

## Debenham High School

A Church of England High Performing Specialist Academy

### Governing Body

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held at the school on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December at 5.00pm.

Present: Mr D Carruthers Chairman Mrs S Janson  
Revd. P Cotton Mr D McMillan  
Mr P Debenham Dr H Marlow  
Dr D Egan Mr B Poole  
Mr C Gilgan Mr R Stevenson  
Mr C Grover Mr D Yaroslaw  
Miss J Upton

In attendance: Mrs T Darby Mr S Martin  
Miss S McBurney Mrs L Ramsay  
Mrs J Mitchell Clerk

#### 1 ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies for absence had been received from Mr R Boulter (Mr Carruthers will act as Chairman), Mrs F Hotson Moore and Mrs J Brown.
- 1.2 Governors consented to their absence.

#### 2 PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

- 2.1 No pecuniary interest was declared with regard to any agenda item.
- 2.2 Mrs Darby stated that there was only one Governor still to complete the annual pecuniary interest declaration.

#### 3 GOVERNING BODY MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 Item 3.1 was listed on Agenda and is noted as an error.
- 3.2 There were no changes in membership since the last meeting.
- 3.3 **To consider alterations to GO1 Terms of Reference (RECEIVED)**  
Changes have been made following a School Development Working Party meeting which reviewed the behaviour policy following an external exclusion.  
Footnotes 1, 2 and 3 page 10 added to clarify the remit and the role of the Governing Body.  
Following items were to be amended:-  
Item 3.3 Last sentence to include students  
Item 4.6 Clerk to Working Part "as nominated"  
Item 5.2 Vice Chairman to be hyphenated  
Item 5.6 Monitoring 'his' performance to be changed  
APPROVED

#### 4 MINUTES (RECEIVED)

- 4.1 The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman with the following amendments:  
Item 4.1 Mr R Stevenson was present  
Page 5 Correct MacMillan to McMillan.  
Miss Upton advised that, with reference to Item 4.2, there were 4 applicants for the Clerk to the Governors position for which application will be closed on 4/12/13.

4.2 No matters arising

## 5 CHAIRMAN'S ACTION

Mr Carruthers advised that there had been no action taken by Mr Boulter since the last meeting.

### **RAISE ONLINE**

Miss Upton gave a brief PowerPoint on the recent Raise Online data where the school is measured on its progress. Last year the school achieved a value added score of 1011 (with 1000 being the average) and this year our result is 1020.7 – significantly above the National average. These are unvalidated as the full report is not received until January 2014. Our points value has been low in the past as we have a declared mainly GCSE diet; however last year it included ICT Functional Skills and BTEC Sport, so have increased. All our SEN/LAC/FSM groups have gone over the 1000 average score.

### **PARENT SURVEY**

A Parent survey was made available to parents to be completed via Parentview Ofsted website (only 30 parents responded). A similar survey handed out to parents resulted in over 200 replies. Mr Carruthers commented that the comments received were very positive.

### **HEAD'S REVIEW**

On 18<sup>th</sup> November 2013 Mr Boulter, Mr Carruthers and Mr Haddock (the School Improvement Partner) undertook the Head's annual performance review. Governors were appraised of the outcome of the review and that as a results of the Head's excellent performance all targets had been achieved with ease. . The following targets were set:

OBJ 1 Maintain focus on KS4 and FFT across the school

OBJ 2 On-going curriculum provision and to support staff as necessary

OBJ 3 Secure schools strategic direction

On behalf of the Full Governing Body Mr Carruthers thanked Miss Upton for all she has done.

Miss Upton thanked the Governors and advised that there is a strong team at Debenham.

## 6 Minutes of Committees

### 6.1 **Draft minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 18 October 2013 (RECEIVED)**

APPROVED

### 6.2 **Draft minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 22 November 2013 (RECEIVED)**

APPROVED

### 6.3 **Draft minutes of the Health and Safety Committee meeting held on 19 November 2013 (RECEIVED)**

Health and Safety changes were noted and that Safety Boss is retained as the external Health and Safety advisor to the school. APPROVED

6.4 There were no other committee minutes to be reviewed.

## 7 AUDIT / ANNUAL REPORT / BUDGET AND RELATED ITEMS

### 7.1 **Audited Annual Report and Financial Statements 2012-13 (RECEIVED)**

The report was reviewed at the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting and was presented to the Full governing Body for approval.

