



RAINHAM MARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON 29 JUNE 2020 6.00PM**

PRESENT:

L Bourne	Co-opted Governor
A Bovis	Trustee
A Clark	Co-opted Governor
L Cox	Parent Governor
N Goodall (V Chair)	Co-opted Governor
S Griffiths (Chair)	Parent Governor
M Harewood	Co-opted Governor
L Lanipekun	Parent Governor
J Mayes	Staff Governor
A Moore	Headteacher
S Roe	Co-opted Governor
K Shah	Co-opted Governor
C Wallis	Staff Governor

IN ATTENDANCE:

S Decker	CEO
M Brighton	School Business Manager
C Collyer	Clerk

Item	Main discussions and agreed actions	Action by/ when
Procedural		
1	The Chair welcomed K Shah to her first LGB meeting and introduced S Decker (CEO) to the newer members. Due notice had been given and the meeting was quorate. Apologies were received and accepted from T Scott-Fox (family commitment).	
2	Declarations of Business interest	
	2.1 There were no new declarations of interest	
3	Notification of items to be discussed under AOB	
	3.1 Ofsted framework	
4	Minutes of the previous meeting on 9 March 20, extra-ordinary minutes 18 May and 8 June and signing thereof	
	4.1 Governors noted an error in minutes of 9 th March 6.3 date should read 11 th June not May. With this amendment, all three sets of minutes were agreed as a true record and Chair would sign when next in school. Governors asked the minutes to reflect that although agreed at the meeting on 18 May (5.1) that monitoring visits would take place via zoom, only the statutory finance monitoring visit had happened.	
5	Matters arising not covered by this agenda	
	5.1 The Chair explained that due to Covid-19 the items noted in the action log on the agenda would be moved to the relevant terms next year.	
Updates		
6	Trust Update	

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	6.1	The CEO expressed his thanks and that of the trust board to all staff for the tremendous effort and work over the last three months. The feedback from parents had been overwhelmingly positive. He acknowledged that most people didn't understand the levels of stress for staff who provided both online and in school learning and staff had managed this extremely well. Across the trust, HTs and their teams were planning for full opening from Sept and he was pleased to note attendance at RMGS was above average nationally. The Government had re-introduced fines effective from Sept as there was growing concern about the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other students. All three schools in the trust had done very well and the primaries had been open throughout Easter and May half-term providing support for key worker children. The move to virtual learning platforms had worked well across all schools. Due to low governor numbers at Twydall, the trust had decided to take governance back into the trust temporarily, via an Interim Advisory Board, so there would be no interruption for the vital challenge and support. He was aware of the challenges with governor vacancies at RMGS and would be updating trustees. Finally, he passed on his thanks from the trustees to all governors for their support during this time and recognised their commitment to the voluntary role. The HT added his thanks for the support he'd received from governors at the LGBs and the extra-ordinary meetings. The CEO left the meeting at 18.13	
7	Governor Membership Updates		
	7.1	The Chair advised that staff governor elections would take place in the autumn term.	HT/Clerk
	7.2	There had been two expressions of interest for co-opted governor and the Clerk and Chair would be meeting with the candidates shortly. The Chair requested that governors share the details,, available on the RMET website with any colleagues or friends who may be interested.	ALL
	7.3	The Chair advised this was the last meeting for A Clark and N Goodall who had completed at least 3 terms of office and A Bovis who joined the board in 2016. On behalf of RMGS, she thanked them for their support and commitment and apologised that it hadn't been possible to give them a proper send off. Hopefully this could be done at some point in the future.	
	7.4	The Chair drew governors' attention to the role description for Vice Chair (copy filed with minutes) which was now vacant. She asked for expressions of interest from governors who had been in post for 12 months or more and she would happy to talk through any questions.	
8	Clerk Updates		
	8.1	Support for governors was being reviewed and the Clerk would be sending out an email asking for feedback on governors use of the NGA and Learning Link websites	Clerk
Business Management			
9	Income & expenditure report (copy filed with minutes)		
	9.1	The School Business Manager (SBM) presented the highlights of the cumulative report	

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	<p>1. Income: slightly above forecast due to receipt of some additional grant funding</p> <p>2. Lettings: were down due to Covid-19.</p> <p>3. Catering: was down due to the school closure. This was the first time in many years catering had a loss. The staff had volunteered to help in other areas as the kitchens were closed.</p> <p>4. Teaching: forecast was slightly down as no supply staff or foreign visits were possible</p> <p>5. Repairs & maintenance: small projects were being completed while the school was empty. Governors questioned refuse figures and the SBM confirmed she hadn't adjusted the reduction in recycling costs but they still had refuse collections. Governors enquired about the cleaning costs too and the SBM explained government guidelines were to pay cleaning contractors even if not being used. However, cleaners came in for the Easter deep clean and have been concentrating on a deeper clean for areas used Yrs 10 & 12.</p> <p>6. Capital expenditure: waiting for costs for computers for the IT suites (45 desktops) but all within budget. Governors asked whether the school was providing laptops and the SBM confirmed that the ESFA gave an allowance for 7 laptops. However the school had refurbished and issued 67 laptops to Yr10s, Pupil Premium students, then years 7,8 and 9. Families were extremely grateful. However, as the school had an in-year surplus, they wouldn't be able to reclaim costs. Governors asked if the school had provided laptops before, whether they had budgeted for any extra maintenance or replacements and whether they may continue to do this in future. The SBM advised historically these were reserved for PPG or vulnerable students, however the HT and SLT were reviewing the criteria for loaning laptops. The HT explained that the current situation had highlighted the issue of some students unable to access online resources on a permanent basis. Governors asked if there had been issues for students accessing the internet and the SBM confirmed the school had provided dongles for some families.</p> <p>Governors asked if there had been issues refunding school trip money to parents and the SBM said no. The RPA insurance had refunded the money in full.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the finance monitoring pair had anything else to add and they confirmed the meeting went well, they were satisfied all their questions were answered and a report would be forthcoming in due course.</p>	<p>AB/LL</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>Accounting Officer Checks</p>	

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	10.1	The SBM and HT confirmed that all the checks had been completed with no concerns raised.	
11	Approve budget forecast and staffing structure (copy filed with minutes)		
	11.1	<p>The SBM presented the highlights of the budget but summarised that the financial status was healthy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Funding for additional Yr7 : £150k had been omitted by Medway, this should have been in-year rather than lagged funding as agreed. RMGS had invoiced Medway for the outstanding money. 2. PP funding: slightly down from previous years but this may change due to Covid. 3. Teacher pension grant: the government had agreed funding for the next academic year only 4. Catering and lettings: income reduced by a third due to Covid 5. Staffing costs: were stable for September 6. Resources: some subjects would have to amend how they teach so had adjusted the budget to meet this need 7. Overall there was an in year surplus for £130k 8. Condition Improvement Fund (CIF): decision still outstanding and long overdue regarding 6th form block. Some reserves had been set aside to support the build if it gets approved <p>Governors questioned the 2024/25 deficit projection and the SBM explained this was because of the increased salary costs versus a static per pupil funding. Governors asked for clarification on the lump sum coded under 4030 and the SBM explained it was the £5k per pupil for the additional Yr7 pupils Governors asked whether the projected increase in cleaning costs were due to Covid and the SBM explained the contract had a percentage increase each year linked to contract staff costs. Governors had no further questions, and approved the budget for submission to the trust board for final sign off.</p>	
12	Monitoring visit report		
	12.1	There were no other monitoring visits to report	
School Improvement			
13	HT report (copy filed with minutes)		
	13.1	<p>The HT presented the highlights from his report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roll: still full in all year groups. 2. Attendance: became irrelevant after Term 4. 3. Transition: there had been 400 participants in a virtual meeting for new Yr7 students and parents. The induction day wouldn't go ahead so they had amended 2 Sept to be for Yr7 and 12 only 4. Yr12: they had an increase in external entrants 5. Staffing: the Schools Direct programme had been a positive channel for recruitment and there was only one unfulfilled vacancy for chemistry 	

