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

**SHENFIELD HIGH SCHOOL**

**6th July 2023 at 4:30pm**

**Present:**

Mr Julian Beard Co- opted Governor

Mrs Katharine Boulton Co- opted Governor

Mr David Churchill Parent Governor

Mr Gary Haines Governor

Mrs Clare Hoddy Governor

Mr Stuart Roberts Staff Governor

Mrs Jane Swettenham (Chair) Co-opted Governor

Mr Andy Williams Governor

Miss Clare Costello Headteacher – Ex Officio

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|  |  | **ACTION** |
| 1 | JS reminded governors the meeting was being recorded for the purposes of assisting the preparation of the minutes.  **Apologies** Jo Gray Victoria Noonan  Karuna Shaunak-Hobbs  Welcome - Gary Haines to his first Governing Body meeting  Absent – Cajiten D’Silva |  |
| 2 | **NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS**  AW would like to raise a safeguarding app under AOB. Governors agreed. |  |
| 3 | **DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST**.  None |  |
| 4 | **GOVERNORS MEMBERSHIP** Lynn Smith resigned in April, she had been thanked for her contribution to the Governing body, particularly with respect to the Resources meetings. JS & CCO to meet with a possible replacement for Lynn.  No changes of roles/committees have been requested or are required currently. |  |
| 5 | **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**The minutes of 23rd March 2023 meeting, having previously been circulated, were agreed as a true record, to be signed by the Chair of Governors. **DC arrived to meeting at 4.36pm** |  |
| 6 | **MATTERS ARISING** Most matters arising would be dealt with under later agenda items. JS asked SR about the review of what services Juniper could offer. This was in hand.  Annual Report to parents discussed. This is currently included in our annual accounts and financial statement available on the website. It was felt there was no current need to produce a separate report.  Photographs of governors are already on the website. It was felt a mini-bio for each governor would be a useful addition to be actioned for September. A template, guide and word count to be circulated by AW to ensure consistency.  Newsletter deadline 14/07/23, JS to submit an item.  **CH arrived at 4.44pm** | **SR**  **AW**  **JS** |
| 7 | **HEADTEACHER’S REPORT** Staff absence data to be discussed more fully in item 8.  Please note that item 1.4.2, Support Staff, in Headteacher’s Report should read **112 days,** not 12 days. These were discussed. In the teaching staff, one long term sick teacher has now moved into maternity leave and has been replaced.  Numbers on roll were discussed, including mid-term admissions and appeals. We expect to be full in each year group in September. Year 7 total for September is 241.  Mobility of students – Year 9 showing the largest numbers. Trends were discussed, one identified is parents withdrawing students due to questions over whether they are being stretched academically. This was discussed. CCO confirmed it is something that is being worked on and is a key focus to include the rigour of PREP and classroom work, along with our assessment and reporting. S&P Committee have also had this as a key focus. Other reasons are geographical house moves.  JB - Current Vacancies – do we use the school website? CCO’s report states that we have various vacancies, but on the website, it says there are none. This is because we have appointed in recent days or expect to, with the exception of the Pastoral Year Manager who was appointed but has since turned down the offer of the job. We have been using agencies for recruitment. Science and Geography are important roles to have specialised teachers with a view to improving academic standards.  JB – Is PREP achieving what is was designed to do? CCO agreed that it currently does not and will be changing to become clearer. It was not the correct priority at the right time. It can affect the student’s potential ATL if they are unable to access the additional requirements, such as museum visits. ATLs will now focus on representing the attitude of the student in the classroom from September as this is a level playing field that each student can access and be assessed on. To “Exceed Expectations” in the current system, a student has to complete wider PREP and this is unfair, not inclusive and disenfranchising on those unable to do so.  Suspensions were discussed. Year 7 is a particularly high number and this was discussed. CCO confirmed that they are a particularly challenging year group, with particular regard to SEND students, particularly students with ADHD. Year 10 is also high, again largely due to having a high number of SEND students. The Positive Impact Centre will play a key role in working with these students. The first suspension of the majority of these students was successful in avoiding subsequent suspensions. Support offered from the LA was discussed, including CSS. To give an idea of the wider picture, CCO explained that there are currently 16 children in the Local Authority who are on a waiting list for provision due to being permanently excluded from their schools. They are currently having to access their education online due to a lack of alternative education provision being available.  The Positive Impact Centre was discussed. It will be fully in place by September.  Staff turnover was raised and discussed in comparison to previous years. Our retention rates are teaching staff - 89.4% and support staff – 89% (4 retirees excluded from this number). Staff are citing the need to work closer to home due to increased travel expenses as being a factor. Some of this staff movement has been good for the school. Recruitment has become harder in the last decade, but CCO is feeling positive about the staffing situation. We will have the sponsor licence in place next year to be able to recruit from overseas. SHS wellbeing charter will be introduced and staff survey. The specific role of DJB and safeguarding within the school was discussed. His role will be changing from September in accordance with the staffing structure.  The appointment of the new Attendance Officer was discussed. It was an internal appointment from someone from the SEND team and this will be her focus in working with the SEND students and families.  Sixth Form Attendance was discussed. There will be changes from September. Leaving school at Period five will be a privilege to be earned. Form Periods were not previously on the sixth form timetables and this has been amended indicating an expectation to be in school at 8.30am. This will be managed by the sixth form pastoral team. CCO has also met with the new Head Boy and Girl.  Unauthorised absence systems and penalty notices were raised and discussed.  CCO was asked for her reflections after her first year. It has been a year of questioning, learning, listening, unpicking, prompting and getting ready. CCO is pleased to see the progress being made, from SLT and through to all areas of the school. There has been a positive shift in the staff. Situations that felt sensitive at the beginning of the year, have now been worked through and CCO is feeling proud of the staff and the progress made. Staff are now on board with new structures, including new guidance on line management. This was agreed by all.  The SIP and SEF were discussed. Senior staff were fearful to discuss data at the beginning of the year, but this has improved which has meant that the SEF can now become more evidence based.  The Senior Leadership Team are more engaged with CCO and the Governors. They are open to discussing, engagement and debating.  Funding and buildings was raised, to be discussed in item 12. The local MP visited the school this week. Funding for buildings and T-levels were discussed during this visit.  **KB left at 5.26pm** |  |
| 8 | **STAFF WELFARE**  JS – recently completed NGA online course on staff welfare which was recommended.  JS - Staff welfare is CCO’s responsibility on a day to day basis and Governors must be careful not to become involved in the operational side of this, but the importance of staff welfare and the factors that feed into it must be recognised. CCO has been looking into improving the working environment and staff workloads, for example giving HOYs additional non-contact time. Good quality professional development is also key.  Staff welfare is inextricably linked to retention and absence. Teaching loads have been reduced across the board. Welfare of Team Leaders and Line Management has been improved. The first question at every LM meeting is about staff welfare.  Improving student behaviour will be key in improving staff welfare.  Staff pulse – nothing has been raised.  Mental Health First Aiders – currently CCO and KWO, no plans for anyone further to be trained in this.  It was felt that a new link governor role should be appointed for staff welfare. JS would email all governors and seek a volunteer. | **JS** |
| 9 | **EXTERNAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE AND ACTION PLAN**  JS - Report from Ruth Murton was discussed. An Action Plan and RAG rating have been produced. This will come back to Governors regularly. The Action plan was discussed.  Adopting Articles of Association needs to be a priority and a decision needs to be made on this. There is a June 2021 model from the DfE or we can commission a bespoke model which will come at a cost both financially and in terms of time. It was discussed that it is not ideal to have a template with “Paragraph Unused” numbered paragraph sections. Whilst some changes would be preferable, you have to adopt that DfE in its entirety.  The template has one issue which was discussed. Paragraph 29 states that when you have a vote you have to have a show of hands. 10% members (one person in our case), can request a proper vote (poll). If this happens, the meeting has to end immediately and a process has to be set up for a formal vote. This could result in highly disrupted and chaotic meetings although there are processes that exist to try and alleviate this potential situation. SR pointed out that this relates to members not trustees.  Should we wish to commission a bespoke model, we would need to instruct solicitors. The DfE have the right to reject the commissioned model. It potentially could raise questions in any inspection as to why it was felt we couldn’t use the DfE model. CCO confirmed that her opinion is that as a stand-alone academy, we are better protected if we take the DfE model.  Currently eight trustees can be appointed by members. There should be a minimum of two parent governors.  **JS – Vote “Are Governors content to adopt the DfE model Articles of Association June 2021 and for Stuart to start the process of that adoption?”**  **All agreed unanimously.**  JS – Review current Members’ arrangements in conjunction with adoption of new articles. We need to recruit as one Member would like to stand down and we require a further two additional people and this was discussed. It cannot be a current member of staff but could be a previous Governor or a recently retired member of staff or member of the community. As long as the majority of Members are not Trustees, we would be compliant. Currently the only Trustee and Governor who is also a Member is JS. We may look to advertise in September. Members will be asked to appoint KB, or another current Governor, so that Leanne Hedden can step down and we will look to recruit for the two further positions. DC mentioned that the person interested in becoming a trustee may possibly only wish to become a member. JS is scheduled to speak to them later this month and will see what they can commit to and if likely to be a suitable fit for us will meet with CCO and JS.  