**Full Governing Body**

Minutes of the meeting held at the school on Tuesday 3rd May 2016 at 5.00 p.m.

Present: Mr R Barker Mrs F Hotston Moore

Mr D Carruthers Chairman Mrs S Janson

Mr P Debenham Mr D McMillan

Mrs C Driver Mr R Stevenson

Ms S Goodrich Miss J Upton

Mr T Green Ms E Wnukoski

In attendance: Mr R Boulter Member of the Academy Trust

Mrs J Brown Member of the Academy Trust

Mrs T Darby Business Manager

Mr S Martin Deputy Headteacher

Mrs L Ramsay Assistant Headteacher

Mr S Wright Clerk to the Governors

1. **Absence**
   1. Apologies for absence had been received from Dr D Egan, Mr R Grimsey, Mr C Grover, Dr H Marlow, Miss S McBurney, Miss J Newman, Mr D Ralph, Rt Revd M Seeley and Mr N Serjeant. Mr Carruthers arrived at 5.09 pm. Mr S Wright left the meeting at 7.19 pm. Miss Upton left the meeting at 7.30 pm.

In the initial absence of Mr Carruthers, Ms Goodrich took the chair.

* 1. Governors consented to their absence.

1. **Pecuniary and Other Interests**
   1. There were no pecuniary interests raised with respect to items on the agenda.
   2. There was nothing to update in the Register of Pecuniary Interests.
2. **Chairman’s Action**

Mr Carruthers noted the following changes in areas of responsibility within the Governing Body:

* Mr Grover is to take on the role of Safeguarding Governor with Mr Carruthers taking the role of Deputy Safeguarding Governor
* Mr Barker is to become E-Safety Governor.

Governors agreed to these appointments.

1. **Minutes**
   1. The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2nd February 2016 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.
   2. Matters arising from the minutes.

5.3 Mr Martin confirmed that the criteria for internal isolation were not the same as those for a Fixed Term Exclusion.

8.1 Links to Admissions Policies have been adjusted. It was noted that policies for a number of different years need to be on the website.

8.1 It was confirmed that the Admission Policy does mention the possibility of out-of-year entry – these are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

8.1 Parental consultation only has to take place if there is a change to the Planned Admission Number (PAN) – not if the number admitted is increased without changing the PAN.

8.1 Timings in relation to the Complaints Procedure have been adjusted.

8.1 Mr Carruthers had checked and it was not a requirement that the Complaints Procedure be included on the website. It was noted that, though it is not explicit, that the Student Logbook includes the required course of action that parents should take if they have a concern.

1. **Academy Improvement**

Presentation by Memo-It, the successful DHS Young Enterprise Company.

The company gave a reprise of their presentation from the County YE final where they had come a close second and had won three individual awards. The company had manufactured acrylic memo boards and had generated a profit of 28%. Governors congratulated them on the quality of their presentation and on their success.

* 1. Headteacher’s Report

Miss Upton reviewed her report.

Personnel Changes

No part-time extra Maths appointment had been possible and alternative arrangements had been made for the Autumn Term. Donna King (Reprographics) had been appointed as part-time textiles teacher – this had left a vacancy to be filled in Reprographics.

SSAT

The Chair of the SSAT (Sue Williams) will be visiting to DHS to mark the two awards the school achieved for progress and attainment.

National Funding Formula (NFF)

If the consultation brings about change to the NFF then it could be anticipated that Suffolk would gain by the AWPU moving closer to the national average (currently £500 below). Any changes would, however, be phased in; nevertheless an increase of only £100 per student would add £65,000 to the DHS budget.

Schools’ Forum

Miss Upton said that she had been elected to the Schools’ Forum unopposed as the only candidate. It was anticipated that there would be further adjustment in membership in September in order to reflect the number of academies in Suffolk.

Admissions

Since the report was written there had been a managed move to DHS for a Year 10 student on a six week trial basis. So far this had been successful with improved attendance in evidence.

Sean O’Neill

The Governors have directed this external consultant to review policies related to the outcome of the recent tribunal.

Jane Sheet

Miss Upton had met with Jane Sheet (Diocesan Director of Education) to discuss an interim replacement for Revd Patrick Cotton on the Governing Body. Mary Lamb (former DHS teacher and now working for the Diocese) had been proposed. Miss Upton and Mr Carruthers had agreed to this appointment and Governors concurred.

Discussion

* Mr Stevenson asked if the international project had a different purpose to that of the French Exchange. Miss Upton said that the Dutch connection was related more to the sharing of practice whereas the French Exchange was specifically an aid to language acquisition.
* Mr Green asked about the current state of admissions. Miss Upton replied that 135 students had been admitted (as agreed with Governors) and that there were currently 7 on the waiting list. Mr Green asked if this caused any issues with buses coming from out of catchment. Miss Upton was not aware of any issues as yet.
* Ms Goodrich noted that attendance records of SEND pupils was good but lower than that for all pupils. Mrs Ramsay pointed out that this was largely down to two students – one with zero attendance who requires one-to-one teaching at home and the other with significant medical issues. There was also a student on the Child Protection register whose attendance was comparatively low (79%).
  1. Year 11 Data

Various points were made:

As the cohort was more able than usual the Attainment 8 measure is expected to be better. The ‘three and four levels of progress’ measure is also looking positive.

