



Hitchin Boys' School

PART ONE OPEN MINUTES FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING Monday 26th September 2022 at 5.45pm held Online

Board Members	Attendance 2022/2023	Present at this meeting
Dr Helen Corkill (HC) Co-opted Trustee – Chair	1/1	Dr Helen Corkill (HC) Co-opted Trustee (<i>Online</i>)
Mr John Turney (JT) Trustee – Vice Chair	1/1	Mr John Turney (JT) Trustee – (Meeting Chair)
Mr Philip Addison (PA) Parent Trustee	1/1	Mr Philip Addison (PA) Parent Trustee (<i>Online</i>)
Mr Neil Broughton (NB) Parent Trustee	1/1	Mr Neil Broughton (NB) Parent Trust
Mr Bryan Gillingham (BG) Trustee	1/1	Mr Bryan Gillingham (BG) Trustee
Ms Kirsty Harvey (KH) Parent Trustee	0/1	
Mr David Hutchinson (DH) Trustee	0/1	
Ms. Hazel Jones (HJ) Co-opted Trustee	1/1	Ms. Hazel Jones (HJ) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Phil Laws (PL) Trustee	1/1	Mr Phil Laws (PL) Trustee
Mr Steven Marlow (SM) Trustee	0/1	
Ms Jen McCall (JM) Co-opted Trustee	0/1	
Mr Fergal Moane (FM) Headteacher	1/1	Mr Fergal Moane (FM) Headteacher
Mrs Janet Radley (JR) Co-opted Trustee	1/1	Mrs Janet Radley (JR) Co-opted Trustee
Ms Kathryn Rainbow (KR) Co-opted Trustee)	1/1	Ms Kathryn Rainbow (KR) Co-opted Trustee)
Mr Chris Schanschieff (CS) Trustee	1/1	Mr Chris Schanschieff (CS) Trustee
Mr Bhagwant Singh (BS) Co-opted Trustee	0/1	
Mrs Liz Taplin (LT) Co-opted Trustee	0/1	
Mr Michael Taylor (MT) Trustee	1/1	Mr Michael Taylor (MT) Trustee
Cllr Richard Thake (RT) Trustee	1/1	Cllr Richard Thake (RT) Trustee
Ms Jo Weston (JW) Parent Trustee	1/1	Ms Jo Weston (JW) Parent Trustee
Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee	1/1	Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee

In attendance:

Bob Goldsmith – Clerk

1.	<p>Welcome and introductions.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all present to the extraordinary trustees meeting, convened as a matter of urgency to approve a revised School Budget for the 2022 – 2023 financial year. Opportunity was also being taken to approve the membership of the Board of Trustee's committees, to enable them to meet with the intended revised membership over the coming month. The Chair thanked trustees for attending at short notice.</p>	
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2.	<p>To receive apologies and approve absences.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Kirsty Harvey, David Hutchinson, Steven Marlow, Jen McCall, Kathryn Rainbow, Bhagwant Singh and Liz Taplin. It was acknowledged that the short notice given of the meeting and early start time had impacted on attendance. Apologies for late arrival were received from Janet Radley.</p>	
3.	<p>To declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the meeting and any changes in declarations of interest.</p> <p><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></p> <p>There were none.</p>	
4.	<p>Revised School Budget 2022 – 2023</p> <p>The Board of Trustees received from the Headteacher a revised school budget for the 2022 – 2023 financial year. Alongside this was a commentary, an amended breakdown of energy costs provided by LASER (the school's provider) and an update issued by the Department for Education on the new energy relief scheme to be introduced by government to support schools, colleges and early years settings</p> <p>The Headteacher reported that the need to revisit the school budget arose from two factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The lack of additional grant funding from central government to meet costs of the recommended teachers' pay award; ➤ The steep escalation in fuel costs. <p>Given these two areas of additional costs placed on the school, there was no alternative other than to find complementary efficiency savings given the requirement that the school set a balanced budget for the year. The proposed savings were set out within the Headteacher's written commentary submitted to the meeting.</p> <p>Costs of the Pay Awards for Teachers and Support Staff</p> <p>The Headteacher explained in more depth the position on the pay award. Teacher pay was proposed to rise between 5% and 8%, with a 5% uplift for responsibility payments and on the leadership scale. The major change would be the uplift for experienced teachers from 3% to 5%, and the overwhelming majority of the school's staff would be on the upper pay spines. No new funding had been offered from the government for this, schools were being told to find the extra from within their already announced settlements. The DfE had cited the increase in per-pupil funding announced earlier in the year by the Chancellor of the Exchequer earlier in the year long before the spike in inflation, the uplift in pay and the energy crisis.</p> <p>The Headteacher also updated the board on the position for support staff. The National Joint Council for local government employers had proposed a £1925 uplift to all pay scales, backdated to 1st April 2022. This would be an uplift of 10% at the lowest end up to 4% of the pay scales. The NJC had also proposed an additional days paid annual leave from 1st April 2023.</p> <p>The total impact for the school of the pay proposals would be approximately £150k.</p>	

Escalating Energy Costs and the Energy Relief Scheme of Schools.

