



RAINHAM MARK GRAMMAR SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY
HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2020 6.00PM – Virtual Meeting**

PRESENT:

L Bourne	Co-opted Governor
L Cox	Parent Governor
S Griffiths (Chair)	Parent Governor
A Gehrke	Co-opted Governor
L Lanipekun	Parent Governor
J Mayes	Staff Governor ()
A Moore	Headteacher
S Reynolds	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/When
Procedural		
1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Due notice had been given and the meeting was quorate. There were apologies from S Roe (pending re-appointment) and T Scott Fox (ill) which were accepted. Post meeting M Harewood sent his apologies (family). The Chair requested a slight re-order of the agenda to allow the CEO and SBM to present first as they were required at another meeting.	
2	Declarations of Business interest	
	2.1 There were no new declarations of interest and none noted	
3	Notifications of items to discussed under AOB	
	3.1 Clerk and HT update (Chair) Additional expenditure (SBM)	
4	Minutes of the previous meeting on 5 October 20 and signing thereof	
	4.1 The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and will be signed electronically by the Chair	
5	Matters arising not covered by this agenda	
	9.1 Anyone interested in the audit committee to contact the Chair	
	13.2 Pupil premium report still outstanding	TSF
	21.1 Expressions of interest for Vice Chair to contact the Chair	
6	Trust Update - CEO	
	6.1 The CEO confirmed a letter would be sent out to all schools to staff and parents, praising staff for their incredible efforts to keep the schools open and to thank parents for sending their children in. It would also include details of the huge amount of extra work staff were doing to manage the impact of the pandemic. Governors asked if they could see a copy of the letter and the CEO confirmed he would forward it to the Clerks to disseminate to governors	CEO/ Clerk
	6.2 It was now a legal requirement for schools to provide remote learning and the school work on the RMGS website was very impressive	



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	6.3	The CEO confirmed to governors that the HT had decided to retire after 20 years of service to the school. The CEO was leading on the recruitment process working alongside governors and trustees. The timescale was an advert out by Christmas and hopefully appointment by February half term. The Chair would give more details later in the meeting.	
	6.4	He also advised governors that the Clerk had resigned and he thanked her for the distinguished service since March 2015 and the invaluable support she had provided the trust and RMGS.	
	6.5	The CEO continued to have regular meetings with the DfE regarding Covid and he reminded governors that the trust schools couldn't close early for Christmas as it would be a breach of the funding agreement. He was pleased to report that attendance at the RMET schools was significantly better than many schools nationally and in Medway. SD left the meeting 18.12	
Business Management			
7	SBM update		
	7.1	<p>The SBM presented the key highlights:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Although overall expenditure was within budget now, the increased use of supply teachers was a significant cost. 2. Income was down but staff costs had risen. 3. Although they had budgeted for 2% teacher pay award, the higher than expected increase could be managed within the current budget. 4. 2 classroom portacabin had been installed with a min rental period of 12 months to provide additional teaching space now winter had arrived and it would possibly assist with space for exams in future 	
	7.2	<p>The SBM sought governor approval to install another covered canopied area near the tennis courts for student shelter. The cost was circa £40k for furniture, groundworks and surfacing. The HT explained that it had always been part of the schools plans to extend the 6th form area but Covid had accelerated the need for the installation. Governors asked where the funds would come from and the SBM advised they had put an extra £20k in the premises budget this year and there was an underspend from the previous year too. The school had substantial reserves and this would significantly benefit the students. The Chair asked if the monitoring pair had discussed this during their visit and they confirmed it had been mentioned but explicit details hadn't been shared at that time. Governors sought clarification that the portacabin was a temporary measure but this canopy was a permanent installation. Both the HT and SBM confirmed that was correct and added that this canopy would compliment any future expansion of the 6th form. If approved, it would be installed at February half term. Governors unanimously supported the proposal.</p>	
	7.3	The SBM advised that there was a water leak underground in M block linked to the boiler. The proposal was to move all pipework above ground level as it was possible there was asbestos under the floors. They were currently obtaining quotes.	



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7.4	The HT advised the Deputy Headteacher (DHT) had received a monitoring call from Public Health England as the school had been moved into a higher category due to the number of Covid cases. After checking safety measures and procedures PHE were content good practice was being observed and could offer no further recommendations.	
7.5	<p>The monitoring pair added:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They had sought clarification on what the additional Covid funding would be spent on. They understood it was to help schools bridge the learning gap and RMGS were looking to use most of it on exam preparation. Governors were confident with the school reassurance that non-exam year groups would have enough time to get back on top of their studies. 2. They had asked for confirmation that the Science Learning Partnership programme didn't overstretch or negatively impact the lead teacher. The school leadership had shown that it was managed very efficiently and continued to raise the profile of the school. 3. A new cost code had been created to capture all Covid related spending but governors expressed caution as the duration of the pandemic was unknown and because of the school's reserves, no further funding would be available to offset running costs. MBr left meeting 18.37 	
8	HT review panel	
8.1	The Chair confirmed the HT's review had taken place with input from the CEO and the external advisor R McKinnon. She was pleased to report it had been an exceptional year for the HT, in addition to dealing with Covid. She took this opportunity to thank him for all his hard work. She would be submitting the panel's recommendation to the Trust Board	Chair
9	Accounting officer checks	
9.1	The HT confirmed all checks had been completed	
10	Premises update	
10.1	<p>The main items had been covered within the finance update. However, the HT wished to bring the following to governors' attention:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They had lost 3k student days since Sept and 280 teacher days - which was a conservative estimate and more like 400 days. There had been record breaking numbers of supply teachers used to keep the school open. 2. RMGS was the only local secondary school fully open, all others were partially open or closed. 3. They had given the Yr11's study leave as it wasn't possible to provide a safe study space for them. The mocks (PEQs) were held last week with attendance like usual. This will enable the school to have some tangible results if Centre Assessed Grades are used again. The leadership had set 	



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		<p>parameters for a consistent approach to grading rather than stretch targets in case CAGS are used.</p> <p>4. The DfE should be sending an update on curriculum content shortly so schools can prepare accordingly.</p> <p>5. Yr13 PEQs will take place after Xmas. There had been mini mocks at end of October in all subjects and results were re-assuring. There would be another set of PEQs in March. If the school stayed open to the exams, the leadership were confident the Yr13s would be ok</p> <p>6. The HT stressed that managing Covid was all-consuming, working long hours and seven days a week. He praised his staff for their amazing efforts and all pulling together. In addition, the students had been extraordinary – so compliant and positive, they were a real credit to the school.</p> <p>Governors thanked the HT for his report and hard work.</p>	
9	Governor Membership Updates		
	9.1	The Chair advised that S Roe’s term of office as a Co-opted Governor had come to an end. She highlighted his long service with the school and his governance experience. Governors unanimously agreed for the Chair to recommend re-appointment by the trust board.	
	9.2	The Chair, HT and Clerk reviewed the skills audit and there weren’t huge skill gaps. The Chair recommended organising some training for Ofsted preparation in March and had contacted two providers for quotes	
	9.3	Recruitment – there was one expression of interest outstanding and the Chair and Clerk would arrange to meet then share details if they were suitable. Governors asked if these new additions would help fill the remaining places on the board and the Chair and HT advised there were still a couple of vacancies but as long as there were sufficient to cover the monitoring pairs, there wasn’t a rush to fill them.	
	9.4	The potential new governor R Osman could possibly be the representative for the audit committee.	
10	Clerk Updates		
	10.1	There were no updates from the Clerk	
School improvement			
11	Admissions update		
	11.1	Oversubscription criteria – the HT explained that the admission policy had to be amended to remove the admission criteria for students at trust primary schools. This was no longer in line with the Admissions Code. It would not have to go out to consultation. Governors noted this and asked that the male/female criteria be amended to say gender on the supplementary information form. Governors also asked if the subscription criteria for the 6th form would also need to be altered due to Covid and the HT explained it was acceptable to review this at the relevant time once results were known	
12	Monitoring visit		



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	12.1	SEND – the HT confirmed the visit had taken place. The Chair asked for the report to be fed back at the next meeting.	TSF, Clerk
Policies & risk register			
13	Policies - there were no policies to review		
14	Review risk registers		
	14.1	Academic – the HT advised there had been no change to the risk levels which remained very low	
Governance/procedural			
15	Governor training & CPD		
	15.1	LB had attended a networking event with Governance Connected and strongly recommended new governors to attend these events as they were very informative. It was a great to meet governors with a wide range of experience from different types of schools and share good practice and challenges	
16	AOB		
	16.1	The Chair advised governors that she and LB were on the appointment committee for the new HT. Also on the committee were the new Trust Chair – R Lawrence, T Whittaker, R McKinnon – external advisor and the CEO. They were being advised by the trusts HR consultants Kape. Applications were expected in January with appointment by February half term. It was a very robust process and the current HT was supporting with logistics as they hoped to do some of the interview in school. She explained both she and LB had stated expressly they didn't want someone to come in and make huge changes. On behalf of the board, she thanked the HT again for his significant contribution to the school.	
	16.2	The Chair thanked the Clerk for her support and wished her well for the future. Governors hoped there could be a celebration, possibly in the summer when the Clerk and other governors who had left in the summer, could be invited back to school.	
	16.3	Governors asked if there had been a reply from the exam board regarding the parent complaint and the HT advised they had to provide comparative data but hadn't heard anything back from exam board yet.	
	16.4	Governors asked if when doing the PEQs did the school learn anything useful if the situation happens again and the HT said it had been set up as if Covid restrictions were in place and it was very beneficial for logistics and for the students as they hadn't experienced a formal exam setting before.	
	16.5	Governors asked if there had been any exit questionnaires issued and the HT confirmed the process was still in place but there was little turnover. The staff member could still request an exit interview but no-one had taken up the offer recently.	
17	Confidentiality – there were no item of a confidential nature.		
18	Impact of governance: – decent level of challenge – good monitoring visit and finance report, – monitoring the impact of Covid and how the school is managing this is still a high priority on the agenda.		
Meeting ended 19.30 Date of next meeting: 01.02.21			



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ACTIONS LOG

Item	Action	Who/when	Update
5.9.2	Anyone interested in being Audit Committee rep to contact the Chair	ALL Next meeting	
5.13.2	Pupil premium monitoring visit report to be sent	TSF/CW	
5.21.1	Expressions of interest for Vice Chair to Chair	Governors/ next meeting	
6.1	CEO to send draft letter to Clerks to forward to governors	CEO Immediately	Completed
8.1	Written recommendation of HTs pay award to be sent to CEO/Trust Chair	Chair Immediately	