

**THE GOVERNING BODY OF HEXHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL AND QUEEN ELIZABETH HIGH SCHOOL HARD FEDERATION.**

**MEETING: WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH 2011 AT 5.00PM.**

**Present:**

**Mr Peter Maxwell**  
**Mr Adrian Woolley (Chair)**  
**Ms Helen Gray**  
**Mrs Alison Killen**  
**Mrs Angela Mole**  
**Mrs Jacqueline Cameron**  
**Mrs Christine Carruthers**  
**Mr David Watson (Headteacher, HMS)**  
**Mrs Rosemary Theobalds**  
**Cllr J B Jonas**  
**Mr Roland Beevor**  
**Mr Alan Lynch**  
**Mr Simon Kitchman**  
**Mr Neil Morrison (Headteacher, QEHS)**  
**Mrs Sandra Thompson**  
**Mr Robin Hodnett**  
**Mrs Sue Boath**  
**Mrs Kate Gessey**  
**Mrs Jane Wrigley**  
**Mrs Sarah Buchan**  
**Reverend Joanna Anderson**  
**Mr Neil Watson**  
**Mr Neil Cassidy ( Associate Governor)**  
**Mr Bill Wilson (Associate Governor)**  
**Mrs Susan Hope (Associate Governor)**  
**Mr Andy Byers (Associate Governor)**  
**Ms Di Harris (Associate Governor)**

**Also present:**

**Mrs Helen Pye (Clerk to Governors)**  
**Mr James Andriot (Present for Item 2)**

**PART 1 (Classified non-confidential)**

**Items discussed under Part 1 of this agenda will not be classified as confidential: consequently the minutes and supporting documents should be made available to any person wishing to inspect them.**

**REGULAR ITEMS**

**1. Apologies for Absence and their acceptance or otherwise**

Apologies were received and consent given for the absences of Mr Peter Oliver, Mrs Annette Bedson, Mr Peter Scaife and Ms Helen Bailey (Associate Governor).

**Action by:**

## **2. Presentation by Mr J Andriot (Performing Arts across the partnership)**

Mr Andriot delivered a presentation to governors highlighting his work across the partnership - how the Arts curriculum was being developed with middle schools and ongoing projects with first schools and also community partnerships.

Governors thanked Mr Andriot for his very informative and enlightening presentation.

## **3. Membership Update**

- Governors considered and agreed the nomination of Mrs Sarah Kemp as Community Governor.
- It was agreed to renew the period of the term of office for Associate Governors for a further 12 months.  
(Following a comment made by Helen Gray, discussion ensued regarding whether Associate Governors should be invited to attend the full governing body meeting. Other Governors and Associates discussed the point and agreed that it was valuable to have members present for the expertise that they were able to provide at meetings).

## **4. Declaration of personal or pecuniary interest in any agenda item**

Governors declared that they had no pecuniary interest in any item on the agenda.

## **5. Consider & Adopt Minutes of Governing Body Meetings**

Minutes of the following meetings, having been circulated to the Governors were adopted and signed as a true record:

- 24 November 2010.
- 31 January 2011 (extra ordinary meeting) – refer to Part II of agenda.

## **6. Matters previously referred or delegated to individuals or committees**

Item 4 – Community Governor Vacancy – Actioned – refer to Item 3.

Item 7(3a/b) – Noted – Paul Lawrence now replaced by Stephen Rodchester. LA to change arrangements at end of the summer term.

Item 7(14) – Health and Safety visit to be undertaken.  
Code of Conduct – refer to Item 12 on agenda.

Item 9(i) – Mr Morrison confirmed that he had discussed concerns in relation to the disabled access and parking with Mrs Killen.

Item 9(vi) – Staffing Committee had been reconvened – To report decision under Part II of the minutes.

Item 10 - Mr Morrison clarified query in relation to KS3 Modern Foreign Language results.

Item 15 – Records Management Policy – referred to Pupil and Curriculum Development Committee.

Item 17 – Looked After Children – Noted that Mrs Killen would present a report to the summer term meeting.

Item 20 – Governors Conference – Noted that this would be held on 26 March 2011.

Discussion with Haydon Bridge High School re collaborative working –

Verbal update by Andy Byers following discussions with HBHS. Considering whether QEHS could help in broadening curriculum at HBHS. Awaiting response from HBHS should they require additional help or support.

**7. Other Matters Arising**

There were no other matters arising.

