



GOVERNING BODY

Thursday 4th December 2014 at 6.30pm

GOVERNORS (* indicates present):

<u>Parent</u>	<u>Co-opted</u>	<u>Authority</u>	<u>Trust</u>	<u>Staff</u>
* Ms P Dixon	Mr M Dixon	Mr C Kitson	Ms R Bynon	* Mr M Deveson
* Ms R Medwynter	* Mr S Gascoigne		* Mr T Williams (Chair)	* Mrs K Wheeler (HT)
Ms M Thomas	* Mrs E Humm			
	* Ms A Ross			
	Ms B Whelan			
	Mr T Wilkins			

In attendance:

Ms A Money, Clerk to the GB
Mr M Beresford, Minuting Secretary

MINUTES

Min	Summary of Action Points or Matters Arising for next meeting	<u>Action</u>
80/14.1	Lesson observations - post November results to next Performance Committee	HT, Clerk
81/14	Trust Board - Nominee requested by Chair for next GB	All Governors Clerk
89/14.3	Disclosure & Barring	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find out how staff might be legally re-imbursed for participating in an updating service 	HT, Clerk
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check impact of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 on staff living in the same household as a disqualified person. 	
89/14.7	SEN Policy - feedback from all Governors invited	All Governors
90/14	Governor Handbook - email out complete document	Clerk

Governors' comments, queries, or challenges during debate are highlighted in these minutes in italic underlined text, with responses and debate following in italic text.

77/14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Action

Apologies and explanations for absence were received, and consented from Governors Bynon, M Dixon, Kitson, Whelan, Ross and Wilkins. Apologies were also received from the Heads of primary and Secondary schools J Bowers-Broadbent and M Parvez. Mrs Thomas' absence was noted.

78/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

None reported.

79/14 MINUTES OF THE GB MEETING HELD ON 18th SEPTEMBER 2014

The minutes were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

80/14 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTIONS OUTSTANDING

Why hadn't the minutes recorded discussion of the June Risk & Financial audit?
The discussion had been before the formal meeting had started. An update had been reported to Resources Committee held on 13th November and was recorded in its minutes. The HT explained the background and gave a further update, which is recorded below at Minute 85/14.2.

1 Minute 62/14 - Richard Evemy

Following several attempts to contact Richard Evemy about governorship including the Clerk writing to him, no response had been received.

2 Minute 65/14 - Removal of draft watermark and signing of June minutes

Chair and Clerk advised this had been done.

3 Minute 66 & 68 /14 - Performance Committee documents

Minutes of the meeting held on 26th June and reports for 25th June meeting had been circulated

4 Minute 68/14 - Lesson Observation Results post-November

The advised that these would be brought to the next Performance Committee.

HT, Clerk

5 Minute 73/14 - Remind Parents re requesting reduction in the £6 daily limit

This had been done via the newsletter

6 Minute 74/14 - Invite Governors to Sports Awards Evening 9th October 2014

Clerk advised this had been done.

81/14 TRUST BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Chair reported that membership of the Trust Board was currently in flux. Steps had been taken to fill a number of vacancies, including those for UEL and LBWF representatives. He reminded Governors that Buxton was permitted two representatives and asked for nominees at the next meeting.

**All
Governors
Clerk**

82/14 GB MEMBERSHIP - TRUST GOVERNOR VACANCY

The Trust had approved a local resident, Jo Blair, as its nominee. Mr Blair was expected to attend the next GB meeting.

83/14 COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

1 Pay Committee

The terms of reference of the Pay Committee had been circulated prior to the meeting. There was no further comment and the terms of reference were approved unanimously.

84/14 CHAIRS' ACTION

The Chair reported that, as agreed by Resources Scrutiny Committee of 13th November, he had approved a 50% discount from £500 to £250 on the community rate for a proposed letting to les Enfants, a local after-school child care organization. In the event, les Enfants did not proceed with the proposed letting.