JS - Governance Professional – KWO stepping down as Clerk so there is an urgent requirement to recruit a Governance Professional to be in place by September. Schools Choice and Juniper have been contacted. Governors had the information from both. We had advertises. One applicant was interviewed by JS and KB but was unsuitable. The approximate costings are £5,500 for Juniper and slightly cheaper for Schools Choice, but Juniper have an advice line which would be beneficial and this would be a virtual appointment. A decision is required immediately as to whether we wish to commission their services. AW said that Lincewood Primary where he is also a governor use Juniper and were pleased with the service**.**  Therefore, are we content to go with Juniper on a one-year basis, recognising that it will be a virtual clerk**?** **It was unanimously agreed** **to** **appoint Juniper on a one year basis**.  JS will proceed with commissioning juniper to provide clerking services for the next twelve months. Meeting schedule will need to be finalised shortly as part of this.  Governor induction was discussed and it was agreed that no changes need to be made. GH felt that the experience was positive. It is incumbent on Governors to do further appropriate training -NGA, Juniper etc.  JS will review the Induction Handbook over the summer.  Governor recruitment – two new Governors this year and we are looking to recruit one more to replace Lynn.  Governor training – KB reviewing.  Ruth Murton has highlighted that SR as CFO and Company Secretary is a Staff Governor and whilst this is not prohibited, it is not recommended which was discussed. SR is happy to step down but if this happens, he has requested that someone takes his place on Schools Forum as a Governor which is a commitment of approximately four meetings a year, two of which are online. Our position is that we acknowledge what Ruth has said, we recognise why she has said it, we understand that the current situation is not prohibited, albeit not recommended, but on the basis that we are still trying to recruit Governors, and we are struggling with Governors being able to attend all meetings, we will keep this under review.  SR – confirmed that the Governor Portal will be on the website by September.  Succession Planning – KB has completed the Chair’s training. It was noted that it is important that when JS does decide to step down, her successor has received sufficient training and is aware of what the role involves and the time that is required to do the role well. JS is committed to giving sufficient notice of her intention to step down at the appropriate time and happy to support and help any governor who is considering putting their name forward to be Chair. | **SR**  **JS**    **JS**  **KB**  **SR** |
| 10 | **STRATEGIC PLAN**  Following the meeting of the strategy sub-committee CCO had reviewed the strategic plan and in response to queries raised by JB had incorporated a detailed 3 year timetable. The strategic document is visually impactful and would be displayed prominently around the school and on the website. The strategic framework is based upon four pillars. It was felt three years was an appropriate timescale rather than five. It was decided that the strategic plan should remain 2023-2026 rather than rolling forward to 2024-2027 etc.  **JS asked governors if they agreed the strategic plan. Governors agreed unanimously.** |  |
| 11 | **REPORT FROM STANDARDS & PERFORMANCE- 2nd May 2023**  Governors had received a copy of the minutes of the meeting. It was pointed out that S&P had considered the recent parental survey in detail and the school were responding to issues for example related to PREP. JB said that in his role as safeguarding link he had met with DJB. DJB’s family were relocating to Sussex and DJB would be looking to find a role in that area. He will remain at SHS for now as he has not submitted his resignation. Governors had no questions arising out of the S&P meeting. |  |
| 12 | **REPORTS FROM RESOURCES COMMITTEE 27TH APRIL 2023 AND 29TH JUNE 2023 TO INCLUDE PRESENTATION OF BUDGET 2023-2024 & 5 YEAR FORECAST**  In the absence of KB the report was provided by SR. Benchmarking had been undertaken by Resources at the April meeting which was a useful exercise. We have a projected in year surplus for 22-23 of £74k. SR went through the capital projects. Our CIF bid for refurbishment of the Science labs had been rejected again as had our application for a loan. We are appealing the latter. Our MP visited recently and acknowledged that the labs are in need of refurbishment and will try and do what he can with lobbying for funding. The school will undertake a limited refurbishment programme over the summer with new table tops and decorating. Investment will be put into the refectory including additional tills and new flooring. Refrigeration units behind the tills will be installed to reduce theft. Pabulum our catering partners have agreed to contribute £30K. There was also investment into the swimming pool with one new ventilation unit being installed. We have managed to secure funding from Active Essex. A second will hopefully be installed next year. Reception area is being revamped and made bigger by extending into the current post room where the receptionist will sit. This will give them access to the admin corridor as they are currently exposed where they are. The area is currently a bit cramped and this will make it larger. Reception is important as this is the first place that visitors see. We have secured a contract with a children’s holiday camp provider to use our facilities in the summer (and possibly for other school holiday) which will bring in much needed revenue. The energy has been fixed for a further year at a significantly lower cost than last year but energy costs are still far higher than they were.  At the June meeting Resources had approved the 23-24 budget. The balanced in year budget for 23-24 is good news and provides us with a decent reserve position to mitigate possible risks that may impact next year. There is a projected in year surplus of £1678. Increases to staffing costs had been put in at 3%. However, no final decisions had been made yet for either teaching or support staff. The pay awards may turn out to be higher and if so we do not yet know whether this would be funded or not. Governors agreed unanimously to approve the 23-24 budget**.**  **GH left at 6.21pm** |  |
