

The Knights Templar School

Minutes of Governors' Meeting on Wednesday 2 July 2014

Present: Alison Atkinson (AAN); Sarah Barker (SBR); Paul Barnett (PBT); Ian Burrows (IBS); Alan Church (ACH); Lorenzo Farina (LFA); Chris Gough (CGH); Wendy Hepburn (WHN); Graham Kingsley (GKY) (Chair); Maria Lukianowicz (MLZ); Jane Millett (JMT); Julie Mutter (JMR); Andrew Pickering (APG); Pauline Poole (PPE); Dari Samsami (DSI); John Swift (JST); Janet Wallace (JWE); Duncan Wardrop (DWP); Sue Welch (SWH)

Apologies for absence: Mike Boxall (MBL); David Cook (DCK); Richard Picking (RPG); Brian Williams (BWS)

1. Supporters' reports: Parents Association (Mark Overton) and Friends of KTS (Becky Northern) No reports received
2. Pecuniary/other interests: None declared
3. Governors' contacts with school: List was circulated
4. Notification of urgent "other business" items arising since 6 June: JST Priority Schools Bid. This item agreed to be covered in PH&S Report of this meeting.
5. Minutes of the last meeting 21 May 2014: Agreed and accepted as an accurate record
6. Matters arising not on present Agenda: None
7. Financial Report:
 - 7.1. Current year's budget as at end of May continued to perform well against plan. Our latest financial forecast shows that we are set to carry forward a significant balance at the end of this year in of about £360k, significantly ahead of our budgeted carry forward of £121k. This is largely due to unused contingency funds of £200k that we included in this year's budget that have not been spent.
 - 7.2. JST distributed copies of a Budget Summary Report showing this year's budget and a budget for 2014/15 which is recommended by F&GP for Board approval. An email was sent last week to all governors including a commentary on assumptions. Key points are as follows:
 - 7.3. KTS will experience much leaner budget next year despite sizeable figure carried forward; income will be £100K less than this year mainly due to changes in Sixth Form funding formula. Resultant cuts will be effected incrementally from September 2014;
 - 7.4. Staff costs will increase significantly next year (increase of £148K) despite same number of staff employed as this year. This is due to increase in pension contributions , pay rises of 1% to teaching staff, pay rises of 1% to support staff and award of increments to current staff;
 - 7.5. SLT has looked at which areas of school budget are most flexible to find ways to reduce costs in response to next year's situation:
 - 7.5.1. Training budget to be reduced from £50K to £30K
 - 7.5.2. Repairs & Maintenance budget to be reduced from £100K to £60K
 - 7.5.3. Curriculum Innovation Fund to be reduced from £20K to £0
 - 7.5.4. Department capitation allowance to be reduced from £162K to £147K
 - 7.5.5. Advertising budget to be reduced from £25K to £20K
 - 7.5.6. ICT budget to be reduced from £110K to £100K
 - 7.5.7. Contribution from Revenue budget to Capital works budget for small projects onsite to be reduced from £50K to £0
 - 7.5.8. The net effect of these reductions to next year's budget is that we produce an "in-year" deficit budget (income less expenditure) of £150k. However with our carry forward balance of £360k we can accommodate the overspend and this should leave a balance of about £209k to carry forward into 2015-16.
 - 7.5.9. No increase in government education budget for 2015-16 is foreseen; further cuts to Sixth Form budget will be experienced; leaner times expected going forward beyond next year against a backdrop of projected further increases in staffing costs.

