



**BIRCHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL**  
 Parsonage Lane Bishop's Stortford CM23 5BD  
 Company No: 07791971

**Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting of the Academy Trust Governing Body held remotely via Teams on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 18.00**

	Name	Category	End of Term
	Annie Swanepoel – <b>Vice Chair</b>	Community	08.12.24
*	Alison Wilson	Community	14.03.23
	Leigh Lloyd-Warren	Community	22.01.24
	Jane Mansfield	Community	22.01.24
*	Fred Gray	Community	08.12.24
*	Jim Winter	Community	06.07.24
	Ruth Bamlett	Community	14.03.23
	Catherine Gater – <b>Chair of Governors</b>	Community	13.07.24
	Charlotte Sear	Community	22.01.24
	Richard Townsend	Community	03.03.24
	Vacancy	Parent	
	Jane Wach	Parent	09.09.24
	Gill Turner	Parent	04.12.22
*	Hilary Scotcher	Parent	30.06.22
*	Lisa Watkins	Parent	30.06.22
	Ruth Crowland	Parent	06.03.21
	Chris Ingate – <b>Principal</b>	Staff	Ex-Officio
	Ross Noblett	Staff	01.04.23
	Claire Pressland	Staff	02.11.24
	Lee Bothwell	Staff	30.06.22
	Vacancy	Co-opted	
	Nicola Coop – <b>Finance Director</b>	Advisory	

\* Denotes absence

Also Present

- Charlie Gilbank – Deputy Principal
- Sam Stopps – Deputy Principal
- Jolene Jacobson – Vice Principal
- Steve Connor – Vice Principal
- Ivan Shepherd – Clerk

Item		Action
1.	<b>Welcome and receive apologies for absence</b> Apologies were received and accepted from Fred Gray, Jim Winter, Hilary Scotcher and Lisa Watkins.	
2.	<b>Declarations / pecuniary interests</b> There were no new declarations of any new pecuniary interests, gifts or hospitality.	

	There were no interest declared that related to matters being discussed at this meeting.	
3.	<p><b>Governance, membership</b></p> <p>Chair of Governors CGa told the meeting that Mark Stocker has resigned as a governor and that a new chair of governors must be elected. CGa added that she is nominating herself for election.</p> <p>The clerk asked if any governors would like to nominate themselves to become chair of governors. There were no other nominations. CGa was elected unanimously as chair of governors.</p> <p>Governor appointments AS term as a parent governor as expired, AS was appointed as a community governor and remains a vice chair of governors. FG was re-appointed as a community governor. The second vice chair position is vacant, action will be taken to appoint.</p> <p><b>AP1 – Any governor who wishes to fill the vacant vice chair of governor role to contact CGa, CI or AS.</b></p> <p>A parent governor vacancy exists; nominations to fill this vacancy will be sought from the parent body in January 2021.</p> <p><b>AP2 – Clerk to inform HfL of the changes to governor and the chair of governor appointments.</b></p>	<p><b>Govs</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>
4.	<p><b>Notification of any urgent business not covered in this agenda</b> No AOB was put forward.</p>	
5.	<p><b>MLM and action points</b> The minutes of the last FGB meeting held on 30.09.20 were <b>AGREED</b> and signed off as a correct record of that meeting.</p> <p>Action Points from previous meetings AP1 – Governors were asked to complete the pecuniary / business interest forms for the academic year 2020/21 and return to Nicola Coop by 02.10.20. <b>This has been partly completed.</b> <b>Business interest forms are still outstanding from FG, AW and LW.</b></p>	
6.	<p><b>Articles of association</b> GT led the discussion. A power-point presentation was circulated to governors prior to the meeting and was shared on screens during the meeting. The key points covered were as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GT explained that an academy is both a business and a charity and is managed by a set of laws; these laws are reflected in the articles of association.</li> <li>• The difference between academy members and trustees was explained, members “own” and trustees “manage”.</li> <li>• The trustees are governors</li> <li>• When the Birchwood academy was created all trustees were also appointed as members.</li> <li>• GT explained the conflict of interests of being both a member and a trustee.</li> <li>• GT told the meeting that from 01.03.21 the law is changing so that employees of</li> </ul>	

