



COMMONWEAL

Academic Excellence. Performing Arts.

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Headteacher Mr Robert Linnegar

The Commonweal School Academy Trust

The Minutes of the Full Governing Body (FGB) Meeting held on Monday, 24th May 2021 at 19:00.

Present:

Dr Jokie Bakker (JBK), Chair of Governors, Appointed Trustee;
Ms Joyce Birnie (JBR), Appointed Trustee;
Mrs Wendy Butcher (WB), Appointed (Staff) Governor;
Ms Erica Ford (EF), Appointed Trustee
Mr Tony Forsythe (TF), Vice Chair of Governors, Appointed Trustee;
Mr Philip Hutton (PH) Appointed (Parent) Trustee;
Mrs Florence Leroy (FL) Appointed (Parent) Trustee;
Mr Bob Linnegar (BL) Headteacher and Trustee;
Mr David Mason (DM), Appointed Trustee;
Mr Greville Parmenter (GP), Vice Chair of Governors, Elected (Parent) Trustee;
Mr Axel Remoiville (AR), Appointed (Staff) Trustee;
Mrs Anna Tuersley (AT), Appointed (Parent) Trustee;
Mr Nick Ware (NW2), Co-opted Trustee;
Mr Nicholas Weaver (NW), Elected Staff (Support) Trustee;
Mrs Genny Williams (GW), Appointed Trustee;

Apologies (received and accepted):

Mr Gurcan Fidan (GF) Appointed Trustee;
Mrs Linda Peele (LP), Co-opted Trustee;
Mr Neil Williamson (NW3), Appointed Trustee.

In attendance:

Mr Nick Bartlett, (NB), Assistant Headteacher;
Mrs Michelle Davies, (clerk) Clerk to The Governing Body;
Mr Chas Drew (CD), Deputy Headteacher;
Mrs Jo Sear (JS), Associate, Company Secretary.

Not Present:

Mr Ali Aram (AA), Appointed Trustee.

1. Welcome; Apologies; Confirmation of Quoracy; Declarations of interest; Notification of Any Other Urgent Business.

The Chair extended a warm welcome to the Governors and attendees. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak and in accordance with Government social distancing guidelines, this meeting was held electronically using MS



THE COMMONWEAL
SCHOOL



TEAMS.

All noted the following:

- Attendance and Apologies are recorded above
- The meeting was confirmed as quorate
- There were no declarations of interest
- There were no other urgent business items to record

2. Full Governing Board Business

2.1 Approval of the Minutes of the last FGB Meeting held on 22nd April 2021

The minutes were **unanimously APPROVED** as an accurate record and will be physically signed by the Chair when Government guidelines permit. **ACTION: Clerk to pass minutes to School Business Manager**

2.2 Review of Action log

All outstanding actions were completed.

3. Remote Learning Self Evaluation (SEF) Report

Nick Bartlett, Assistant Head Teacher, joined the meeting to update Governors on online learning throughout lockdown. Key points were discussed from the attached presentation and governor's questions were invited:



Presentation for full governors - becomin

A Governor asked: 'You say students have learnt a good degree of digital literacy... Is that spilling over into their personal use – are they more mature with things such as social media?'

Not certain of this, but it will be a good question to ask in the term 6 student survey. We can say that the student body does commit well to using things like TEAMS and to work confidently on their mobile devices. The more the school does to teach students how to use technology appropriately, the hope is it will spill into their personal usage.

A Governor asked: 'As a school, are we still going to continue using technology like Edulink?'

Yes... We are looking to continue to see how far we take the technology forward. We already using Edulink for many things, such as setting homework, seating plans, registration, giving awards and sanctions. All of the past years Parents evenings have been run through the platform, as well as successful tests and exams.

Governors noted that as the school is using Edulink/home working more, the school will need to look into how to fund for supplies such as new Chromebooks to give students the tools to be able to work at home.

The Edulink platform has also become a key tool for teachers on a daily basis.

A Governor asked: 'Going forward, will teachers build more technology into lessons, so that they can present their work on a more technical platform, rather than using paper?'



