



**Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the
FULL GOVERNING BODY
of Helsby High School**

Date:	Monday 15 th July 2024 at 5.00pm	
Venue:	School	
Present:	I Devereux-Roberts (ID-R) Chair H Coy HC Vice Chair M Hill MH R Allerston RA K Lowe KL M Garvey MG A Canham (AC) A Kelly (AK) A Heald (AH)	Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Head Teacher Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Local Authority Governor Parent Governor Staff Governor Parent Governor
Absent:		
In attendance:	S Warburton M Vickers John Addison	Senior Deputy Head Teacher School Business Manager Clerk to the Governing Body

The meeting met its quorum.

Decisions, actions and areas of challenge during discussions indicated in bold text

Agenda item 1	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Discussion:	The Chair welcomed all present. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from A. Critchley, N. Davies and T O'Neill
Agenda item 2	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
Discussion:	The Governing Body considered the minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 25 th March 2024.
Resolved:	That the minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 25th March 2024 be approved as a correct record.
Agenda item 3	ACTION LOG
Discussion:	The Action Log was reviewed and updated.
Agenda item 4	COMMITTEE REPORTS
Discussion:	The Governing Body received the following committee reports; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources Committee held on 3rd June 2024. HC referred to the health and safety accident report involving a tractor which was discussed at length at the committee. The committee was happy that the school had addressed any necessary issues after it came to light that the tractor was on the school site during school hours. The committee had left the matter to be discussed by the School Business Manager

	<p>in conjunction with the local authority and the contractor. In this regard, MH advised that these discussions had taken place but that the local authority was unwilling to say anything other than the school needed to undertake its own risk assessment and put the necessary measures in place. The school was now minded to put a banksman on the field the next time it was being cut.</p> <p>The committee was also advised that the new build was due to be completed on time and there had been no major disruption to school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of Education Committee held on 13th May 2024; RA went through the headlines from the meeting. ID-R advised that he had attended the Social Science Curriculum Review and also expressed his disappointment that RE had been removed from the Ebacc curriculum PDBA Committee held on 17th June 2024 KL went through the headlines from the meeting and recommended that Governors look at online safeguarding training. 		
Resolved:	That the reports be noted		
Agenda item 5	GOVERNANCE ISSUES		
Discussion:	<p><u>Terms of Office</u> Governors were advised that all terms of office were current and that Adam Kelly had been elected as the Staff Governor.</p> <p><u>Vacancies</u> Governors were advised that vacancies existed for 2 Co-opted Governors. It was agreed that efforts to fill these vacancies be deferred until September 2024</p>		
Resolved:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> That the membership of the Governing Body be discussed at the next meeting. That Adam Kelly be confirmed as the Staff Governor for a 4-year term of office to 14th July 2028. 		
Action:	What:	Who:	When:
	That the membership of the Governing Body be discussed at the next meeting.	Clerk	Next FGB
Discussion:	<p><u>Skills Audit</u> The Clerk advised that he was awaiting the final submissions from Governors.</p>		
Resolved:	That the outcomes from the Skills Audit be discussed at the next meeting.		
Action:	What:	Who:	When:
	That the outcomes from the Skills Audit be discussed at the next meeting.	Clerk	Next FGB
Agenda item 6	HEADTEACHERS REPORT		
Discussion:	<p>In introducing his report MH commented that less than 72 hours after the result of the General Election became known it was clear that a change of government was likely to bring with it significant change to profession, with promised reform of Ofsted and refinements of the curriculum likely to shape work in the coming years. More immediately, the deferred decision on the 2024-25 Teacher Pay Award was likely over the summer holiday, which would inevitably shape the financial background to work in the short-and medium-term.</p> <p>GCSE and A-Level Examinations The number of examinations and the increased complexity of special arrangement provision meant that the summer examination season was a massive event in schools Both the GCSE and A-Level examinations ran very smoothly this year, not least thanks to the huge amount of</p>		

preparation in advance put in by the Curriculum Support Team. The Year 11 and 13 cohorts showed very impressive levels of maturity and resilience throughout the 6-week examination period, and it was wonderful to see them relax and celebrate at their Prom events at Chester Fields and Chester Racecourse respectively. They had been two fabulous cohorts and we now look forward to receiving the results of their endeavours in August.

Summer Term

On top of the immense amount of work that staff put in to end-of-year assessment-marking and report-writing for all the other year groups still in school, the summer term was always busy with trips, events and preparations for the new academic year. Please see the social media sites and end-of-term newsletter for full details of everything that had been going on in school, with welcoming the new Year 6 students into school on their Induction Days and hosting an Afternoon Tea for members of the local community.

Planning for September

At the time of writing, staffing for September was almost fully in place. There had been more internal leadership recruitment this year than external teacher recruitment and thank you to governors for their invaluable support with the associated interview processes. With the new timetable complete, teaching colleagues had been starting to use their 'gained time' (when they used to teach Year 11 and 13 classes) to review and adapt their curriculum and ready themselves for the new academic year.

A key feature of schools' work in the Autumn Term will be the implementation of the outgoing government's new Mobile Phone guidance ([Mobile phones in schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)), with most schools following the 'Never Used, Seen or Heard' approach which school was implementing. Preparations for this implementation had included presentations to students, communications with parents and the trial of 'No-Phone Fridays' on the final three Fridays of this term. **RA asked if this had been well received by staff and students. MH responded that it had been received with some trepidation by students but was popular with parents. Natalie Witcher had delivered a number of Assemblies around the benefits of the initiative. ID-R asked school to be mindful of communicating important information to new students and their parents.**

Parental Engagement

A key focus of the work of the Senior Leadership Team this term had been the implementation of the Parental Engagement School Development Plan (SDP) Appendix constructed with governors in the first two terms of the academic year. Over 120 Year 5 parents visited the school for our first 'Parent Tours' in the week beginning 1st July, with feedback from visitors on observed students' work and behaviour and the school's facilities unanimously positive. School was also looking forward to the first 'Community Event', an Afternoon Tea on Wednesday 10th July. Thank you to governors for all their support of various events this term - support which was an invaluable element of the SDP Appendix.

Much work has also been going on behind the scenes to re-establish expectations of communication between parents and school, particularly with regard to e-mail. Plans had been shared with staff and would shortly be shared with parents both ahead of and during the start of the new academic year. **HC asked if there was any update on the email protocol. MH advised that school wanted to upgrade the website before gradually introducing in the Autumn.**

New Build

The construction of the new build remained on track for the four new English classrooms to be available for the start of the new academic year. This was a source of much excitement in school as the development would provide the English department with a suite of new classrooms and also transform the eastern end of the school building.

Future Challenges

Despite the optimism brought by so many of the above developments in school this term, alongside the likelihood of a clearer national direction with regard to education post-election, there remained many likely challenges ahead in the 2024-25 academic year. Governors were aware that setting a balanced 2024-25 budget was a challenge - to do so again for 2025-26 without either improved funding for schools or reductions in expenditure in many areas, including staffing, would be impossible. With no guarantee of improved funding, school was already looking carefully at how we could reduce expenditure if necessary, which inevitably would have an impact of the work of colleagues and the provision for students.

Another key challenge for the next two years would be maintaining appropriate accountability for GCSE results for the current Year 9 and 10 cohorts. Put simply, with no Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Test results (due to the impact of the pandemic whilst they were in their final year of primary school), there was no concrete measure of their potential against which to judge outcomes. There would be no Progress 8 measure and to hold individual teachers, Department Leaders and the Senior Leadership Team to account for grades achieved would be exceptionally difficult and required much thoughtfulness.

Rising Above Challenges

With imminent uncertainties such as those described above with regard to funding and accountability, never had it been more important to hold on to the longer-term vision for the school. To that end school had continued to promote its' aims, 'Achieving Success' and 'Valuing Others', whilst also focusing on the HHS Character Profile developed by students and staff over the last 18 months. The profile consisted of those student attributes which were key to the school's aims - being Respectful, Ambitious, Resilient and Empathetic (RARE) - and development of them would continue to be the focus of much of the Personal Development work in the new academic year.

2024-25 School Development Plan (SDP)

Ultimately, the key vehicle to realising the vision of the school was the School Development Plan. The Senior Leadership Team had updated their whole-school self-evaluation this term, in doing so identifying areas of focus for the 2024-25 SDP. School Development Plans which outlined the addressing of these areas of focus were currently being drafted and would be finalised early in the Autumn Term following evaluation of our Summer 2024 external examination results. A recent Twilight INSET session was used to share key priorities for 2024-25 with staff: Teacher CPD (from the Quality of Education SDP); the HHS Character Profile (Personal Development); the new Mobile Phone policy (Behaviour & Attitudes) and our plans to enhance Parental Engagement (Leadership & Management).

Multi-Academy Trust Developments

Looking beyond the medium-term development of the school, in the last few weeks I have started exploring with primary colleagues whether the existing Frodsham And Villages Schools Partnership (FAVSP) had the potential to develop into a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) in the future. Given that academisation and MAT membership was a hugely significant (and relatively irreversible) long-term commitment by a school, it was only right that ultimately governors (who represented the school's long-term future) played a key role in any developments. To that end, it would be good to start the work of the governors' MAT Working Party in the Autumn Term, where all options could be considered in the context of any future direction of travel in this area announced by the new government.

New School Improvement Partner

Some of the discussions with primary colleagues mentioned above had been supported by our new School Improvement Partner (SIP), Mark Bayley. Mark had vast experience in all

	<p>areas of education, having recently retired as Director of Education in Cheshire East and he was still currently leading the Cheshire East Primary Headteacher Network. Mark's expertise and experience would be invaluable if/when we considered further MAT developments, but, equally importantly, he would be able to support our own improvement plans as a school. Mark's appointment follows the retirement of Steve Dool, our SIP until recently. I know many governors have worked with Steve over the 5+ years that he had supported the school and would want to thank him for his invaluable work during that time.</p>
Resolved:	That the Headteachers Report be noted.
Agenda Item 7	UPDATE ON LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SECTION OF THE SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Discussion:	Governors received the latest Leadership and Management, Governing Body, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Parental Engagement and 6 th Form sections of the School Development Plan (SDP) following the updates made in April and which would be reviewed in September.
Resolved:	That the update be noted.
Agenda item 8	SAFEGUARDING
Discussion:	SW advised that there was nothing specifically to bring to the attention of Governors.
Resolved:	That the report be noted.
Agenda item 9	RESOURCES
Discussion:	<p>The School Business Manager update Governors as follows</p> <p>Budget 2023-24 Confirmation of the outturn for the 2023-24 financial year had been received from from Cheshire West and Chester (CWAC). The school's outturn position formed part of the Council's annual accounts which were subject to external audit and would be finally approved by full Council in July. This figure, therefore, was provisional.</p> <p>School had estimated, in March 2024 that the outturn would be £397,938. This included the funds retained in the school's bank account on behalf of the FAVSP (Frodsham and Villages School Partnership), which were estimated to be £53,944 by the end of March 2024. This meant that, when the 2023/24 budget was set in March 2024, the estimated outturn would be £343,994.</p> <p>At the end of March 2024, the FAVSP outturn was £52,985, slightly lower than estimated.</p> <p>The outturn, confirmed by CWAC, was £402,115, £4,177 more than estimated back in March. As explained above, £52,985 belongs to the FAVSP, leaving £349,130 belonging to Helsby High School.</p> <p>The SBM recommended that the 2024-25 budget be retained as that approved in March. The very small surplus from the 2023-24 outturn could be retained to support the 2025-26 budget.</p> <p>Budget 2024-25 The budget monitoring governor's report provided line by line details of the income and expenditure of the current budget (2024-25). School was 15 weeks into the new financial year and there was nothing significant to report. School was on track to make a small saving on the pay bill but this depended on a fully funded pay award for teaching staff this autumn</p>

	<p>Budget 2025-26</p> <p>The 3 year plan, forecasted a very challenging financial year in 2025-26. This reflected falling numbers in lower school and rising costs. However, SLT were aware of this and working on plans over the coming months to ensure that school was in a position to prepare a balanced budget in spring 2025. MH confirmed that SLT had modelled the staffing structure on reducing pupil numbers.</p> <p>AH asked if staff regularly looked at what they spent to satisfy themselves that they were getting value for money. MV commented that Departmental Leaders were excellent at managing their budgets and were well aware that resources were scarce. HC commented that the Resources Committee regularly challenged the School Business Manager to ensure that Departments were adequately funded. ID-R counselled caution that any staff reductions did not impact on staff wellbeing.</p>
Resolved:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the 2023/24 outturn be noted. 2. That the 2024/25 budget be confirmed as that set by the FGB in March 2024. 3. That the financial update regarding the 2025/26 budget be noted.

Agenda item 10	REQUEST FOR REDUCTION IN SCHOOL PUBLISHED ADMISSION NUMBER (PAN)
Discussion:	<p>MH circulated a report at the meeting seeking the approval of the FGB to formally commence the process to reduce the Published Admission Number (PAN) for Yr7 of the school from 225 to 196.</p> <p>MH explained that the request was made in response to falling and fluctuating pupil numbers which made planning for the school both short and long term very difficult. A PAN to 196 would enable school to continue to operate a 7 form entry.</p> <p>In considering the request, Governors wished it noted that they strongly believed that every student within the partner primary schools who wished to attend Helsby High School should be able to do so, even if this meant that school would go over PAN.</p>
Resolved:	That application be made to the local authority to enable school to reduce its Yr7 PAN to 200 be authorised

Agenda item 11	2025/26 TERM DATES
Discussion:	Governors were requested to approve the 2025/26 term dates which followed a similar pattern to previous years. The dates were in line with the wishes of the majority of school staff and had been shared with partner primary schools.
Resolved:	That the 2025/26 term dates be approved.

Agenda item 12	POLICIES
Discussion:	<p>Governors were asked to approve the Complaints Policy and to ratify the following policies following review at the committees indicated.</p> <p>Resources Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Premise Management documents <p>Quality of Education Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capability Policy and procedures (Teaching and Support Staff) - Induction of Early Career Teachers Policy - Leave Policy - SEND Policy <p>PDBA Committee</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anti Bullying Policy - Behaviour Policy - Exclusions Policy - Sex and Relationships (SRE) Policy
Resolved	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Complaints Policy be approved. 2. That the following Policies be ratified. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capability Policy and Procedures (Teaching and Support Staff) • Induction of Early Career Teachers Policy • Leave Policy • SEND Policy • Anti-Bullying Policy • Behaviour Policy • Exclusion Policy • Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) Policy • Premises Management Policy 3. That the Attendance Policy be deferred to the next meeting
Agenda item 13	DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS
Discussion:	<p>Monday 23rd September 2024 - FGB Monday 7th October 2024 - QofE Committee Monday 18th November 2024 - PDBA Committee Monday 2nd December 2024 - Resources Committee Monday 16th December 2024 - FGB</p> <p>Monday 20th January 2025 - QofE Committee Monday 10th February 2025 - PDBA Committee Monday 10th March 2025 - Resources Committee Monday 24th March 2025 - FGB</p> <p>Monday 12th May 2025 - QofE Committee Monday 19th May 2025 - Resources Committee Monday 23rd June 2025 - PDBA Committee Monday 14th July 2025 - FGB</p>

There being no business the meeting ended at 6.30pm