

Hitchin Boys' School

PART ONE OPEN MINUTES FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING Monday 31st October 2022 at 6.00pm held at the School

Board Members	Attendance 2022/2023	Present at this meeting
Dr Helen Corkill (HC) Co-opted Trustee – Chair	2/2	Dr Helen Corkill (HC) Co-opted Trustee
Mr John Turney (JT) Trustee – Vice Chair	2/2	Mr John Turney (JT) Trustee
Mr Philip Addison (PA) Parent Trustee	2/2	Mr Philip Addison (PA) Parent Trustee (Online)
Mr Neil Broughton (NB) Parent Trustee	2/2	Mr Neil Broughton (NB) Parent Trust
Mr Bryan Gillingham (BG) Trustee	2/2	Mr Bryan Gillingham (BG) Trustee (Online)
Ms Kirsty Harvey (KH) Parent Trustee	1/2	Ms Kirsty Harvey (KH) Parent Trustee
Mr David Hutchinson (DH) Trustee	0/2	
Ms. Hazel Jones (HJ) Co-opted Trustee	2/2	Ms. Hazel Jones (HJ) Co-opted Trustee (Online)
Mr Phil Laws (PL) Trustee	2/2	Mr Phil Laws (PL) Trustee
Mr Steven Marlow (SM) Trustee	1/2	Mr Steven Marlow (SM) Trustee
Ms Jen McCall (JM) Co-opted Trustee	1/2	Ms Jen McCall (JM) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Fergal Moane (FM) Headteacher	2/2	Mr Fergal Moane (FM) Headteacher
Mrs Janet Radley (JR) Co-opted Trustee	2/2	Mrs Janet Radley (JR) Co-opted Trustee
Miss Kathryn Rainbow (KR) Co-opted Trustee	2/2	Miss Kathryn Rainbow (KR) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Chris Schanschieff (CS) Trustee	2/2	Mr Chris Schanschieff (CS) Trustee
Mr Bhagwant Singh (BS) Co-opted Trustee	1/2	Mr Bhagwant Singh (BS) Co-opted Trustee
Mrs Liz Taplin (LT) Co-opted Trustee	0/2	
Mr Michael Taylor (MT) Trustee	2/2	Mr Michael Taylor (MT) Trustee
Cllr Richard Thake (RT) Trustee	2/2	Cllr Richard Thake (RT) Trustee
Ms Jo Weston (JW) Parent Trustee	2/2	Ms Jo Weston (JW) Parent Trustee
Ms. Vicki Whent (VW) Co-opted Trustee	1/1	Ms. Vicki Whent (VW) Co-opted Trustee
Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee	2/2	Mr Kris Whitmore (KW) Trustee

In attendance:

Bob Goldsmith – Clerk Femi Olusanya – Head Boy

1. Welcome and introductions.

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting. In particular, she welcomed Vicki Whent who had accepted an invitation to be co-opted onto the Board of Trustees - (see Item 6 for the decision on this).

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	The Chair proposed and it was agreed that the order of the agenda be changed to take Item 14C, the Trustees' Safeguarding Quiz, after Agenda Item 6.	
2.	To receive apologies and approve absences .	
	Apologies for absence were received and accepted from David Hutchinson and Liz Taplin and for late arrival from Bryan Gillingham (present for Item 8 onwards).	
3.	To declare any conflict of interest that may arise during the meeting and any changes in declarations of interest .	
	'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'.	
	Kirsty Harvey declared that her son was now employed as a part-time member of staff at the Sports Centre.	
4.	Notification of Any Other Business	
	 Teacher recruitment and receipt of a letter from local NEU Branch about teacher pay (from the Headteacher); 	
	 Good news about the progress of a former student (from Michael Taylor). 	
	 The Trustees welcomed to the meeting the school's new Head Prefect Femi Olusanya. He talked with trustees about: > His pleasure that football had been introduced at the school, the reason why he was smiling! > The good working relationship he was developing with the younger prefects for Years 7 and 8 He added that associating with his siblings' friends was helping him gain greater awareness of the needs of younger students at the school. > His role leading the new Diversity Club which aimed to embrace students from all ethnicities and year groups to develop the sense of family across the whole school. Femi was particularly excited about bringing his Nigerian food and ethnic dress into school for a proposed event in April to celebrate the different cultures represented by students across the school. > His role co-ordinating the choice of charities that the school would be supporting during the year, as voted by the students across the school. > The new eco garden being created alongside the entrance of the 6th form centre. 	
6.	Membership of the Board It was noted and recorded that David Ingledew had resigned from the Board of Trustees, The Chair introduced Vicki Whent to her fellow trustees. who she nominated for co-option onto the Board. In particular, the Chair referred to Ms. Whent's knowledge and experience of special needs education provision which would bring a welcome new facet to the skills sets of the board.	
	 Resolved: 1) that Vicki Whent be appointed as a co-opted member of the Board of Trustees for a period of four years. 	