There is a fine line, the main drive for the forthcoming Curriculum is all about literacy; the ability read, write, learn, listen, read and speak out loud with confidence. Looking to the future, the school needs to get the balance of the importance of writing on paper, and using technology to benefit our students life chances in modern careers. A Heads of Faculty (HoF) conference will be held in term 6 where this will be discussed in more detail.

Other successful platforms used are Hegarty Maths, and also, online assessments for Drama classes.

A Governor asked: 'Looking at non-engaging students, are there any similarities to those who didn't engage pre-covid – what do we know about them and what tools can we use to help them engage or close attainment gaps?'

A good example to share - using Edulink as a tool to find the non-engagers, which allowed the school to contact the families to see what the issues were. Those students were invited into school, or given Chromebooks to help them participate in online lessons. One further example was an anxious and disengaged student who joined from another school just as lockdown happened – the student was set up on Edulink with core subjects and was able to participate with his class, which helped his transition back to the school environment.

Governors noted that there was a pattern of non-engaging students both online and in school. The school worked extremely hard in removing all barriers to learning, by offering the tools to work online, such as Chromebooks, Modems, SIM Cards etc. Other assistance was with step by step guides/videos detailing how to access work on line; these were also offered in different languages to help English as Second Language (EAL) students. The final step for non-engagers was to invite them into school with the Key-worker and Vulnerable students.

A Governor asked: 'Regarding CPD - does Teams allow you to 'store' more material online for staff to choose themselves?'

Yes... there were many choices, from basic teaching, to using break-out sessions.

A Governor asked: 'Do you know which type of devices students were using from home (and if so, are you aware of any trends in performance)?'

Lots of students used Chromebooks – we are not aware of any trends in performance at this stage.

A Governor asked: 'Are there more opportunities to cheat if online?'

Yes, but the hack around that was to set work that had to be submitted in an hour's timescale, knowing that the work would take an hour or less to complete. This would mean that any would-be cheaters would have to be very effective in their ways. Also, any copy and pasted answers are easy to see.

A Governor added: 'Local parents on social media have been very complimentary about Commonweal's response to the pandemic and the quality of the online offer.'

A Governor added: 'From a parent's point of view, the online classes by teachers massively helped in lockdown 3'.

ACTION: NB to circulate the survey responses to all Governors.

Thanks were extended to NB for his very comprehensive update.

4. Commonweal school – The Five Year Action Plan



Governors congratulated Chas Drew on his appointment as Headteacher – CD presented his vision for the school key points were discussed and Governors questions invited.



**A Better
Commonweal - April**

A Governor asked: 'How does the school propose to keep the learnings from the Covid style school, but balance the mixing of students which helps students learn to socially adapt – it's not natural to keep year group apart all of the time?'

This is absolutely right... A few things that will help – there won't be a staggered start to the day and tutor period will return. There will be two lunch breaks, for KS3 and KS4 to help save queuing and will allow students to sit in the canteen if they wish to; a more civilized and social area to chat amongst themselves and mixing of year groups within their Key stage group. One of the added benefits of the split lunches is that extra-curricular activities can be organised more effectively with more choices available to students.

The outside areas will also be split into Key stage groups, which will help reduce conflict between older and younger year groups. There will also be other outside areas where all year groups can mingle should they choose to.

There will be a staggered end to the day, using two exits, with a five minute gap to ease congestion onto The Mall.

It is important that the younger year groups mingle with older years as they are seen as role models to other students. The balance of students mingling and also, some designated some space for themselves is very important.

A Governor asked: 'Do you have a figure on what percentage of students fall into the wave 2/3 need for support?'

Not at this stage... this is an ongoing support function; across the seven years of learning, most students will need support at some stage.

A Governor asked: 'Where will the support for more able students sit?'

This will be within the Curriculum team, but cross over into the Student Support overview.

A Governor asked: 'Will there be support to help able students, who don't realise their capabilities, to go on to achieve great things?'

This will sit in Student Support and the Global Learning Faculty.

A Governor asked: 'Following on from the able students, I'm assuming the same support will be there for our SEND students?'

Yes... all teachers are teachers of SEN and delivering an appropriate curriculum for all students are the responsibilities of the outcomes team and the HoF's. If a student faces any more barriers, the Student Support team will be there for them.

A Governor asked: 'There had been some mention (timetable permitting!) of a specialised hybrid COVID



bubble type offer for new year 7s, could this still be a feature for year 1?’

Timetables for next year are still in the planning stage, but this still is an aspiration that the school will review after half term.

A Governor asked: ‘Do the 2 leadership teams that you wish to create come from existing staff, or will you need to recruit externally?’

Yes, interviews will take place for these roles later this week. The aim is to recruit two Deputy Heads, (Curriculum and Student Support), with four Assistant Heads, making two teams of three.

A Governor asked: ‘Who will lead on parent and carer engagement to support better student outcomes and impact of interventions?’

This will depend on who recruited into the new SMT roles.

Thanks were extended to CD for his insightful presentation and for patiently answering Governors questions.

5. Headteachers Report

Governors noted that Term 6 would be crucial in successfully planning for September. We have successfully recruited an excellent Headteacher in Chas Drew to lead us out of COVID and into the new era of education in England. Chas has very succinctly shared his vision for the next three years with the selection panel, SMT and tonight the Full Governing body. His appointment has meant that we are able to start the process of transition two terms early which give us a head start before September.

The school will take the opportunity to gently unlock the school in advance of September, putting into place some Behaviour for Learning (B4L) training (taking place on the 9th July) for both staff and students; for example helping Y7 to be in school and in a wider community.

As from Monday the 7th, science labs will reopen, and then later toward the end of term, students will move around the school freely again – teacher will get their classrooms back to prepare for the September re-opening.

This term has been critical in our GCSE and A-level grading process – monitoring, marking and evidence of the awarded grades is now being reviewed to ensure everything is captured correctly before submission on Friday 18th June 2021.

The Headteacher personally thanked Chas Drew, Paul Battye, Nick Bartlett and Sarah Moore for the brilliant work they have done - 3354 assessments have been marked and moderated in a very short period of time; sterling work. The Headteacher Designate added a personal note of thanks the Sarah Moore for her cleverness and skill, remarkable!

The Governors **agreed** that letters of commendation should go to all staff noted above.

Governors noted that a Safeguarding audit would take place on the 30th June 2021 with Sarah Turner. This will take into consideration the response to the work the school has been doing in response to the Sexual Harassment in public schools. OFSTED are also seeking consultation from school in this area.

Governors noted the report from the Educational Strategic Partnership (ESP) with thanks.

It was noted that the Department for Education (DFE) is pushing for Multi Academy Trust (MAT) status. Also, the possibility of the two tier governance system may need to be reviewed. **ACTION: more discussion would take**



place at the term 6 FGB meeting

A Governor asked: 'Summer school? As it was mentioned that students missed quite a lot of the curriculum this year, could such a school could perhaps be implemented instead, or do you plan something else?'
Commonweal will not be running a summer school this year.

6. Risk Register

The School Business Manager advised that the main focus of the Finance & Planning Committee this term was on the Kreston Internal Assurance visits. There are three in total; two of them look at income/expenditure/payroll etc. The third one is specific to the school and is identified from the risk register – the school identified 2 areas, one on additional funding and the other, on the fluctuation of student numbers. Governors noted that we are waiting for their response. **ACTION: More detail to be provided at the term 6 FGB meeting.**

The Chair expressed her thanks to the School Business Manager and the Finance & Planning Committee for all of their work in this area.

Governors were invited to suggest any risks they would like to see reviewed to the School Business Manager.

7. Committee Reports

The FGB noted all Committee Minutes from Term 5 and gave a brief update highlighting key points of discussion noted below:

Chairs' Coordinating Group (JBK)

- Main discussion was on the changes to the school day
- Heads transition period
- Remote learning
- Exam preparation

Curriculum (DM)

- Thanks to Joyce for taking the minutes in the Clerks absence
- Post Covid changes to the school day
- Trips and visits being restarted (Curriculum based / only in the UK)

Finance and Planning (NW)

- Two main topics of debate in the meeting - the initial version of the 3-year plan, and a discussion on the cost and benefits of the proposed SLT structure with Chas as the new head. The initial draft of the 3-year plan is currently showing a deficit in outer years. However, there are a number of staffing and other changes still to be made before the final draft is submitted to F&P in June. We discussed the



reserves which we are likely to end the year with, which is expected to be in excess of our Reserves policy. We discussed, how, given the deficit in outer years, we should not look to be spending too much of this, and felt that we should endeavour to maintain a level of Reserves at the policy level over the 3 years of the plan, with anything in excess of this available within the budget. We agreed that this proposal would be discussed in CCG prior to coming back to F&P and FGB.

