

Dorset Studio School

Minutes of the Governors meeting held on Thursday 7 July 2016, 4.00pm

Governors (GB)	Kaye Chittenden; *Clare Davison (Director/Vice Chair); Andy Daw; *Peter Edwards; Michael Foley (Director); *Mark Gibbens (Chair); *Avril Harrison; David Humphreys (Director); *Robert Lasseter; *Annetta Minard (Principal); *Jim Tirrell (Director); *Martha Vipond (Parent Governor); *Alex Williams (Parent Governor)	
Other Attendees	*Vanessa Gifford (KMC Clerk); *Chris Pedder (Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services KMC)	
* <i>Indicates actual presence at this meeting</i>		
AGENDA		
AGENDA ITEM		ACTION
1.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>Representatives of Kingston Maurward College (KMC) and The Thomas Hardy School (THS) reaffirmed their standing declaration of interests in items relating to the financial / legal relationships between those sponsoring bodies and the Dorset Studio School (DSS).</p> <p>There were no further declarations of interest.</p>	
2.	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Andy Daw, Mike Foley and Kaye Chittenden.</p> <p>It was noted that this was the last meeting of Clare Davison, due to her imminent retirement as Principal of KMC and Director of DSS.</p>	
3.	<p>MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 19 MAY 2016</p> <p>The Governing Body (GB) APPROVED the minutes of 19 May 2016 as a true and accurate record and APPROVED them for website publication.</p>	
4.	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</p> <p>The following matters were NOTED from the minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members questioned why the figures in the Management Accounts differed from those use in the pre-opening plan. 	





	<p>Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services KMC explained that the figures were based on the calculation of student numbers which reflected the plan in place. In the first year of the DSS the forecast budget would have been subject to change due to weighting. It was considered that a five year projection was required to ensure that the school remained financially viable. The Principal confirmed that the plan had been produced on an intake of 75 students, with 3 scenarios being completed for the plan, and the worst case scenario was still viable. Contracts with the EFA were based on a census of the actual number of students, whereas the pre-opening figures were produced as a forecast.</p> <p>It was agreed that a projection over a three year period would be presented to members in the next financial year.</p>	
5.	<p>PRINCIPALS REPORT</p> <p>The following points were NOTED from the Principals Report:</p> <p>Student Outcomes</p> <p>Year 9: the Principal explained that this was a bright cohort of diverse mid-range students with performance currently on the borderline of grades C and D, whilst two years away from formal exams so considered this to be a healthy position.</p> <p>It was noted that the Progress 8 attainments overall for Year 9 was 3.26, with progress being made from the starting point.</p> <p>The Principal advised that she had had problems recruiting a Maths teacher but had now been successful with a strong candidate commencing in September.</p> <p>Year 10: the Principal was pleased to report that these students were forecast at 63% achieving 5 x Grade A* to D, including English and maths, against a target of 55%.</p> <p>Members asked when a base figure would be available for the new intake, and the Principal advised the tests the students were currently completing would give a starting point. The Principal was clear on quality assurance, and had evidence to uphold the results. When grades were known she continued to monitor that students attained within their Progress 8. It was noted that English and maths were double weighted. The Principal constantly monitored and checked that the right qualifications were being taken as she had to ensure that she met the government format and guidelines.</p> <p>Curriculum Update</p> <p>The Curriculum Update Report highlighted the priority given to English and maths, and that rural Craft had been replaced by Rural Science as the Principal considered this to be more appropriate.</p> <p>The principal confirmed that placements had been good, with students currently out on work experience. The students would continue with these placements every Friday throughout Autumn 2 and Spring 1. The Principal presented the basis of project based learning and ensuring that learning and work experience all linked together. Land-based visits had recently been made, with Year 10 visiting Portland and Year 9 Fonthill Farm. The Principal highlighted how each qualification was broken down with a good third of the timetable completed outside, with a large amount of time undertaken on the expected</p>	





	<p>specialism.</p> <p>Attendance The Principal confirmed that attendance had improved, with systems being monitored. The last meeting a 91.8% attendance figure had been reported and it was now showing as 94.6 therefore back in line with the national benchmark, with the top 40% of schools nationally at 95%. This did not take into account the breadth of the catchment area for the DSS.</p> <p>Pupil Premium Update The Principal tabled a draft report on Pupil Premium and explained that the Assistant Principal responsible for this had been on sick leave and a detailed report would be presented to the next meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that an SEN Report would be available in the next academic year once the new SENCO had settled in. However, the Principal advised that the important thing was that there were no significant gaps between characteristic groups, with the only current issue being that girls were out-performing boys.</p>	<p>AM</p> <p>AM</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW</p> <p>The Governing Body MONITORED the DSS Development Plan and the following points were NOTED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Principal confirmed that the document had been shared with all staff and outcomes agreed. • The biggest outcome was the requirement of rewards, which had also been expressed by students. • A major area for development for staff was the necessity to recruit widely experience land based/animal specialists to enable the school to become a national Centre of Excellence. • The Principal had encouraged staff to be ambitious with key priorities, and aim for results above the national levels. • The Principal informed members that she considered priorities set out at the beginning of the year had been achieved, with quality assurance between schools carried out to ensure that the school did not become isolated. • The Parent Governor advised members that the feedback from the visit to Fonthill Farm was very good, with Velcourt very impressed with the students, as they were engaged and behaved well. Another member confirmed that he had spoken to a Velcourt Director after the visit who had also spoken highly of the day and was keen to establish links. The students had prepared well for the visit, with follow up work. 	
<p>7.</p>	<p>DFE MONITORING VISIT</p> <p>The Report from the recent Monitoring Visit had only just been received but members had received it electronically before the meeting. The Principal confirmed that she had agreed the actions which were already in the Development Plan.</p>	





	<p>It was agreed that an industry sub group would be set up and meet around 4 times a year to support the curriculum. The Chair would be taking this forward.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that a Skills Audit of Governors would be carried out during the summer. It was noted that the Directors had also agreed an update to the Articles of Association regarding Directors and legal advice would be taken.</p> <p>The GB considered it to be a good report and congratulated the Principal on the progress.</p>	VG
8.	<p>SAFEGUARDING</p> <p>The Link Governor for Safeguarding had confirmed that she had undertaken a Safeguarding check and worked through the Audit with the DSL. The Inspector had checked the SCR and all staff were up to date.</p>	
9.	<p>MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 MAY 2016</p> <p>Revised Management Accounts to 31 May 2016 were NOTED, reflecting an up to date funding position. The following key points were NOTED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was reported that the budget was being delivered as planned and included the carry-over from the previous year of £42K, to give an improved forecast. • The Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services KMC highlighted that the major cost was staffing with projections showing as 73%. It was noted that this was in line with schools guidance of 70-80%. • It was noted that students would pay full transport costs for 2016/17. 	
10.	<p>AUDIT STRATEGY MEMORANDUM FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2016</p> <p>The Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services KMC advised that the proposed external auditors were used by KMC and the memorandum advised of the proposed progression of activity for the year ending 31 August 2016. Following issues the previous year the auditors would not be completing KMC and DSS year end at the same time – KMC was scheduled for October, with the DSS in November.</p> <p>The GB agreed that it had to be confident and have sight of the report before approval at the December meeting. Subject to this, the Audit Strategy Memorandum for the year ending 31 August 2016 was APPROVED.</p>	
11.	<p>BUDGET 2016/17</p> <p>The GB CONSIDERED the draft Budget 2016/17 and the following points were NOTED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services KMC presented an additional report giving an overview of performance to Date compared to the Project Plan. • The Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services KMC advised that when the 	





	<p>forecast had been completed the carry-over from the previous year had not been included, with just the planned performance taken into account for the year. The carry-over of £42K would be kept in reserves to build up a surplus for capital investment in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The comparisons highlighted how the DSS had performed with its operations and confirmed that the initial low student numbers was at a high cost. The post opening grant had assisted with this issue, and would disappear once numbers reached capacity and the school would have to operate within its own means. • The Development Plan had highlighted that the Principal was more confident on consistent recruitment and had a better understanding of the demographics. • The Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services KMC confirmed that cashflow was acceptable with £200K cash in the bank and EFA income being paid monthly. • It was confirmed that different financial scenarios would be available for the next meeting. • The Principal suggested that an Ofsted Inspection would take place in 2017 but the finances would not be scrutinised. However, poor student progress would not represent value for money. • It was noted that guidance suggested that only 5% of income should be carried forward, so any excess would be ring-fenced for capital projects, otherwise it could be clawed back. • Members requested any supporting evidence to back up the Budget and the Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services KMC agreed to circulate the mechanism detailed in the Funding Allocation letter from the EFA. • It was agreed that the school would be in a better position if enrolments were at 100% but it was suggested that a good Ofsted result would aid recruitment. <p>Following a full debate the Budget 2016/17 was APPROVED.</p>	CP
12.	<p>WORK EXPERIENCE/EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT</p> <p>The DSS Work Experience Policy was NOTED.</p>	
13.	<p>ADMISSION POLICY</p> <p>The Principal advised that the DSS was able to carry out its own admissions, currently carried out by Dorset County Council, and the GB should consider this from September 2017.</p> <p>The Principal confirmed that no changes had been made to the Admission Policy but members should be aware that if there was an up-turn in applications the fact that the DSS was a land-based school should be made explicit. It was agreed that the robustness of the policy should be considered in the new academic year and a member agreed to assist with the required demographic data.</p>	AM/AH





6pm	<i>Robert Lasseter left the meeting but it remained quorate.</i>	
14.	MEETINGS 2016/17 The meeting schedule for 2016/17 was APPROVED .	
15.	CORPORATE RISK REGISTER The Corporate Risk Register was CONSIDERED and the following points NOTED : <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It was noted that the Principal, the Deputy Principal, Finance & Corporate Services KMC and the Business Manager were now meeting regularly so that there was continual communication.• It was noted that there had been no information on the National Funding formula post Brexit, therefore there was uncertainty on the future level of funding, and would have an impact for the 3 year budget plan.	
16.	ANY OTHER BUSINESS FOR REPORT No further issues were discussed.	
<i>The Meeting closed at 6.05pm with no further business</i>		

Chair Date