7.	Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair		Cha
•	Appointment of chair and vice-chair		
	Resolved:		
	 That Helen Corkill be re-appointed as Chair of the Board of 	Trustees for a further	
	year.		
	 That John Turney be re-appointed as Vice-Chair of the Board 	rd of Trustees for a further	
	year.		
•	Minutes of Previous Meetings		
	a) Meeting held on 5 th July 2022		
	Item 7C: Sports Centre Staff: Uplift in Pay for Level One	to Level Four Staff	
	(Audit, Risk & Resources Cttee Report)		
	Kirsty Harvey declared a personal interest in consideration	of this matter, her son now	
	being a part-time employee at the school's sports centre.		
	In response to a question on progress with this item, the He	eadteacher advised that,	
	since the 2021- 2022 year-end financial accounts for the sp	2	
	finalised the previous week, there had not as yet been oppo	ortunity to review the	
	scope for the proposed pay award.		
	Resolved: That the Chair be granted authority to take a de	cision on the matter under	Cha
	Chair's Action.		
	> Item 8B: Invitation of the Parents' Society Chair to mee	t with the Board of	
	Trustees (Headteacher's Report)		
	The Chair reported that the Chair of the Parents' Society ha		Clerk
	the meeting, as agreed, but because of his diary would inst	ead be attending the	not
	board meeting on 13 th December.		
	Item 11: Trustees Skills Audit (Governance)		
	The Chair reported that the Skills Audit had now been com	pleted by all but two	
	trustees. The exercise had been helpful in guiding the appo	ointment of trustees onto	
	committees and indentified the necessary skills sets to be f	illed as new trustees are	
	appointed (see VW's appointment at the current meeting to	o provide particular	
	expertise in special educational needs).		
	> Item 11: Requirement that all Trustees Use their HBS E-	Mail Addresses when	
	conducting School Business (Governance).		
	The Chair reported that all trustees were indeed now using	their HBS email addresses	
	when conducting school business and not their personal er		
	thanked trustees for their co-operation with this important	change.	
	Note that all other actions listed at the foot of the minu implemented as required.	utes had been	
	Resolved: that the minutes be approved and signed as a correct re-	cord of the meeting	Chair
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	b) Extraordinary Meeting held on 26 th September 2022		
Т	here no matters arising from the minutes.	Clork	
	Resolved: that the minutes be approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting <i>ubject to</i> adding Kathryn Rainbow to the list of those present at the meeting.,	Clerk	
9. G	Sovernance Matters		
a	Code of Conduct The Chair clarified that the only change to the code of conduct had been to add the requirement that trustees use their HBS email addresses when conducting school business (as already discussed).		
	Resolved: that the Code of Conduct be approved.	Clei	
	b) The Board's Operational Procedures The clerk clarified that the document had been re-titled as 'Operational Procedures', rather than 'Governing Body Policy' as previously, as this title better reflected the purpose of the document. No changes had been made to the body of the text. Resolved: that the Board's operational procedures be approved.		
c) Terms of Reference for Committees and Establishment of a new Pay and Performance Committee	Clei	
	Terms of Reference The Clerk advised that he had initially read through the terms of references for the Board's committees (as variously set in 2018 and 2019). The following changes would be advisable:		
	 Audit, Risk & Resources Cttee: to update the levels of spend permitted under delegated authority and reflect the amalgamation of the previous Audit Cttee and Resources Cttee into the one body Pastoral Cttee: to reflect the changes introduced with establishment of the school's new Pastoral Team (headed by the new Deputy Head for that role). No changes were required for the Health, Safety & Premises Cttee or the Teaching & 		
	Learning Cttee . However it would helpful to present them in a common format with one overall review date.		
	Additionally, the Chair advised that it would be necessary to establish a new Pay and Performance Committee , this having been omitted from the committees set up at the Board's Extraordinary Meeting on 26 th September.		
	Resolved: That the Clerk be asked to undertake a review of the terms of reference for the Board's various committees,	Cle	
	Establishment of a new Pay and Performance Committee		
	Resolved : that a new Pay and Performance Committee be established with the following membership: John Turney (Chair), Helen Corkill, Bhagwant Singh and Richard Thake.	Cler	

