



## OLDFIELD SCHOOL

### A Meeting of the Full Governing Board (FGB) on Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 at 5.30 pm in the Learning Resource Centre

#### **Present:**

Stuart Weatherall (SWe) (Chair); Kelly Ogden (KO); Duncan Giles (DG); Steven Mackay (SMK) (Headteacher); Barry Raynes (BR); Kevin Ward (KW); Margaret Roberts (MR); Victoria Robinson (VR) (arrived at 5.55 pm); Tahir Darr (TD) (Vice Chair) (arrived at 6.01 pm).

1. SWe welcomed everyone to the meeting, which began at 5.40 pm.

**Apologies** were received and accepted from Sally Basson (SB); Michelle O'Doherty (MO); Nick Regan (NR). Martin Bentham (MB) was absent. **The meeting was quorate.**

**In attendance:** Patrick Heuff (PH) (Deputy Headteacher); David Taylor (DT) (Independent Member, Oldfield Trust) (arrived at 6.27 pm); Marya Marriott (Clerk).

2. **Declarations of Business and Pecuniary Interests:** No declarations of interest were made.

3. **Election of the Chair.**

SWe was re-elected Chair of the Governing Board for a 1-year term. SWe thanked governors for their support; he advised the Board that this was likely to be his final term as Chair as his term of office as Governor was due to end in March 2018.

4. **Election of the Vice Chair**

TD was re-elected Vice Chair for a 1-year term.

#### **Chair's Opening Remarks**

The challenges for the coming year would include some 'tidying up', particularly in relation to last year's finance. The school's position was secure but the Board needed to be confident that it had a full picture of the school's finances.

Appraisal and Remuneration would be busy areas in the autumn; the lessons learned from the previous academic year would need to be embedded.

The main effort would be teaching and learning, which was clearly SMK's area. The Board would need to provide support and challenge on its delivery.

Shaping the school for the future was very much the Board's business and had its own set of challenges. School results had turned a corner thanks to PH's work both leading school improvement and sharpening up predictions.

There is a risk that the school loses its reputation for high quality teaching and learning and, as a consequence, lose its Outstanding rating from Ofsted.

Currently, many parents send their children to the school from long distances. In order to mitigate that risk the Board's highest priority must be effective strategic planning that supports SMK and ensures high quality teaching and learning. As Trustees the Board also has responsibility for the oversight of the school's finances; another area of risk.

During this year, the Board must focus on capitalizing on the changes that had been made. Opportunities were present in relation to finance. The school was almost at maximum numbers and budget; lag-funding would catch up. There were important and exciting investment decisions to be made to best improve the quality of teaching learning at the school.

#### 5. The Minutes of the last Full Governing Board Meeting (19<sup>th</sup> July 2016)

SWe asked for comments on the accuracy of the minutes. BR advised that his action at Item 7 had been completed prior to the previous meeting. Subject to the above correction, the minutes were agreed to be an accurate record and were signed by the Chair. **VR joined the meeting at this point (5.55 pm).**

#### 6. Matters Arising from previous meetings:

##### Outstanding Actions from 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015

##### 19. Policies

d. All governors had been asked to complete Appendix A: *Annual Conflicts of Interest Statement* and Appendix B: *Register of Business Interests*. **[It was agreed that this action would be deleted.]**

**New Action: Clerk to liaise with Company Secretary** regarding the annual update of the Pecuniary Interest Register, which would be an item on the December 2016 agenda. **TD arrived at this point (6.01 pm).**

##### e. Safeguarding Policy

All governors had been asked to sign Appendix 1, *Confirmation of Receipt of Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* so that Sarah Mills could update Single Central Record. **[It was agreed that this action would be deleted.]**

**New Action: Clerk to liaise with Sarah Mills** to identify any action needed to update the Single Central Record.

##### Outstanding Actions from 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016

##### i. School Growth:

a. Obtain birth rate prediction information. **Action: MO – carried forward**

##### Outstanding Actions from Planning Day held on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2016

ii. It was agreed that BR would meet with staff to discuss the school's ethos and values and the best way to ensure a consistent approach throughout the school. The data from the Staff Attitudes Survey would help inform discussions; SMK to be involved. **Action completed.**

##### 13. Governor Training: Self Evaluation form

TD reported that a large number of forms were still outstanding. All who had not done so to forward forms to KO. **[Main Agenda - Item 12c.]**

##### 21. Clerk's Report:

c. The Governors' Handbook would be updated for the next meeting. **Action: Clerk - carried forward**

d. The Clerk advised that she would send all governors the link to the online Prevent Training; she asked governors to forward their certificates to her for inclusion in the governing body training file.

**Action: Governors – carried forward.**

##### 22. Any other URGENT Business

##### a. Lessons learned from last HT Appraisal

It was noted that the RC would need to hold a second meeting each year in order to review the Pay Policy. The Terms of Reference (TORs) would be updated to reflect those changes. [KW advised that it had been subsequently agreed that the RC Committee would continue to meet just once per annum.

**Action superseded.**

##### Outstanding Actions from 19<sup>th</sup> July 2016

##### 8. Mission Statement, Ethos and refresh of Oldfield 'brand'. (PH)

It was agreed the re-branding would be a key focus of Strategy meetings. **[It was further agreed that this would be on the agenda of the meeting planned for 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016]. Action: SWe**

## 9. Options for School Growth

It was agreed that School Growth would be an item on the next FGB Agenda. **Action completed.**

## 10. Adoption of the revised Complaints Policy

The Governing Board agreed that the policy would be adopted. It would be scheduled for review in July 2018. The revised policy would be posted on the school's website. **Action completed.**

### a. Governor training/evaluation form

TD agreed to collate and analyse the data received in order to identify gaps. **[Repetition of item 13.] Action deleted.**

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## 7. Chairs' Group Report

The group (BR, KW, NR and SWe) had met. Minutes had not been produced because it was a discussion meeting rather than a meeting with delegated decision-making powers. The key benefit was ensuring a common awareness of issues and how the work of the committees and the Board would need to link together. It had been a worthwhile meeting and further meetings would take place.

## 8. Headteacher's Report

The report was circulated in advance of the meeting and was taken as read.

SMK confirmed that the format of his report was different from that of his predecessor; SMK welcomed feedback as to whether it met governors' needs. All headteacher reports would focus on school improvement and, as with this one, the main headings used would reflect the areas inspected by Ofsted. Information about key school events would be included, to encourage governor attendance. Key information from the school's Data Dashboard would also be incorporated; SMK advised that he would provide Data Dashboard training for governors in due course.

The Board confirmed that it was happy with format of his report. SMK invited questions from governors.

**Governors observed** that it was frustrating that there had been a very significant and surprising underspend of c£165,000; that inaccurate forecasting had affecting decision-making.

SMK advised that the new forecast needed to be viewed cautiously. Some of the funds were from cost centre budgets that hadn't been fully spent; due to the large number of cost centres held by the school sums could quickly add up. Staff salary savings were also a feature as were accruals. It was likely that the final figure would be less than £165,000. There was a large amount of cash at the bank and variances would be positive. SMK advised that he had checked that what was being predicted for the year end was accurate - and could confirm that it was. The new Company Secretary and Finance Officer, Siobhan Randall, would be tasked with devising an improved framework for financial reporting to governors.

GCSE results had improved but were significantly below what the school should achieve. SMK directed governors to the Data Dashboard [circulated in advance of the meeting], which showed that performance in several areas was below national expectations, and in particular for those eligible for Pupil Premium.

The outcomes signalled over-prediction by staff in many subjects, and within subjects in some instances. SMK reported that he had had 3 post exam meetings with staff to date. There were issues to be resolved but there had been some good results too. Outcomes would be good if teaching and learning is good. Decisions made last year about staffing had had a negative impact in some areas i.e. science. The use of inexperienced or temporary teachers had played a part.

