

**Thomas Hardye School – 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016**  
**Meeting of the Governing Body**

**Present:** Garry Batt, Martin Baker, Mike Foley, Iain Cornell, David Grassby, Tony Foot, Sarah Cuff, Natasha Bousfield, Tim Gallego, Laura Cheney, Jon Dean, Linda Morrison, Simon Conibear, Lynne Cove

**Apologies:** Hugh Griffiths, Karen Weir. Sue Harries gave advanced notice of late arrival

**Clerk:** Vicky Smyth

Item	Minutes	Action
16/68	<b>Declarations of Interest:</b> None	
16/69	<b>Minutes of 28<sup>th</sup> September</b> were approved and signed. Matters arising: 16/12: Mrs Bousfield had sent Mrs Smyth a document that she will circulate prior to the next meeting 16/17.5: Mr Batt asked Mrs Bousfield if any Governors had contacted her respecting the School Improvement documents distributed at the last meeting. Mrs Bousfield confirmed that they hadn't and Mr Batt reminded Governors to review the documents and contact Mrs Bousfield with any queries or comments	VS  Govs
16/70 16/70.1  16/70.2	<b>Reports of the Committees</b> Mrs Cove moved the minutes of the Learning and Community Committee meeting of the 12 <sup>th</sup> October. These were formally adopted and there were no matters arising. Mr Conibear and Mr Foot arrived at 4.45pm. Mr Conibear declared his standing business interest as an employee of the Duchy. Mr Baker moved the minutes of the Finance and Resources Committee meeting of the 19 <sup>th</sup> October. These were also formally adopted and there were no matters arising. Mr Dean arrived at 4.50pm	
16/71	<b>Annual Accounts</b> Mrs Smyth confirmed that the audit meeting had taken place on Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December between Mr Foley, Mr Baker, Mrs Cuff, Mr Trowbridge, Mr Cornell and two representatives of Albert Goodman, Mr Doggrell and Mr Hake. Mr Baker and Mr Foley informed Governors of the outcomes of that meeting and shared the positive verbal feedback of the auditors. Mr Batt requested that the Governors thanks to the Finance department be recorded in the minutes, for their fantastic work in this regard, noting that two minor action points for a school THS's size is impressive. Mr Batt confirmed that the final copy had been received earlier today and approved by the MAT Directors ready for submission to the Education Funding Agency.	
16/72 16/72.1	<b>Headteacher's Report</b> MAT - Mr Foley referred to the written report circulated prior to the meeting. He confirmed that 5 schools had requested to move to the next stage of the MAT process and that Sarah had arranged to visit 2 prior to Christmas and would visit a further 2 shortly after. Mr Foley distributed a document giving basic details of a draft Scheme of Delegation and explained that the situation is slightly false at the moment, as there is only THS in the MAT but that it would need to be read as if there were several schools. He informed Governors that Directors had fully delegated to the Governing Body at THS at this stage but the Scheme of Delegation would make lines of accountability clear and though the document appeared simplistic, very detailed work would need to take place before a final Scheme of Delegation is approved. Mr Batt stated that this work was a MAT process but Governors would need to be aware of it. Mrs Smyth confirmed that this was correct and ultimately, Governors awareness would be checked at school inspections in the future, as it had with more established MAT's inspected recently. Mr Foley explained that there would be occasions where schools would not have full delegation, citing a school experiencing difficulties in terms of performance as an example, and explaining that, in these circumstances, the Trust Board would have a greater involvement in staff appointments than in the standard delegation circumstances. Mrs Harries opined that there would be a general scheme of delegation variegated by resolution to pull responsibilities back	