The Headteacher advised the board that there was a huge unknown around energy costs.

The school was part of a collective buying scheme, Laser run by Kent County Council. This had significant leverage in the market as they were buying £0.5bn of energy on behalf of a variety of public sector organisation. Their tendering process would produce the best possible value. The school had factored in an 80% rise into the budget for both gas and electricity and would be working with staff to try to reduce usage. Another unknown was if Laser would take on the gas supply for the J Block and Pavilion new buildings that were currently on standalone agreements with British Gas. Electricity had already been added to the Laser contract for these buildings).

The Headteacher also presented an update just received from the Department for Education's update on a new energy relief scheme for schools.

Other Increasing Costs

The Headteacher reminded the board that inflation would be impacting on other areas of school spend over the coming year. For example, the cost of books was rising by 15% - 20%.

Other Action Taken by the School

The Headteacher reported that he had written to Hitchin's local MP about the financial choices facing the school.

Questions from Trustees

Trustees had already submitted questions prior to the meeting:

Q1: How effective have Laser been at keeping the costs down over the last 12 months?

A: It has been a fixed price – see the forecast

Q2: I wonder whether we need to fully reflect the upwards pressure somewhere (perhaps on the risk register?) particularly as business energy costs are rising far above the household price cap? Especially given how taut the budget is without any contingency.

A: Yes, Risk Register will be updated for FGB. Energy price cap for businesses lasts until end of March, now households reviewed at the same point too in the latest announcement by the latest Chancellor (at the time of writing)

Q3: What increase have we assumed on the medium sized budget lines such as catering, cleaning, and supplies and services? Are our suppliers contractually tied to costs? Or could the suppliers pass their increased costs on to HBS?

A: We are retendering for cleaning. Catering is down to Herts Catering Limited to manage their supply chain, staffing costs etc. Increases in supplies and services will be serviced by fixed capital budgets – we will get fewer learning resources, less facilities maintenance etc for the same money

Q4: What are we paying currently (per kWh) for electricity? Is our current deal 'fixed' until next September?

A: This is in the forecast

Q5: Can we make our energy costs one of the KPI's?

A: No, this is subject to government regulation, it is largely outside our control

Q5: Going forward the school needs to take some energy saving measures, which might mean

	<p>spending a little to save a lot. Such as better heating controls, local temp settings, ensure all external doors & windows close & seal, reducing the temperature, reduce the hours in a day when the heating is on, add local smart meters to see where our high electricity usage is, we have led light fittings but add more PIR sensors so lights turn off automatically when no-one in the room, re-think our hot water systems, turn the temperature down. What scope is there for energy savings measures?</p> <p>A: Newer buildings already have solar panels, PIR sensors etc. School boiler system was completely replaced 3-4 years ago and is as efficient as it can be. An audit can be done, but this is time expensive and the maintenance budget needs to be spent on safety and improvements that make a difference to the education of young people.</p> <p>Following due consideration of the revised budget and the financial position it was unanimously resolved that the revised school budget for the 2022 – 2023 financial year be approved.</p>	
5.	<p>Committee Membership 2022 – 2023 School Year</p> <p>The Chair presented a paper setting out the proposed committee membership for the 2022 – 2023 school year. The proposed membership had been previously been considered at the Chairs Steering Group and was now recommended for approval.</p> <p>Resolved that the Membership of the Board of Trustees for the coming year would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Audit, Risk & Resources Cttee: Philip Addison, Bryan Gillingham, David Hutchinson, Hazel Jones, Steven Marlow, Janet Radley, Bhagwant Singh, Richard Thake and John Turney. ➤ Health, Safety & Premises Cttee: Kirsty Harvey, Phil Laws, Steven Marlow, Richard Thake, Khris Whitmore and a staff trustee. ➤ Pastoral Cttee: Philip Addison, David Hutchinson, Phil Laws, Janet Radley, Chris Schanschieff, Michael Taylor, Jo Weston and a staff trustee. ➤ Teaching & Learning Cttee: Neil Broughton, Helen Corkill (ex-officio), Bryan Gillingham, Kirsty Harvey, Chris Schanschieff, Bhagwant Singh, Khris Whitmore and a staff trustee. 	

The meeting closed at 6.05pm

Chair's Signature:

Date:

Approved: _____
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