



**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BODY  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 MAY 2018 AT 1800 HOURS**

PRESENT: N Briggs (Chair), R Butterfield (from 1820-1915) L Clapham, S Horsbrough, R Rehman, M Thorp

IN ATTENDANCE: Gail Khan (Gail Khan Associates) – item 6, Sohail Mahmood (until 1915), Jenni Taylor (until 1915), T Wright (clerk)

APOLOGIES: V Khanna, H Rush

A round of introductions took place.

**1. APOLOGIES**

Noted above.

**2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST/AGENDA CHANGES**

No declarations of interest or agenda changes.

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (30 JANUARY 2018)**

Received: Doc 30/17-18

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of events.

Proposer: M Thorp    Seconder: L Clapham

**4. MATTERS ARISING (NOT COVERED ON AGENDA)**

Questions had been invited by the Chair prior to the meeting. Questions had been submitted by R Rehman.

4.1 [Item 6.9] Item would be covered in item 8.

4.2 [Item 6.11] R Rehman asked if coding around School data has been corrected. M Thorp confirmed.

4.3 [Item 6.15] R Rehman asked if the staff cost savings required had been reflected in the budget. Item would be covered in item 7.

4.4 [Item 6.22] Item would be covered in item 7.

4.5 [Item 8.15] R Rehman asked if there was a Governor plan that included potential meeting dates with TLRs. Item would be covered in item 10.

4.6 [Item 9.7] R Rehman asked if the Assistant Head returning from maternity leave had accepted the secondment at Grove House. M Thorp confirmed.

4.7 [Item 11.2] R Rehman asked for a copy of the presentation on academisation. This had been forwarded by NB.

- 4.8 [Item 13.4] R Rehman asked about the outcome of the bid. M Thorp confirmed the School would find out in July.
- 4.9 [Item 14.2] Item would be covered in item 8.
- 4.10 [Item 16.2] R Rehman asked about the outcome of the bid. M Thorp explained this had been successful and £13k had been awarded jointly with Swain House. After the half-term break, the School would be providing some sports coaching sessions every week.

## 5. CORRESPONDENCE

### 5.1 Received: Doc 31/17-18

Letter received by L Clapham from Michael Jameson complimenting the School on the results of the recent Ofsted inspection. M Jameson was highly complementary of the work M Thorp and L Clapham had done to drive forward improvement in School.

### 5.2 Received: Doc 46/17-18

Resignation letter received from Pauline Leach who will retire at the end of the year. Pauline had been working at the School since 1998 as a cover supervisor. Thanks were noted for her contribution and service to School.

### 5.3 Received: Doc 47/17-18

Resignation letter received from Lynda Radcliffe who had been at the School for 34 years and will retire at the end of the School year. Lynda had written a nice letter and she continues to support the School. Lynda had asked to see N Briggs after her resignation. Credit and thanks were extended for how Lynda had held the School together during a difficult time.

## 6. ACADEMY INFORMATION PRESENTATION

Gail Khan from Gail Khan Associates was in attendance for this item.

- 6.1 Gail recognised that this was an experienced body of people in terms of academies so she would present a small amount of input including some scene setting.
- 6.2 Gail presented the academy context at local and national level with figures of academies as at 1 April 2018.
- 6.3 R Rehman declared that he was a Chair of Governors at an academy School. R Butterfield was currently involved in setting one up with another School.
- 6.4 Gail explained that the MAT would be the employer so land and buildings would go into the MAT and would no longer be maintained by the LA.
- 6.5 Gail outlined the reasons why Schools may consider academisation. These included strategic planning and thinking, diminishing capacity in the LA in some areas, greater control, school to school support, possibility of greater autonomy, greater financial control, formalising of existing arrangements where it is an extension of an existing collaborative arrangement.
- 6.6 As yet there was no typical model of governance, this was ever evolving. There is a lot of emphasis on governance, more so than before with separation and levels. In the past the Chief Executive had been a trustee,

any new Trusts now will not have the Chief Executive on the Board. Some MATs do not have any local governing body structure but instead have an advisory committee. The Board of Trustees may also have committees to deal with day to day business.

- 6.7 The process was the same whether choosing or being forced.
- 6.8 Gail emphasised the importance of research and due diligence in order to understand what options are available. The School can then make a decision about whether that is something they want to do and, if so, with whom.
- 6.9 Resolution is required as a formal application process. If Schools join a MAT, the MAT also needs to approve the School. When a School applies they need to be clear about the governance model of the MAT and look at what they are going to offer the School. The academy orders the permission to move forward, that is not the final sign off.
- 6.10 Academisation releases £25k which follows the School for conversion. The School would need to consider whether this goes to the School or the MAT. The School would need legal advisors and some form of working party working with leadership and the Trust to manage transition.
- 6.11 Once the funding agreement had been signed it would not be possible to go back. Gail re-emphasised the importance of research and due diligence in obtaining the right partner.
- 6.12 There would be an assumption that staff would transfer as is, however some MATs may propose changes in advance, eg: the MAT may have different pay dates and structure arrangements. This should all be discussed during the process.
- 6.13 A legal process would take place with the LA for the transfer of land and buildings.
- 6.14 There is a Scheme of Delegation document which can be downloaded from the Trust's website. This would detail the level of delegation that leadership would have including financial planning.
- 6.15 The average timescale is 6-9 months from start to finish.
- 6.16 Opportunities and challenges may include pensions, with concern for some MATs in terms of liability and risk, career and development opportunities within the MAT, access to other funding streams.
- 6.17 Some key questions for Schools to ask include:
  - 6.17.1 What is the vision/strategy for school improvement? Does it fit with your needs as a School now and in the future?
  - 6.17.2 Due diligence – capacity, financial, educational
  - 6.17.3 Autonomy and governance, how aspirational is the Trust? Growth can be a challenge for new Schools joining a Trust. If a Trust is taking on more than 3-4 schools in a year they have to demonstrate capacity to be able to give what is needed to make improvement.
  - 6.17.4 What services are centralised, where are there efficiencies, what top slice would you pay, what would that get you, what would be the

impact in school and classroom? All accounts are public documents to look at. How can they support conversion into the Trust

- 6.18M Thorp asked, once a MAT is formed, under what obligation are they to take on Schools pushed their way by the DfE? Gail said this depends on local context, in theory a MAT might exist but not have sponsor status, if they do then there is an expectation to sponsor Schools however there can be valid reasons why a Trust may not want School to join their organisation.
- 6.19M Thorp asked about capacity, in terms of expansion plans, is their clarity around that? Any MAT will have their growth plan and clear vision of future direction of travel. M Thorp questioned whether a plan was legally binding. Plans have to be agreed by Boards and RSC. RSC and SEFA can say MATs are not expanding quickly enough.
- 6.20R Butterfield felt that Gail had set out all issues to take into account very clearly.
- 6.21S Horsbrough noted there was no blueprint for a MAT and it would be important to understand their values and structure, look at the schools in the Trust and their journey as part of due diligence - who they engage with, what their values are. Gail also suggested looking at how enshrined those values are within the organisation and whether it was owned by all staff.
- 6.22S Horsbrough suggested a crucial part would be autonomy for School.
- 6.23R Rehman emphasised the importance of relationship building and making sure there was synergy.
- 6.24M Thorp noted he had been through some stages of a process at a different School and that you can never mitigate the risk as organisations evolve and things change over time which would make it difficult to future-proof, you can only act on the best information available at the time.
- 6.25N Briggs observed that that due diligence would be the best fit attempt in terms of suitability. Only when you start undertaking due diligence will information emerge to support where you want to move in terms of direction.
- 6.26R Butterfield felt it would be important to talk to the proposed sponsor, ask if they would leave the School as it is and support, would they raise standards.
- 6.27R Butterfield had listened to a few talks by Chief Executives. The most recent he heard suggested visiting Schools to walk round and talk to staff about how they felt it was dealt with.
- 6.28N Briggs summarised that the School has talked about academisation as an option. He proposed to move to the next stage by beginning some tentative due diligence and start talking to potential partners. M Thorp and S Horsbrough would consider potential partners and put forward some dates to meet with Governors.
- 6.29Gail suggested that once the School had an idea on three, it may be worth speaking with Yasmin Umarji who has fortnightly discussions with the RSC and may hold information that would not be otherwise available.

## 7. SCHOOL FINANCE

Received: Doc 45a-e/17-18

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CHAIR:
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7.1 The budget demonstrated a £35,760 deficit for 2017-18 to carry forward to the current year. N Briggs asked about the reasons this was pulled back from £70k. S Mahmood explained there were various areas of anticipated spend which did not meet expectations and where the allocation for supply was more than actual spend.

