safety Policy

- **Redundancy & Redeployment Policy**

Governors concurred that this policy should be retained pending further advice from the school's solicitors – Brachers LLP.

Governors discussed various items on page 1 as follows:

- **Data Protection Policy**

Governors clarified that there was in fact a Data Protection Policy however it had inadvertently been omitted from the spreadsheet.

- **Staff Disciplinary and Capability Policy**

Governors were advised that there was the possibility that an under-performing member of staff on a high pay scale could be demoted. It was accepted that such a procedure would be unhelpful in terms of maintaining the quality of teaching in the school. Governors acknowledged, however, that there was a distinction between stepping down from a TLR post and being moved downwards from a UPS salary.

- **Finance Policy**

Governors were in agreement that the Finance Policy should be reviewed annually.

- **Governors Visits and Allowances Policy**

Governors agreed that it was appropriate that Governors should be reimbursed reasonable expenses for attending training and for items such as printing costs, subject to the approval of the Chair/Vice-Chair.

In general, Governors agreed that:

- some policies would be scrutinised by the appropriate committee before being placed before the full Governing Body e.g. Finance Policy – PPPF committee and Careers Education and Guidance – SPPC

	<p>committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All draft policies would be placed on the Governors' area on the website for colleagues' comments prior to approval at a full Governing Body meeting. • Subject to points discussed above, policies on pages 1 and 2 of the spreadsheet should be classified as policies or procedures as appropriate <p>The Finance, Staff Disciplinary and Capability, Behaviour and Governor Visits and Allowances policies were all approved in their present format The Teacher Appraisal, Fairness at Work and Careers Education & Guidance policies would be available for further comment until 6/1/14.</p>	Clerk
		All
10.	Dates for future meetings	
	Full Governing Body 6 th March 2014 Governors noted dates for other future meetings as indicated on the Governance calendar.	
11.	Any Other Business	
11.1	6th Form Prefects	
	A Governor drew colleagues' attention to the impressive work of the Head Boy, Aidan Thompson, and his team of prefects in providing stewards for a variety of school events during the Autumn Term. The Chair undertook to send a vote of thanks on behalf of the Governing Body.	JD
12.	Confidentiality & Publication of Minutes	
	Governors did not consider that any items needed to be placed in the Confidential section of the minutes.	
	There being no other business the meeting closed at 6.59 p.m.	

Signed _____ Mr J Dennis (Chair)

Date _____