

Thomas Hardye School – 6th December 2017
Meeting of the Governing Body

Present: Garry Batt, Mike Foley, Linda Morrison, Natasha Bousfield, Jan McKie, Mike Faulkner, Laura Cheney, Tim Gallego, Lynne Cove, Helen Arthy, Iain Cornell, Kaye Chittenden, Simon Conibear, Martin Baker, David Grassby

Apologies: Hugh Griffiths, Tony Foot

Clerk: Vicky Smyth

Item	Minutes	Action
17/50	<p>Student Voice – Presentation</p> <p>Mrs Chittenden introduced the Student Voice who had come along to present to Governors. They began by explaining their roles and informed Governors that the Secretary, Chair and Vice Chair are elected by students and the rest of the group are not. This results in students that would not normally put themselves forward joining in to improve school life for students at THS. They explained that all elected participants had previous experience in youth democracy and had chosen to split into three groups focussing on the following issues identified by the membership: curriculum for life, mental health and guidance, equality and diversity. They explained that the group still has ‘all together’ meetings to discuss all aspects of student life. Views being expressed by the sub-groups presently included:</p> <p>1) politics, finance etc - students are compiling a list of subjects they would like covered in PHSE</p> <p>2) students feel lucky to have the in-house guidance facility however, it is felt that there is a stigma about going to guidance and it is perceived as somewhere you go if you’ve done something wrong. Students did not appreciate that behaviour support included wider aspects such as exam stress. This group are working to breakdown stigma and raise awareness of the amazing things guidance do in school. Six wheels of mental health issues that affect students most, created via youth parliament, were distributed to Governors. Governors were informed that these are to help students to manage their own mental health, particularly as CAMHS is under stress due to cuts to funding. They informed Governors that these wheels have been handed out to all tutors for use within academic tutorials as well as several sets in guidance. The wheels also include all the contact details for support organisations that work within those areas of mental health. 3) Equality & Diversity. Again, students felt lucky to attend a school that is very welcoming of differences but there are always the odd occasions of bullying and this group works to eliminate this. Mrs Chittenden enquired as to how many students had attended the last meeting. Student voice confirmed that there had been over 50 students in attendance at the last two meetings which had greatly impressed them as they had feared that numbers may reduce over time. Mrs Cove asked how often student voice meets. They confirmed that they have half termly meetings. Mr Gallego enquired as to whether there was much involvement from different year groups. Governors were told that there was involvement across year groups and that representatives had been pleased to note the number of Year 9’s that had joined as it can be intimidating when joining a new school. In addition, they confirmed that there was equal representation from all colleges. Mr Baker enquired as to the impact of social media upon students, citing bullying as an example. The representatives felt that this was not a huge problem for young people but just something that is part of their lives. Mr Foley highlighted the link with 6th Form and the work around transition to 6th form being undertaken. Mr Batt thanked student voice representatives for attending and for their fantastic</p>	