SMK advised that, in the context which he had found himself, PH had done a very good job.

The school needed to do better. Across the board, subject progress was at 70%. SMK's expectation was that the school should be at 80% given its profile.

Attainment was strong but that should be the case - pupils were above average when they joined the school. Best practice needs to be spread, especially in maths, English, science and the performing arts.

The school had achieved 61% for maths; nationally the expectation was 68%; the school should achieve at least 70%. Teaching and learning was the issue.

Heads of Faculty need to have a shared view that they are **leading** learning; some already had that view but not all. PH would be line-managing that group in future; strong middle leadership was essential but it would take time to bring about change.

**Governors asked: Will you be able to report back on all the things you have put in place?**

**A:** Yes – and quite soon in some areas. For example, mock exams for maths are planned to take place soon. Mocks will also help ensure that students – and staff – have clear expectations.

SMK reported that he was making a particular effort to speak to Year 11 students so that they felt valued. Governors would need to closely track the Data Dashboard.

The A' level results would be included in the Dashboard as soon as possible. Results had been mixed. In small groups the performance of 1 pupil could skew results. An element of staff teaching small groups as though they were tutorials i.e. in a very relaxed way, was evident in some instances.

**DT arrived at this points (6.27 pm).**

PH advised that grey areas were English and maths. The school had advertised the position of Head of Science; January 2017 was the planned start date.

SMK advised that the high attainment profile on entry of our students needs to be better understood by staff to ensure that we challenge appropriately in lessons.

**Governors asked: English gets consistently good results – can we mimic that Faculty's approach across the school?**

**A:** That was the crux of conversations today. The Head of the English Faculty is clear that students' outcomes need to +5/80% when considering the overall student profile.

**Governors asked: Pupil Premium Students results are very disappointing; we've gone backwards significantly this year. Why?**

**A:** Two students were hospital-educated but still on the school roll which had a bearing. However, PH's increased responsibilities for the last 2 terms meant that he was unable to give that area the attention it required. Attendance also had a big impact. Although the PP funding had paid for an Attendance Officer that person had left. The school had now recruited a new person to that post.

**Governors asked: Does a child who is school phobic count?**

**A:** Not for their attendance but their exam results do count.

It was agreed that the next Curriculum Committee would focus on Pupil Premium. **Action: NR/SMK/Clerk**

**Governors asked: Will we receive an Ofsted this year?**

**A:** It looks unlikely.

**Governors asked: What notice is given before an inspection?**

**A:** Schools are told the day before. The school is not 'inspection ready' at the moment.

The Board thanked SMK for his very informative report.

## 9. Draft School Improvement Plan (SIP)

The SIP and Guidance on the SIP had been circulated in advance of the meeting.

SMK advised that the SIP had been shared with staff, who had been asked to consider their own areas of responsibility in relation to the plan. The main priority in relation to teaching and learning was marking. The SIP would be 'rag-rated' so that everyone can see progress. All staff as whole should be able to make a link between the SIP and their own performance management objectives.

Staff had received the SIP reasonably well. The SIP would need to be monitored by governors. It was agreed that a link should be made between the SIP and committees' TORs to ensure that monitoring and delivery of the SIP remained in focus. **Action: Chairs of Committees to update TORs.**

It was agreed that aspects of the SIP would be assigned to each committee. **Action: SWe/SMK**

### **Governors asked: Is the objective to see if we are on track to hit KPIs (key performance indicators)?**

**A:** We need to consider the best way to do it; some areas are obvious but others are more subjective e.g. Ebacc. **Action: SMK/SLT** (Senior Leadership Team) to brief governors on progress with KPIs at Committees.

## 10. Options for School Growth

SMK advised that, at this point, there was not much to add to the information provided by PH at the meeting held on 12 May 2016.

The school could increase numbers; it could accommodate 8 form entry. Insufficient dedicated science and technical subject teaching space would create some logistical issues. The existing PAN is 180 but it has increased class sizes. It was noted that in 2016 the school had received admissions appeals for the first time; they had been successful.

### **Q: Aren't we likely to get better results with fewer children?**

**A:** Yes. Increasing numbers might not benefit us.

### **Q: What's your advice?**

**A:** There is no financial imperative if 6th form grows.

### **Q: Is the limiting factor physical space? Do we have an ideal number?**

**A:** Yes. The same number as now. Break times highlight crush points, especially now that food is available (it is very popular); it creates a funnelling effect. The advantage of 180 is that there is a degree of flexibility.

SWe summarised: On one side we have demand for school places; on the other is capacity. We don't need to build capacity as we have agreed that our main risk is damage to our reputation. Therefore, we should focus on teaching and learning.

SMK reported that at a meeting with a CIF (Condition Improvement Fund) expert, he had been advised that any new build would be classed as expansion and was likely to be turned down. Further information regarding CIF bids would be reported to the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The Board agreed that the PAN for Sept '17 would be 180.

The Board agreed that the PAN for Sept 18 would be 180.

It was noted that further Admissions Appeals might result.

## 11. Staffing

### a. Leadership Capacity and Development

SMK had prepared a confidential report which was circulated at the meeting. The report encompassed a proposal to permanently recruit an additional Assistant Headteacher. The new AHT would initially take on maternity cover duties to ensure continuity of provision. The report also included proposed changes to the responsibilities of the Headteacher and School Business Manager (SBM) posts.

The proposal was fully-costed. If accepted, the plan would provide financial savings in the school's 2016-2017 financial year and savings in 2017-2018. In 2018-2019 staffing costs would increase, balanced against anticipated additional funding received for increased pupil numbers.

**Governors asked: Do we have a small SLT?**

**A:** Yes. The size usually relates to the number of students at the school.

**Governors asked: Do the projected costs include national insurance and other on-costs?**

**A:** Yes

**Governors asked: Will this post, if agreed, help drive improvement?**

**A:** Yes.

**Governors asked: Does this constitute a re-structure?**

**A:** No. This had been checked; it is not an issue.

**Governors asked: Is it feasible for you to take on financial oversight and also lead teaching and learning?**

**A:** Financial oversight is not a new area for me; I did so in my last post. It may be that it needs to be reviewed at a later point.

**DT asked: An issue raised at the recent Academy Ambassadors Board Day was the fact that the competence of SBMs affects their ability to fulfil their tasks. The Board needs to ensure that risks in relation to financial management are mitigated. Will that be an issue?**

**A:** This most closely relates to members of staff who have new responsibilities. The new Company Secretary, who is also the new School Business Manager, has a background in banking and has high level financial skills. Support to quickly understand the school context will be needed but a plan to address that will be put in place. Her colleague in the school's financial team is currently studying for the AAT qualification; she already has substantial financial skills and experience at Oldfield in particular. The new SBM would be taking on budget forecasting. SMK would be line-managing both members of staff. It was intended that this arrangement would be trialled for the current academic year and then be reviewed.

**Governors asked: Will the new SBM attend Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee meetings?**

**A:** Yes.

**Governors asked: Will the SBM just report or be able to provide advice?**

**A:** Both. SMK advised that he would also attend but the F&GP Committee would be able to shape what was provided to meet its needs.

**The Governing Board approved SMK's proposal.**

## 12. Governing Board

### a. Confirm Committee Membership and Lead Responsibilities

A table detailing existing responsibilities had been circulated. The Committee membership and responsibilities were confirmed. It was noted that BR was also a member of the Remuneration Committee.

**Action: Clerk to update.**

It was agreed that a Pupil Premium Link Governor would be appointed at the next FGB meeting.

Action: SWe/Clerk.

SMK reminded governors that a calendar of key events had been sent to them in order to encourage their attendance and increase the Governing Board's visibility in school. Action: All

#### **b. Governor vacancies**

SWe advised the Governing Body that Dr Nicky Chatten (NC) had tendered her resignation on 20.09.2016 due to work pressures. On behalf of the governing body, SWe had sent a 'thank you' to NC for the very valuable contribution she had made to the school during her time in office.