APPROVED

### 7.2 **Update on Audit held during October and Audit Finalisation meeting on 9 November 2013**

Only minor points had been raised at the finalisation meeting. These were discussed at the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting and any necessary follow-on actions implemented.

- 7.3 **Audit Summary Memorandum for period ended 31 August 2013 (RECEIVED)**  
This document is the final confirmation of outcome of audit and summary of points raised during the finalisation meeting.
- 7.4 **Copies of two Representation Letters, one to be signed by Accounting Officer and the other on behalf of the GOVERNING Body by the Chair of Governors (RECEIVED)**  
Copies of these letters that are included within the Annual Report were circulated so that Governors could see what the Head and Chairman were signing. APPROVED FOR SIGNATURE
- 7.5 **Value for Money Statement (RECEIVED)**  
There is a new EFA requirement for accounting officers to ensure the spending of public money provides Value For Money.  
Mr Gilgan asked if we could state how many staff the school helped to get their MA. Miss Upton advised that 9 members of staff achieved an MA module through the school last year.  
APPROVED
- 7.6 **Budget Position Report October 2013-14 (RECEIVED)**  
Mrs Darby stated that, financially, it is still early in the year. The budget would be tight this current year. End of year adjustments complicate the picture in the early part of the year.
- 7.7 **Final Capital Fund 04 Report 2012-13 (RECEIVED)**  
Mrs Darby stated that it this was useful to see an overview of the Capital Fund. Restricted fund 04 can only be spent on capital projects. She gave a quick overview to highlight the balance available for the year ahead.
- 7.8 **Report from Mr Neil Serjeant, Responsible Officer**  
Unfortunately Mr Serjeant was not present. **INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT (RECEIVED)**  
Mrs Darby advised that only 3, instead of 4, Best Practice testing elements had been performed in line with a three visit schedule. Points raised had been discussed at Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting and an action plan agreed as appropriate. The action plan summarises what we do and the systems in place and any observations.  
One key element raised in the report suggested a Governor skills audit should be undertaken. Miss Upton had produced a "Governors Skills Audit" sheet. This shows how Governors can help the school and also whether the school has given enough information to Governors. Miss Upton requested that Governors read, complete and return as soon as possible. The idea was not to be invasive.
- 8 BUILDINGS – Verbal report on latest round of ACMF Grant Application**
- 8.1 Mrs Darby advised that the latest ACMF bid round had opened with the opportunity to bid for capital funding for two capital projects.  
Project 1 – extension and expansion creating a congregation space and flexible classrooms above and behind current music room. This is now a two-story extension and is in planning. There is a meeting with the Quantity Surveyor and Architect 4<sup>th</sup> December.  
Project 2 – Roofs, boiler and infrastructure. A survey has been done on the roof. A survey was also completed on the boiler and to attract funding, a sustainable low carbon solution such as a BioMass boiler would be required. Infrastructure; it is proposed that sealing of old pipework and putting new pipework above ground is undertaken.
- The bid will be submitted January 29<sup>th</sup>. We should know if our bids have been successful in late April. Mr Carruthers advised that the Finance & General Purposes Committee had discussed the building project and time scale involved and agreed to a two-stage tender process to appoint a building contractor. The Committee had also agreed to contribute £50K to each project. Grants must be spent by March 2015. All projects have been assessed to ensure minimal disruption to teaching and learning.  
Mr Gilgan enquired as to whether the increase in floor space would increase the PAN. Miss Upton advised that the school requires the floor space for the pupils already in attendance due to

overcrowding.

## **9 NOTES ON WORKING PARTIES / REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS**

9.1 **Draft minutes of the Curriculum Working Party meeting held on 15 October 2013 (RECEIVED)**  
APPROVED

9.2 **Draft minutes of the School Development Working Party meeting held on 14 November 2013 (RECEIVED)**

This was in response to Appeals Hearing. APPROVED

9.3 There were no other Working Party notes to be reviewed.

9.4 **Review of School Visits from Governors.**

English & Mathematics Faculty Reviews have taken place with Ms Goodrich and Mr Stevenson in attendance. Mr Stevenson attended pupil reviews in Mathematics and stated that the pupils were proud of what they do and what they achieve and it was great to see. Ms Goodrich sat in on some English lessons and was very impressed with teaching staff as well as pupil responses. Several of the Governors had attended the Drama production "The Witches" and said it was a most enjoyable evening and an excellent production.

9.5 **Provisional Subject Review Timetable 2014 (RECEIVED)**

It was noted that Mrs Ramsay (LR) was Lead SLT for SEN & Drama; S.Jansen should read S. Janson. Mr Carruthers urged Governors to attend as they can provide a valuable insight into each subject area and how the performance of individual students is recorded and assessed.

## **10 SCHOOL POLICIES**

10.1 **Positive Management of behaviour Policy (Received)**

Miss Upton advised that the Statement of Principles (page 3) and framework notes (page 5) had been amended. Item 6.7 has been changed to give greater clarity for Governors. Item 7.6 Power to discipline beyond the school gate had been added.

Mr Gilgan advised that Item 6.4 – Bringing a dangerous weapon onto the premises and carrying an offensive weapon should be classed as the same. He also stated that Item 7.4 right to search – this should read "in the presence of two adults, both of whom will be the same sex as the pupil" in order to protect the staff.

**Policy was approved with agreed changes**

**Performance Management / Appraisal Policy (Received)**

Miss Upton brought this to the last meeting. It has been amended to give greater clarity to Support Staff. Sections 1 – 12 are relevant for all staff with section 13 – 16 relevant to all teaching staff. This policy is linked to the National Teaching Standards.

**Policy was approved with agreed changes**

**Reserves Policy / Reserves & Investment Policy (Received)**

Mrs Darby stated that the Reserves Policy has now been included in the Investment Policy – therefore creating the Reserves & Investment Policy. This will clarify the reasons for Reserves, and investment policy. From the last Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting it was agreed that £50K be invested in a high interest account at Lloyds for 4 months. Then January another £50K would be invested and this would be repeated again in Feb/March. Therefore 3 blocks of £50K will be invested. This is low risk and is an amount the school can afford, giving a better interest rate.

**Policy was approved with agreed changes**

**Health & Safety Policy (Received)**

Mrs Darby stated that there had been minor amendments – changing Mr Voller's job title and removing the LA as property consultants. The changes were simply to update the policy.

**Policy was approved with agreed changes**

**11 & Inadvertently numbered incorrectly on agenda**

**12**

**13 Governor Training**

The Governors' Handbook has a list of courses that Governors can attend. Bookings are on page 4. These should be arranged individually via e-mail. There is a course – CP34 Governors Seminar that Mrs Janson would like to attend.

The school will be able to keep a record of Governors Training from the Governors Skills Audit – Item 7.

**14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mrs Janson stated that she would be prepared to collect her paperwork for Governors' meetings rather than the school pay the postage. Other Governors stated this was a good idea.

An e-mail will be sent to all Governors two days prior to posting paperwork to see if they can collect it.

**STAFFING CHANGES**

Mr Steel will be leaving us at the end of term to attend Denes Academy, Lowestoft. The school will create a temporary post for two terms and then advertise for a Head of Humanities to commence September 2014.

Mr Novak has been promoted to IT Manager at Northgate School, Ipswich and will be leaving us at the end of January.

**15 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Dates for meetings 2013-14 as follows:

TUESDAY 25<sup>th</sup> February 2014 (including AGM at 4:30 pm)

13<sup>th</sup> May 2014

8<sup>th</sup> July 2014

The meeting closed at 6.35pm

Signed..... Date.....