

The Harvey Grammar School

Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body number A32 held via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 9 July 2020 at 5.00 p.m.

NB All governors had previously acknowledged that, due to the coronavirus crisis, they were content that the meeting should be held remotely via Microsoft Teams

Present: Mr. J. Dennis (JD) (Chair), Mr. M. Bridges (Vice-chair), Mrs. Anne Brown (AB), Mrs.K. Callandar (KC), Mrs. A. Carney (AC), Mr.W.Caudwell (WGC), Mr. J. Chamberlain (JC), Mrs. Polly Davis (PD), Mr. Charles Lancefield, Mrs. M. Mitchell (MM), (CL), Mr. Dominic Van der Wal (DvW) and Mr. S. Norman (SN)(Headteacher - HT).

In attendance: Mr. A. Allon (AA) (Deputy Head Pastoral - DHP) and Mr. S. Goodfellow (SJG) (Deputy Head Curriculum - DHC)

Clerk: Mr. M. Hydes (MCH) (on line from 5.10 p.m.)

NB Mr. S. Goodfellow undertook to take the minutes until Mr. Hydes joined the meeting.

No.	Item/detail	Action
	The following papers were available on the intranet in advance of the meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2020</i>• <i>Headteacher's Report (including Self Evaluation Form)</i>• <i>School Improvement Plan 2019/20 Update</i>• <i>School Improvement Plan 2020/21</i>• <i>Chair's Report</i>• <i>PPPF report</i>• <i>SPPC Report</i>	
1.	Chair's Introduction and Welcome	
	The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and confirmed that it was quorate under Article 117 – 12/12 governors being present.	
2.	Apologies for Absence	
	None	Clerk
3.	Declaration of Business Interests	
	Governors present declared that they had no business interests to declare other than those already registered.	Clerk
4.	Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 February 2020	
	P.2 6.1 line 30 insert 'The' P.3 6.1 line 26 insert 'the' Subject to these amendments, the minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the chair	Chair/clerk
5.	Matters Arising from the Minutes	
5.1	Page 3 6.1 School Improvement and Self-Evaluation	
	The HT advised governors that he had recently been informed that the school's Condition Improvement Fund bid (CIF) had been unsuccessful. The HT commented that he was not yet aware of when the school would be able to launch a further bid.	

5.2	Page 5 6.3 Staffing	
	The CoG drew attention to the fact that it was customary to invite staff leavers to attend the FGB meeting to thank them for their work. The CoG proposed that he write to the colleagues concerned to thank them for their service to the school and to wish them well for the future. Governors agreed unanimously to the proposal.	CoG to write to staff leavers – on-going
5.3	8.1 Governor Training and Visits	
	CL noted that he had met with the CoG to discuss governance matters.	
6.	To Receive and Consider the Headteacher’s Report	
6.1	School Development Planning	
	<p>The HT commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the 2019/20 School Improvement Plan (SIP), unsurprisingly in the light of the impact of the coronavirus crisis since March, showed more items in red and amber than might otherwise have been the case. Updates on planned actions were included as appropriate e.g. 1.3. The HT commented that none of the issues was a major concern and would be carried over into 2020/21 as necessary. • An improvement plan for 2020/21 had been drawn up but was, necessarily, an evolving document subject to further significant changes over time. The main objective would be to deal with, and adapt to, the issues caused by COVID-19. • The school was expecting to be re-opening for all pupils in September with planning on-going. Detailed government guidance was due on 9 July and further changes to this guidance were expected to be made over the summer. The school’s main aim was to deliver as wide a curriculum as possible although certain subjects would necessarily be restricted (e.g. sport). All pupils would be kept in year group bubbles to maintain social distancing. Staggered arrival/departure times were being arranged for each key stage across the school site. The diner had been re-organised to facilitate provision for separate groups of pupils. • Staff would be assessing the impact of closure on all pupils and, in particular, disadvantaged boys in terms of academic progress, health and wellbeing. • The school would not be open over the summer break and the needs of any families would be met by the local authority and other providers. • Transition from primary schools into Y7 had been adapted utilising a number of virtual activities. At the start of the autumn term on 1 September (a staff training day) it was planned for Y7 pupils to come on site for induction. <p>In discussion, governors:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked about how transport worked in relation to morning/afternoon buses and were advised by the HT of the arrangements being made to ensure pupils could access their normal mode of public transport. • Asked about Y6/Y7 transition and were advised by the DHC of the nature of some of the videos that had been provided e.g. a virtual tour of the school by the head boy and deputy head boy. Where possible, the DHP had visited primary schools to discuss issues arising out of the transition process • Confirmed that on the training days at the start of the autumn term safeguarding and child protection matters will be provided for all staff organised by the DCPO. • Asked how many Y12 students would be joining the school and were advised by PD (Staff governor/Sixth Form Support Manager) that approximately 120 Y11 students would be moving into Y12 plus up to 10 external students from neighbouring schools who had successfully met the entrance requirements. PD noted that, in the case of external students applying to join The Harvey, they provided their own grade predictions which the school had to accept at face value. For 2020, it was anticipated that there would be some discussion with students' previous schools about grades. • Confirmed that the school's risk assessment would be updated as necessary and reviewed by the HAJB. 	<p>Risk assessment update to be considered by HAJB prior to start of term 1</p>
6.2	School self-evaluation	
	<p>The HT noted that the self-evaluation document had not been updated since the February FGB meeting since it reflected how the school judges itself during "normal operations". Self-evaluation would be resumed in the autumn term.</p>	
6.3	Pupil performance	
	<p>The HT explained that under normal circumstances he would be reporting to governors how the school felt it would be performing in the summer examinations. However, in 2020 due to the coronavirus crisis students had not actually sat any examinations and teachers had had to submit projected grades to exam boards based on past assessment data. These grades would then go through a process of standardisation by the exam boards. The actual student grades submitted by the school were strictly confidential. However, and subject to standardisation, the grades submitted suggested that if taken at face value, there would be a small improvement in GCSE results whilst A level outcomes would be in line with 2019.</p>	

	<p>The HT noted that A level and GCSE exam results were due for publication on 13th and 20th August respectively. Guidance was still awaited from the DfE about how schools should manage results days but at The Harvey it was planned to distribute results through TALISMAN in the usual way and communicate with individual students where there were any concerns.</p> <p>In discussion, governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> asked about students re-taking exams and were advised by the DHC that the exam boards were planning an exam series for November 2020. It was not expected that there would be a large number of Harvey students re-taking exams, with much depending on the criteria for a student's next stage of learning. Additionally, it was expected that universities displayed some level of flexibility in awarding places in the light of the unprecedented circumstances prevailing. asked about students moving directly into employment and were advised by PD (Staff governor/Sixth Form Support Manager) that the school was in contact with all students planning to enter employment including taking up apprenticeships. 	<p>HT to update governors as appropriate – on-going.</p>
<p>6.4</p>	<p>Curriculum</p>	
	<p>The HT commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the period of closure the curriculum had been delivered through remote learning. Governors had been provided by the DHC with details on line of the school's journey in the delivery of remote learning. Students in challenging circumstances had been fully supported by the school under the auspices of the DHP including the provision of IT equipment and access to free school meals vouchers. On re-opening the school's key priority was to assess curriculum gaps and needs adapting as necessary including, if appropriate, providing a blended approach. <p>In discussion, governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asked what gaps might be anticipated and was advised by the DHC that this would not be fully known until the school was back together. It had to be accepted that whilst many boys will have adapted well to this method of learning, others will have found this more challenging and only once boys were back in school would it be possible to properly assess where gaps might have developed. Furthermore, some concepts were not always easy to teach remotely to all learners. Commented on the impact of the lockdown on some pupils' confidence and ability to get back into school routines and suggested that a holistic approach (e.g. through PE) would be 	

	<p>beneficial. The HT advised that the school would be doing its best to address the matter and intended to appoint an extra member of the support staff in September as an Early Intervention Officer to offer support to the school's most vulnerable families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commented on the importance of learning about exam techniques • Noted the usefulness of remote learning during the lockdown. The HT commented that the school had managed to successfully adapt over the space of a few weeks to a new approach to teaching and learning that otherwise would have been developed over the course of the full school year. The DHC commented that the school was now focussing on developing more fluency in digital teaching and learning. 	
6.5	Staffing	
	<p>The HT commented that, overall, the school would be fully staffed in September and in a strong position for the 2020/21 academic year.</p> <p>The CoG, on behalf of the FGB, thanked the school's leadership team and its teaching and support staff for their exemplary efforts in continuing to prepare for a re-opening in September in the context of the challenges of government guidance.</p> <p>Governors were unanimous in accepting the school's plans for September 2020.</p>	
6.6	Summer census	
	<p>The HT noted that the DFE had not required a summer census and that he would report when the school was required to submit census data in the autumn term.</p>	
6.7	Admissions	
	<p>The HT noted that the Y7 cohort for September totalled 152 pupils including 6 who had successfully appealed.</p> <p>The HT explained that in common with other schools offering their own entrance test, there had been an objection to such admissions arrangements.</p> <p>It was expected (but not confirmed) that the Kent Test would be held on Thursday 15 October and the Shepway Test accordingly on Saturday 17 October. The school was drawing up plans for how pupils would sit the Shepway Test in accordance with government guidelines.</p>	HT to report on progress – on-going
6.8	Finance	
	<p>The HT reported that the minimum funding level per pupil had now reached £5,000 which would enable the school to meet the government's pay rises for staff and increase capacity without the need to restructure. Additionally, increased funding would permit limited increases in spending in key areas such as premises maintenance, IT equipment and staff development.</p>	
6.9	Performance management	
	<p>The HT reported that the performance management for teaching staff was due to be completed in the usual way in October. Support staff</p>	

	performance management would be completed by the end of the summer term 2020 with telephone calls replacing face-to-face meetings.	
6.10	School events including visits and journeys	
	Governors acknowledged that activities had been curtailed due to the coronavirus crisis including much anticipated trips to the United States and Slovenia. Refunds for trips, where due, were being met through insurance claims.	HT to report on success of refund claims
7.	To Consider Chair's Report	
	<p>The CoG commented on the role of the Harvey Academy Joint Board (HAJB) as a mechanism of providing a governor's view to the headteacher during the coronavirus crisis. Whereas in some schools the chair of governors alone had liaised with the headteacher keeping the governing body informed to a greater or lesser degree, the HAJB had met on 30 April (after the spring break) and then weekly since 14 May with minutes published on the governing body tile on the intranet once they had been approved. In addition, the CoG had e-mailed updates to governors on 8 occasions.</p> <p>The CoG outlined proposed amendments to the HAJB structure, function and membership as originally approved at the FGB meeting on 10 October 2019 clarifying the dual roles of HAJB members and changes to the brief of the joint board (for details see CoG report on FGB tile on intranet)</p> <p>In discussion, governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked about the approval of policies by the FGB and the CoG commented that, given the detail of some policies, current practice was for the chair to review policies in advance of an FGB meeting, invite governor feedback over a given timeframe and then approve as necessary. During the coronavirus lockdown the HAJB had been approving policies on behalf of the FGB or policies had been approved by a chair's action. In cases where a policy was at variance with government guidance, the matter would be referred back to the FGB. • Asked about how the FGB should respond to any changes to re-opening arrangements required by the government announced over the summer holiday and were advised by the CoG that he would consult with all governors and any governor uncomfortable with an action should express their concern which would be recorded • Commented on the perception that the HAJB made decisions for retrospective approval by the FGB and were advised by the COG that all governors had access to HAJB decisions and could challenge as appropriate. • Asked about the term 'Member' in the HAJB committee list and were advised by the CoG that this referred to the 'Members' of the Harvey Academy Trust who were responsible for the governance arrangements of the trust (as distinct from the governing body 	

	<p>which was responsible for the day to day running of the governance of the trust). All members of the HAJB had equal rights whether they were a 'Member' or not.</p> <p>In summary, the CoG in the light of points arising out of discussion agreed to re-draft proposed amendments and publish them on the intranet.</p>	CoG to update HAJB remit and publish on the intranet
8.	To consider governance matters	
8.1	Committee Updates	
8.1.1	PPPF	
	<p>The PPPF chair reported on three PPPF meetings held since the last FGB: the first had been a conventional meeting pre-lockdown; the second under lockdown comprising papers from the DoSS and the bursar inviting questions from committee members with responses provided as necessary; and the third a shortened meeting via Zoom video conference focussing on the 2020/21 budget.</p> <p>At the meeting on 25 June, after answering questions from committee members, the 2020/21 budget was proposed and seconded and approved unanimously under delegated powers.</p> <p>The FGB voted unanimously to adopt the 2020/21 budget as presented.</p>	
8.1.2	SPPC	
	<p>The SPPC chair reported on the two SPPC meetings held since the last FGB: the first had been a conventional meeting; and the second, under lockdown, providing written reports on SPPC matters, inviting questions from committee members with detailed responses from the DHC and DHP.</p> <p>In discussion, governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asked about the new 'T' level exams and were advised by the DHC that specifications for these exams were unlikely to be suitable for Harvey students since they comprised just one subject e.g. accounting plus a substantial 45 day work placement requirement. With the curriculum at The Harvey students studied three A levels in different subjects. 'T' level exams were aimed primarily at the further education sector. The HT commented that it was hoped BTec exams would continue, however, since they provided an important vocational element to some students' options in the sixth form alongside A levels. • Commented on the quality of on line home learning resources provided by staff and the high degree of engagement with students • Asked about attendance figures for Y10/Y12 students returning to school after lockdown and were advised by the DHC that the percentage was 86.0% with 14 students providing genuine reasons 	

	<p>for not coming in to school. The DHC confirmed that attendance remained generally stable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commented on the excellent feedback received from a student returning to school after lockdown (a parent governor) • Commented on highly positive staff perceptions of the arrangements made by the SLT on managing Y10/Y12 students returning to school (a staff governor). 	
8.2	Governor training	
	<p>The training governor reported that the three newest governors had completed/were due to complete on line induction training.</p> <p>Governors who had already undertaken on line training commented positively on the quality of the resource including the opportunity to network with other new governors.</p>	
8.3	Governance calendar 2020/21	
	<p>The clerk noted that a draft 2020/21 calendar was available on the intranet.</p> <p>The CoG asked governors to e-mail him with their thoughts on how the current meeting had operated using Microsoft Teams.</p>	Governors to e-mail CoG on remote FGB meetings
8.4	Academies Financial Handbook	
	The clerk drew governors' attention to the September 2020 edition of the Academies Financial Handbook which was available on the governor portal. Key changes to the 2020 edition were on page 9.	
9.	To consider/approve school policies	
9.1	Infection Control/Safeguarding	
	<p>The CoG drew governors' attention to the Infection Control policy and the updated Safeguarding policy (amended to include COVID-19).</p> <p>The CoG commented that he had sought the opinion of an expert on infection control who considered the policy fit for purpose.</p> <p>The DHP commented that on 20 March 2020 parents were asked to keep their children at home, wherever possible, as part of the response to coronavirus (COVID-19). Schools and childcare providers were asked to provide care for a limited number of children - children who are vulnerable, and children whose parents are critical to the COVID-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home. Accordingly, an addendum to the Safeguarding policy had been added (see page 24) which staff and parents had been made aware of.</p> <p>Governors were content to adopt the policies.</p>	
10.	To receive an update on risk management.	
	The CoG noted that risk management was discussed at PPPF meetings and key matters placed before the FGB. The risk register was being updated as necessary for when the school re-opened fully in September.(See also 6.1 above)	

	<p>In discussion, governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commented on the risk of a 'coronavirus second wave' and were advised by the HT that the school was focussing on contingency planning e.g. investment in IT resources to facilitate remote learning. • Enquired about Ofsted inspections and were advised by the HT that although inspectors would be 'visiting' schools to see how they were getting back up to speed, after being closed to most pupils and learners for so long, full inspections were unlikely to resume until January 2021. 	
11.	Date of next meeting	
	8 October 2020 at 5.00 p.m. (TBC)	
12.	Any other business	
	None	
13.	To Consider Confidentiality and Publication of Minutes	
	No matters were deemed confidential.	

There being no other business the meeting closed at 7.10 p.m.

Signed:  (Chair)

Date 8th October 2020