It was noted that a vacancy on the F&GP Committee had been created by NC's departure. Action SWe.

There were 2 Co-opted Governor vacancies. KO advised that she was aware of 2 parents who had expressed interest in joining the Board. Action: KO to forward contact details to SWe.

#### **c. Governor Self Evaluation Form: Analysis of Governing Body Training Needs**

TD and KO reported that only a small number of completed forms had been received. After discussion it was agreed that a re-think was needed.

##### **New actions:**

- i. Review and simplify the self-evaluation questions and re-circulate. Action: TD/KO.
- ii. Complete the revised forms and return to TD/KO. Action: All governors.
- iii. Report back at next meeting. Action: TD/KO

#### **13. Any other URGENT Business**

##### **a. Safeguarding Policy**

SMK circulated the revised policy at the meeting and highlighted the small number of changes:

- i. Page 4, section 7. Recognising abuse: this section had been updated to include more detailed information.
- ii. Page 29, Appendix 8. Early Help: This Appendix was new.
- iii. Pages 30 and 31, Appendix 9. Supplementary Information: New information about sources of support for students about self-harm were now included in the appendix.

The Governing Board approved the revised policy. The policy would be reviewed in September 2017. It was agreed that it would added to the school website. Action: SMK.

##### **b. BET (Bath EducationTrust)**

SWe reported that BET had been dissolved. It had become too big. A Headteachers' group was likely to be formed out of the remnants of the organisation. Currently governors' meetings were taking place but it was too soon to know if those would continue.

##### **Governors asked: Will the joint projects we have with BET continue?**

A: Most will carry on including Continuing Professional Development work.

##### **c. Feedback from the Academy Ambassadors (Department for Education) Conference**

DT reported that this Academy Ambassadors had been set up in order to provide support and development for governors of academies. The conference had provided feedback on lessons learnt that would assist the development of trusts. Nick Gibb, Minister of State at the Department for Education, and Lord Nash, Under Secretary of State for Schools, had spoken at the event.

After the formal presentations all questioning from the floor had concerned grammar schools; those questions had not been answered.

DT had attended *Transfer to MAT (Multi Academy Trust)* and *Financial Management* workshop sessions. At the latter event the following information was shared:

- i. An 8%, in real terms, reduction in school budgets was forecast;
- ii. Over 50% of Trusts were in deficit
- iii. 54% of Single Academy Trusts (SATs) were in deficit.

The following issues were highlighted:

- iv. There was a lack of financial management, forward planning, oversight and supervision in many Trusts;
- v. There was a lack of financial information available to Trusts which inhibited the ability to be responsive to issues;
- vi. Many Trusts did not have a 3-year Business Plan in place;
- vii. There was a lack of awareness of the impact of falling rolls;
- viii. Boards need to ensure that they have sufficient information to fulfil their legal responsibilities
- ix. SLTs need to be more business-focussed;
- x. Back office teams need specialists instead of multi-hatted individuals;
- xi. The current agenda (expansion) is to ensure that academies secure the benefits possible from economies of scale;
- xii. All schools converting to academy status by 2020, within a MAT if possible, remained a priority for government.

DT reported that a clear message was given to SATs: *'Make your bed or it will be made for you. Don't be focussed on grammar schools – sort yourselves out.'*

The Governing Board noted that although it was a SAT it already benefitted from economies of scale via joint-purchasing arrangements with other schools e.g. utilities.

TD reported. that there was a MAT Strategy meeting with other schools on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016 at Hayesfield School.

DT offered to circulate relevant documents from the event. **Action: DT/Clerk.**

**14. Date of next Full Governing Board Meetings: Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

10. 30 am - Full Governing Board

12.30 pm - Full Governing Board and Student Council.

The meeting ended at 7.50 pm.

**For information:** The next OSA (Oldfield School Association) meeting would take place on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016, 7.00 pm. Venue: The Boathouse by the Newbridge Park and Ride.