	<p>from schools in certain circumstances. Mr Foley agreed. Mr Baker shared the auditor's suggestion that the MAT would be one organisation with the schools seen as departments.</p>
16/72.2	<p>Standards – Mr Foley began by comparing this year's cohort to last years, explaining that there are differences, but that it was not about the cohort's ability at this point rather their work ethic. Mr Cornell added that staff were working hard to try and instil the work ethic they wished to see; the College Leaders were very involved and there is more going on in school than ever before to move them on. Mr Foley expressed his view that there had been some surprising mid-year results for some subjects so Mr Cornell has written to Heads of Department to inform them of the situation and encourage them to draw focus on who needs the support to move up grades to meet targets. Mrs Cove enquired as to attendance. Mr Foley confirmed that attendance was very good and that Nicki and Kaye had done sterling work here. He added that exclusions were also still very low at this school. Mr Baker asked what the school were doing with regards to parents and their children's work ethic. Mr Cornell explained that the school had been also been working on this and had run workshops for parents that had been fairly well attended as well as monitoring attendance at parents' evenings. Mr Foley added the Mrs Morrison also has the ability to see who has opened the online report for their child. He concluded that collation of mock results had been completed, he would use the data to 'drill down' further with Governors.</p>
16/72.3	<p>Mr Foley confirmed that the school was well over the PAN in the number of applications for entry to the lower school for September 2017. In response to a question by Governors, Mrs Bousfield confirmed that the deadline for expressing interest in the sixth form for 2017 entry was 15<sup>th</sup> January and that there would be more detail respecting numbers at that time.</p>
16/72.4	<p>Dining facilities – Mr Foley noted that the figures for catering had been fabulous this year with £34k taken in November. He and the staff involved believe that the income could be increased further, however, there are limitations such as time, space and the number of till points. Mr Conibear asked why there had been such a marked increase in the figures and whether the food was healthy. Mrs Cheney confirmed that the catering staff had broadly adopted the guidelines for school food plan but ultimately, she believed it was because the students were getting good, home cooked food and value for money. Mrs Harries asked if the school was still maintaining separate accounting with regards to the dining facilities, questioning whether the facilities were now covering their costs and perhaps creating additional income. Mr Foley confirmed that the separate accounting was being maintained however, he was aware that there were still some issues to resolve respecting the type of contracts and numbers of catering staff. He reassured Governors that work was ongoing here adding that the behaviour of students in this area of school had also improved significantly. Mrs Harries opined that this could be related to a cultural change as students move through the school. Mrs Cheney agreed that this was partly the case but that the dining room was used by more staff now who sit in and eat regularly.</p>
16/73	<p><b>DASP Annual Report</b> Mr Foley referred to the report that was circulated prior to the meeting ensuring that Governors understood that they were to receive the report and be aware of its contents but that approval was not required. There were no questions respecting this item.</p>
16/74	<p><b>Raise online</b> Mr Foley confirmed that he had circulated the full report prior to the meeting and Mrs Morrison distributed hard copies of a summary report. Mrs Morrison proceeded to take Governors through this report pointing out and explaining important data such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school had ranked in the top 14% of all schools nationally with regards to its Progress 8 figure.</li> <li>• That she was unable to find national statistics for disadvantaged students to compare the school's data to, therefore it is only shown as in the report, where</li> </ul>