| 13 | **MONTHLY MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS AND VIREMENTS**  Governors had received copies of the virements which had already been brought to Resources and signed by KB as committee chair. There were no questions. Monthly management accounts are available on Weebly and JS encouraged governors to access and scrutinise. SR confirmed that changes to the 2023 Academies Handbook meant that there was no longer the requirement to share the management accounts with governors at least 6 times a year. However the board must still consider them when they meet. They must still be shared with the Chair monthly. No longer required to explain in the governance statement in the accounts if FGB meets less than 6 times a year. However must meet at least 3 times a year. |  |
| 14 | **ESFA LETTERS**  None |  |
| 15 | **RISK REGISTER**  The register is a regular agenda item at FGB. No changes to risks reported. |  |
| 16 | **SCHOOL LEAVERS DESTINATION 2022**  Governors had been provided with details of the 2022 cohort. This was broken down into university, employment, apprenticeships and Gap year (travelling). There are 5 NEET students which AC is currently chasing. |  |
| 17 | **SCHOOL POLICY REVIEW**  The following were firstly agreed by members S&P committee and then ratified by the FGB unanimously.   * Uniform |  |
| 18 | **TERMS OF REFERENCE**   * Pay * Resources * Standards & Performance     **Governors approved all the above terms of reference.** |  |
| 19 | **CHAIR’S ACTION**  None |  |
| 20 | **CHAIR’S BUSINESS/CORRESPONDENCE**  JS had received one complaint from the parent of a year 13 student. The student had been suspended and the parent did not agree with the suspension. JS had considered the parent’s representations relating to the suspension. There was also an issue relating to the communication and information provided to parents about the exclusion process and procedures which JS had addressed. There was also a related issue regarding bullying on social media which had arisen in the aftermath of the suspension which the school had given advice and support on. Some students involved were from other schools. |  |
| 21 | **COMPLAINTS**  Governors had received anonymised details of complaints that were dealt with by CCO and JS. Of those complaints only two had been referred to JS under the Complaints Policy and neither had requested a panel be convened. In view of the size of the school the number of complaints that are referred to CCO which haven’t been resolved by HOD, HOY etc are very small. There are no trends that emerge from the data. |  |
| 22 | **GOVERNOR MONITORING, DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**  KB delivered this report after item 6.  Thank you for responses to the requests for training.  Key training courses have been identified and these have had a good uptake. These will be reviewed over the summer. All Governors have completed some training. It would be useful for further Governors to complete training on pupil exclusions and interviewing techniques.  New Governors to complete Introduction to be a Governor training.  KB to ask KWO to put the training log on Weebly.  JB had already referred to his meeting with DJB earlier in this meeting as part of his safeguarding link governor role.  AW updated governors on his meeting with SR and the Estates Manager Steve Adams in his role as H&S link governor. Governors had AW’s report. The H&S external audit we had commissioned had been very helpful. AW reassured that the excellent work being carried out by SA and the site team means that any compliance based and operational failures had been identified and either have been or are being addressed.  JS confirmed that the summer term monitoring visit was scheduled for tomorrow and that a monitoring visit note would be distributed to governors when finalised. The focus of the visit would be behaviour and staff welfare. | **KB** |
| 23 | **DATES/TIMES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**  It was not possible to finalise the dates for next academic year at this meeting. Resources had discussed moving their meetings to a Tuesday at 4.30pm to maximise governor attendance. We were considering making Tuesdays meeting day. SR wanted to look into this further and produce a finalised calendar tomorrow which would then be distributed to governors. Time of the essence as we would need to provide finalised dates to Juniper. JS would distribute to governors next week. | **SR**  **JS** |
| 24 | **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**  AW – Safeguarding app. This is a free app. AW would provide CCO with further details. DC said that Zurich have a similar offer.  JS thanked governors for all the support they had provided to the school and to JS in her role as Chair. JS thanked CCO and staff for the information and help they had provided to governors. Special thanks to KW who is stepping down from her role as governance professional and to CW and LS for the support they had provided to the sub-committees. JS wished everyone an enjoyable summer break.  Meeting finished at 6.43pm. |  |

Signature: Date: