



RAINHAM MARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2019 6.00PM

PRESENT:

A Bovis	Trustee
A Clark	Co-opted Governor
L Cox	Parent Governor
N Goodall	Co-opted Governor
S Griffiths (Chair)	Parent Governor
J Mayes	Staff Governor
A Moore	Headteacher
S Roe	Co-opted Governor
T Scott Fox	Parent Governor
L Lanipekun	Parent Governor
C Wallis	Staff Governor

IN ATTENDANCE:

S Decker	CEO
M Brighton	School Business Manager
M Harwood	Observer
C Collyer	Clerk

Item	Main discussions and agreed actions	Action by/when
Procedural		
1	The Chair welcomed governors to the meeting. Due notice had been given and the meeting was quorate. Apologies were received and accepted from L Bourne (away) and A Bovis had notified the Clerk she would be late. The Chair welcomed Mr M Harewood who attended as an observer and prospective new governor.	
2	Declarations of Business interest	
	2.1 There were no new declarations of interest	
3	Notification of items to be discussed under AOB – none noted	
	3.1 The Chair advised the Trust Development Plan would be reviewed	
4	Minutes of the committees and previous meeting on 30 Sept 19 and signing thereof	
	4.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record, so the Chair signed the minutes.	
5	Matters arising not covered by this agenda	
	7.2 The Chair explained that there were now just two named governor roles yet to be appointed which were Training & Development and Careers (which is a statutory role). These fell under the Quality of Leadership & Management and Quality of Education & Pupil Outcomes respectively. The Chair asked the Clerk to circulate more information about the role the Careers governor and bring back to the next meeting.	Clerk
	15.2 The School Business Manager (SBM) had reviewed the anomalies within the finance reports with the monitoring pair at their visit	Completed
	15.2 The review of the Academy Finance Manual was ongoing and to be brought back to the next meeting.	AB/MBr/ Clerk
	17.1 D1 carpet – this was part of an ongoing schedule of work and to be removed from the agenda	Completed

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	17.2	The HT confirmed he had spoken with the Heads of Depts re their updates.	Completed
6	Governor Membership updates		
	6.1	The Chair explained that there were now several vacancies on the LGB (7 co-opted and 1 parent governor). There would be a recruitment drive after Christmas but asked governors to think about creative ways in which the school could attract governors and asked them to talk to anyone they knew who may be suitable and met the skill gaps. The Staff Governor advised there was a Yr7 parents information evening on 28 th Nov and a Powerpoint presentation could be uploaded onto the screens. Also agreed was an article in the next newsletter perhaps with a focus on "my experience as a governor". Also suggested was a large banner for display. The Chair and Clerk to liaise on these options.	Chair/ Clerk
Business Management			
7	Income & expenditure		
		To allow the SBM to leave the meeting early, the Chair re-organised the agenda accordingly.	
	7.1	The SBM advised that the period 2 income and expenditure reports had circulated prior to the meeting (copy filed with minutes) and there were no areas of concern to bring to the governors attention.	
	7.2	The cleaning contract, with a value of £120k, had gone out to tender as a Trust contract. They had worked in partnership with Medway, Twydall and Rainham Mark and resulting in the contract being awarded to the existing service provider with a £1k saving. It had been a fair and equitable process which had analysed the market place effectively. Governors asked how long the contract was for and the SBM confirmed it was 3 yrs with an option to extend for a further year. Governors questioned the content of the provider with the highest quote and the SBM stated they had been asked to quote on the same basis as the other companies but had come in considerably higher with no perceived added value.	
	7.3	The SBM sought governors' approval to place the treasury deposits, currently held in two separate accounts with a value of £250k each, into a 90 day notice account which yielded a slightly higher rate of interest of 0.95% fixed for a year. Governors asked about the sweeper account that had been discussed before and the SBM explained that she had sought advice from Barclays and they didn't recommend this approach for school accounts. Governors approved the recommendation. A Bovis arrived 18.16	
11	Monitoring visit report – Finance, Pay and Reward – (A Bovis & L Lanipekun)		
		The report had been circulated prior to the meeting (copy filed with minutes). The Chair asked whether the monitoring pair had found the visit useful as it was their first visit using the new governance model. They confirmed it had been very useful and that all questions had been answered in full and satisfactorily. They had reviewed the finance figures and confirmed there was nothing to bring to the wider Board's attention. The SBM confirmed that the school would be submitting another bid for the 6 th form block based on overcrowding. However the criteria for bid success was to have significant overcrowding now rather than forward planning to meet known demand. Governors expressed their concern that there would be shorter time to make a decision on how this work would be funded if the bid wasn't	

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		<p>successful. The SBM agreed and advised she would need to investigate alternative funding options. Governors asked when the space would be needed and the HT confirmed it would be Sept 22. Governors queried how long it would take to build the additional space and the HT confirmed a year. Governors discussed and agreed that the final decision would need to be taken in Mar 21 which would need to include a backup option if funding wasn't approved. The HT drew governors' attention to the fact that a delay in building and consequent overcrowding could adversely affect student numbers, especially the 6th form. A reduction in 6th form numbers would affect the schools ability to provide a broader curriculum which currently made it attractive to external students. The Chair concluded the discussion explaining that this would need further in-depth discussion in Mar 20 to monitor the alternative funding options and back up plans.</p>	
9	Accounting officer checks		
	9.1	The HT confirmed he had completed all the necessary accounting officer checks and all were in order	
10	Premises update		
	10.1	The SBM advised governors that quotes for gas works and furniture fittings were still being sought for the Science labs refurbishment and there had been excellent feedback from the Science dept on the work completed so far	
	18.34 the SBM left the meeting		
8	Agree Pay committee recommendations for HT's salary - 18.40 the HT and Mr Harwood left the meeting. 18.50 the HT and Mr Harwood returned		
	8.1	This item was deemed confidential and minuted separately	
School improvement			
12	Review exclusions		
	12.1	The HT advised there had been 2 fixed term exclusions. Governors asked whether there were repeat offenders and the HT confirmed one student was. Governors asked which years the students were in and the HT advised the repeat offender was a Yr8 student and the other was Yr10. Governors asked if there were any trends and the HT explained that numbers were so low, now and historically, that there were no patterns.	
13	Admissions updates		
	13.1	The Admissions policy had been circulated prior to the meeting (copy filed with minutes) and the HT advised that the school were not recommending any amendments and therefore wouldn't need to consult. Governors approved the recommendation	
14	Send report		
	14.1	The HT explained that as a SEND monitoring report was on the agenda, he would supplement any additional information after the governors had presented their information rather than provide a duplicate report.	
15	Monitoring visits		
	15.1	<i>Quality of Education and Pupil Outcomes – (L Cox & L Bourne)</i> the report had been circulated prior to the meeting (copy filed with minutes). L Cox gave a summary with key points being that for GCSE the Progress 8 score of 0.28 was slightly lower than expected and down from 0.36 in 2018. English remains steady and EBACC results continue to improve year on year. German grading	

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	<p>criteria was being reviewed nationally as it's considered too harsh. Staffing Maths had been an issue with 3 maternity/paternity absences to provide for and the cover was not as effective as hoped. The performance of the 21 PPG students was commended, having achieved a value of 0.54 at Progress 8 and an Attainment 8 score of 65.81, both comparing favourably to other pupils. A-level - the provisional VA figures have shown improvement year on year and this now stands at 0.04, the first positive value. Much of this improvement is attributed to the teaching and learning enrichments activities that the school provides. The A*/B percentage compares well with other schools and the staff were commended for their efforts in achieving these outcomes. The breadth of the curriculum was attracting more 6th form students and they had been particularly impressed with the results of the Philosophy and Theology results and commended the teaching staff. Governors asked if the Philosophy and Theology was the only Pre U course offered now and the HT confirmed it was but that it will be discontinued as there was little advantage to doing it anymore. The new A-level for RS would be introduced from Sept 20. Governors noted their request to query the identical numbers of students for each grade reported in the GCSE Biology and Chemistry results and looked forward to the update. The focus of the next monitoring visit would be target setting and reviewing the school SEF and development plan.</p>	
<p>15.2</p>	<p><i>Pupil Premium Grant spend and impact – (T Scott Fox and C Wallis)</i> The HT advised that the Trust had commissioned a trust wide review of pupil premium. 2 consultants had spent half a day in school and looked at the data, interviewed students to find out how they felt supported, did 2 learning walks, met the PPG co-ordinator. The report had been published on 22 November and had not been available for this meeting. However, he was pleased to report that the overall outcome was very good. The cultural capital initiative was particularly commended. The Chair asked if there had been any suggestions on what could be improved and the HT advised there had been two minor recommendations: 1. How more PPG students could access 6th form and 2. Increase the uptake of the cultural passport for PPG students Governors asked whether reducing the point score for accessing the 6th form for PPG students could be an option and the HT explained this wasn't a feasible option. The monitoring visit was scheduled for the next day and the HT asked the Clerk to forward the final report to the monitoring pair ahead of their visit to the school.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>15.3</p>	<p><i>Personal development, behaviour and wellbeing – (J Mayes, L Bourne)</i> the report had been circulated prior to the meeting (copy filed with minutes) and J Mayes gave a top line summary. The kindness initiative had been well received and there had been a noticeable difference in more students using small gestures of kindness and the initiative had been promoted to parents too. The Duke of Edinburgh programme take up had increased by 400% in the last three years. Yr10 students were mentoring Yr7 PPG students and the school would also be introducing diversity champions in the future. Governors asked about the focus of the School Wellbeing Activity Programme and were advised it was on mental health and well-being. Governors asked how the staff governor had found the</p>	

