

**The Minutes of the Full Governing Board Meeting**  
**Held on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 10.30 am in the Learning Resource Centre**

**Present:**

Tahir Darr (TD) (Vice Chair);  
Ruth Henry (RH);  
Vicki Jackson (VJ);  
Steven Mackay (SMK) (Headteacher);  
Michelle O’Doherty (MO);  
Kelly Ogden (KO);  
Nick Regan (NR).  
Margaret Roberts (MR);  
Joanna Symons (JS);  
Kevin Ward (KW);  
Stuart Weatherall (SWe) (Chair).

**1. Student Council**

Between 10.30 and 11.30 am, the Governing Board had met with representatives of the Student Council.

**2.1 SWe formally welcomed** everyone to the meeting, in particular, Claudia Wade, who would report at Item 3.

**2.2 Apologies** were received and accepted from:

Tom Davies (TDv);  
Duncan Giles (DG);  
Barry Raynes (BR).

**2.3 The meeting was quorate.**

**2.4 In attendance:**

Claudia Wade (CW), Independent Consultant  
Marya Marriott (Clerk).

**2.5 Declaration of Business Interests and Conflicts of Interests.**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. External Review of Governance (ERG)**

CW thanked the Board for the welcome she had received and for way that all involved had engaged with the review. CW advised that the Board having commissioned the ERG was a sign of its forward thinking and desire to be the best it could.

The ‘headline’ finding was that the Board was effective. Some recommendations to ensure that evidence of all of the Board’s work, and the impact of that work, were contained within the report.

The calibre and collective skill set of the Board’s governors meant that it was well equipped to fulfil its core roles. The governors recognised that the Board was very ably Chaired. The report’s recommendations identified how the Board could sharpen practise in relation to its scrutiny role.

It was suggested that governors' visits could have greater impact if they were linked to school priorities. A report for all visits should be produced so that it could be added to the governance evidence base. It was noted that Ofsted expected governors to be able to demonstrate how well they know their school, and should ensure that they have evidence of external scrutiny and monitoring of the school's work.

Impact: The Board should consider whether it could articulate the impact of the decisions it has made.

Pupil Premium: Nationally, schools were expected to close rather than maintain the gap.

Outreach: Schools are expected to demonstrate altruistic thinking more widely than their own organisation.

**Governors asked: If we link governors to priorities will we be able to dispense with our subject links? Would we lose anything by doing that?**

It was agreed that SEN, Pupil Premium and Safeguarding Link roles would be retained. The committee's work was already aligned to the pillars and priorities in the School Development Plan, therefore each committee should decide which link roles were needed and appoint as necessary. It was noted that linking governors to school priorities was likely to increase Board visibility. **Action: Committee Chairs.**

It was agreed that a new Visit Report Form which identified a structured approach, including prompting governors to ask key questions and record evidence of progress with priorities, would be drawn up; visits might start by meeting the SLT lead for the relevant priority.

**Action: TD.**

It was agreed that the committee structure would be reviewed; it was noted that combining the personnel and finance briefs was likely to be onerous for a single committee. **Action: SWe**

External scrutiny: It was agreed that reports from the External Adviser would be shared; the Board and Headteacher would identify the focus of future visits, aligned to identified priorities. **Action: SMK/SWe.**

It was noted that previous visits had considered 6<sup>th</sup> Form provision and evaluation of teaching and learning. It was agreed that the External Adviser should be asked to attend an FGB each year. **Action: NR**

Outreach: SMK had been elected Chair of BET (Bath Education Trust) Headteachers' Group. BCA (Bath Community Academy) was closing, Oldfield had taken students in Years 8 and 9 who were in need of a school place.

The Board thanked CW for her very helpful report. [CW left the meeting at this point.]

**4. Agree Governing Board Response to Student Council**

The response would be agreed at the next FGB meeting. [Summary of feedback at Appendix A.] **Action Clerk.**

**5. Notification of Any Other Urgent Business**

- a. F&GP Committee Report (Item 22.1)
- b. Teaching Schools Alliance. (Item 22.2).

**6. The Minutes of the last Full Governing Board Meetings (5<sup>th</sup> October 2017)**

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chair.

**7. Matters arising from the last Full Governing Board Meeting**

Please see page 7.

**8. Appointment of the Auditors**

The Governing Board agreed that Monahans Chartered Accountants would be appointed as Auditors to Oldfield Trust.