- 7.5.10. Governors were asked to note the alarming figures that we show for 2014/15, based upon existing levels of staffing/other expenses and latest guidance on income. A projected further reduction in 6th form funding and an increase in staffing costs of £235k give rise to an in-year deficit of £495k, cushioned somewhat by the previous year's carry forward but clearly insufficient to balance our books. Previous year carry forward balances will also be all used up. Governors were alerted to the fact that further significant budget cuts will be required going forward in order to balance our books beyond 2014/15, unless the dicated funding climate changes.
- 7.5.11. GKY asked the meeting to approve the proposed budget for the year 2014-15
- 7.5.11.1.1. Agreed: Budget accepted & agreed
- 7.6. Sports Centre: profits of around £27K achieved for the year to April 2014. A £5,900 share of this yet to be transferred into KTS budget. No anticipated causes for concern re. SC income. The Committee thanked JST for his reports.
8. Pupil Premium Update: IBS reported that data collections for Years 7, 8, 9 & 10 are yet to be completed. (Deadline not yet reached).
- 8.1. MLZ is to meet with Margot Whitworth (Pupil Premium Coordinator) next week to discuss.
- 8.2. A report of progress will follow at next meeting.
9. Governor Business:
- 9.1. Community Governor Appointments:
- 9.1.1. GKY and MLZ terms as Co-opted Community Governors ending leaving two vacancies for Co-opted Community Governors. They left the meeting temporarily. SWH acted as Chair to oversee voting process undertaken. Governors had received and read pen-portraits from each. SWH proposed GKY and MLZ as Community Governors. Governors voted.
- 9.1.2. Agreed: Both GKY and MLZ re-elected for a further term of 4 years.
- 9.2. Governor Development Coordinator: CGH circulated a training grid sheet to all governors for completion during the meeting, to collect latest information on governor's training records. Agreed: Governors to circulate a small resume of learning outcomes from any governor training they attend, to enable others to benefit in the short term and additionally decide if they would like or need to attend that training themselves.
10. Teacher Governors' Update:
- 10.1. JWE reminded governors the End of Term celebration is on Friday 11 July at 6.30pm. Final ticket allocations being made. A few still available for governors who want them.
- 10.2. DSI brought staff news/queries/issues to the meeting:
- 10.2.1. Art Dept end of year GCSE & AS/A2 Exhibition launch is Tuesday 15 July 5-7pm (light refreshments available). Exhibition also open Weds 16 and Thurs 17 July during school day. No appointment necessary, all welcome
- 10.2.2. Healthy Eating School query from Andy Allman who is interested in progressing this agenda. Discussion about opportunity to attach "traffic light" initiative to dining room biometric data system: capability to collect information on which pupils make healthy choices and reward accordingly? League tables as per attendance? Agreed: School Council were pursuing this issue but no news on this for a while.
Action: SWH to add to next P&P Agenda, revisit with School Council and liaise with Andy Allman as his enthusiasm for this issue is very welcome.
- 10.2.3. Uniform query. Girls' trousers becoming less and less "standardised" or tailored; some very tight leggings-style which should not be worn but difficulties of addressing issues with girls. Some male members of staff uncomfortable with pointing out uniform code violations with girls who may question why their choice of trouser is not acceptable leading to conversations which could potentially present difficulties for staff. Consistency of approach is essential: same rules apply to all girls at all times regardless of other behaviour.
Agreed: Staff who do not wish to enter into conversations about trousers should send girls dressed inappropriately to HoY or Student Services.
- 10.2.4. Action: Letter underlining school dress code and uniform expectations to be sent out to parents before the end of term with summer reports to support parents in purchasing correct uniform items over summer ready for September.
- 10.2.5. IT Support query. Staff have experienced problems with availability of support and voiced that they would like to see improvement in this area if possible, suggesting an external review of systems &

provision. IBS confirmed a review of services & support to staff is under way as SLT are aware of some issues (including staff illness) which are impacting on staff more widely.

Action: SLT to progress review from September 2014.

10.3. Support Staff Governors Update: BWS sent apologies for absence. JWE and JST unaware of any pressing issues.

11. Reports:

11.1. Headteacher's Report: APG had circulated a report to governors prior to the meeting covering Attendance, Behaviour, Award of MBE to John Glover, Wider School Activities, Cashless Catering, Staffing and NUT/Unison Strike Action due 10 July 2014.

11.1.1. Further to last item on strike action: Since writing his report APG has been forced to take decision to close KTS on Thursday 10 July due to numbers of staff (including site staff) taking part in strike action which means it would not be safe or practical to open school to pupils; remaining staff capacity would be too small.

11.1.2. Biggest impact is to Year 6 Transition Day. No alternative day can be arranged at this late stage; it is County-wide chosen date and cannot be rearranged. Disappointing for all and worrying for parents and new year 7 students.

11.1.3. Baldock Network has found a partial solution: part of Weds 9 July is feasible for Year 6 pupils in most of the feeder schools to attend KTS for activities during the morning. This severely curtailed provision is better than nothing at all and the best solution in the circumstances.

11.1.4. APG answered questions on the future of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme at KTS.

11.1.5. John Glover (JGR) to continue coordinating the Scheme and the school's other Outdoor Pursuits for a further year on a part-time basis. Any further arrangements yet to be confirmed depending on how things develop during the year and to allow flexibility from both JGR's and new Headteacher Tim Litchfield's points of view. Succession planning to be a part of JGR's remit to ensure solid continuation of this highly successful area.

