



Hitchin Boys' School

MINUTES FOR FULL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING 2nd March 2022 at 6.20pm

Board Members	Attendance 2021/2022	Present at this meeting
Dr Helen Corkill (HC) Co-opted Trustee – Chair	5/5	Dr Helen Corkill (HC) Co-opted Trustee – Chair
Mr John Turney (JT) Trustee – Vice Chair	5/5	Mr John Turney (JT) Trustee – Vice Chair
Mr Philip Addison (PA) Parent Trustee	4/5	Mr Philip Addison (PA) Parent Trustee
Mr Neil Broughton (NB) Parent Trustee	4/5	Mr Neil Broughton (NB) Parent Trustee
Mr Bryan Gillingham (BG) Trustee	4/5	Mr Bryan Gillingham (BG) Trustee
Ms Kirsty Harvey (KH) Parent Trustee	3/5	
Mr David Hutchinson (DH) Trustee	3/5	
Mr. David Ingledew (DI) Trustee	2/5	
Ms. Hazel Jones (HJ) Co-opted Trustee	4/4	Ms. Hazel Jones (HJ) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Phil Laws (PL) Trustee	5/5	Mr Phil Laws (PL) Trustee
Mr Steven Marlow (SM) Trustee	5/5	Mr Steven Marlow (SM) Trustee
Ms Jen McCall (JM) Co-opted Trustee	2/5	Ms Jen McCall (JM) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Fergal Moane (FM) Headteacher	5/5	Mr Fergal Moane (FM) Headteacher
Mrs Janet Radley (JR) Co-opted Trustee	5/5	Mrs Janet Radley (JR) Co-opted Trustee
Miss Kathryn Rainbow (KR) Co-opted Trustee	4/5	Miss Kathryn Rainbow (KR) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Bhagwant Singh (BS) Co-opted Trustee	5/5	Mr Bhagwant Singh (BS) Co-opted Trustee
Mrs Liz Taplin (LT) Co-opted Trustee	4/5	Mrs Liz Taplin (LT) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Michael Taylor (MT) Trustee	5/5	Mr Michael Taylor (MT) Trustee
Cllr Richard Thake (RT) Trustee	5/5	Cllr Richard Thake (RT) Trustee
Ms Jo Weston (JW) Parent Trustee	5/5	Ms Jo Weston (JW) Parent Trustee
Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee	5/5	Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee

In attendance:

Bob Goldsmith – Clerk

	The meeting was conducted remotely using MS Teams owing to Covid-19 restrictions. The meeting was quorate.	Action
1.	Welcome and introductions.	

Approved: _____
Board of Trustees 2nd March 2022

	Michael Page, the recently appointed new chair of the Members' Board was welcomed to observe the meeting.	
2.	To receive apologies and approve absences . Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Kirsty Harvey, David Hutchinson and David Ingledew and for late arrival from Neil Broughton and Richard Thake.	
3.	To declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the meeting and any changes in declarations of interest . <i>'Trustees are reminded they must declare a particular interest, financial or other, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting for that item'</i> . There were none.	
4.	To receive notification of Any Other Urgent Business There was none.	
5.	To approve the minutes of Board of Trustee meetings held on 26th January 2022 The minutes were approved as an accurate record, to be signed electronically on GovernorHub.	
6.	<p>Matters Arising from the Minutes</p> <p>1. Sign the minutes of Board of Trustees meetings of 11th November and 9th December 2022 on Governor Hub. HC COMPLETE</p> <p>2. Code of Conduct: Trustees to comment to the Chair on her HC proposed draft by 18th February. Final version to be submitted to The Board Meeting on 2nd March. HC ONGOING</p> <p>3. Link Governors to arrange online meetings with their subject leaders / pastoral leads - to take place before the end of the Spring Term. Also, to liaise with the Chair should they not have received any training on how to conduct link governor visits. Trustees ON AGENDA</p> <p>4. Governor Hub Training Logs to be updated by all Trustees by 18th February. Trustees ON AGENDA</p> <p>5. Trustees to set up school emails (should they not already have them) on the basis that they will be the only email addresses used from September 2022. Trustees ONGOING</p> <p>6. Begin planning work for the Staff Tea Party with Trustees on 11th May. PA, LT, & JW ON AGENDA</p>	
7.	Membership of the Board of Trustees The Clerk that Helen Corkill's membership as a Co-opted Trustee would expire on 22 nd April 2022.	

Approved: _____
Board of Trustees 2nd March 2022

	It was unanimously resolved that Helen Corkill be re-appointed as a Co-opted Trustee for a further four years of office - (proposed John Turney, seconded Michael Taylor).	
8	<p>Headteacher's Report</p> <p>The Headteacher gave an oral report to the Board on key developments recently at the school. Discussion focused on the following matters:</p> <p>a) Secondary School Allocation Day</p> <p>The headteacher presented a summary report following secondary school allocation day, which had posted on Governor.Hub</p> <p>The headteacher reported that the previous day had been 'Secondary School Allocation Day. 210 applications had been received, so it was certain that the school would reach its Planned Allocation Number for accepted places. With falling rolls at some other comparable local schools, this was an achievement not to be under-estimated. Particular features of this year's applications were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 38 applications from siblings, which would allow more scope for children from families new to the school to attend. • 85 applications from the priority area closest to the school. • Applications for two looked-after children. • Only one child currently in receipt of an Education Health Care Plan. • 13 applications from children currently attending independent schools (although the headteacher predicted that this number would reduce with certain of these being accepted by secondary schools after exams). • The families who had applied were in the main living in Hitchin, with Letchworth and Knebworth also having quite a few applications. • There would be fewer feeder schools that in past years, although still around thirty. <p>The headteacher also reminded trustees that the applications had been submitted under the current applications procedure, not that recently approved by the board which not come into effect until 2023 – 2024. Prospective parents would be contacted at the end of April. At the end of the process, the school would be over-subscribed so places would be allocated on distance once higher priority groups of applicants have been allocated.</p> <p>Q1: Reference was made to a report sent to trustees providing further information on secondary school applications, in which they appeared to be colour-coded. What was the significance of the colours, does it represent location?</p> <p>A: No, this is a quirk of the computer package being used.</p> <p>b) Plans for Green Week</p> <p>The headteacher presented the written programme for the school's Green Week, which had been posted on Governor Hub prior to the meeting.</p> <p>105 new trees had been allocated to the school by the National Trust and an event was planned for 18th March either to plant them should they be received in time, or at least celebrate the project and the positive impact on the environment of tree planting. House mascots for the World Wildlife Fund would be playing a prominent role in the Green Week. The new School Eco Cttee had been planning the initiative. Trustees welcomed were pleased to hear about the plans and thanked the Eco Cttee for their enthusiasm and leadership.</p>	

c) Support to Help Students Cope with the Pressures on the Wellbeing of the Russian Government's Invasion of Ukraine.

The headteacher presented the letter that had been sent to parents on 28th February given recent developments in Ukraine.

The Board of Trustees reflected on the tragic developments taking place as they met in Ukraine, the bombing and loss of life arising from the Russian Government's invasion.

The Headteacher drew trustees' attention to the impact of these developments on students' wellbeing, particularly so soon after the anxieties of covid, and the need for the school to provide students with all possible support and re-assurance it could. He spoke about teaching taking place about the history of Ukraine, NATO and the Cold War and background to the current war. Students had also engaged with charitable fund-raising efforts which would help them give a sense of agency in the face of events. The difficulty of doing this in an appropriate manner was acknowledged, but the school could see threats to students' wellbeing were the matter not to be talked about by the school.

JM, (a teacher at the school) advised trustees that there was a student at the school with a grandmother still in Ukraine, alongside three Russian students two of whom were in Year 7 so particularly young and potentially vulnerable. Adults within the school had been designated to provide 1:1 personal support for these four boys, acknowledging the duty of care owed to them by the school. They had been responding in an admirably mature way to the stresses being placed on them. Parents from one of the families involved had personally thanked the school for its support.

The headteacher also advised that one member of staff had been in Russia at the time of the invasion and was still trying to get back home.

Trustees thanked the headteacher for the work taking place to support students at this difficult time. He agreed, confidentially where necessary, to keep the chair updated on developments.

d) Departure of Rose Oliva Pugh (Assistant Headteacher)

The Headteacher reported that Rose Oliva Pugh (Assistant Headteacher) would be leaving the school at Easter. She had been offered promotion to Deputy Headteacher by a school in Bedford, which would be a good career move for her and also be closer to her home. Rose had taught at the school for seventeen years. Her leaving would be a real loss to the school's leadership.

The Board of Trustees thanked Rose Oliva Pugh for her contribution to the school.

e) Proposed Staff Leadership Team Re-Structuring

The Headteacher presented a written report (that had been posted on Governor Hub prior to the meeting) proposing a re-structuring of the school's Senior Leadership Team. The report had been written taking advantage of the announcement of Rose Oliva Pugh's departure to take a fresh look at the SLT's structure.

The Headteacher outlined the rationale for a restructuring:

- Strains evident in pastoral world – more complex needs, more mental health issues post covid, challenge from parents etc;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A larger school – by September, we will be 210 students in each year group from year 7-11 and with the largest sixth form to date; • Need to put in place a scalable system that caters to the larger, more complex school and allows for strategic development as well as reactive and operational matters <p>The Headteacher advised that large secondary schools generally now have two deputy headteachers, with duties separated out between them for pastoral and academic. This would be the model that the Headteacher recommended. He outlined the proposed roles and how they would operate under his model.</p> <p>The Headteacher then moved onto the practicalities of how his proposed structure would, if agreed, be introduced from September 2022.</p> <p>The Headteacher explained that an advert had already been place for recruitment of a new Deputy Headteacher post (closing 14th March with interviews on 21st March). These dates were however subject to approval of the senior leadership at the current meeting. He outlined the practicalities of moving forward with his proposed new structure, should it be approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new Deputy Head is a governor appointed role, so will be externally advertised and open to internal and external candidates. Will need to be September start given the timing, but appointed before Easter. • Head of KS4 and KS5 roles are likely to be internal and open to anyone with pastoral experience, not just current heads of year. This would be advertised after the DH Pastoral appointment. • One year associate Assistant Head appointed again in the summer term for a September start <p>Following discussion with the Headteacher on the rationale for the proposals, the Board of Trustees endorsed the proposed re-structure of the School's Leadership Team, as reported by the Headteacher, along with the practical</p>	<p>Head</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>School Governance</p> <p>a) Governor Link Visits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT <p>KW spoke about a fascinating visit he had recently made to the school's IT faculty. He referred to the staff all being quite recently appointed and their real ambition to develop an innovative contribution to the school's teaching. In particular KW referred to a new Year 7 Stem Club. KW also spoke about development of the IT curriculum to better in-bed students' knowledge combatively; a new project being initiated with another local school; and improving links into other teaching disciplines within the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Technology <p>FW had also visited the Food Technology teaching. He referred to their increasing engagement with the school's hospitality for visitors. This led to the Board of Trustees to discuss whether it might be a good initiative for Food Technology students to provide hospitality for one of their meetings.</p> <p>Agreed to invite the Food Technology students to provide hospitality for a future Board of Trustees meeting.</p>	<p>Chair / KW</p>

	<p>b) Governing Body Code of Conduct The Chair reported that she was at work finalising the wording of the Board of Trustees' Code of Conduct. This was at least in part because some trustees were yet to send her their comments.</p> <p>The Chair proposed that the school's values be built into the Code of Conduct. This was approved as a great idea.</p> <p>Chair to present the final document to the next meeting for approval.</p> <p>(NB: At this point, Richard Thake joined the meeting).</p> <p>c) Audit of Governor Skills and Training- Interim Findings So far, the Chair had only received responses from one-third of trustees. This was preventing her from presenting interim findings. She asked all trustees to complete this task urgently.</p> <p>d) Tea Party with Staff Noted that work was progressing, led by PA with LT and JW also contributing.</p> <p>e) Trustee Meetings After Easter: In Person or Online? It was agreed, on the Chair's recommendation, that after Easter committee meetings would be held in person but that the larger Board of Trustees meetings would generally still be held virtually online. However, the Board of Trustees meeting on 11th May would be held in person, given that trustees planned to meet with staff at the tea party.</p>	<p>Chair</p> <p>Chair (All to Note)</p>
10.	<p>Committee Meetings</p> <p>The minutes of the Teaching & Learning Cttee meeting on 1st February and Health, Safety & Premises Cttee meeting on 9th February were noted.</p>	
11.	<p>Policies</p> <p>There were no policies to consider.</p>	
12	<p>Queens' Platinum Jubilee Tree Canopy</p> <p>Richard Thake reported on a project that he and KH had developed with the local Royal British Legion for trustees to provide a commemorative plaque for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. This would be a high-profile and impressively finished plaque, which trustees recognised would be an appropriate gesture.</p>	<p>KH / RT / Head</p>
13.	<p>Chair's Action</p> <p>None to report.</p>	
14.	<p>Other Urgent Business</p> <p>The Board of Trustees received and noted the management accounts for January 2022 which projected an end-of-year surplus of around £200k. The Headteacher outlined latest budgetary developments, which included positive outcomes to recent applications for external funding, better than expected sports centre income and accounting for covid catch-up grants.</p>	

	<p>Q2: Did this situation represent one-off circumstances or were longer-term trends involved? A: One-off circumstances, although it was to be hoped that the situation would continue to improve.</p>	
15.	<p>Dates of Future Meetings of the Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11th May 2022; • 8th June 2022 and • 5th July 2022. 	

The meeting closed at 7.02pm

Signed:

Date:

Summary of Actions Agreed			
Action Point	Action	Responsibility	Status
8 c)	Restructuring of the Leadership Team	Head	New Item
9 a)	Invite Food Technology students to provide catering for a future Board of Trustees meeting / event.	Head	Completed
9 b)	Approval of Board of Trustees code of conduct	Chair	Ongoing
12	Queen's Platinum Jubilee Tree Canopy	Governors	New Item

Approved: _____
Board of Trustees 2nd March 2022