	and clear exposition.	
17/51	Declarations of Interest: Simon Conibear gave his usual declaration respecting his employment with the Duchy of Cornwall.	
17/52	Minutes of 11th October 2017 were approved and signed.	
17/53 17/53.1	Headteacher's Report Admissions Mr Foley informed Governors that the school was full to the new PAN of 450. He felt that by 2020, 450 is unlikely to be enough places. The increased numbers are coming mainly from St Osmunds, who had a new form of entry added in 2016. In addition, there are advanced building plans for new forms of entry at Puddletown School and expansion is being considered at Manor Park among other schools. THS's PAN will need to increase to 475 from 2020 and this will need to be agreed and consulted upon in September 2018. Mr Foley stressed that, though this has been the PAN in the past, that doesn't mean it is a comfortable number in school. He informed Governors that 6 th form numbers in year 12 are lower than in year 13 but that had been an exceptional year, the largest for many years. Mr Foley continued, that 350 was the prediction for student numbers in the summer and 315 will exit the school so this represents an increase. Ideally, we would like 450 in each year of the lower school and as close to possible as 400 in year 12 and year 13. He opined his optimism about recruitment for year 12 2018 entry. Mr Foley updated Governors respecting his recent conversations with the Regional Schools Commissioner who advised him that that they have no ability to plan for places and that this remains the responsibility of the Local Authority (LA). He reminded Governors of their disappointment following their last meeting with Ed Denham, sharing his view that, despite this, Governors should still invite him to attend another meeting before changing the PAN. Mr Foley stated that he was trying to avoid a last minute panic in 2020 due to lack of spaces. He noted that there are spaces in Weymouth schools but would not want to go against parental choice. Mrs Arthy enquired as to the number of students that come from outside of the catchment. Mr Foley believed it was in the region of 10 – 15% but agreed to provide an accurate number to Governors. Mr Faulkner asked whether the school had had to turn any away applicants from within catchment. Mr Foley confirmed that it hadn't. Mrs Arthy asked whether parental choice was the priority. Mr Foley replied that government policy is such that parental choice should allow those out of catchment to attend and that popular schools should expand to accommodate this. Mrs Bousfield advised Governors that 110 students had enrolled in the sixth form in September 17, from out of catchment, via external applications. She confirmed that they would still have THS year 11 students that might be out of catchment to add to this number.	
17/53.2	Strategy Mr Foley outlined the three main strategy points included in the report: Standards, Financial Position and MAT and the growth of partnerships.	
17/53.3	Financial Position – Mr Foley informed Governors that the revised Fair funding Formula would give the school an extra £180,000 per year if passed on in full however, the LA are entitled to skim some of this. This money will be set against issues such as increased pension contributions, which, at last estimation, are going to cost £90k. Pay rises are not funded and there is likely to be huge pressure to break that 1% pay increase barrier. This would have a huge impact on school budgets and would wipe out more than just the extra funds. Mr Foley confirmed that there had been no further contact from Nick Gibb. He informed Governors that he had explained the shrinking school budget to Oliver Letwin MP and the reasons why the fair funding formula still isn't fair. The Oliver Letwin had requested a copy of the budget for all years 2011 to 2017 which Mr Foley has forwarded. He highlighted to Governors that THS was the school in Dorset	

<p>17/53.4</p>	<p>that benefited least from the new funding formula because it has less students in deprived categories.</p> <p>MAT - Bere Regis School is expected to join the MAT in April and the MAT is likely to grow fairly quickly after this. Mr Grassby noted that there is a huge amount of work here and asked Mr Foley how the MAT is resourced to manage this. Mr Foley agreed and informed Governors that he had just applied for some funding for MATs and will hear the outcome in March. Governors enquired as to whether there is any funding attached to Bere Regis. Mr Foley confirmed that there was but that it is not ongoing funding so he and the Directors must ensure that the MAT is set up to be financially viable and the services provided are self-funding. However, he would need to 'put the time in' in order to reap the benefits. He concluded that the key is to achieve balance in the MAT. For this reason, Mr Foley stated that he is keen for Damers School to join. The Directors need to make sure that the MAT doesn't overstretch itself. Mr Baker agreed, adding his view that, as the MAT grows, the superstructure will need to grow citing finance, HR, ICT as examples and that the Governance around that super structure will also need to grow. Mrs Arthy enquired as to the benefits of the MAT. Mr Foley explained that a MAT has the ability to bring in lots of expertise from its member schools. He shared his experiences of staff learning from Ferndown during the sponsorship period and that he had found that there were things that their staff were doing that were useful for THS. He continued that working in a larger partnership gives access to more staff, which, in turn, opens up career opportunities for said staff. Economies of scale are also a useful benefit and HR was cited as a service that would ideally be brought in-house as the MAT grows, negotiating with the LA initially for a discount. Once the HR was in-house, funds formerly paid out to LA would stay in the MAT budget. MAT's also have access to different funding streams; partnerships between groups of schools allows them to share expertise, career opportunities, leadership progressions etc. Other services such as Educational Psychologist support is hard for schools to fund alone but a possibility in a bigger organisation. He opined that if THS had not make this move it could have been left behind and opportunities would have been closed off, especially as support from the LA decreases. Mr Baker added that in his experience, schools appreciated the scale of economies a MAT could bring in areas such as policies, for example, most statutory areas would have a single MAT policy instead of each school having their own individual policy. It also increases resilience in schools, providing support when the single receptionist in a school is off sick. Finally, Mr Baker added that he hoped it would help to make the system work better for when students ultimately arrive at THS – ensuring that students are at the right stage when they reach middle school from first school and so on, banding together staff and curriculum. Mrs Arthy noted Mr Baker's responses but highlighted that not all the schools in the MAT are part of DASP. Mr Foley agreed and said that this was still the long term aspiration of the MAT, difficulties with the Diocese notwithstanding, however, Mr Foley argued that there was also a moral issue here in that if THS could help a school then it should. He opined that all those involved in supporting Ferndown would say they had benefited from the experience. Mr Batt agreed and added that it is fundamental that if the government is supporting MATs then THS would want create its own rather than eventually need to join another.</p> <p>Standards</p>	
<p>17/53.5</p>	<p>Mr Foley informed Governors that the LA is considering SEN funding because of its overspend. The LA have promised Mel Orchard that there will be no mid-year changes but that there will need to be significant changes next year which will cause angst among parents and staff. Mr Foley requested that this be added to the agenda for the next meeting. He added that mocks data will also be available for the next meeting. Mr Foley advised Governors that there was a</p>	<p>VS</p>

