**MINUTES FOR A MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF**

**SHENFIELD HIGH SCHOOL**

**THURSDAY 23rd March at 4:30 pm**

**Present:**

Mrs Katharine Boulton Co- opted Governor

Mr David Churchill Parent Governor

Mrs Jo Gray Parent Governor

Mrs Clare Hoddy Governor

Mr Stuart Roberts Staff Governor (Virtual)

Mrs Karuna Shaunak-Hobbs Staff Governor

Mrs Lynn Smith Governor

Mrs Jane Swettenham (Chair) Co-opted Governor

Mr Andy Williams Governor

Miss Clare Costello Headteacher – Ex Officio

**In attendance:**

Mrs Karen Whordley Clerk

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **ACTION** |
| 1 | **APOLOGIES**Mr Julian BeardMr Cajiten D’SilvaMr Gary HainesMrs Victoria NoonanMr David Churchill arrived at 4:40pmMrs Jo Gray left at 5:35pm Governors were reminded the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of the minutes.  |  |
| 2 | **NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS**DC – if time permits will feedback from two recent local Ofsted visits. This was then briefly mentioned in point 22. |  |
| 3 | **DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST**None |  |
| 4 | **MEMBERSHIP OF THE GOVERNING BODY**2 new member appointments – Cajiten D’Silva and Gary Haines. Both were welcomed in their absence. |  |
| 5 | **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**The minutes of the 6th December 2022 and 16th December 2022 meetings, having previously been circulated, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair of Governors. |  |
| 6 | **MATTERS ARISING**Repeated requested for the “reply all” function on emails to be reduced where appropriate.Articles of Association were discussed, whether we adopt the June 2021 DfE version which has to be adopted in its entirety or whether we can work on a bespoke set which would require legal advice. Either version requires approval from the Secretary of State. Governors were asked for their preference and it was agreed that this would be revisited at the July meeting. Before the next meeting, Governors were asked to read the DfE Model Articles of Association that were published in June 2021.Whole school attendance strategy that is being developed by JRI was mentioned and will be discussed in CCO’s report section.There is an intention to produce a SHS version of the DfE Well-being Charter of 2022.Juniper – SR to do a review as to how far Juniper can be useful to SHS and what else may be required as the value of the internal controls are useful but otherwise it is thought to possibly be limited.  | **Agenda****SR** |
| 7 | **REPORT FROM Headteacher**CCO highlighted the following from the report:* Leavers and joiners – Kim Messenger is retiring; Jono Sands is moving to a new post; Arwen Bloomfield is moving to a post nearer to home in Chelmsford. Recruited new Finance Manager, Sandra Hatton and Ed Miller a new Maths trainee.
* Current vacancies and appointments – Sarah Whitfield appointed Team Leader for English giving a KS4 vacancy after Easter; Cover Supervisor currently being advertised; Attendance Officer currently being recruited – will be discussed further when Attendance is discussed; AHT interviews taking place shortly – 16 applicants (3 internal), shortlisted to 7 which will require further shortlisting before interviews; DHT has had 15-16 applicants. Both Senior positions had good quality applicants from a range of schools.
* Absence and well-being of staff – still a number of staff off with long term absence including stress, bereavement and illness – a further breakdown will be provided but the picture is not worsening. Support staff absence higher than teaching staff which is largely down to two significant bereavements.
* Training may have reduced in comparison to previous comparable periods but this is controlled, targeted and linked to school priorities.
* Numbers on roll were discussed. Year 9 has greatest level of mobility; we have lost some high ability students in this year group, it is not one-way traffic.
* Attendance is a declining picture. JRI is working on a targeted Attendance Strategy. Too many parents are currently proving to be content not to send their children to school. One Attendance Officer is not sufficient, we are interviewing next week for a second Attendance Officer. Senior Pastoral Lead has taken on the role of supporting some of these students and a member of the Safeguarding Team is looking at the “severely absent students” defined at below 60% by SHS (50% by LA) which includes “Home Visit Fridays”. We are currently not able to fully investigate the patterns of absence which will be improved when we appoint the new Attendance Officer. Sixth Form Attendance was also discussed which is poor and has an ingrained culture which needs to be addressed including there being an earned privilege in year 13 to sign out for P5 being worked on. Rooming will need to be found to home increased numbers of Sixth Form. Extra lessons will be added to Sixth Form timetables next year, increasing from 9 to 10 lessons. Home/School Support Worker and home visit benefits were discussed. PA with SEND and PP students was discussed as absence rates are higher than the main body of the school. Various reasons but often due to the engagement of the parents and there seems to be a culture forming in general society in people who are under 30 that work/school can be optional. Covid still having an impact and people increasingly aware of the impact of MH. As a school we are accountable to change this culture in our school community. DfE stats for state secondary schools in 90.9%, PA 27% so we are above national average.
* 38 Suspensions - boys more prevalent than girls. 9 in year 7 which is high, mainly due to a very small minority displaying significantly poor behaviour impacting staff and students. Working on blended provision and reduced timetables where appropriate to help these students to de-regulate when needed. One suspension in Sixth Form was omitted from the figures. This data includes the protest day suspensions and one year 10 permanent exclusion. We are re-setting our Blue Room (Internal Suspension) provision after Easter to include upgrading the formality of this provision and the communication of this to the parent/carer.
* Safeguarding numbers continue to be high, the most common entries on CPOMS are concerns around Mental Health. Some students have Risk Assessments or Care Plans and these students are very time-consuming and concerning. CCO placed it on record that it is to be understood that the staff working in this area do an amazing job on the front line – it is a tough job.
* Admissions for September 2023 looking good – SHS first choice for 195, filled up by category 4. We offered 242 last year and wanted to over-offer again so that we were not left vulnerable to having to take year 7 students mid-term. Communications were had with the LA about how many we may over-offer. CCO does not want to be in position where we have to fill these over-offered places. EHCP and SEND student numbers are increasing as SHS has a positive reputation for SEND with parents. This is unlikely to decrease and needs to be acknowledged. CCO has concerns as well as pride in having a reputation as being a good school for SEND. Additional funding for these students will need to be looked into. CCO is looking into Inclusion Framework Funding with the LA and has been speaking to the Inclusion Partner. If we apply for too much Inclusion funding from LA, we may then be obligated to take more SEND students. School Improvement Partner (Martine ??) has looked at our current provision, plans for C8 including to convert the classroom next door and plans to expand our vocational offer and CCO been advised by her to make a substantial bid (£100,000). Performing Arts number is low again this year; 24 students can be taken across Performing Arts and Sport which has been filled more by the Sport students. Parents may be more willing to fulfil Performing Arts talent in activities outside of school. No updates regarding the Mountnessing Primary School consultation.
* Jono’s responsibilities have been distributed across the senior team including changes to line management. JMA has picked up significant line management duties, CCO has picked up Science and Sixth Form line management, gaining capacity for this by moving some of her existing line management. CCF and Mr Sapford’s line management is now going to SR along with fixtures and extra-curricular but CCO acknowledged the benefit that her having line managed CCF had given her an understanding of the whole school impact of it. From September – the new Senior Team structure was discussed, including the AHT current roles and where Ben Clifford and Richard Drew fit into this structure. RD – to continue in area of assessment and reporting and timetabling; BC – chose between Head of English and AHT as both was not sustainable and chose to continue as AHT for Curriculum, line managed by JMA, hence the appointment of new Team Leader for English. This is a team where people are new to role and will be under the leadership of JMA as a Quality of Education Team. New DHT post will bring together Behaviour and Inclusion. Currently AHT for Behaviour, Safeguarding and SENCO all report to CCO but in the new structure, will report to the DHT for Behaviour and Inclusion. PP leadership will be under JMA for now. PP is below national average levels. PP students have a range of different needs and abilities and labelling can become problematic. Improvements in overall monitoring of all students, including PP students, will help with this. We also need to discuss the funding around PP.

KSH current Associate AHT position – new proposal removes Associate AHT position as this role is currently unclear.The wider Staffing Structure was then discussed and Governors requested structures which outline the Senior Team and the Heads of Department.CCO talked about the vision to always be a Headteacher of a fully comprehensive school, being able to fully meet the needs of all students and she is clear on the direction of travel. Data shows we are not always providing well enough currently for our high achieving students and this was also discussed. Special School provision for SEND students was mentioned. Staff are having a mindset change too with a new Headteacher in post. * The Positive Impact Centre (PIC) was outlined, the former first aid room which is a small room with computers, H50 is also being used. Nurture Group to be in place for year 7 and 8 in September, English, Maths and Humanity – students staying static and teachers come to them, HLTAs to also be used.
* Mixed Attainment moving to banding – still under early discussion with senior team. CCO open to this but not keen on setting purely based on KS2 data. Governors reported that speaking to staff, it is not universally popular with all staff and similar concerns are raised by parent groups. CCO reports that staff views are shifting towards feeling generally more positive about banding. This would also help to address the previous reported concerns about the attainment of our higher achievers. Any organisation will experience resistance to change and it is the responsibility of leadership to manage this. CCO also acknowledged that the previous model was in place pre-covid and much has changed post-covid. The scale of need is now different. There can be stress and frustration knowing that you have a high achieving student in your class and due to poor behaviour elsewhere, you are unable to support this student.

KB- You find yourself teaching to the middle. New teachers are often not equipped to deal with mixed teaching and with a view to good retention of staff, we do need to address this. It will have a positive impact on staff well-being.CCO – also need to be able to adequately explain to parents why decisions about their child’s banding have been made.LS- Focus Group for Parents may be a useful tool to ensure support is gained from parent groups. CCO there is more fluidity with banding than setting which will help. Assessment is driven by curriculum* Parental questionnaire – closes next week and has been well utilised.
* Industrial Action – discussed, no major concerns. MSAG and pay awards may require SHS to find the funding.

Questions for SR – what is the impact on the finances of the new staffing structure? SR – closely analysing, affordable for next year, longer term impact being analysed. Were there any costs involved in the damage to the school during the protest? SR – next to no costs, media hugely exaggerated the costs. Much of what was more widely reported in the media was also exaggerated.DC & JS – would like to acknowledge their thanks to the school staff for how it handled the school protest. A letter was sent by JS to parents and it was acknowledged that CCO and all staff did a remarkable job in the most challenging of circumstances. CCO also paid tribute to the parents who supported the school. Excellent communication between school and parents helped hugely. There was a lot of misinformation in the media and on social media that needed to be carefully managed.JS thanked CCO for her highly detailed report. | **Agenda- PP** |
| 8 | **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES****Resources Committee – met in February*** Financially all going well – carry forward increased and additional grant
* Three year good for year one and two. Question mark over year three to be expected.
* Teacher pay – 2.4% forecast, funded versus unfunded
* Energy continues to be an issue, forecasting remains difficult
* GDPR virtually green
* ICE review – 2 minor issues - Governor Business Register interest –when these started possibly now needs to be recorded and the Business Continuity plan
* Health & Safety audit at end of last term – little issues, strong start from new Estates Manager. Cleaning to be reviewed with a view to coming in-house

**Standard and Performance**In the absence of JB, DC confirmed the minutes and there were no questions.**Pay**JS confirmed the following from the March meeting which dealt with support staff pay:* Non staff Governors can always access the minutes through KW and further clarity can always be sought from JS.
* Most staff members move up one point on their pay scale. When they reach the top they will remain unless there is a change to their responsibilities and JD that justifies them accessing the next pay scale. SHS uses the Essex Pay Scale.
* Support staff pay – CCO’s recommendations were approved. SF confirmed it was affordable to include NI and pension. No conclusion as yet to the negotiation with the trade union for the national pay award. This will be back dated to 1st April when resolved. SF has added 3.5% to the budget at this stage.

**Strategy*** JS – meeting held was not a formally minuted session.
* The different format of this was more creative and worked better so should continue but information gathered does need to be collated, particularly in the 3-5 year planning.
* Proposal for a sub-committee focussing on Strategy in liaison with CCO and SLT. A 3-5 year plan during CJH’s final year would not have been appropriate and CCO needed time before the 3-5 year plan could be created. This Sub-committee was agreed.
* Email JS if interested in being part of the sub-committee or if any part of this resonates with you and this can then be fed back to the new sub-committee, Members of staff will also be invited to join the sub-committee. Not to be rushed. There is good alignment between the senior team and the Governors
* There is a need to understand the Vision Statement for the school and then how CCO’s new staffing structure, along with Parent, student and staff surveys will all feed into this by providing an evidence base.
 | **JS** |
| 9 | **GOVERNANCE REVIEW**JS – thank you to everyone who took the time to be interviewed by Ruth Murton and everyone who participated in the virtual self-review session. JS has the draft report and will report comments back to Ruth who will finalise the report next week. When the final report is received, JS will email to Governors. To be added to July’s agenda and an Action Plan will need to be put together, by a group of Governors rather than just JS. Must be a collective decision by all Governors.It was agreed that it had been a useful exercise. | **Agenda** |
| 10 | **STAFF WELFARE*** JS – Staff welfare is something as Governors we have to be aware of.
* Staff Pulse discussed. KW- Looked at regularly. One member of staff had been reported to CCO as being stressed, and there has subsequently been one more. KW has checked the members of staff were ok.
* Mental Health First Aiders within school. KW and CCO MHFA’s. Stress levels in the corporate world are increasing. More colleagues need to be trained and up-skilled to be approachable when staff are feeling stressed. This needs to be championed so people can be correctly sign-posted, which can be done through Line Management and “check-ins”. CCO – there is now a Line Management template and the first question is to discuss well-being. Teaching staff can be supported by looking at the timetabling / banding so their every day situation is improved. MH training can be very expensive. The regular staff bulletins always mention who the MH First Aider is (KW) and there is also an external number circulated on this giving alternative, external support. We are good at MH First Aid for students, but need to improve in our MH support to staff. Staff do feel able to declare if an absence is due to MH which is pleasing.
 |  |
| 11 | **SURVEYS*** CCO had previously referred to a parental survey during this meeting which was acknowledged. CCO would also like to do a staff survey and student survey in the summer term on the theme of assessment.
* Student Voice needs to be looked into. CCO had recently spoken to a year 8 girl specifically regarding toilets and a mechanism for pupil’s opinions being actively sought was discussed as part of this as CCO wants students to know they have a right to have their opinions heard, even if they are less confident to approach staff.
 |  |
| 12 | **RISK REGISTER*** Important this comes to Governors.
* SR acknowledged this was due in 2022 and that the launch of the Reviewed Risk Register has not gone to plan at this stage. SR stated that is important that it is reviewed in its current form, with an understanding that this is not the final version.
* DC- Lots currently on it are “business as usual”. We will always be considering student safeguarding, staff well-being. Can the way it best be revised would be to look at what needs looking at from a strategic level? Maybe to look at on the Business Continuity Plan. Likewise with the Facilities. SR – agreed but has concerns with losing sections of this as it may then be called into question why it had been removed. Suggested having an area of focus each term. JS – we can keep this as a main Risk Register in line with SR’s suggestion, but we can extract a shorter list of maybe 5-6 items that Governors can strategically concentrate on rather than the operational concerns. SR reminded Governors that the original brief was to make the main Risk Register more Operational, but it is accepted that splitting it into two – Strategic and Operational could be useful. AW would always recommend keeping more risks on the register but RAG rate them. It was agreed that things can’t be removed from the Risk Register. The time frame column can also be used as an additional tool to RAG rate.
 |  |