Duplicate copies of the 3 letters of engagement, required by the EFA (Education Funding Agency), were signed by the Chair of the Governing Board and the Headteacher.

It was noted that UHY Hacker Young Accountants had tendered notice of its resignation on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2017. The resignation letter confirmed that *“there were no circumstances in connection with our ceasing to hold office that need to be brought to the attention of members or creditors of the company”*.

#### 9. Adoption of the Annual Accounts 2016-2017

The Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017 had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

KW, Chair of the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) Committee, reported that Monahans representative, Mr James Gare (Partner) had attended the F&GP meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017. Mr Gare had provided a detailed report on the accounts, and had also identified changes that would be beneficial going forward. There were no concerns.

It was noted that Monahans had also provided a very useful financial benchmarking report.

Monahans had also conducted an audit of financial procedures; a small number of recommendations were made which were generally low risk; action to address the recommendations was in hand.

Some anomalies in relation to how the Trust's land value was calculated and recorded had been brought to committee's attention. A financial 'treatment' consistent with that used by other schools would be applied going forward.

The accountants had noted that the Board had breached its reserves policy; the Board was aware of that issue. The accountants suggested that the reserves policy be reviewed; that review had been carried out. The reserves policy was now based on operating days which provided greater flexibility so that plans to refurbish the school could be acted on. The long-term financial picture for the school was very healthy.

The Governing Board agreed that the annual accounts would be adopted. Three copies of the annual accounts were signed by the Chair of the Governing Board and the Headteacher.

KW provided a report on other matters addressed at the last F&GP meeting, detailed at Item 22.1.

#### 10. Approve Oldfield Trust Scheme of Delegation (SoD)

The document had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Board was reminded that it was a requirement for the document to be in place and for it to be published on the school's website. It was intended to be a 'live' document. It was noted that a small number of changes to committees' terms of reference would be needed to ensure that the level at which decisions were made was consistent and transparent.

The Governing Board agreed the SoD would be adopted. **Action: Clerk/Company Secretary.**

#### 10.1 Financial Regulations Policy

The School's Financial Regulations Policy had been revised by the Facilities and Finance Manager; it had been discussed at the last Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017 and had been loaded onto GovernorHub.

Purpose of the policy: To ensure good financial stewardship and ensure understands their role; to ensure all were clear when to act if things went wrong. The document had two sections;

Section 1: The roles and responsibilities for the board of Trustees and key personnel

Section 2: The Financial Processes and Internal Controls for Oldfield School.

It was noted that all Trustees should read, The Essential Trustee [folder 6, in GovernorHub.

**10.2 Review level at which formal tendering triggered (currently £25,000)**

The Governing Board agreed there was no objection in principle but information about another school's practise, statutory and best value requirements should be obtained before a decision could be made.

**Action: SMK**

**11. Capitalisation limits**

The school's new accountants had recommended that the limit be raised. A level of £2,500 was proposed by SMK. The Governing Board agreed that the recommendation be adopted. **Action: SMK**

**12. Website: Publication of Minutes**

It was noted that the publication of minutes on the website was not a statutory requirement. Websites at other local schools had been viewed; minutes were not published. After due consideration, the Governing Board re confirmed its decision to publish its minutes on the school website.

**Action: Clerk** to ensure confidential items removed.

**13. Election of Vice Chair**

The Governing Board re-elected TD as its Vice Chair for a period of 12 months.

**14. Governor Appointments**

SWe advised that he and SMK had met Mr Tom Davies, who had applied to join the Board. They were agreed that he had skills and necessary and were pleased to recommend his application. The Governing Board confirmed that it would Co-opt Mr Tom Davies for a 4-year term of office.

**15. Staff Governor Vacancy**

MR had advised that she would be stepping down from the Board. The Board thanked MR for her hard work and insight; she had made a very valuable contribution to its work.

It was agreed that the vacancy be advertised to all staff. **Action: SMK.**

**16. Parent Governor Elections**

The Governing Board confirmed that a Parent Governor Election would be held.

**Action: Clerk** to forward templates and guidance to SWe/SMK and act as returning officer.

**17. Appointment of the Chief Financial Officer**

It was noted that it was a statutory requirement for the Trust to appoint a Chief Financial Officer. #The Governing Board agreed that Siobhan Randall would be appointed.