Mr Green commented on the difference between the figures now and those that were distributed in the Spring Term. Miss Upton pointed out that the current data was generated by staff who were asked to be conservative in their judgements to enable targeted support to be provided for students. The outcomes were not sent home by teachers as they had been in previous terms.

Mr Green also asked if the discounting of subjects was reflected in figures – Miss Upton confirmed that it was, with the methodology being that required in regulations for Attainment 8, Progress 8 and for the English Baccalaureate.

It was noted that the GCSE predictions were missing in RE and Computing – these will be corrected and redistributed.

**Action Miss Upton**

* 1. Safeguarding Audit

This was received by Governors together with the DHS response. There was only one statutory area where the school was felt to be deficient – this related to the Prospectus. Most issues raised were easily fixed. It was noted that Mr Grover is booked on a course on Safeguarding to enable him to fulfil his role as Governor responsible for Safeguarding.

* 1. Teaching School (TS) Action Plan

This item taken in conjunction with the related item in the Headteacher’s’ Report and in a copy of the plan distributed to Governors.

Staff had been consulted before the compilation of the action plan. There had also been a meeting with Jim Sweetman from the DFE together with representatives from the Five Rivers TS Alliance – as a consequence the plan is of a general nature and will be shaped as time passes. Miss McBurney will be Director of Teaching School and is currently attending an induction event in Nottingham – Miss Upton will join her after the meeting. Discussions had been held with the Suffolk and Norfolk Initial Teacher Training (SNITT) as to how DHS can assist in delivering their programme (e.g. core delivery days) to the extent of 3 or 4 days a year. SNITT and DHS will remain independent of one another. Ms Wnukoski will provide administrative support to the Teaching School. Mr Carruthers pointed out that there will need to a Governors’ Steering Group formed to oversee the work of the Teaching School. Two typos in the AP were corrected.

* 1. Multi-academy Trust (MAT)

Mr Carruthers introduced this item by placing it in the context of recent government announcements relating to all schools becoming academies. He suggested that, if this were to be required then DHS would prefer to take the lead rather than to be led. Primary schools within the DHS pyramid were interested to learn what the DHS’ position on a MAT would be – they were already being approached by other potential MAT providers. The issue had not been discussed with DHS staff yet as it was a strategic issue that needed to be examined by Governors first.

Miss Upton then gave a presentation relating to the context and nature of a potential DHS-led MAT. She agreed with Mr Carruthers in that a meeting of Heads and Chairs of local primary schools had shown varying degrees of interest in a local MAT with some schools being very keen indeed. Some PS had already been approached by the Avocet Primary Academy Trust – one feeder school was considering joining the Diocesan MAT.

Slides covered (presentation attached):

The increasing proportion of schools in MATs and the consequent reduction of number of schools that were standalone academies.

Government guidance as to the characteristics of a successful MAT

* Geographical focus
* Slow expansion
* Pedagogical strategy – improvement-centred
* Improvement expertise
* Effective governance
* Strong oversight

What a DHS-led MAT might look like (please refer to structure diagram in presentation):

* Central focus would be on students and developing their ability to do their best in whatever area.
* Aims would be similar to those of DHS and would be delineated clearly
* Key principals of: Pride, Participation, Responsibility and Excellence
* Linked to key values of: Courage, Compassion, Forgiveness, Generosity, Justice, Peace, Hope, Equality, Truthfulness.
* All decisions to be built on the pillars of: Ethos, Well-being, Teaching, Learning, Curriculum, Enrichment and Leadership.
* Others wishing to join a DHS MAT would have to buy in to these guiding tenets.
* The whole would be underpinned by the more practical elements of: Resources, Quality Assurance and Strategy.
* Structure to be based on a hierarchical model of Trust Members, Directors and Local School Governing Bodies.
* Due diligence would need to be completed on potential members relating to: Finance, Property, Attainment and Staffing.

Discussion

There were contributions from the majority of Governors in the discussion that followed Miss Upton’s presentation during which the following observation s were made:

* Though there was not complete knowledge of what other high schools were doing, some were potentially moving towards a MAT model.
* The Government perspective on academies had changed and it had been recognised that 2020 as the year when all schools should be academies would not be achievable. Nor was it clear what the DfE saw as being the ideal size for an academy. The Regional Commissioner (Tim Coulson) had indicated that 1200 pupils could be appropriate but other sources suggested nine schools and 3-4000 pupils would be more suitable. What was clear is that standalone primary schools wishing to convert to an academy would probably not be able to function independently of a MAT.
* If DHS had not become part of a MAT by 2020 the school would probably be forced to join one; given this, it would probably be wise for DHS to take the lead in the formation of a MAT.
* DHS could not be forced to take a school into any MAT that it led but, this being said, the driver behind the MAT programme is to bring about improvement in under-performing schools.
* If DHS were to take the lead in the formation of a MAT this would be because of the school’s commitment to improving education locally rather than because of any government imperative.
* Any decision to join a MAT was one for the governing body of each individual school.
* Two local primary schools were keen on being part of a MAT but no Governing Body had yet made this decision. There was a probability that they are waiting for a high school to take the lead. The two major feeders for DHS were warming to the idea.
* The recent news story of Suffolk creating their own MAT had been as a response to the local situation and, in reality, it appeared as if little groundwork for this had been done by the LA.
* The existing DHS Trust would need to be maintained. There may need to be some changes to Articles of Association to mitigate against the Diocesan Board of Education taking too much control.
* Members of the existing Academy Trust would go and Directors of any new MAT would be responsible for strategic decisions relating to the MAT – there was potential for Directors to be prescriptive in this but DHS would wish to avoid this were it to lead any further MAT.
* Some concern was expressed at the insertion of a further level of governance.
* The CEO of the Trust would be the accountable officer for MAT finances which would, almost inevitably, be centralised.
* Some of the advantages of the MAT might be to lead to smoother transition between Year 6 and Year 7, developing expertise across the MAT and general improvements in Teaching and Learning.
* Because of the current positive position in which DHS currently finds itself the creation of a DHS-led MAT presented a real opportunity for educational enrichment of the local area.
* It was confirmed that if one school in the MAT was deemed to be in special measures then the MAT would be held accountable and expected to address any shortcomings. As yet the whole MAT is not judged as a whole unit.
* A primary school might become part of any MAT without being financially viable, but would be more likely to survive as part of a MAT.
* Mrs Hotston Moore said that her experience with an existing MAT emphasised the need for caution and that she felt that the demands on resources during the setting-up process would be significant.
* Members of staff would be consulted before any decision was made and, whilst there were evident advantages for DHS from leading a MAT, there would need to be careful consideration of any negative impact on the school.

After discussion it was proposed that Miss Upton should let pyramid schools (only these initially) know that DHS was giving serious consideration to the setting up of a MAT and that further work was to be undertaken to this end – potentially involving a core team of Governors. This was agreed nem con.

1. **Budget and related items**

6.1 Current budget position

All projects are on track. Teaching school monies have been received and this will be put into next year’s accounts. Income and expenditure are about where they should be at about 60% of annual income/expenditure.

6.2 ACMF Boiler project

Some minor issues are still to be resolved but these are being dealt with and are no cause for concern. The final bill shows a small underspend but this will be accounted for so, in terms of the EFA grant, this is shown as spent. It was mentioned that Concertus, although there had been some initial concerns, had been very good throughout the whole process and had certainly saved the school money.

6.3 Roof Repairs

All phase 1 repairs have been completed with the exception of the hall roof which cannot be done until the Summer holidays; at present the project is well within budget. The LA will contribute their £18K when the works are completed.

6.4 CIF Bids

As previously discussed both bids have been successful. The roof project will go ahead to include new windows in the Science block, this means that all of the school roofs will have been done recently.

The bid for the extension has generated a ‘significant change’ form and this has been completed. This means that we now need to go to consultation due the “significant” change in our numbers (30 above the 625 in our funding agreement). Miss Upton asked for (and received) the Governors’ approval to start this consultation. The wording will be based upon the need to expand to accommodate present numbers and adjustments related to the breadth of curriculum.

Mr McMillan asked how long the consultation will last – Miss Upton thought this would be around 4-6 weeks.

6.5 Appointment of Auditors

It was agreed to reappoint Larking Gowen as auditors even though rates may increase; the appointment being for a further 12 months.

1. **Committees and Working Parties**

7.1 Minutes from FGP Committee of Friday 18th March were received by Governors.

7.2 Mr Stevenson commented upon the Science review and its very positive outcome.

1. **Policies**

8.1 The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Discretions Policy was received by Governors.

8.2 The DHS Reserves and Investment Policy was received by Governors.

8.3 DHS Attendance Policy

Mrs Ramsay went through the minor changes to the policy, the level for a persistent absence was noted as a change to below 90% compared to previously below 85%. The use of penalty notices was clarified. Ms Goodrich raised the point of the more sporadic absence and the support offered to those students. Mrs Ramsay was asked to look at expectation of students/staff in relation to sporadic absence: her findings will then be emailed to Governors. The Attendance Policy was approved, with a few minor changes to labelling.

8.4 DHS Positive Behaviour Policy

This was approved with a few minor changes, references to some points to be changed and smoking on site would lead to an isolation within school. Any changes to this policy are to be agreed by the Full Governing Body.

1. **Governor Training**

9.1 Prevent training for Governors had taken place prior to the meeting and the Chairman had attended

named governor Safeguarding Training. The termly report had been received.

1. **Any Other Business**

* There was an update on the tribunal.
* Governors wished to express their thanks to Mrs Wilson and Dr Sharpe for all their efforts with the

Young Enterprise team.

1. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is due to take place on Tuesday 5th July 2016 at 5.00 pm.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Signed: …………………………………………………….. Chairman Date: 5th July 2016