	<p>10 day half term for October and that the school had starting fining people £60 for taking holidays during term time. Mr Batt and Ms Cheney left 5.25pm</p>	
17/54	Finance	
17/54.1	<p>External Audit Mrs McKie gave Governors an update respecting the external audit of the school. She informed Governors that the in-year deficit was £140k greater than reported in Summer term, one of the reasons for this was double counting of £90k SEN funding. Mrs McKie advised Governors that the Accountants had met with Directors and that a £35k trip deficit had been highlighted and that this was being investigated by finance. She requested that Governors read the Trustees report and send any questions to Mrs Smyth.</p>	Gov
17/54.2	<p>Internal Audit Mrs McKie informed Governors that there were three parts to the internal audit and that some issues respecting Governance had been raised as a medium alert. She advised Governors that these would be addressed and brought to a satisfactory conclusion as the MAT is set up. Purchases and payments had also been raised as a medium alert; the practice was fine but the documentation didn't match practice. This is being addressed with a new MAT scheme of delegation. Petty cash process had also been raised but this meets external audit requirements so is not of great concern and the new finance system will meet internal auditors requirements. Staff are also being regularly reminded to keep receipts. Mr Grassby enquired as to whether the school is still using the same company. Mrs McKie confirmed that SWAP are still the internal auditors and Albert Goodman are still the external auditors. Mr Grassby asked if Mrs McKie was happy with their performance. She stated that she was and that there is one more year of the contract to run. Mr Grassby asked if Mrs McKie thought the costs were reasonable. She affirmed that they were and that they provided clear reports.</p>	
17/54.3	<p>Budget Mrs McKie advised Governors that the budget statement Governors receive will be different to what they are used to. She continued that the statement would show income streams separately to make it easier to see the activity in the account. Educational visits will be reported in figures going forward but will be shown separately. Mrs McKie advised Governors that codes were entangled and finance were working to try and separate these more clearly. Mrs McKie concluded that salary overspend was not a concern at this stage as it would even out during the year.</p>	
17/54.4	<p>MAT Mrs McKie reminded Governors that the school will have to make a levy payment to the MAT as will other schools but that the school would already have been paying for some of the services it would receive anyway. Mr Conibear asked whether a school budget is secure within a MAT. Mrs McKie explained that the money comes into the MAT from the DfE and goes out to schools, therefore schools will have their own budgets. The plan presently is to honour surpluses. Mr Foley added that the intention is for school budgets to remain with them unless certain circumstances made that inadvisable and that it would be up to the MAT board to decide the percentage of carry forward schools will be allowed to keep. This will have to be a policy at board level. Mr Conibear asked if Bere Regis is sound financially. Mrs McKie informed Governors that there may be some difficulties with pupil numbers but that they do have a surplus. Mr Foley added that Bere Regis also had new buildings. The MAT board is to decide on what happens in school's generating their own income. Mr Foley expressed his belief that additional income should be kept by the school that generated it otherwise there is no incentive for PTAs, the lettings of facilities etc.</p>	
17/54.5	Investments	