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		<p>process and she explained that although there had been no conflict of interest in her role as a monitoring governor meeting work colleagues, it had been slightly awkward asking the questions. Governors reflected that there had been some concern about staff governors conducting monitoring visits and it had been raised before the new system was implemented. The Chair clarified that this had been considered when allocating governors to the different areas as there were some roles where it clearly wasn't appropriate for staff governors to be involved. It was agreed that this would form part of the whole model's review in six months to see if it required adjustment or if it was part of the new model settling in. The Chair and HT would monitor. The Chair noted the review of parental engagement and suggested that while the governing board was short on numbers, rather than appoint a parental engagement governor, it would make sense to have this as a standing agenda item to monitor all stakeholder engagement.</p>	<p>Chair/HT Clerk</p>
15.4	<p><i>SEND (T Scott-Fox and J Mayes)</i> – the draft report had been circulated prior to the meeting (copy filed with minutes) but had yet to be signed off from the senior leader. T Scott-Fox advised that she had agreed to visit the school again to meet with the Inclusion Manager and conduct a learning walk to observe what and how interventions and support were offered. She would also be discussing how mental health was monitored and supported. As a selective school RMGS had a very low percentage of SEND students (only numbering 10 with 1 Education Health Care Plan EHCP). These numbers have remained consistent even though the selection criteria recently changed. Progress made showed as a negative but this was attributed to one student with very poor absence due to a severe medical condition. Once this student was removed from the data progress was positive. The SEND support focussed on social and emotional issues rather academic. Once the additional visit had been completed, the report would be updated. The HT provided some additional data. He advised that 5.3% of the Yr 11 were SEND and that Progress 8 scores were -0.39 versus +0.24 for non-SEND pupils. The difference was minimal. Governors noted that the admission criteria had changed from score to distance and it hadn't impacted the SEND students' score which was very impressive. He advised governors that the validated school performance data would be available at the next meeting but the provisional figures evidenced that RMGS SEND students were performing way above the national average. Governors asked if the comparison data was with other grammar schools and the HT said no. Governors asked how SEND students were assessed and supported and were advised that if a child had an Educational Health & Care Plan (EHCP) they had a statutory right to support. Others were assessed by Action Plus and the school advised on transition from primary.</p>	<p>T Scott Fox</p>	
16	Clerk updates		
16.1	<p>The Clerk requested that governors update their personal information on Governorhub. The site was secure with only the governors and relevant staff members able to access the information.</p>	<p>All</p>	
17	Trust updates		
17.1	<p>For the benefit of Mr Harewood, the CEO gave a brief overview of the trust. He updated governors on the recent Ofsted visit to another school in the trust which</p>		

