



# Tring School *a specialist humanities college*

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## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOVERNORS OF TRING SCHOOL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 30 MARCH 2011 AT 6.30PM

### Part One

#### PRESENT

Mr B Scarth (Chair), Rev Huw Bellis, Mrs G Davies, Mrs J Donald, Miss J Harding, Mrs K Hughes, Mrs S McGregor, Mrs J Smith, Mrs C Thompson, Mrs D Turner, Mrs S Wheatley, Mrs L Whitesmith, Mr D Ashall.

#### IN ATTENDANCE

Ollie Beckwith (Head Boy), Evie Price (Head Girl), Max Baiden, Jennie Cannon, Mrs A Wiltshear (Clerk)

Mrs Jill Smith opened the meeting with prayer.

#### 1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND APPROVAL OF ABSENCES

The Chair welcomed Ollie Beckwith and Evie Price, recently elected Head Boy and Girl. Thanks and good luck for exams were extended to Max and Jennie, for their term as previous Head Boy and Girl. Apologies were received from Mrs W Copper, Mr J McMunn, Mrs S Hall, Ms N Sayer, Mrs A Walters, Mr A Watson, Mrs T Watson. These were accepted and approved.

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

#### 3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2011 (Part One)

Approved.

#### 4. MATTERS ARISING

5a) Equality Scheme. This needs to be reviewed at the next Students & Families Committee.

*Action: Agenda item for next Students & Families Committee.*

#### 5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### a) Resources

(i) Mr Scarth presented the minutes of the committee's meeting held on 14 March 2011 (copy filed with signed copy of these minutes).

(ii) **Minute 3 – Benchmarking.** Mr Scarth reported that the benchmarking figures showed that Tring School reflected the area in which the school is situated and is comparable to other similar sized Secondary Schools. It had been agreed to review Benchmarking annually.

(iii) **Minute 6/7 – White Paper/ Finance Report.** There were gaps about the amount of information given to schools, and still a debate about what exactly the budget was going to be, implications of this would be reported in Part II. Mrs Wynd and Mrs Davis had been working together on getting this year's figures into a good state, projecting out a deficit of £46,000. A carry forward of



£138,000, departments had contributed to this by spending very little Christmas.

(iv) **Minute 7(b) - Audit Report.** A copy of the Audit Report stated that

(v) **Minute 8 - Safeguarding Update Including Health & Safety Report.** There had been some good work in progress. A meeting with Mrs Wheatley and Mr Rennard had taken place with 2 Crime Prevention Officers regarding the premises. A new badging system is to be introduced in September, for all staff, visitors, governors and sixth form.

(vi) **Minute 12 – Any Other Business.** Total Print Solution – a lot of work was going on regarding a new print system throughout the school. Dual Use – Work continued on understanding funding. Mrs Davis would be looking at contracts. Diocese Service Level Agreement – The Church of England would be starting to charge for the services provided. The payment of £1190 had been approved.

## **b) Curriculum & Teaching**

(i) Mrs Donald presented the minutes of the committee's meeting held on 8 March 2011 (copy filed with signed copy of these minutes).

(ii) **Minute 5 – Intervention Strategies.** A report had been presented and a plan had been put together for this year. There had not yet been any analysis of last year's work, this would be prepared.

(iii) **Minute 6 – Curriculum Model.** Year 12 student numbers were quite high 188 internal and 4 external. The sixth form was looking very healthy.

(iv) **Minute 7 – Assessment Calendar.** Mr Hencken had produced a draft calendar which would be discussed with Unions together with the whole school calendar.

(v) **Minute 9 – Review of Governors' School Plan Objective - Humanities.** Governors had a lengthy discussion on the full meaning of 'Humanities' and where it fitted within Tring School.

Mrs Wynd informed Governors that Mrs Chapman was unable to attend this meeting for a discussion on this subject, but suggested that the C&T and S&F Committees discuss this at their next meetings. An opportunity to bring ideas to Full Governing Body and the Leadership team for an open discussion would take place on 25 May at 5pm, to maybe redefine this objective incorporating CofE and Student Enhancement.

## **c) Students and Families**

(i) Mrs Whitesmith presented the minutes of the committee's meeting held on 10 March 2011 (copy filed with signed copy of these minutes).

(ii) **Minute 5 – Admissions Policy.** It was reported that this had been reviewed with discussion regarding allocated Church places. Mrs Wynd informed Governors at this point that only 9 Church places had been taken up out the allocated 10 and the intake for Yr 7 was up to 239 instead of 240.

(iii) **Minute 6 – Letter from Parent.** All governors had been sent a letter regarding students smoking. Governors were informed that this issue would be dealt with by Mr Barlow, Assistant Head.

**Trips** – Discussion had taken place on whether departmental budgets should subsidise trips when places were not paid for by parents. This item came under lengthy discussion with the Full Governing Body; whether some departments organised more trips than others, and the difficulties surrounding planning trips, how places on trips could be allocated. Governors questioned whether the school had communicated to parents the problems surrounding this issue.

It was agreed that if departments took responsibility for what happened if not all places were paid for by parents, this would encourage departments to become more efficient in planning. If trips were planned well in advance, with staggered payments, this would assist parents.

Governors were informed that Mr Dobberson had been working hard with departments on the best way forward regarding trips and visits.

**Rewards.** Mr Barlow had reported to the S&F Committee that next year assemblies would focus on rewards. He also hoped to develop the student council.

(iv) **Minute 7 – Safeguarding.** A meeting to discuss ID and visitors badges would take place in two weeks.

It was reported that there had been 6 incidences of bullying and 2 racist incidences.

(v) **Any Other Business.** The Behaviour Policy had been reviewed for approval by the Full Governing Body.

## **6. POLICIES FOR APPROVAL**

- a) Admissions
- b) Governors Expenses
- c) Review of the Behaviour Policy

**These policies were recommended for approval, They were all approved by the Governing Body.**

## **7. STUDENT REPORT**

a) The Head Boy and Head Girl gave their final report on the projects they had been running over the year.

b) Jennie Cannon reported that the Politics project for Year 8 would continue next year, a new sixth form leadership post would be created to take responsibility for this project. She also reported that the Eco-Council which had been initiated by the Deputy Head Girl would also continue. The environmental report was impressive and the audit had involved student voice and the Leadership Team.

c) Max Baiden, Head Boy reported that unfortunately the Science project had not been completed but it was hoped that this would be carried over to next year. The Achievers' Wall had been completed and thanks were extended to the Mr Cook from the D&T department who had made the plaques. The formal unveiling of the plaques would take place on Monday 4 April at 3.30pm. The 14 students who had a plaque would be invited to staff briefing.

d) Charity Week had proved to be extremely successful, the gross total including last year's amounted to £2,270. Iain Rennie Hospice had received a cheque and Make and Wish Foundation had also received a share of fundraising.

e) The Headteacher thanked the Head Boy and Girl for their exceptional hard work during the year and was very proud of their active citizenship.

*(Mrs Wheatley left the meeting)*

## **8. KIRKLAND ROWELL SURVEY**

- a) The Headteacher reported that the survey showed that most improved was pupils' respect for teachers and others, she stated that this said a great deal about the students. Other positive improvements were, parents/students perceptions of subjects in which English outstripped others. Geography was also rated highly. Areas of concern were Science and Music. School communication which was bottom on last year's survey was now at the top, this reflected the increased number of newsletters, Parentmail and email.
- b) Mrs Davies stated that parents' evenings seemed to be more focussed, there was a feeling of openness in all evening events.
- c) The Head Boy stated that the email system between students and teachers had helped the sixth form tremendously.
- d) Discussion then followed on whether this survey would be undertaken again, which depended on funding, or whether the school could organise their own survey.

## **9. SCHOOL PLAN**

- a) Mrs Davies gave a brief background on how Governor objectives were set for last year's School Plan. Alison Garner had run a workshop on Governors' Self Evaluation, which was 'Satisfactory' and the importance of raising the bar. Each Committee were asked to review their 3 objectives.
- b) Resources – The Chairman presented the objectives.
  - (i) The leadership/management of support staff structure had been revised and successfully in place.
  - (ii) The increased and more strategic focus on the budget and definitely improved since the Finance Manager and the Headteacher had been working together. Working on a 2-5 year budget was unrealistic, 2-3 years would be more manageable.
  - (iii) Governing Body skills had developed by working with SIP. The Chairman stated that he felt confident that more members of the Resources committee had a greater awareness of the budget, particularly as how this was presented had greatly improved.
- c) Students & Families – Mrs Whitesmith presented the objectives.
  - (i) Communication – this had improved with email. Feedback from parents through Kirkland Rowell Survey was to be looked at by each committee.
  - (ii) Governor visits had been successful and enabled strong links with staff to be forged ensuring that governors become critical friend. There were still gaps in documenting these visits. Miss Harding had put together a new feedback form to be completed by governors with the subject leader. Any concerns should be discussed with the Headteacher or member of Leadership Team. This document would then be filed and brought to Governing Body meetings. Miss Harding was thanked for her work on this. This was a good 2-way process, staff were now used to seeing governors around in school. It was also reported that staff were now more willing to bring presentations to Committee meetings.

*Action: AWi to collect Governor Visits feedback forms and keep on file to bring to each Full Governing Body meeting.*

- (iii) Humanities – There had been no suggestion that this would change, and therefore would go for re-designation. Governors had not had a full understanding of what this meant, therefore, the meeting which would take place on 25 May (see item 5c) above) would be a useful session in defining this.

It was suggested that the Committees use their meetings prior to this to brainstorm and formulate thoughts for discussion. It was noted that governors had been supportive, attending the Humanities meetings.

d) It was agreed that Committee objectives be set at next committee meetings and agreed at next Full Governing Body meeting.

*(Rev Huw Bellis and Mrs McGregor left the meeting)*

**10. SAFEGUARDING**

This had been covered by each committee. If governors had any further comments, the next Safeguarding Conference would take place on Tuesday 5 April at 3.30pm.

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

a) External Signage – There was some discussion as to whether Humanities should be included on the school signage, this then lead to discussion about Tring being a Church school included on the signage. It was finally agreed to postpone any decision until after the Humanities discussion group scheduled for 25 May 2011.