	Mrs McKie confirmed she had met with Mr Gallego and had circulated his advice on the investments. Mr Grassby enquired as to the total amount. Mrs McKie explained that the school would keep a £600k buffer in the account and invest the rest, opining that a little bit of interest is better than nothing. Governors agreed the investment strategy and Mrs McKie will implement.	JM
17/55	<p>Capital Projects</p> <p>Mr Foley agreed to share the drawings of the new dining room next time. He added that the bid is to be resubmitted by 13th December and that he will know if it has been successful by March. He advised Governors of the plan to knock through the dining room into the two drama studios, extend on to the grass bank and then build 2 drama studios above the dining room. The £2.2mill bid scored a 65 last year but will need 75 or above to be successful; the 65 was achieved without gaining planning permission, putting the project out to tender etc. Planning has now been achieved and the project is currently out to tender. The new facility will be able to be closed off and used commercially. The dining room presently is very busy and it is impossible to serve everyone during the break and lunchtimes. The school could make more money if it had more room and it could also make money externally, for example, through the provision of catering to others. Mr Foley requested that, should the bid be successful, a Governor join the monitoring group.</p>	MF/VS
17/56	<p>Governor Visits</p> <p>Mr Conibear stated that he had found his visit very interesting but had noticed the chewing gum on the carpets and asked whether senior management felt this would reoccur if the school was refurbished. Mrs Bousfield responded that this hadn't reoccurred in the areas of school that had been refurbished recently. Mr Foley added that there had also been a reduction in littering. Mr Conibear stated that he had nothing but positive comments on teaching standards, that the class sizes were surprisingly small and that behaviour had been very good. He concluded that overall he was very impressed. Mr Grassby opined that the visit had been timed well and that he had arrived at 10am and concluded the visit by 12pm. He added that the visit had been illuminating and requested to see a GCSE paper for English and Maths. Mr Grassby also shared his enthusiasm respecting his visit to a year 11 media studies class. Mrs Arthy agreed that the visit had been very valuable and a great opportunity to ask lots of questions not just of teachers and pupils but of Mrs Bousfield too, for example how the school makes non-set English lessons work. She added that the confidence displayed by students to talk to Governors was impressive. Mrs Smyth read out the feedback of Mr Foot which had been forwarded prior to the meeting. Mrs Arthy expressed her view that she would like Governors to attend a learning walk every 6 months. Mrs Bousfield confirmed that she had sent a message of thanks to the teachers who had been visited and found that they were keen to know Governors thoughts. Mrs Cove highlighted the confidence and quality of the teachers who had carried on and not changed their styles because of the visit. Mr Foley thanked Governors for their feedback. Mrs Bousfield drew Governors attention to the link governance paper and link governance meeting on the 30th January 2018 at 4.30pm. She requested that Governors confirm with Mrs Smyth if they are able to attend. Mrs Bousfield will forward all relevant paperwork to Governors in advance.</p>	Govs NB
17/57	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Next meeting 31/1/18</p>	

Action Log

Person	Action	Timing	Outcome/Update
Vicky Smyth	Add SEN funding and mocks data to next agenda	24/1/18	Partially complete
Governors	Send queries respecting audit to Mrs	ASAP	

	Smyth		
Jan McKie	Implement Investments plan	ASAP	Complete
Vicky Smyth	Add plans of dining room to next agenda	24/1/18	Capital Bids update added
Governors	Governors to confirm their attendance at link governance meeting	30/1/18	
Natasha Bousfield	Forward all relevant visit paperwork to Governors in advance	30/1/18	