- We also had a good discussion on Chas's proposed SLT structure. We were presented with a number of budget options and discussed the benefits of each. Employing an additional member of SLT as the Deputy Head would be very expensive (c. £90k in each year of plan, rising with inflation), and would keep the SLT at 9. This was recently noted as being high for the size of the school by the SRMA visit. As such, recruiting from within the school was the favoured option. The incremental cost of 2 Deputy Heads over 1 was low (<£5k) and given the benefits to the school of a more joined up Support Services grouping, it was felt that this option was worth the small incremental cost. The Committee noted that taking both Chas's appointment and the new proposed SLT structure into account, the expected annual cost saving was c. £100k per annum. As such, the F&P committee supported Chas's proposal.

Personnel and welfare of Students Committee (AT reporting as Vice-chair in LP's absence)

- Presentation from James Woods and good discussion on B4L and attendance statistics. Very positive attendance for on-line learning.
- Praise for Y7's and how they have conducted themselves
- Reports on behaviour challenges for a small group of Y8 & 10's
- A staffing matrix had been put together by the School Business Manager which will be added to the SharePoint for review.
- Presentation from Chas Drew on his view for the future of the school

A Governor asked: ' Who will complete the Headteachers exit interview?'

This will depend on the availability of Governors.

8. Policies for FGB ratification

The following policies had been reviewed by their delegated Committees and now passed to FGB for formal ratification.

8.1 Governors

- *G17: COVID 19*

8.2 PAWS Committee

- *P6b: Support Staff Performance Management*
- *P10: Managing Employee Health Wellbeing and Attendance*
- *P11A: Teachers Pay*
- *P16: Staffing Appeals*
- *P17b: Freedom of Information*
- *P17c: Publication Scheme*
- *P18: Young Carers*
- *P19: Education of Children Looked After – New version of policy*
- *P23: ITT*
- *P24: Uniform Policy – COVID Appendix deleted*
- *P25: Behaviour for Learning*



8.3 F&P Committee

- *F&P10: Major Incident Plan*
- *F&P13a: LGPS Employer Discretion*

8.4 Curriculum Committee

- *C3: SEND Policy*

The FGB **unanimously APPROVED** all the above policies.

A Governor added: 'The SEND policy would need to be reviewed again once the new structure was in place and after the SEND review. It was also noted that the Major Incident Policy would also need to be reviewed, along with others.

9. Feedback on Headteacher recruitment

- The confidential minutes from the 29th March 2021 and the 22nd April 2021 were **approved** as a correct record.
- Governors all agreed that they were happy with the contribution from the School Improvement Partner (SIP) in the interview process. The quote made by the SIP on Chas Drew's appointment was very well received by staff; it was suggested that the same process happens upon appointment of the two Deputy Heads
- Governors had given feedback on the process at their Committee meetings and there were no further comments other than congratulating Chas Drew once more on his appointment.

10. Governor Training Log

Governors noted the training session available through Governor Support (circulated by the Clerk). There is now a log to record all visits to the school and any training undertaken – please let the Clerk know should you attend any sessions so that a record can be made for review. **ACTION: The School Business Manager to review with HR any SIMS entries for training which can be added to the log.**

11. Any other Business (Urgent)

- It was noted that the next FGB would take place in Library and those who wished to join in person could do so. The option to join by TEAMS would also be extended. Covid tests would be available before the meeting for those that wish to take them.
- Governors can decide at their sub-committees should they wish to continue meeting via TEAMS or in school.
- The Chair extended to all Governors and staff for the contribution to the meeting

12. Items to note for next FGB Agenda

None to record

Meeting Dates 2020/2021

Term 6: 12th July (to note date has changed)