[MO and KO left the meeting at this point (2.25 pm).]

**18. Headteacher's Report**

SMK's report had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Also circulated were:

- The School Improvement Partner's Visit Report (23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017)
- The Data Dashboard.

SMK invited questions.

**Governors asked: In terms of outcomes, did the incentivisation intervention used with boys work?**

**A:** Yes. But it is very difficult to measure accurately. We will use that approach only with More Able boys this year.

**Governors asked: What are the particular issues with boys?**

**A:** It is a combination of factors, some of which are historical. Examples of those factors, staff had not been used to teaching boys; boys having joined the school late. The curriculum not being suited to them can also be an issue; that was true in relation to English. However, boys tend to do less well at GCSE but catch up later.

**Governors asked: What level is considered to be More Able?**

**A:** Level 5 in 'old money'. Historically, English was the school's most successful department; we want to move the Middle Ability group on.

**Governors asked: What's the issue with attendance in Year 11?**

**A:** There had been a big improvement overall but there is some long-term absence where students have been in hospital or supported by CAMHS; a few cases pull down the overall figure but it is not ad hoc.

**Governors asked: Are you aiming to get the PP group's attendance up to 96%?**

**A:** There are barriers for some students. Their attendance is currently lower than at the same point last year, especially in Year 11. We want to see those students' attendance move into line with their peers – the rest of the school is at just over 95% at the moment.

**Governors asked: Should we communicate with parents?**

**A:** Yes – and we do. Triggers for contact are in place.

**Governors asked: How easy will it be to recruit a Head of PE?**

**A:** We hope it will be relatively easy – is a very attractive post in a very attractive location. We will advertise in January 2018.

Governors noted that there had been 90 applications for 6<sup>th</sup> Form – there was still 3 weeks until the application closing date.

SMK advised that the number of fixed-term exclusions during 1<sup>st</sup> September-30<sup>th</sup> November 2017 were, for the school, quite high; this was due to the Behaviour for Learning Policy being implemented with greater rigour and consistency.

**Governors asked: What does a 1-day exclusion achieve?**

**A:** A shock – to make students think about their actions and to reinforce the school's authority. However, we want to reduce the yo-yo-ing that some students do i.e reformed behaviour for a spell then a decline. Behaviour support for schools in the local authority area is very poor and there are not enough places at Aspire (alternative provision).

**19. Approve Pupil Premium Statement 2017-2018**

The document had been circulated prior to the meeting.

**Governors asked: How much is the funding per child?**

**A:** £935.

**Governors asked: Do we undertake an evaluation of impact?**

**A:** Yes.

**Governors asked: Do we have many children who have EAL (English as an Additional Language)?**

**A:** Not many; our EAL specialist identifies any additional support needed.

**Governors asked: Do we have any Looked After Children (LAC) or Service Children?**

**A:** We have 6 LAC and 3 children from service families.

**20. Safeguarding (Standing Item)** This item was addressed in the Headteacher's Report at Item 18.

**21. Link Governor Reports & Feedback from Governor Training Events**

There were no reports for consideration.

## 22. Any Other Urgent Business

### 22.1 Finance & General Purposes Committee Report

KW advised that at the F&GP meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2017 the committee's key decision had been whether to unlock funds and reduce the cushion provided by high levels of reserves. The committee was clear that its duty was not to build a 'war chest' but to make best use of resources for the students at the school.

The committee had considered SMK's detailed report, *Capital Programme 2017-2022*, in the context of a very healthy financial outlook for the school. The school was benefitting from the Board's previous prudent decision-making.

Consequently, the committee was confident that substantial investment in school infrastructure could proceed now rather than allow further site deterioration. SMK's recommendations were approved in full. The investment was valued at c£1,000,000 over the next 5 years.

The committee had agreed to released £150,000 for the programme in 2017-2018, in addition to £50, 000 already allocated for maintenance. It was noted that if the school's CIF (Condition Improvement Fund) Bid (for windows and roofing) was successful the school might need to contribute up to £55,000.

**Governors asked: During the discussions about the capital programme, was any consideration to improving the external (sloping) football pitch?**

**A:** Not from this programme - it would be very expensive; a better option would be to move the site of the pitch and install astro turf. There may be other sources of funding could be investigated.