d)	Arrangements for Link Trustees Visits The Board discussed the arrangements for link trustee visits to the school.	
A: Hea trus poli mid	How many times should a link governor be visiting the school each year? The Chair responded that this was a matter currently under discussion with the adteacher. A balance would be needed between the need, on the one hand, for link tees to identify and consider developing trends across the school terms within a particular cy area or academic year and, on the other, not creating undue pressure on the time that dle leaders have available given their other duties and their shortage of available time for fessional development.	
The	Chair agreed to report further to the next meeting.	Chair
e)	Audit of Trustees Skills and Training Skills Audit 	
	The Chair updated the meeting on completion of the skills audit. The main development over recent months had been the renewed opportunity for link trustees once again to visit the school, which would enable them to observe teaching and learning in practice and develop the confidence to challenge as critical friends what they observe and take matters forward appropriately. The Chair also referred to recently issued guidance from the National Governors Association.	
	Trustee Training On training, the Chair reported that she had been exploring wider options for accessing courses, given the pressure on the places offered by HfL Education. In particular, courses offered online by (for example) 'Modern Governor' were free unlike most of those offered by HfL Education. However, HfL Education alone provided real-time opportunity for trustees / governors to meet with the trainer and enter into discussion. Course providers should therefore be selected appropriately. The School Business Manager (DIW) would be sending trustees a pro-forma to use in future when booking HfL courses. Attendance on fee-charging courses would require prior approval from the Chair, and the School Business Manager. given the costs involved.	Trustees to note.
	The Chair also reported that a bespoke training event had been set up for the whole board on School Exclusions – Thursday 10 th November at 6.30pm.	
f)	Succession Planning The Chair emphasised the importance at all times of succession planning to enable a seamless change of post-holders.	
g)	Options for and External Scrutiny of Governance Arrangements The Chair reported that she was looking into options for external scrutiny of the school's governance arrangements, as recommended by the Dept for Education's 'Academies Handbook'. One potential option under consideration would be to employ Alison Saunders, the School Effectiveness Officer designated by HfL Education to work with the school. The aim would be to carry out the scrutiny review in Spring or Summer 2023.	Chair
The	Chair agreed to report further to the next meeting.	Chair
. Pay	Award for School Staff, 2022 – 2023	
The	Board of Trustees received a written report that had been posted on Governor Hub prior	
to t	he meeting.	

a) Teachers Pay Award

The Headteacher advised the Board that the 'School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document 2022, including Guidance on Teachers Pay and Conditions', had passed through Parliament on 14th October.

The nationally approved pay 'increase' would be 5%, with nearly 9% for early career teachers on their way to achieving the goal of a starting teacher salary of £30k next year. The leadership, unqualified and TLR scales, would also rise by 5%. The pay rise would be backdated to 1st September.

While the proposed increase technically awaited final sanction by Government, given the opportunity for MPs to raise any objections to the proposed increase until 4th November, the likelihood of this occurring was very slight. (Update: there were no objections). To ensure that staff received the pay award in their November salaries, the Headteacher asked the Board of Trustees to approve implementation of the proposed increase without delay.

The Board acknowledged that, being an academy trust, the school was not strictly bound to implement the nationally agreed pay increase to teachers. However until now, in line with most other academies, the school had gone along with the nationally approved pay increases as in maintained schools.

The Headteacher advised that, bearing in mind CPI inflation in September of 10.1%, the nationally agreed levels would in effect represent another real terms pay cut. Over a twelve year period, teachers pay would have been cut in real terms in nine of those years, leading to an overall cut of 20% in real terms during this period. He drew to the Board's attention the current ballot taking place among teachers for industrial action on the matter that could lead to strike action at the school alongside others across the country. However it was however acknowledged that the school was not financially in a position to pay increases above those set nationally.

Resolved:

- That the School continue to pay salaries to its teaching staff in accordance with the levels recommended by the Teacher Review Body and approved by Parliament, not taking up the opportunity available to it as an academy to implement different pay levels.
- That the Board of Trustee implements the increases to teacher pay set out in 'School Teachers Pay and Review Document 2022 as approved by Parliament, for inclusion in November pay cheques to staff.
- 3) That decision making on approval of incremental pay progression for teachers be delegated to the Pay & Performance Cttee (established at Item 9C above).

b) Support Staff Pay Award

The Headteacher reported that a flat £1925 increase to all pay scales was proposed by Local Authorities ('The Green Book' via National Joint Council for local government services.) An additional day's holiday was also proposed. UNISON had already accepted the pay offer (and is the only recognised union for Herts locally. The full trade union side would be meeting on 1st November and it seemed very likely that a formal collective agreement would be achieved with issue of the NJC pay circular shortly afterwards. (Update: this did prove to be the case). Again the Headteacher requested the Board's approval to the proposed increase.

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Chair

	Resolved:	
	 That the School continue to pay salaries to its support staff in accordance with the levels collectively agreed by local authorities and the trade unions nationally. That the proposed flat rate increase of £1925 be paid to support staff, as agreed nationally. That the national collective decision with respect to UNISON's proposal for an additional day's holiday be recognised by the school. 	
	c) Senior Leadership Pay	
	Resolved: that decision making on Senior Leadership Pay be delegated to the Pay & Performance Committee (established at Item 9C above)	Chai
11.	School Development Plan The Board of Trustees received the School Development Plan 2022 – 2023, updated and RAG- rated, which had been posted on Governor Hub prior to the meeting.	
	The Board acknowledged that the school had only reached an early point in the school year, so implementation of school plans were obviously only just getting started. However the report did give opportunity to identify any initial delays.	
	The Headteacher briefed the Board on those matters that were currently rated as amber:	
12	 Ethos and Culture: The World Class Schools Movement had now disbanded. Therefore the proposal to engage with them would be dropped. The School would explore whether an alternative suitable grouping exists. Quality of Education: Priority had been given initially to getting the new A-Level courses up and running. Work on the super-curriculum would be something to progress at a later stage during the year. Personal Development: Work was steadily progressing to establish a multi-years career strategy. The school was currently developing links with external groups – for example the Trade and Enterprise Council. Priorities would be to create apprenticeship opportunities for Year 12 students and to initiate careers fairs. Leadership and Management: The School was awaiting a response from the Department for Education. Staffing and Development: Recruitment and retention of staff would be an ongoing challenge for the school and a matter for constant attention. Community: Building links with charities would be central to the role of the prefects over the coming year (as discussed by the Head Prefect earlier in the meeting). 	
12.	 Headteacher's Report The Board of the Trustees received a written report from the Headteacher, which had been posted on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. Introducing the report, the Headteacher advised that the school was currently in a good position, particularly with regard to its summer exam results. Comparison of these results with other schools was not strictly possible, because each school had different experiences during lockdown with absence levels and other factors. National and county level results had not as yet been published. 	

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	The potential challenges facing the school would be reduced funding, the possibility of teachers taking industrial action over pay and staff retention / recruitment. Already in the first term a higher level of staff turnover was occurring, After advertising posts, on occasions	
	5 5,	
	there had been as few as two applicants. Finding good quality new members of staff was	
	now a constant challenge for the school.	
	a) Survey of Parents	
	Q2: No opinion survey with parents has taken place over the past twelve months (page 9).	
	When will this be actioned?	Head
	A: Kirkland Rowell is currently carrying out opinion surveys – with parents, students and staff.	
	Hopefully it will be possible to share the findings at the Board's next meeting.	
	b) Specialist Support for Students with Special Educational Needs	
	Q3: The report states (page 15) that there is a growing prevalence of SEND students and	
	students with EHCPs who are not coping well with mainstream education. Reference is also	
	made to the waiting list for special school places in Herts and for SEND advisory and	
	Education Psychologist services. What is the school's strategy for managing this situation?	
	A: This is indeed an important issue for the school, which the Pastoral Committee should	
	address. Herts CC have a legal duty to address the specified needs of pupils with EHCPs, but	
	resources to achieve this are over-committed (although we need to get the issue in	
	proportion: only three students at the school have EHCPs and they are making good	
	progress). The school is working with other external agencies to provide support to SEND	
	students, including the Priority Behaviour Specialist Support Service. The school is providing	
	an initial triage assessment of presented SEND needs and flagging these up with other	
	agencies, recognising that it cannot do everything itself. It is particularly disappointing that	
	the Government's SEND Green Paper seems to be have been struck off the list, as the area	
	needs review at a national level.	
	Q4 What is the position with the newly built and opened Pastoral Support Unit at the Priory	
	School (also in Hitchin)? Can this take some of the weight of Hitchin Boys School in providing	
	for special educational need students?	
	A: The new unit does not provide education in a special school setting. It is for mainstream	
	teaching and learning. It is not as yet clear to what degree the unit may be able to provide	
	for students other than those enrolled at The Priory School	Clerk
	for students other than those enrolled at the thory school	CIEIK
	Reference to Pastoral Cttee	
	c) Difficulties with Recruitment of Staff	
	Q5: What is the school's strategy to deal with the staff recruitment difficulties just now? Has	
	the school got good links with recruitment agencies?	
	A: There is little that school can do really other than to re-advertise posts and hope for a	
	better field the next time and in the interim obtain supply teachers (although in some subjects	
	they are also hard to find). People are generally not coming forward to enter the teaching	
	profession. Experience is showing us that people put forward by recruitment agencies tend	
	to come with past baggage. In cases where appointments have been made, the teachers	
	have in too many cases resigned after only a few weeks, leaving the school with the wasted	
	cost of a sign-on fee.	
	The Board discussed various options to attract candidates to apply for teaching posts,	
	including "nominate a friend" and different agencies trustees had used when recruiting in	
	their respective fields.	

13.	'Looked-After Children' Annual Report The Board received a written report that had been posted on Governor Hub before the meeting.	
	It was acknowledged that the link-trustee for looked-after children (DH) was not present at the meeting.	
	The report was deferred until the next meeting so that link-governor could be present to introduce it.	DH / Clerk
14.	Safeguarding	
	a) Safeguarding Annual Report The Board received the school's annual safeguarding report, which had been posted on Governor Hub prior to the meeting. The report required amendment on page to replace reference to 'Islington Safeguarding Board' with that for Hertfordshire.	DA
	JR (Safeguarding Lead Trustee) had nothing to add to the report.	
	The report was noted.	
	b) Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance (2022) The Board received the 2022 updated of the statutory guidance, which trustees had already been required to read prior to the meeting.	
	c) Trustees Safeguarding Quiz Trustees participated in a quiz to test their knowledge of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance, including the updates put in place for the 2022 – 23 school year. The questions were set by the Headteacher and Chair. The winner, flittingly, was JR – the lead trustee for safeguarding.	
	d) Update on Cyber Security The Board received an oral report from the Headteacher which was noted.	
15.	Reports from Committees The Board received written reports from the Health, Safety & Premises Committee; the Teaching & Learning Committee and the Pastoral Committee. Each report was noted.	
16.	Risk Register The Board received the latest update of the school's risk register, which had been posted on Governor Hub prior to the meeting.	
	The risks outlined within the report had already been considered under the Headteacher's Report (Item 12). The report would also be on the agenda for the Audit, Risk & Resources Cttee agenda on 2 nd November, so was noted by the Board.	
17.	Ratification of Policies Approved During the Cycle by the Board's Committees	
	Resolved: that all the policies approved by the respective committees during the current cycle of meetings now be ratified for publication on the school's website.	Hea

18.	Date of the Next Meeting	
	Tuesday 13 th December	
19.	Any Other Business	
	a) Teacher Recruitment and Retention	
	This had already been covered during the meeting.	
	b) Success of a Former Pupil of the School	
	Michael Taylor (MT) was pleased to report that a former pupil of the school would shortly be	
	appointed as the youngest ever captain in the British Army. The Board passed its	
	congratulations onto him. The Headteacher suggested that he might be an ideal for the	
	school's Remembrance Day service and agreed to talk further with MT.	

The meeting closed at 8.00pm

Chair's Signature:

Date:

Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility	Status
6.	Add Vicki Whent to the Governor Hub database as a newly appointed co-opted Trustee and designated as SEND lead trustee.	Clerk	Immediately
8.	Decision be taken under 'Chair's Action' on the proposed salary award for Levels One – Four sports centre staff, now that the 2021 – 2022 accounts are verified for sports centre income.	Chair / DIW	ASP
8.	Invitation to be sent to the Chair of Parents Society to attend the next meeting.	Chair / Clerk	For 13 th December meeting
8.	Amendment to be made to the minutes of the meeting held on 26 th September.	Clerk	Immediately
9C.	Review of the Terms of Reference for the Board's various committees.	Clerk	ASP
9D.	Decision required on the frequency of Link Trustee monitoring visits to the school.	Chair	13 th December
9G	Decision required on who <u>m</u> to commission to carry out the required external survey of governance arrangements.	Chair	13 th December
10	Audit, Risk & Resources Cttee to take decisions required on incremental pay progression for teachers and the Senior Leadership Team.	Chair	2 nd November

12A	Headteacher to report on the findings on the Kirkland Rowell surveys of students, parents and staff.	Head	Next Meeting (if possible)
12B	Pastoral Committee to consider the availability of specialist support for students with special educational needs	PA / Clerk	Pastoral Committee 31 st January
13	Looked After Children Annual Report – deferred until the next meeting	DH / Clerk	13 th December
14A	Amendment to be made to the Safeguarding Annual Report	DA	Immediately