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		had gone well. The focus of the new Ofsted inspection framework was centred around middle leaders. They had interviewed governors and the CEO. He offered to provide some training on the new framework to help the LGB be Ofsted ready. Governors enquired whether the inspectors only wanted to meet with the Chair and Vice Chair as in their experience, it had been helpful to have a group of governors who could support each other answering questions from the inspectors. The CEO agreed. Governors asked whether RMGS was due for an inspection and the CEO confirmed that Ofsted were re-inspecting outstanding schools.	
	17.2	The CEO updated governors on the recent annual review meeting with the Regional Schools Commissioner which he had attended with the Trust Chair. It had gone well and they appeared delighted with the progress the Trust was making.	
Policies and risk register			
18	Policies – none to review		
19	Risk register		
	19.1	The academic risk register had been circulated prior to the meeting (copy filed with minutes) and the HT reported that the status was very good. Governors noted that he was the owner of every action and wondered if this was correct. The HT advised it was his responsibility but he obviously worked with others to ensure the risk management	
Procedural/Governance			
20	Governor training update & skills audit		
	20.1	The Chair reviewed the skills audit which had been circulated prior to the meeting (copy filed with the minutes). Governor recruitment had been touched on earlier in the agenda and she confirmed that the skill gaps were around finance, HR, reviewing governance and preparing for external oversight. Governors suggested there be some guidance notes on the answering the questions so that people were responding on a basis of mutual understanding.	
	20.2	Training – governors agreed they would like some joint training with other governors within the Trust. The Chair signposted governors to the online training available for safer recruitment and Prevent via Educare. She also recommended the online training for analysing data available by Learning Link. Governors expressed an interest in training for the new Ofsted framework, better understanding of the curriculum and finance. Following a comment about out of date data, the Chair asked the Clerk to check the finance training recommended.	Clerk
21	AOB		
	21.1	Trust Improvement Plan: the HT explained that the improvement plan was part of the support provided by the trust to the school and provided a consistent way of reporting across the Trust. He tabled an update on progress (copy filed with minutes) on the HT/LGB/Clerk actions and highlighted a few key points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There was now a consistent format for HT reports to enable trustees to understand performance more easily 	

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The introduction of the circle model of governance across the trust was a significant change and there would be a proper evaluation and feedback later in the year. All governors would be given the opportunity for input. 3. The PPG review commissioned by trust had been very helpful and an excellent external validation of their provision. Key evidence for Ofsted 4. There was now a consistent procedure to review of monitoring standards within the schools. Although each school had many strategies for this, the HT's had worked collaboratively conducting lesson observations within each other schools. The CEO had also participated resulting in a common understanding of good teaching and learning. It had been very useful to understand primary and the transitional phase. 	
	21.2	Governors had taken part in the PTFA Quiz night and had won 2 nd place. They commended the PTFA who had raised £700 which would go towards the new lighting desk.	
	21.3	The HT advised that the Inspection Data Summary Report (ISDR) would be available before the next meeting in January. All governors should review this at some point although the data monitoring pair would be reviewing in detail as part of their next monitoring visit. The Analysing School Performance (ASP) data would be an agenda item for the January meeting. If any governor would like access to ASP please contact either the HT or the Clerk who will be happy to organise this for you.	
22	Confidentiality.		
	22.1	There was one item deemed confidential and has been minuted separately.	
23	Impact of governance		
		<p>Governors reviewed the content of the meeting and the impact of governance had been:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The quality of the monitoring visits had been excellent 2. The agreement to develop a governance action plan/KPI's later in the year 3. Good discussions about what had been happening within the school had broadened governors knowledge 4. Confirmation that the Chair was meeting regularly with the HT to review progress 	
Meeting ended 19.47 Date of next meeting 20 Jan 20			

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ACTIONS

Item	Action	Who/when
5.7.2	Circulate information on Career Governor role and add to next agenda	Clerk/next meeting
5.15.2	Review Academy Finance Manual relating to Circle Model	A Bovis/M Brighton/Clerk/ next meeting
6.1	Provide promotional material for governor recruitment	Chair/Clerk/Next meeting
15.2	Forward PPG report to monitoring pair	Clerk/Completed
15.3	Review/monitor staff governors role in monitoring visits	Chair/HT/Next meeting
15.3	Add stakeholder engagement to all agendas	Clerk/next meeting
15.4	Meet with Inclusion Manager and complete a learning walk	T Scott Fox / next meeting
16.1	Update personal details on governorhub	All governors/ next meeting
20.2	Clerk to check how current information is within the finance training module	Clerk / immediately

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