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		<p>6. Safeguarding: staff had worked extremely hard to maintain communication and flag any issues. Governors asked how concerns were identified and the HT advised each student was in weekly contact with their teachers, so the first alert was if they stopped engaging. Then the Head of Year would contact the family. Students were also reminded to make contact if they're worried.</p> <p>7. Remote teaching: over 90% of Yrs7 & 8 were engaging at least satisfactorily. The school was migrating to blended learning and delivering live lessons. They had set up a working party to look at ways to improve online learning and 60% + students had responded to the survey. Governors asked the HT to pass on their thanks to S Rowden Knowles for the survey and questioned whether it was representative across the year groups. The HT confirmed it was. Governors enquired whether parents completed the same survey and the HT explained that all parents had been contacted by phone and asked similar questions.</p> <p>8. GCSE and A level grading – this year exam results would be identical to last years. This substantial piece of work had been submitted to the exam boards for final decision.</p> <p>9. Exclusions – no update since Term 4. Governors asked for the comparison figures with last year and the Saturday and internal exclusion data.</p> <p>Governors probed staff wellbeing and how teachers were coping with the workload. The HT advised some had been very stressed but working with the Heads of Dept, staff were able to address this. SLT ensured staff touched base at least weekly with their line managers or teams so they could monitor wellbeing. Governors noted the discreet list of 'new vulnerables' and asked about the impact on workload for the pastoral team come Sept and the HT clarified this related more to students falling behind and that they would be supported in the usual way. Governors asked whether the appeals had taken place and the HT confirmed they had 55 appeals but the process had been totally paper based and the outcomes pending</p>	<p>HT</p> <p>HT</p>
	<p>13.2</p>	<p>Return curriculum (copy filed with minutes)</p> <p>The HT apologised for tabling this document but it had taken a long time to put together. He advised governors of the importance of positive language and the evidence internationally was that students were resilient to extra-ordinary events. For Yrs 7, 8 9, there was lots of time before public exams. So the SLT were very confident they would be on track eventually. Current Yrs 10 & 12 will be in their exam year next year and won't have the same time to make up ground. However students across the country were in the same boat.</p> <p>Governors asked whether students will be given the opportunity to reflect on this time and review the positives – resilience, character, how a community handles a disaster. The HT responded that Yrs 10 & 12 had up to 85%+</p>	

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		attendance and were very pleased to be back. He agreed, there was educational value in reflection. Governors thanked the HT and his team and were impressed with the document	
14	Review exclusions for year		
	14.1	See HT report	
15	Review school development plan		
	15.1	The HT advised that most of the SDP had become irrelevant due to Covid. However, where working parties had been set up to focus on a key criteria, this work would be rolled over to the next year – such as diversity. However, the priority must remain the return curriculum	
16	Performance management report for support staff		
	16.1	This would roll over to Term 1.	
17	Monitoring visit reports		
	17	No visits were completed this term	
Policies & risk register			
18	Policies - none		
19	Review risk registers		
	19.1	Unfortunately, there had been an error with the risk registers and the Chair asked the HT and Clerk to circulate and governors could review and forward any questions. They would be reported in Term 1	HT/Clerk
Procedural/Governance			
20	LGB skills audit		
	20.1	The skills audit had been amended and would now include criteria to provide guidance on grading and make completion easier for governors	
21	LGB terms of reference and circle model		
	21.1	The Chair explained that the working party for the Circle Model had met and recommended that as there hadn't been a full academic year, an extension for the review would be sensible. Governors agreed to review the length of time for an extension at the meeting in Term 1.	Clerk
22	AOB		
	22.1	The HT asked for governor approval to move the autumn INSET day as Medway have put the date back of the Medway test. He proposed the 6 th November. Governors approved the recommendation	
	22.2	The Chair invited governors to join an Ofsted framework working party. Anyone interested should contact her direct. This group would also look at the governor work plan and key performance indicators for the coming year. She had put a link to a 1 hr training webinar on Governorhub and encouraged governors to view it. The focus was on evidence required for Ofsted. Governors asked that with the monitoring visits cancelled, should they be seeing evidence to support what they were being told by the school leadership. The HT explained that the information was available.	ALL
	22.3	Governors asked the HT to provide a summary report on Covid-19 to identify any lessons learnt in case the lockdown is enforced again. It was noted that documents relating to Covid were available on Governorhub in the extra-ordinary meeting 18 May 20. Finally parent governors confirmed that parents	HT

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		were receiving the same information as governors, reflecting the transparency in communication adopted by the school.	
20	Confidentiality.		
	20.1	none	
Meeting ended 20.10 Date of next meeting 5 October 20			

ACTIONS LOG

Item	Action	Who/when
7.1	Staff elections to take place	HT/Clerk September
7.2	Governors to promote vacancies through their networks	ALL Immediately
8.1	Survey governors for their use of NGA and Learning Link	Clerk Next meeting
9.1.6	Monitoring pair to complete the finance monitoring visit report ready	AB/LL Immediately
13.1.7	HT to pass on thanks S Rowden Knowles for the survey on behalf of governors	HT
13.1.9	HT to provide comparative exclusion data for last year and include Saturday and internal exclusions	HT
19.1	Circulate correct risk registers and any questions directed to HT. Clerk to add to Term 1 agenda	HT/Clerk
21.1	Add Circle model review extension timeframe to Term 1	Clerk
22.2	Speak with Chair about expression of interest for Vice Chair role	September
22.3	HT to provide a summary report on Covid for governors	HT Next meeting

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