| 13 | **ANNUAL REPORT TO PARENTS AND PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT*** JS – annual report has never been done and has previously been encompassed in our accounts, which are publicly available. There has never been a requirement for academies and no longer a requirement for maintained schools. Do we want to do this? DC-Happy to share responsibility to upload to website. DC will look at template and bring considerations to the next meeting. Previously schools have done an Impact Statement that is then fed into the accounts that are published.
* JS – how best to improve engagement with parents was discussed and is a work in progress. Governor profile requires more work and this will be discussed further in future meetings. School Production was amazing.
 | **DC** |
| 14 | **MONTHLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AND VIREMENTS**SR – nothing to report and no comments from Governors. |  |
| 15 | **ESFA LETTERS**None |  |
| 16 | **TERMS OF REFERENCE**The following terms of reference were ratified by the FGB having previously been approved at committee level:* Pay Appeals Committee
* Pay Committee and Headteacher’s Appraisal Committee
* Resources Committee
* Standards and Performance Committee
 |  |
| 17 | **POLICY REVIEWS**The following policies were ratified by the FGB following approval at the relevant committee meetings:* Charging & Remissions policy
* Data Retention policy
* Provider Access policy
 |  |
| 18 | **TERM DATES**INSET Days and Term Dates for 2023-24 were discussed. INSET Days had been previously set for staff to return to school on 1st September and CCO had refused to approve Term Dates she had not agreed to. 20th December had previously been in the Christmas holiday but this has now been amended. Dates for 2023-24 were agreed. |  |
| 19 | **CHAIR’S ACTION**JS – none taken |  |
| 20 | **CHAIR’S BUSINESS/CORRESPONDENCE*** JS – letter was sent to parents concerning events of 27th February.
* One letter of complaint received concerning an EHCP student and the effectiveness of the transition from year 7 into 8 and the effectiveness of the plan that had been put into place. JS responded and the parent decided they did not want to take it further to the complaint panel. JS acknowledged the comprehensive work of the SENCO and SEND team with this student.
* One email was received about “unspecified issues”. Referred back to school. JS reiterated that she is bound by the school’s Complaint Policy.
* DC - There was also a Governor Review of two five day suspensions for the same family – school had done everything correctly. DC was thanked for doing this and giving the family the opportunity to be listened to.
 |  |
| 21 | **GOVERNOR MONITORING, DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**Two Monitoring Visits and their Reports were briefly discussed. The standardisation of the reports is appreciated.December – JS, JB, KB and DC. It was put on record how impressed they were with the new SENCO and the SEND team. Also met with some SEN students who were impressive.February – JS, LS and VH. It was a very involved and highly informative day going through the Essex Safeguarding Toolkit. All this is reflected in the Monitoring Visit review note. Governors were given a detailed tour. It was put on record how impressed the Governors were with Mr Barron and Mr Bolitho. Mr Bolitho explained CPOMS in detail which has been helpful. The Vocation Building was also seen. And Meeting held with Julie Lloyd of Gateway.Link Governor – SEND Visit first week of Summer Term.AW will have a meeting with SR in his role as Health and Safety Link Governor and will report back with the progress of the Health and Safety Audit.JS to speak to Jo Gray regarding a visit in her role as Careers Link Governor.Training Courses – nothing to report but induction required for new Governors. | **JS/JG** |
| 22 | **AOB*** DC – would like on behalf of the Governing Body to express the thoughts and sympathies of everyone with the family of Ruth Parry, the Headteacher who committed suicide following an Ofsted report. We must never underestimate the stress involved on the staff during Ofsted inspections.
* DC will feed back to Standards and Performance regarding some recent Ofsted visits he has locally been involved in.
* Two local schools have been recently inspected. It is useful to read these reports to see what Ofsted are looking at currently, their approach and the conclusions they have come to. Careers was a focus on one of these, as was behaviour of students and staff workload. A crib sheet will be put together and both the Governor training and Essex deep dive also need to be re-looked at regularly by all Governors to keep Governors up to date.

JS thanked everyone for their time.Meeting closed at 18.40 |  |

Signature: Date: