

ST BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL
MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
WEDNESDAY 9TH DECEMBER, 2020 AT 6.30 PM VIA MS TEAMS

MINUTES

PRESENT:	Catie Colston (CC)	Co-Chair of Governors, Chair of Meeting
	Karen Sadler (KS)	Co-Chair of Governors
	Julia Mortimore (JAM)	Headteacher
	David Fitter (DWF)	Co-Headteacher
	Umar Butt (UB)	Co-opted Governor
	Steve Foyle (SF)	Appointed Governor
	Greg Humphreys (GH)	Co-opted Governor
	Daisy Hutchinson (DH)	Appointed Governor
	Kate Lefever (KL)	Appointed Governor
	Shaun Letchford (SL)	Appointed Governor
	Gary Norman (GN)	Parent Governor
	Marcus Randall (MAR)	Co-opted Governor
	Adam Robbins (AER)	Deputy Headteacher
	Jeremy Sharpe (JPS)	Deputy Headteacher
	Campbell Smith (CS)	Appointed Governor
	Will Thomas (WT)	Appointed Governor
Charlie Warner (CW)	Co-opted Governor	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Helen Sutherland (HLS)	Clerk to the Governors

1. WELCOME

CC welcomed those present to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

3. IAN PEDDIE – THANK YOU

Ian Peddie (IP) joined the meeting for this item only.

IP stood down as a Governor on 10th November, 2020, although he will remain a Member.

KS and JAM both thanked IP for his contribution to St Bart's over a 25 year period, first with the PA, then as a Governor and as hair of Governors for the last nine years.

IP was presented with a decanter with St Bart's crest engraved onto it.

IP returned the thanks, and in particular thanked JAM for her work over the last seven years.

4. DECLARATION OF AOB

End of term arrangements and the Carol Service were both added to the agenda.

The agenda was re-ordered to allow staff to leave earlier.

5. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations.

6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH SEPTEMBER, 2020

The minutes were agreed pending correction of one typo.

7. HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

JAM's report was circulated in advance of the meeting and the following were highlighted:

- Staff, in particular Julie Shepherd, Business Manager, are thanked for their work in re-opening the school in September under lockdown restrictions;
- Attendance is around 95.5%, above average;
- West Berkshire's Environmental Health & Education Specialist made an advisory visit; there was positive feedback and no concerns were raised;
- The COVID situation has recently changed with an increase in the number of positive cases involving both staff and students – all cases are connected;
- There are 99 students and 25 staff currently isolating;
- 16 members of the sixth Form are isolating due to alerts from the NHS track and trace app;
- The Government will release more information in January regarding next summer's exams;
- Practice exams have gone very well;
- Staff are continuing to be creative and students are engaging well;
- Catch-up funding is being allocated – there will be a more comprehensive report on this next term;
- The partnership with The Clere is still moving forward;
- Recruitment is a problem for January; more agency staff are being used than ever before and there is concern regarding recruitment for September;
- Virtual evening events, including the Year 13 Parents' Evening, have gone well.

CC noted that there will be a message to staff from Governors in the last Staff Bulletin of the term.

WT asked if recruitment is worse due to the pandemic, local demographics etc. JAM responded that the area is always challenging, especially for NQTs etc. Programmes to "grow" st Bart's own staff helps to address some of the gaps but promoted posts are difficult to recruit to as well; People want to move less due to the pandemic.

CC asked about the Kirkland Rowell survey and when would be the right time to consider stakeholder feedback. It was noted that Kirkland Rowell is run every two years and is due again during the Spring Term. JAM explained that small stakeholder surveys had taken place last year but they were not completed because of the pandemic. JPS explained that the Kirkland Rowell survey will all be run online.

8. FINALISE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

JAM explained that there were no major changes from the drafts considered at the end of last term and the beginning of this. The SDP is focussed on recovery and looking forward; it is ambitious, especially with regard to the current circumstances.

KS asked about Objective 3b – referrals to the school counsellor. What are the numbers and the common profile? DWF replied that the waiting list has always been high and is slightly more so at the moment. The breakdown is interesting, even between year groups; there are slightly more in KS4. There is an even gender distribution in the Sixth Form but a very small number of boys lower down the school, so this is a key focus. KS asked about the longest waiting time. DWF responded that it depends on the issue – there is a reasonably quick triage system in place and sometimes students are sign-posted to different types of support such as ELSA or the Houses, Time2Talk.

KL asked about the feedback on the Mental Health First Aiders Programme, what is the impact and is it helping? DWF explained that Kelly Thorne completed a three day training course so that she can train others, along with Sarah Austin Smith. All House staff have been trained to Level 1 and the aim is to train all tutors as well. The Houses are finding that more students are approaching them with anxiety and other mental health concerns.

KS noted that any progress against Objective 5 will be a bonus; the focus of staff and governors is on recovery.

The SDP was approved by Governors.

9. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

Resources Committee – SF

- The meeting was dominated by COVID;
- Julie Shepherd had updated the Committee on the arrangements in place;
- The budget report indicated that catering income was lower than normal, mainly due to the impact of COVID;
- The new canopy, kiosks and outside seating are helping to address some of the requirements;
- Emerging needs include space and Sixth Form accommodation;
- CCTV was installed in the Hub in May;

- Health & Safety:
 - o SF and SL undertook a walkaround and were very impressed by what they saw which included hand sanitiser, screens, water dispensers, 2m guidance tape and one-way systems;
 - o There is an increased feeling of calm;
 - o The school should be complimented on how they have managed;
 - o The Health & Safety meeting covered COVID and accident statistics.

Education Committee – GN

- GN is now the Chair of the Education Committee;
- GN met JPS and AER to agree the agenda in advance of the meeting;
- The meetings focussed on supporting the school during the current situation;
- The well-being of staff and students was considered;
- The Ofsted Steering Group will be meeting in January;
- GN attended the House Heads meeting and was very impressed

Safeguarding Governor’s Report - DH

DH’s report was circulated in advance and taken as read. DH noted that by the time of the second meeting of the Education Committee, safeguarding referrals were rising.

Skills Audit – KL

KL’s paper was circulated in advance of the meeting:

- As a number of new governors have joined the FGB, a skills audit has been undertaken;
- This will be used as the basis for recruitment and training;
- Some weaknesses were identified;
- Key areas of focus are SEND, Finance, Education and Health & Safety

JCC – KS

- There was a report from the Staff Forum: staff had given feedback to the LT which had been listened to – all suggestions are considered;
- The Support Staff Representative did not receive any reports;
- The Union Reps were very positive but stressed the issue of staff workload to accommodate COVID requirements.

People Committee – KS

- The Headteacher’s performance review was completed, taking into account new guidance with regard to COVID, and with
- The Headteacher’s and Co-Headteacher’s objectives were set, with the advice of the School Improvement Advisor;
- The Staffing Report was reviewed;
- Governors’ succession planning was considered;
- The Governors’ Plan was updated;
- A Parent Governor Election is planned for as soon as possible under COVID restrictions and may take place electronically;

- LT succession planning was discussed.

Finance & Risk Committee – CS

- The financial statements were considered with Mike Farwell from James Cowper Kreston in attendance ;
- There was an unqualified report again.

Vote

Presentation and Recommendation of the Accounts by the Finance & Risk Committee

CS reported that the F&R Committee had reviewed the reports and accounts and recommended that the accounts be signed off by CC, KS and JAM.

The vote was unanimous.

Consider the details of the external auditor arrangements, including the reappointment or dismissal of auditors based on the recommendation of the Finance & Risk Committee.

It was agreed that a desktop exercise should be carried out to ensure best practice and value for money, to be done once the reports of local schools have been published (deadline 31st January).

ACTION: CS

10. POLICIES

The following policies were approved:

- Admissions for 2022-23 for consultation
- Appraisal
- Assemblies & Acts of Worship
- Capability
- Curriculum Statement
- Data Protection
- Exclusion
- Grievance
- Health & Well-being
- Link Governor
- Maternity & Adoption
- Medical Conditions
- Newly Qualified Teacher
- Parent Governor Election Rules
- Pay Policy for Support Staff
- Pay Policy for Teachers
- Physical Restraint
- Positive Behaviour
- Probation
- Radicalisation & Extremism
- Relationship & Sex Education
- Social Media

- Teaching & Learning

KL left the meeting at 7.45 pm.

11. AOB

End of Term Arrangements

JAM explained the following:

- The Government's expectation is that schools will make staff available for six days following the end of term to help with contact tracing;
- Usually only contacts within the 48 hours before the onset of symptoms need to be traced;
- In the same announcement, the Government announced that staff need to have a break!
- A member of the LT will be available for a set time every day during the period needed;
- Teaching staff need to be contactable to provide seating plans so that contacts can be traced;
- Staff want to do what is best for the community but this will be difficult;
- It has been decided that there will be remote learning only on Friday 18th December, the last day of term and an early finish is already planned as usual. The number of teaching days will not be affected.

GN asked about how much notice parents will be given and JAM reported that they would be written to the day after the meeting.

Carol Service

JPS noted that the Carol Service will be taking place virtually on the evening of 15th December at 7 pm. HLS will be circulating the link to Governors.

12. STEVE FOYLE

This meeting was SF's last before stepping down at the end of the month after 19 years. KS thanked SF for his contribution to St Bart's including on health & safety, involvement in the new school buildings, risk management and Browns Meadow. SF was also presented with a decanter.

JAM, DWF, JPS & AER left the meeting at 8.15 pm.

13. CHAIRS' GROUP

CC reported that the Chairs' Group had met the night before this meeting and discussed:

- The Governors' plan – it isn't possible to take this any further forward in the way originally intended at the moment but it may be possible that some items can be considered;
- Policy processes;
- Committees;
- Risk – specific governance responsibility;

- Vice-chairs for committees.

KS added that a Governor Forum has been proposed to enable Governors to discuss issues, ideas etc. outside a formal meeting. This was agreed.

14. GOVERNANCE

Governance Handbook Update

- A new Governance Handbook was issued in October;
- There are some changes to previous versions;
- In particular, it is worth noting that Governors are responsible for ensuring that risk is managed and they have a role in parental and community engagement.

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Appointments and Resignations

HLS reported the following:

- Bruce Steiner stood down on 23rd September, 2020
- IP's term of office ended on 10th November, 2020;

Code of Conduct, Business Interests, KCSiE

All Governors have now confirmed their compliance with these documents.

Committee Membership & Link Governance Roles

It was agreed that SL will become Chair of the Resources Committee and Health & Safety Governor.

The following were also noted:

- UB, Sixth Form Governor
- WT, Careers Governor.

Governors were reminded to let HLS know when meetings have been arranged and to send the finalised report to her for circulation to the appropriate committee.

Governor Communication Outside Meetings

CC and KS will issue a weekly update email to keep the FGB abreast of current developments, both at St Bart's and in the wider education world.

Finance Training

It was agreed that this will take place next term.

These minutes are subject to final approval by the FGB at its next meeting.

SignedDate

Chair of Governors