85/14 COMMITTEE UPDATE

1 Performance Committee 5th September 2014

The minutes of Performance Committee had been circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting. The Chair allowed time for Governors to read through the minutes and drew their attention to the fact that the Committee had agreed updates to the Attendance Policy.

The minutes of the Committee were noted and its decisions - including the updates to the Attendance policy - were ratified unanimously.

2 Resources Scrutiny Committee 13th November 2014

The minutes of Resources Scrutiny Committee had been circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting.

June 2014 Risk & Financial Audit

The HT explained issues arising from the audit. The auditor's overall opinion had been restricted to one of "limited assurance" against financial and other risks because the initial written report contained 17 recommendations. The report's recommendations far exceeded the verbal feedback given to her that there were 4 or 5 points to address, none of which were serious.

She had decided to raise objections to the written report with the managing officer at LBWF and the auditing company, and she had since learnt that Heads of several other schools were also dissatisfied with the audit process. The recommendations had then been reduced to 7, two of which were, in her opinion, duplications, and the audit judgment altered to "reasonable assurance".

The HT and Business Manager described several examples of the recommendations to illustrate to Governors why objections had been lodged and why they thought the issues to be of minimal risk to the organization:

Committee minutes not signed off

This had occurred in only 2 of 39 sets of minutes and one missing set related to a breakdown in the Dictaphone, which had been both reported and minuted.

Formal ratification of each Committee's terms of reference not done

The terms of reference of the Committees had not changed, but it had not been recorded that they were still the same for the 3 Committees. This issue had been raised twice.

Write-off of debts and disposals not reported to GB

Debts of £21 and £28 had been written off and disposals dealt with under delegated authority in accordance with Financial Regulations and reported to Resources Scrutiny Committee.

2013-14 outturn statement not reported to GB at time of budget

No outturn statement was available at that time.

Authorisation by HT of cancelled cheques

There was a full audit trail for cheque payments.

Waiver for less than 3 quotations not sought from GB

This had occurred in only 2 instances, a school trip and IT room refurbishment where alternative suppliers were either not relevant or available.

Reports such as HT Performance Review and Business Plan not approved by GB

For matters delegated to Committees, all documents such as reports, recommendations, plans, and appendices were considered and approved in Committee and discussion / decisions recorded in Committee minutes. These minutes were made available to all Governors for scrutiny and/or ratification at the next relevant GB.

The view taken by the auditor seemed to be challenging the principle of delegation i.e. suggesting that ratification of Committee minutes and decisions was not adequate to indicate GB approval of Committee decisions. This meant that certain matters approved at Committee should be separately endorsed by the GB.

Staff checks - Renewal of DBS checks every 3 years, bank details on starter forms

3 year renewal deadlines were sometimes breached e.g. when staff were on leave. The risk on starter forms was for staff rather than the school and this query had been withdrawn.

Despite requests, the auditors were not able to provide written guidance on which their judgments of these issues were based. Governors noted the position and agreed that none of the matters raised were of serious risk to the school.

The minutes of the Performance Committee were noted and its decisions - including the updates to the Attendance policy - were ratified unanimously.

3 *Inclusion and Diversity Committee 24th November 2014*

Minutes of the meeting were still under preparation. In the absence of the Chair of the Committee (Belinda Whelan), the HT reported that Buxton had been previously asked by the LA SEN team to extend its service level agreement (SLA) for the provision of speech, language, and communication support beyond mainstream needs, e.g. to cater for autistic children. Inclusion and Diversity Committee had considered this idea and rejected it on the basis that the current provision would be diluted. The LA Inclusion Manager, who had recently joined the Trust Board, had agreed with this view. The Committee had therefore recommended that Buxton stick with the current SLA.

Governors endorsed this decision, unanimously.

86/14 HEAD TEACHER'S REPORT

Action

The Head's report had been circulated with the agenda with the latest update of performance (Buxton School "Data Dashboard" Autumn 1). She reminded Governors that the data would be looked at in detail at Performance Committee on Thursday 11th December, and highlighted the following:

Achievement

- Y11 prediction of 55% A*-C grade inc English and Maths was up on 48% at end of Y10
- While below the target set last year achievement was good given that this year group was weaker than those of both 2013 and 2012
- 49 students were achieving this standard in either Maths or English but not both, which represented potential to improve
- KS2: a potential downturn in Y6 performance had been corrected by putting interventions in place. Compared to the same time last year level 4 was 7% stronger in Reading, Writing, and Maths, but weaker (3% decrease) in matched level 4b+. Level 5 was stronger in Reading, but not in Writing or Maths.
- Y3 -Y5: work was continuing to improve performance before Y6
- A different methodology was being used to assess departmental targets for Y11 and this would be reported to Performance Committee.

Attendance

- 95.7% overall in half term 1 was a pleasing improvement on last year and the HT expressed her thanks to all the staff involved in this effort.

Exclusions

- Exclusions had increased due to 5 unrelated incidents, most of which had occurred outside school. One had involved an assault on the Head of Secondary and could have been a permanent exclusion. Instead, a transfer was being sought to a Newham school with support from LBWF and LBN fair access panels.
- However, behavior as a whole had improved.

What were the external incidents?

One involved assault and theft of a blazer and mobile phone by an outsider and another related to incidents involving 2 sets of pupils in one of their houses, resulting in pupils being put on police bail. As the police had been involved in these incidents there was the risk of negative impact on Buxton's reputation, but this was out of staff's control.

Were all pupils involved in the same year group?

No.

87/14 BUILDINGS DEVELOPMENT

As mentioned in Resources Committee minutes 13th November, the HT reported that the lack of interested contractors to bid for the project meant further delay and work was unlikely to start until the end of 2015 rather than in the summer. She thought the work might be split up, but bids would not now be obtained until January.

Why were contractors not interested?

The LA had said it could find contractors but there appeared to be more attractively priced work elsewhere.

Governors expressed disappointment and concern that building delay could increase the risk of losing current and potential pupils to Chobham Academy. Buxton could not do anything about this, except promote its good results. The HT agreed that the delay should not be over-emphasized publicly as the LA's commitment to the development was undiminished and it was continuing to press the Education Funding Agency.

88/14 SOUTH AREA PARTNERSHIP COLLABORATION

The HT reported that the partnership was seen as good practice so in recent meetings the LA had been looking to increase its scope across all Borough Secondary schools. The IQT (Improving the Quality of Teaching) initiative had been successful, and was now based at Buxton, which had boosted everyone's confidence. An outstanding teacher programme was planned for next term.

89/14 POLICIES

The following policies and the annual Health & Safety report had been agreed by Resources Committee on 13th November and circulated to all Governors with the GB agenda:

1. Staff Pay Policy
2. Staff Appraisal Policy
3. Disclosure and Barring Policy & Guidance
4. Data Protection Policy
5. Annual Health & Safety Report

1 Staff Pay

This policy had been adapted from the Waltham Forest model Pay Policy. The HT drew Governors' attention to the main text changes, viz:

Section 12 - Rewarding additional duties / honoraria (orange and red text): Buxton staff and unions had requested deleting reference to a specific time period, and this had been agreed

Section 21 - Pay Progression based on performance: wording had been adopted from the Appraisal policy in the fourth and seventh paragraphs (red text) and deleted in the eighth (orange text).

Sections 26.1 and 27.1 - DHT and AHT Performance: to contain the same statements about pay recommendations reflecting the outcome of appraisal review, objectives and HT/ line manager's view (orange text)

Governors voted unanimously to ratify Staff Pay policy.

2 Staff Appraisal

It was noted that there had been no change from the policy that had been considered in detail last year, and Governors voted unanimously to ratify the Staff Appraisal policy.

3 Disclosure and Barring Policy & Guidance

This was based on LBWF policy and guidance related to job applicants and employees. The HT pointed out that the requirements were more demanding and Governors should be aware that their input may be required in checking and/or confirming disclosure review or risk assessment of convictions/cautions/warnings, which might involve interviewing staff. She added that DBS clearance was required every 3 years, and on past experience with CRB clearance there could be delays in renewal, for various reasons.

Were Governors required to be DBS checked?

Not required by law but the GB could decide this should be done.

Action

Could renewal be carried out on-line or updated on a continuous basis?

The practicalities of this were being explored with the LA, but members of staff would have to choose to participate in an update service and pay £13 per annum for it. It was not clear whether the school could legally pay for this.

It was agreed:

1. to find out how staff might be legally re-imbursed for participating in an updating service and
2. to check the impact of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 on staff living in the same household as a disqualified person.

**HT
Clerk**

Subject to this action, Governors ratified the policy and guidance.

4 Data Protection Policy

Governors voted unanimously to ratify the Data Protection policy.

5 Annual Health & Safety Report

Governors voted unanimously to ratify and sign the Annual Health & Safety Report.

Two policies considered by Inclusion and Diversity Committee on 24th November had also been circulated to all Governors with the GB agenda, viz: Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, and SEN Policy

6 Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

The HT informed Governors that some modifications were still required to this policy so it was intended to bring this back to the next relevant GB for ratification. In the meantime the policy would be implemented in its current draft form. This was agreed.

7 SEN Policy

The HT explained that, as indicated on the timeframe attached to the policy, it was still subject to consultation, and further input could still be made via the consultation page on the school web-site. It had been discussed in some detail at Committee, but feedback from all Governors was invited. Subject to the timeframe and amendments the SEN policy was approved.

**All
Governors**

90/14 GOVERNANCE UPDATE - GOVERNORS' HANDBOOK

The Clerk explained that the printed document circulated to all Governors with the agenda comprised only those pages of the Handbook that had changed. She would forward the complete document by email.

Clerk

The HT pointed out that section 1.3 and other guidance identified that the school ethos should promote British values. In light of OFSTED downgrading certain schools in Tower Hamlets due to the risk of radicalization, it had become more important to review the curriculum, particularly for PHSE, and demonstrate how potential dangers were managed, e.g. use of the internet. Such action could not be labelled as "anti-radicalization", but the school web-site and reported to the GB. She intended to set up training for staff and Governors before a GB meeting.

What was being done at the moment?

Issues were being tackled via pupil assemblies and within PSHE. Advice from the police in the form of a primary prevention strategy was available but this needed re-packaging to be suitable for use with students, and training was needed for staff. The HT was discussing with senior leadership staff how to check what views visiting speakers put across. There was also the problem of easy and widespread transmission of messages among both students and parents using social media.

How could the school possibly regulate messages transmitted at home or in social media?

It was a problem, the school already had to deal with issues such as: bullying; preventing disputes among pupils who had fallen out over messages; or people just believing the school was complicit with personal messages. The school had to find ways of showing it was trying to stop these.

The Clerk suggested the issue should be on the Governors' Conference agenda.

91/14 GOVERNOR FEEDBACK

1 Link Governor Reports

There were no reports. Governor Ross queried whether she was still the SEN link following her change to co-opted governorship, and it was confirmed that she was.

2 & 3 School related events attended & Governors' contributions to school life

Governor Williams	Had attended the Sports Awards and Buxton factor
Governor P Dixon	Had attended the Sports Awards and Buxton factor
Governor Whelan	Had attended the Sports Awards and Presentation evening
Governor M Dixon	Had attended the Sports Awards

Governors were also pleased to note that former Governor and Chair Jo Durning had attended the Presentation evening.

4 Training planned or undertaken

Governor Gascoigne	Had attended new Governor training in Newham and was planning to attend safeguarding training in March 2015
Governor P Dixon	Had attended a Governors' Conference in LB Newham

92/14 MEMBERSHIP

1 Resignation of Governor Deveson

Governors were informed that Mark Deveson was standing down as Staff Governor, and elections were planned for January 2015. Mark was thanked by all for his contribution to the GB.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 20.15