11.2. Baldock Forum: Meeting with Councillors

11.2.1. NHDC holds portfolio for housing development in Baldock area; HCC has responsibility for schools and is also the major local landowner;

11.2.2. NHDC confirmed the number of new houses for Baldock is not yet agreed but government housing plans will have final influence beyond local considerations;

11.2.3. Baldock Town schools are currently FULL. Problems with admissions are predictable over next few years;

11.2.4. HCC representatives undertook at the meeting to better consult with Baldock Network Headteachers in Baldock Area Forum: met with local Councillors on 30 June to discuss local housing development plans future in formulating plans;

11.2.5. Overall infrastructures in the area were also discussed and impacts of development.

11.3. PH&S committee: 3 points of focus to committee business currently:

11.3.1. Site Manager's house - Planning Permission application about to be submitted

11.3.2. School buildings – priority is to consider strategy in the light of pending ACMF Bid Appeal result

11.3.3. Committee agreed to approve H&S Policy subject to JST receiving confirmation of receipt of confirmation from named personnel with listed responsibilities. JST will then publish updated Policy to school website. Agreed: reviewed H&S Policy (July 2014) accepted.

Action: JST to publish to website.

11.4. P&P committee: SWH confirmed nothing to report outside of Minutes. One action ongoing is to investigate installation of a water fountain in Sixth Form Block so students can easily refill water bottles throughout the day.

11.5. T&L Committee:

11.5.1. Link Governor protocols initiated at T&L Committee were discussed at last F&GP and agreed in principal. Suite of documents includes protocol, suggested points for discussion, post visit review sheet and all were distributed by MLZ prior to this meeting. MLZ confirmed the purpose of the post-visit sheet is to keep & discuss it with HoD's to move relationship forward positively. At end of year Chair of Committee

will be able to report to FGB on how many visits have taken place and give a general picture/comments on how this process is working & benefiting those involved.

11.5.2. Action: MLZ to send final copies of all Governor Visit docs to all governors.

Action: APG to cascade to HoD's upon receipt, for sharing & discussion with teams.

Agreed: All governors to receive Minutes of Department Meetings in their Linked areas.

12. F&GP Committee:

JST followed up re. new £2m Priority Schools Building Programme. Government funding now available to schools in poor condition: F& GP last meeting agreed to make an expression of interest for this scheme. Governors are asked to note that this would involve the project being managed under contractor / central government control, not the school's, as was the case for the ACMF funding for the 6th Form Block. Design likely to be of a modular system and of inferior quality to 6th Form Block. Any future ACMF bids would NOT be prejudiced by an expression of interest – confirmed by the ACMF authorities. ACMF Phase 2 Bid for Science Block funding - appeal response still awaited – due by end of week ideally.

13. Child Protection: MLZ had circulated document summarising issues prior to the meeting. Comments:

13.1. APG noted the increase in staff and therefore costs allocated to pastoral/holistic/safeguarding care of young people. This area of education highly at risk due to funding issues.

14. Dates of next meetings:

Full GB meeting to be arranged. KTS calendar currently under construction.

Baldock Area Governor Training (Monday 7 July) on Exclusions Appeals: 3 places available at time of meeting. 7 KTS Governors attending since some have other roles in other schools. JMT coordinating places so contact her directly by lunchtime on 07/07/14 for a place.

15. A.O.B. ACC attended Changes To Leadership Pay & Progression training recently and would recommend it. Ofsted plans to examine governors in future on how decisions on performance –and therefore PRP – are evidenced and taken. This training important and useful. GKY directed governors to the training calendar for forthcoming opportunities to attend.

Discussion topic: Community Surveys Review

LFA gave a presentation on the findings of the recent surveys of pupils, staff and parents/carers by an externally commissioned consultancy. Advantage of employing a consultant is it enabled relevant comparison with other schools.

Good level of response received among students and parents. The detailed report had been circulated to all Governors. Level of data obtained enables detailed breakdown of findings beyond general pictures, eg satisfaction at year-group level among students/parents and interschool comparison of such data.

Queries arise over some questions posed/answers received, eg were any parameters given for what constitutes “good” quality teaching? No – answers are purely subjective. Answers breed more questions! - It is for HoD's to further interrogate the findings internally eg to find out what do students consider to be good or important? etc.

Those present took part in a group activity to examine and discuss 6 particular issues raised by the survey and the results reported for our school, and each group submitted their views to LFA:

Happiness of Child

Healthy Lifestyle through Diet

Social Health Education

Careers Advice

Teaching Quality

Celebrating Achievement and Success