	<p>disadvantaged students results are compared to the national statistic for non-disadvantage students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free School Meals children did not do so well in Maths so this will continue to be a focus. Mr Batt asked what the reason could be for this. Mrs Morrison confirmed that they were not sure at the moment and were adding more support for this cohort but will review this and decide if even more resources are required.</li> <li>• Children with a SEN statement also did not do so well this year, however, this can vary from year to year depending on the individual needs of the child and severity of their disability.</li> <li>• Two Looked After Children did exceptionally well. Mrs Morrison attributed this to exceptional guardian support and that they were exceptionally hardworking students who perhaps did not do so well in Key Stage 2 tests as a result of their home situation at the time.</li> <li>• Mrs Morrison also explained that the student at the lower end of the results graph did not attend school or the alternative provision that had been provided.</li> </ul> <p>Mr Batt questioned the results in languages and Mrs Morrison confirmed that this area had moved from blue to black last year but unfortunately had returned to blue again. She reassured Governors that action was being taken with lots of support in this area for students and parents as well as controlled assessment retakes.</p> <p>Mr Batt also highlighted the Chemistry results. Mrs Morrison agreed stating that the figures for the C and above were ok but there were not enough A's and above. Mr Grassby asked if recruitment in this area was still difficult. Mr Foley confirmed that it was and that he had shared his concerns about the cost of housing, particularly in regards to teaching staff, with a local housing association. Mr Foley asked Mrs Morrison for her opinion of the new reports and she confirmed that they were not as informative. Mr Batt asked if they were still useful. Mrs Morrison asserted that they were but gave an example of not being able to compare the value added figure for disadvantaged children as this data is not provided anymore. Mr Foley recommended that Governors search 'Progress 8' on youtube as there is a useful information video that Governors might like to watch. Mrs Harries asked if parents were supposed to use this information to make informed choices about their children's education. Mr Foley confirmed that a parents' dashboard was due to be released. Mr Baker opined that it was fair to say that the school had done outstandingly well with regards to results in a world of shrinking resources. All Governors were in agreement.</p>	
16/75	<p><b>Dining Room Extension</b></p> <p>Mr Foley informed Governors that the bid had been submitted and that the school would be told the outcome at the end of March. The architects are moving forward to the next stage of achieving full planning regardless so that if the school is successful with the funding request it can move on to tendering and if isn't, de-risking will already be underway in preparation for bidding again in the future. Governors reiterated their approval for the allocation of £45k of funds to de-risking the project and their acute awareness of how desperately needed the improvements to the facilities are in terms of Health and Safety.</p>	
16/76	<p><b>Section 106 – Sports Facilities</b></p> <p>Mr Foley informed Governors that Kendall Kingscott had also been working on a bid for improvements to the Tennis Courts respecting Section 106 funds. An initial proposal has been submitted. Mr Conibear updated Governors respecting conversations with West Dorset District Council and the fact that they had carried out a basic consultation to find out what residents would like the money to be spend on. Sports facilities such as a skate park and more tennis courts had featured. Mr Foley confirmed that the estimated cost of open, floodlit tennis courts had been put at £350k with the cost of covered courts still being researched. Mr Conibear alerted Governors to the fact that there were other good causes calling on this money and that seeking a percentage of the cost rather than the whole amount could stand the project in good stead.</p>	
16/77	<p><b>Phase VI Update</b></p> <p>A final agreement has been reached respecting the Phase VI build that Governors approved via email prior to the meeting. Resolution of final snags is</p>	

	in hand. Mr Baker asked if the school would be expecting more than the £150k maximum agreed by the Trustees of the Thomas Hardy Foundation for this project. Mrs Cuff confirmed that this would not be the case.	
16/78	<b>Sterile Strip</b> Mr Foley confirmed that there had been no further undertaking on this project since the initial consultation. Discussion ensued with positives for the development such as resolution of the ongoing anti-social behaviour and health and safety issues e.g. dog fouling on the school playing fields and additional funding for improvement to facilities that can be enjoyed by both the school and local community. It was also noted that this is private land and not public land with a fixed period lease and diminishing return.	
16/79	<b>School Improvement Plan</b> Deferred to next meeting	
16/80	<b>Complex Communications Needs Base</b> Mr Foley referred to the long discussion held on this subject as minuted in the F&R minutes of 19 <sup>th</sup> October and the pressure on Learning Centres presently. He asserted that there is a danger that when the Local Authority are looking to place children with challenging behaviour, they may attempt to place them in mainstream schools. Mr Foley is aware that inclusion is very important to all at Thomas Hardy therefore children supported by the current Speech and Language Base are educated alongside pupils in all subjects except English. In order to ensure that this system is able to and does continue, the Headteacher and Mrs Orchard will monitor the change to the new base carefully. Mr Foley reassured Governors that the written agreement between the school and the LA respecting the new base had been carefully drafted to the satisfaction of both and would apply for an initial period of 12 months only. Mrs Harries asked what would happen to the children accepted in the 12 months if the school or council were to decide to cancel the agreement. Mr Foley confirmed that those admitted to the school would remain and be fully funded throughout their school career. Governors agreed.	
16/81	<b>Policy Review</b> Mrs Smyth highlighted the changes in each policy, making Governors aware particularly of the fact that the MAT was now the Admission authority for the school. Both policies were approved.	
16/82 16/82.1	<b>Any other business</b> Mr Batt noted that it was Mrs Harries last meeting as a school Governor following her resignation. He Thanked Mrs Harries for her wonderful service to the school as a Governor and more recently, as the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee. Mrs Harries responded by stating that she had felt it was her privilege and honour to have worked with the school over the last 10 years and after seeing 4 of her own children enter and leave the school in that time, was proud that the young people attending were being offered the very best opportunities possible.	

#### Action Log

Person	Action	Timing	Outcome/Update
Vicky Smyth	Circulate Link Governors document prior to next meeting.	Next meeting	
Governors	Approach Mrs Bousfield with any comments or queries respecting the School Improvement Plan	Next meeting	