## **INCOME**

7.2 2018-19 had seen the introduction of the National Funding Formula (NFF). This had seen a slight positive for Grove House with an increase in allocation. Funding may fluctuate depending on numbers of pupils coming in but the budget had assumed that figure for next three years. N Briggs noted that M Thorp did some excellent work in the census, when would feedback be available on that? M Thorp described two censuses; October on pupil numbers and January for pupil premium. The school was by and large full and no fall in roll was anticipated with nothing locally that would indicate otherwise and roll numbers have been pretty steady year on year. L Clapham reported one year group slightly lower but there was no declining picture. M Thorp noted a number of plans in terms of quality provision to retain the Early Years figures.

7.3 The School only has children with EHCPs in the ARC.

7.4 Pupil Premium funding was estimated at £155k. This would be verified by the DfE and School would be notified.

7.5 Forecast for 'other' income was minimal.

7.6 R Rehman asked if the £13k sports funding was reflected in budget. S Mahmood clarified not. M Thorp noted some other funding streams that had not yet been included in the budget.

7.7 Sugar tax was included in I18.

## **EXPENDITURE**

7.8 Teacher increments and an above inflation pay rise had been budgeted for. There was an anticipated increase in staff development and training.

7.9 E10 was the de-delegated amount back to the LA for insurance and E12 included all SLAs.

7.10 N Briggs asked if the predicted building spend had been factored into budget. J Taylor confirmed some roofing and radiator maintenance was included.

7.11 M Thorp would question whether money allocated previously had actually been spent on that item and felt that coding had not been accurate.

7.12 The figure for VI provision had been moved to E28 from E19.

7.13 There had been some re-coding of other areas - E20, E27, E22.

7.14 There had been a large spend on agency staff last year so an element of contingency had been included. This will be closely monitored over the year and potential savings re-invested in other areas.

7.15 Staffing costs had been predicted assuming the staffing structure remained the same. This had been projected for the new two years.

7.16 It was hoped that by end of this year the deficit would be eliminated and the budget balanced.

- 7.17M Thorp noted some insecurity around the budget whilst they were clearer on previous spend on cost codes. He felt there were still further savings to be made in the budget after Q1 monitoring.
- 7.18S Mahmood explained the School had moved to a new SFS system which re-designed the whole cost centre structure. This has created lots of new codes and re-allocation of costs from certain areas. If there was any overspend, it would be clear where that was.
- 7.19N Briggs commented that the quality of documentation was very professional and the presentation of information very clear. He suggested this may be the reason why the quality of questions asked in the past may not have been fit for purpose as the quality of presentation was not fit for purpose.
- 7.20M Thorp thanked J Taylor as this had been a sizeable piece of work to bring together in a short space of time.
- 7.21S Mahmood explained the School also had some capital money, £9k, which may vary depending on pupil numbers. This money was ring-fenced for capital.
- 7.22A number of charts were presented to show the profile of funding and expenditure. Funding – must have pupil numbers in school. Profile of expenditure – as expected, the bulk of money was spent on teachers.
- 7.23N Briggs moved for the FGB to accept the budget. All Governors agreed.

## **8. HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT**

Received: Doc 39/17-18

### **BEHAVIOUR**

- 8.1 L Clapham reported there had been a reduction of blue and red letters issued. The way the behaviour policy is implemented across School varies hugely. There is concern that warnings are not being given or escalated.
- 8.2 S Horsbrough explained that they have just received some updated staff training as she has often tried to influence staff and model the policy. The training will take place at the beginning of each year. S Horsbrough offered to share this training with the School. M Thorp reported that the School are waiting for the Tom Bennett training so would not want to put anything else in place at this stage. The School have six new staff starting in September so they would not plan to do any training until that time.
- 8.3 N Briggs asked about compliance with the policy. L Clapham feels that staff need to see they are being monitored as well as the children. M Thorp feels it is about ethos and you start to build that when you have the right people in place. N Briggs asked if there was a role for Governors in terms of compliance. M Thorp suggested some Governor training on what the School was trying to achieve would be helpful. S Horsbrough felt it was about Governor knowledge rather than action.
- 8.4 S Horsbrough asked how the School tracked behaviour and felt it might be useful to see data separated by year group. L Clapham explained that blue and red letters are logged on CPOMS. The School was also planning to keep a tally chart to log how many warnings were issued. N Briggs asked

how the School knew the policy was right. M Thorp explained this is predominantly about learning behaviours and that where teaching requires improvement you are likely to see the implementation of the behaviour policy not strong. L Clapham said the School know part of it is work not being pitched correctly.

8.5 L Clapham suggested Governors are invited to a staff meeting in September where ethos is discussed.

8.6 M Thorp emphasised that unconditional positive regard should be at the centre as it is graspable for everybody.

Received: Doc 46/17-18

8.7 Anne Bowyer visit report tabled.

8.8 Agreement was to have a telephone conversation between A Bowyer and N Briggs.

8.9 The next visit was planned for 5<sup>th</sup> July.

8.10 N Briggs noted that Anne's involvement in challenging L Clapham on the School Development Plan (SDP) was critical. N Briggs questioned whether there was anything new in the report that had not been seen or heard before. L Clapham reported the main thing that came out of the day different from before was how the SDP was written, this was to be used as a static document and the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) as a rolling programme.

8.11 L Clapham reported that Leading Together and Teacher First coach would be in School on Friday.

8.12 L Clapham reported that Sports UK activities would be starting after the holidays. School council will survey children to ask what they would like and the School will target children to ensure some impact on home life also.

8.13 There has been a reduction in persistent absence without G codes at 8.2% (national average 8%). L Clapham explained that procedures for holiday requests had been tightened; parents must see L Clapham to discuss requests and someone from Crossley Hall has been trained up to deal with these.

8.14 There had been no fixed term exclusions.

8.15 The School will be taking on an anti-bullying focus.

8.16 Data:

8.16.1 PIRA and PUMA tests have been done and it was felt the administration of these was much more successful than previously; brought in line with how year 6 were assessed. L Clapham reported there was still a lot of work to do around data and reliability.

Received: Doc 47/17-18

8.16.2 End of year indicators were tabled.

8.16.3 Phonics was predicting above national average.

8.16.4 The numbers in brackets indicated last year to compare.

8.17 S Horsbrough asked if much work had been done with staff to prepare for SATS. L Clapham confirmed.

8.18 L Clapham reported that when they started to unpick reading, it was noted staff were relying on book bands with no reading areas where children can

learn to love a particular genre or author. Nobody was assessing the children to see what book band they should be on. S Horsbrough asked what other texts children have access to. L Clapham responded not much at the moment. Teachers do not seem to know how to benchmark reading so training will be required.

8.19N Briggs asked how confident the School were in the data. M Thorp explained that year 6 expected was based on a recent mock so they were fairly confident in the data. S Horsbrough thinks the School had done well to achieve an expected combined of 60% bearing in mind the recent changes.

Received: Doc 48/17-18

8.20 Early Years (EY) data was tabled.

8.21 S Horsbrough asked what was used to track reception and EY. L Clapham confirmed Early Essence but this was not used very well. Staff do not know where the gaps are and there is no overview. In September the School will move back to profile books which are more time-consuming but more effective.

8.22 The Teaching and Learning profile reported the two teachers in year 6 were Crossley Hall members of staff. L Clapham reported staff moving year groups in September which will be revealed after the next holidays.

8.23 N Briggs said he would like to see some strategy at next meeting with the impact of what this teaching has been on those year groups and what the School was going to do to catch up.

8.24 The School would be staffed for September with a sizeable portion of staff changed, about 50%. The last round of recruitment was very successful with the appointment of three new teachers; two NQT and one in their third year of teaching.

8.25 As Lynda will be leaving in summer, the School have internally advertised to replace with an Assistant Head rather than a Deputy.

8.26 The School presented an idea around TLRs to have a 'leader in waiting' model. This would entail an L1 with a specific school improvement project. When an Assistant Head post became available there would be someone to step in. TLRs would only be given temporarily in future.

8.27 S Horsbrough noted a proportion of 'good' teaching and asked if anybody was tipping towards outstanding. M Thorp confirmed there were a few. The School have put a bid in with Exceed Teaching School for improvements in writing.

8.28 N Briggs noted reference to TLRs in previous minutes. L Clapham confirmed that in the new academic year there will be a process to meet with Governors.

8.29 N Briggs asked what vehicle would be used to communicate the SDP, to bring it alive and hold people to account. L Clapham explained the plan had already been shared with the senior leadership team, when the plan was complete it would be rolled out to staff. N Briggs noted it was a very useful document..

## 9. SELF-EVALUATION FORM

Received: Doc 40/17-18 v5

9.1 M Thorp will be supporting L Clapham in the wording of the SEF.

9.2 M Thorp reported a lot of things have happened but any big impact has not come through yet.

9.3 S Horsbrough noted an interesting document from a HMI regarding 'SEF on a page'. This could be used to share with Governors to make it easier to manage.

9.4 N Briggs asked about curriculum development plans. L Clapham explained that staff were realising that curriculum does not show progression and was too prescribed. Assistant Heads will drive this forward. A passport-style achievement record was to be implemented. The School was also looking at attaching each class to a local charity or organisation to encourage enterprise opportunities. There was some work to be done around communication with parents knowing what their children were learning in school, the School propose to send home a curriculum map each half-term.

## 10. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Received: Doc 44a-d/17-18

10.1 A Bowyer had suggested changes to some of the columns. The document would be colour-coded and updated as things were completed. Spend would also be included.

10.2 It was agreed the document would be brought to each FGB meeting.

10.3 M Thorp explained he has tied Anne Bowyer's visits in with the FGB meetings so these can feed into the updated document brought to the meeting.

10.4 The plan will include a front page with milestones to track data.

## 11. EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP REVIEW

Received: Doc 49/17-18

11.1 N Briggs recapped that back in December Governors took the decision to move leadership forward. At the time it was agreed to review how that had gone. N Briggs suggested this was now reviewed and next steps discussed.

11.2 M Thorp tabled a discussion document.

11.3 M Thorp explained the proposal was tied to two other key documents; A Bowyer report and Ofsted report published in February. Both of those reports were an evaluation of the work done so far. The reports reflect positively the relationship between the two schools and that leadership had been successful.

11.4 The discussion paper provided options on what direction to take next. M Thorp put forward a proposal that as of September the relationship between the two Schools be made permanent. This would mean M Thorp would be employed as Executive Headteacher by Crossley Hall solely but Grove House would buy two days of his time. L Clapham would be

- employed solely by Grove House. From Grove House's point of view, this would provide some security and stability for staff, families and children that gives assurance of some leadership in permanence. The model leaves some flexibility around whether M Thorp continued to be involved long-term. The same would apply in terms of the Executive Business Manager who would be employed by Crossley Hall and bought in by Grove House.
- 11.5 There were a number of staff currently employed by Crossley Hall but working at Grove House who sit separately from this discussion document. There would be an internal recruitment process to move from one set of books to the other.
- 11.6 R Rehman asked where the document would leave a MAT. M Thorp explained that it was not inconceivable or unworkable to buy in an Executive Headteacher of an academy so there was no reason why the proposal would not work with a MAT. S Horsbrough noted that you should think about academisation as an individual School.
- 11.7 N Briggs had received feedback from R Butterfield today and noted that he was supportive of the proposal.
- 11.8 M Thorp noted that having spoken to Chair of Governors and FGB at Crossley Hall, a positive response had been received and it would be presented at the next FGB.
- 11.9 N Briggs noted he was keen to build some sustainability into the School.
- 11.10 It was agreed that Governors would read the discussion document with a view to further discussion at the next FGB.

## **12.20 QUESTIONS FOR GOVERNORS**

Received: Doc 32/17-18 – 20 questions document

Received: Doc 33/17-18 - CHPS

Deferred to the next meeting.

## **13. SCHOOL BUILDING REPORT**

Deferred to the next meeting.

## **14. GOVERNOR VISITS**

14.1 R Butterfield had undertaken a health and safety visit to School today.

Report to be tabled at the next meeting.

## **15. POLICY REVIEW**

Received: Doc 34/17-18 Accessibility Plan

Received: Doc 35a-b/17-18 Code of Conduct

Received: Doc 36/17-18 EYFS Policy

Received: Doc 37/17-18 E-Safety Policy

Received: Doc 38/17-18 Evac/Invac/Lockdown Policy

Received: Doc 41/17-18 School Pay Policy

Received: Doc 42/17-18 Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Received: Doc 43/17-18 H&S Policy including Risk Assessment

## Data Protection Policy

15.1 All above policies were approved.

15.2 It was agreed that only essential policies would be considered by FGB. Non-statutory documents would be updated and circulated.

## 16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### 16.1 Membership

16.1.1 Election of chair and vice-chair. It was proposed that the Chair and Vice-Chair for the next academic year would be elected at the next FGB meeting. T Wright to invite nominations for next meeting. N Briggs noted he would be prepared to continue for one more year.

16.1.2 T Wright to email N Briggs and R Rehman with confirmation of R Rehman's end date. **Action: T Wright**

16.1.3 The SEN report would be presented at the next FGB with discussion about an SEN representative.

16.1.4 It was noted there was one LA representative vacancy.

### 16.2 GDPR

16.2.1 N Briggs asked if the School was compliant. M Thorp explained they are in the process of being compliant. The LA are looking to put things in place, particularly around Data Protection Officers. There will be a piece of training to do with the staff. The main issue will be around vigilance and sensitivity of data.

16.2.2 The School were implementing systems which would be paperless and involve cloud storage.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 2020 hours

Minutes approved by Chair:

NAME: Mr Nick Briggs

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_