	<p>the academy cannot be members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The change in the law also comes with a “Strongly Advised” message that members and trustees should not be the same people.</li> <li>• Background work on changing the articles still needs to be carried out.</li> <li>• A proposal on those changes will be brought to the FGB meeting due to be held on 20.01.21.</li> </ul> <p>GT circulated a list of FAQ relating to members, trustees and the articles.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Principal’s report</b></p> <p>The Principal’s report was circulated prior to the meeting for governors to read and attend the meeting with questions and challenge.</p> <p>The Principal summarised the report, the key points of discussion were as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covid management remains a high priority. The SLT and staff have started to look at the positives coming out of the way the school has been run during the pandemic Remote learning has been well received and very positive. Behaviour has been much better with “on call” students being half the number when compared to last year. The number of DA and SEND students in the “on call” group is much reduced.</li> <li>• The Safeguarding audit for the autumn term has been completed and with the approval of the governors will be sent to the LA. Governors <b>APPROVED</b> the Safeguarding audit and it will be submitted to the LA.</li> <li>• RC told the meeting that she had reviewed and cross checked the autumn term Pupil Premium report. The Pupil Premium report was <b>APPROVED</b> by governors. The Principal told governors that he and RC had discussed how best to utilise catch up fund and Pupil Premium funding in order to maximise the impact. The <b>PROPOSAL</b> is that they two funds be combined that way they would reach more pupils who require interventions. The Principal added that that the Pupil Premium fund must be reported on and its impact measured and that will be done. Governors <b>AGREED</b> that the funds be combined on condition that the impact is reported on.</li> </ul> <p>A governor asked how pupils are identified as need interventions The Principal told the meeting that a recent data drop was compared against data from pre lockdown, those pupils who are working below where they are expected to be will receive interventions.</p> <p>A governor noted that there was some Pupil Premium budget carried forward from last year, is this money included in what is planned to be spent? The Principal confirmed that it is included.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The H&amp;S report for the autumn term has been completed. RT told the meeting that he plans to visit again in the new year to gain a greater depth of knowledge and understanding of the school.</li> <li>• The Principal told the meeting that strategic priorities for the school have been discussed by the SLT and will be reported via the Principal’s report at the next</li> </ul>	

	<p>FGB meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A representative from HfL has completed a staff review; the report is on the governor portal.</li> <li>• There has been an increase of those students making Birchwood their first choice for the 2021 Yr. 7 intake, which means that the virtual open days were successful. 6<sup>th</sup> form applications are underway.</li> <li>• The Principal wanted to put on record his thanks to the parent council who have been a great support to the school during the past year.</li> <li>• The Principal wanted to record his thanks to the site and cleaning teams who have worked incredibly hard throughout the pandemic.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CGk told the meeting that because a lower number of students are choosing to take the EBAC there has been a negative impact in terms of student numbers taking French.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NC updated finance matters. There is very little movement in the budget versus when they were last presented in September 2020. NC told the meeting that there will be some surplus to carry into the next financial year. There are some SIF projects will be partially funded from the reserve fund.</li> </ul> <p>The catering tender was discussed at the last Finance and Estates meeting. At that meeting governors AGREED to extend the current suppliers contract rather than go through a full re-tendering process. Governors <b>APPROVED</b> the decision to extend the current suppliers contract.</p> <p>The scheme of financial delegation for the Finance and Estates committee was <b>APPROVED</b> by governors.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Pupil Premium Report and proposed expenditure</b> This was covered under agenda point 7.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Committee reports</b> The terms of reference for the Finance &amp; Estates and Audit committees were <b>APPROVED</b>.</p> <p>Update from Committee chairs</p> <p>RC told the meeting that there had been some small changes to the 6th form curriculum, the addition of a Business Studies BTEC and a Computer Studies A level adds more options. There has also been a slight shift in the threshold for allowing DA students to enter 6th form. Those DA students with a slightly lower score than 36 will be allowed to join; this was tried as an experiment for the 2020/21 year and has been successful. The school will make this an ongoing arrangement.</p> <p>GT told the meeting that the company who were managing the lettings have gone into administration. It was decided at the Finance and Estates committee to bring this function in house, it will be managed by the newly created Lettings Manager.</p>	

	<p>GT told the meeting that the Finance and Estates committee are proposing that the school take advantage of the Salix Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme to replace all of the school lighting with LED lights.  The size of the loan is £163k and the repayments are funded by the energy savings.  The deadline for the bid is 11.01.21.  The consultant's fee is 8%.  The school contribution is between 5% and 10%  Governors <b>AGREED</b> in principle subject to greater scrutiny by governors.</p> <p>AS told the meeting that students have attended virtual mental health sessions.  The feedback is that they are very useful and positive.  Students feel very well supported.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Link governor update</b>  Safeguarding – this was covered earlier in the meeting.  SEND &amp; DA – this was covered earlier in the meeting.  RC told the meeting that she will be meeting with the school SENCO in January 2021.</p> <p>Health &amp; Safety – this was covered earlier in the meeting.</p>	
11.	<p><b>GDPR</b>  The Data Protection Policy was <b>APPROVED</b>.  The privacy notice has been updated.  CGk urged governors to send their personal references to the Personnel Manager to be stored in the single central record.  <b>AP3 –All governors to send their personal references to the Personnel Manager.</b></p>	<b>All gobs</b>
12.	<p><b>Policy Management</b>  The Child Protection Policy was <b>APPROVED</b>.</p>	
13.	<p><b>Chair's Report</b>  CGa wanted to put on record her thanks to Mark Stocker for his many years hard work as a governor and as chair.  CGa also wanted to record her thanks to the cleaning team who have contributed significantly in safeguarding staff and pupils from covid.</p>	
14.	<p><b>Dates of future full governors meetings all start at 19.00</b>  20.01.21  03.03.21  05.05.21  07.07.21</p>	

Meeting closed at 19.36

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Catherine Gater – Chair of Governors Birchwood High School

### Summary of action points

AP1 – Any governor who wishes to fill the vacant vice chair of governor role to contact CGa, CI or AS.

AP2 – Clerk to inform HfL of the changes to governor and the chair of governor appointments.

AP3 –All governors to send their personal references to the Personnel Manager.