It was noted that the Risk Assessment had been updated to include the new GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).

### 22.2 Teaching School Alliance

SMK advised that Tim Withers (TW), Chief Executive of Palladian Academy had asked the school to consider supporting a bid to the DFE. School-to-school support and ICT were examples of the work that would be addressed by the alliance. Currently there was no teaching school in the Bath area. The bid would bring additional funding. TW had written to all local schools asking if they would like to be involved. SMK had given a provisionally positive response. There were potential advantages for the school's staff in terms of CPD (continuing professional development) opportunities but there were potential tensions with BET (Bath Education Trust). There was no impact on governance.

#### Items for next agenda

- Response to Student Council Feedback
- Safeguarding
- Competency Framework – action in light of the External Review
- Skills Audit and Self Evaluation Analysis

The meeting finished at 3.00 pm.

#### Dates of the next Governing Board Meetings:

Thursday	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2018, 4.30 pm.	Personnel & Student Welfare Committee (additional meeting)
Thursday	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2018, 5.30pm.	Curriculum
Thursday	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2018, 5.30pm.	F&GP
Thursday	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2018, 4.00pm.	Full Governing Body – meeting staff
Thursday	8 <sup>th</sup> February 2018, 5.00 pm.	Full Governing Body

## 7. Matters Arising from previous meetings

Item 4.4 SWe and SMK had each met with a potential new governor; Action: SWe/Clerk.

Item 5. Election of the Vice Chair - deferred to the next FGB meeting. Action: Clerk.

Item 9.5 Departmental Raising Achievement Plans (RAPs) would be added to GovernorHub. Action: SMK.

Item 9.15 ...the tables relating to racist incidents would be clarified (period measured) [in future reports]. Action: SMK.

Item 10. [School] would retain its existing PAN;.. Action: SMK to advise the LA that, in principal, the governing board would like to increase the PAN; to do so the school would need financial support from the LA to develop the facilities.

Item 13. Governors asked: Has the Governing Body's commitment to pay at least the Living Wage been included?

Action: SMK to update the policy. The Governing Board agreed to accept the STPCD recommendations. Action: SMK.

Item 14. Review Scheme of Delegation

...a review and recommendations would be prepared for the next FGB meeting. Action: Company Secretary/Clerk.

Item 15. Safeguarding (Standing Item)

Progress with the Highway 'Stopping Up' process would be reported at the next meeting. Action ongoing: SMK [Stone King Solicitors had been instructed c.4 weeks' previous to the meeting. SMK would ask the Facilities and Finance Manager to chase progress.]

Outstanding Actions from previous meetings:

From 13<sup>th</sup> July 2017

Item 6.1 Pre-meeting preparation forms Governors would forward forms at least 48 hours before the meeting.... Action ongoing: All/Clerk

Item 8 Appointment of Auditors

Can either of the new companies offer work experience? Action ongoing: SMK [Logged for FGB Feb 2018]

Item 13 Personnel & Student Welfare Report. Anti-bullying strategy. KO would meet with Sarah Mills. Action ongoing: SMK to advise KO when to contact Sarah Mills.]

Item 17 Strategy (GB/SLT) Meeting Dates

...would continue to examine 2 of the pillars in the School Development Plan at each meeting; pillar 5 and 6 would be addressed at the next meeting. Action: KW to lead. [Further action: SWe and KW to liaise. Pillars 5 and 6 and the preamble had been revised. Pillars 1-4 would be reviewed at the next meeting.]

Item 19 Governors' Competency Framework...the document would be considered again once the External Review of Governance had been completed. Action ongoing: SWe. [Logged for FGB, Feb 2018.]

Item 23 Website Profiles

Action: All governors without a website profile to forward to the clerk.

[In place for SWe; TD; MO; DG; BR; NR; KW; TDv.]

From 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Item 9. Strategy Meeting Update

...the Strategic Plan's narrative would be updated. Action ongoing: SWe

The updated documents would then be included on the next FGB meeting for approval, after which they would be added to the staff area of the website and GovernorHub. It was agreed that this process would start at the next FGB meeting. Action ongoing: SMK. [Logged for Feb 2018]

Item 17. Link Governor Reports & Feedback from Governor Training Events

c. JS would arrange a similar visit. JS: Action carried forward. [JS has had a tour with Tahir including year 11 assembly, sports day and prevent training.]