**8. Receive Minutes of Committee Meetings**

Governors received the signed minutes from the following committee meetings:

Pupil and Curriculum Committee – 25 January 2011

Arising from the minutes:

Andy Byers talked about vocational provision.

Community Engagement Committee – 2 March 2011

Finance and Premises Committee – 14 March 2011

Simon Kitchman talked about the effect of cuts and how potentially large deficits would need to be addressed.

Helen Gray expressed concern at the use of a biometric school meals cashless system. Steps would be taken to consult with parents and any concerns would be addressed. It was hoped that the system would be implemented during the course of the summer term. It was noted however that any parent could elect to opt-out should they so wish and use a PIN number. Mrs Hope would give an update report at the summer term meeting.

Staffing Committee – 14 March 2011

Refer to Part II of agenda.

**SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY ITEMS**

**9. Head Teacher's Report**

Governors considered the reports from the Head Teachers.

**Hexham Middle School.**

The report was tabled at the meeting (copy filed in minute book).

**Mrs Killen**

**Mrs Hope**

Mr Watson highlighted the following points:

- Pupil/Teacher Ratio slightly increasing.
- Mr Clarke will be sorely missed when he leaves for promotion.
- Concerns noted in relation to sickness absence cover.
- Christine Carruthers commented in relation to a 'County' perspective in relation to the redundancy situation to date.
- Forecast Numbers – good.
- Exclusions – noted.
- Attendance – authorised absence increased.
- 1:1 and 'Fresh Start' – intervention initiatives – delivering good progress.
- Budget – commented upon error in funding arrangements.
- Community Cohesion – noted issues.
- Safeguarding Visit (14 February 2011) – John Froud's report circulated – requested that this be referred to next Finance and Premises Committee. Appropriate action already being taken on this.
- SIP Report – circulated for information (noted increase in Maths results). The Chair wish to congratulate the team for an increase in standards and to send Helena Hay their best wishes.
- Questionnaire to Parents – results circulated for information.

**Finance and  
Premises  
Committee**

### **Queen Elizabeth High School**

Mr Morrison highlighted the following points:

- An anticipated significant drop in pupil numbers. More pupils however being attracted to Year 10.
- Attendance rates – 93.16%. Stricter approach being taken with requests for holiday absence.
- Exclusions – more than normal – Mr Morrison spoke of incidents and policies.
- Very pleasing results.
- Development Plan – attached for information – identified areas for improvement as outlined in SEF – incorporated into Development Plan.
- Single Status – hopefully to be finalised by June.
- DFC – noted reduced funding £147,000 to £18,000.
- Budget Summary attached – challenges over next 3 years.

In response to a question from Jane Wrigley, Di Harris spoke of the amount of careers guidance being provided to pupils via connexions.

## **10. Budget Update**

HMS - Mr Wilson gave an update of the budget position for Hexham Middle School. Current year £150,000-£160,000 in deficit. Anticipated to come out of deficit in next 2 years. Other economies made – pupil ratio going up – natural wastage. Licensed deficit applied for in respect of 2 years.

QEHS – Mr Morrison updated – refer to Headteacher's report and committee minutes. Three year plan which will bring budget back into balancing position – by 2013/14. Will ultimately mean reductions each year.

Extra ordinary Finance Committee meeting to be convened by end of term to consider formal approval of the operational budgets.

## 11. Visiting Governors' Report

Governors received and considered the following reports:

Reverend Joanna Anderson / Alison Killen – Visited 10 February 2011 – Focus: RE//PSHE.

Annette Bedson and Rosemary Theobalds – visited January 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> – Focus: Care, Guidance and Support.

Di Harris commented that the cuts would severely impact on student support through loss of services.- tremendous achievements made to date however should be applauded. Di Harris would give an update report at the summer term meeting.

**Di Harris**

Link Governor Responsibility Sheet – circulated for information. Governors to advise Barbara Shevlin of any amendments / updates.

## 12. Code of Conduct

Governors considered the draft documents that had been circulated for consideration and agreed to adopt the 'Lambeth' document with amendments as follows:

- To include point re safeguarding arrangements
  - 'Visiting the School' – To note School Visitors to visit in accordance with Visitors Policy
- To delete 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet point.

(Barbara Shevlin would be asked to redraft the policy)

**Barbara Shevlin**

## 13. School Voluntary Accounts

Governors received a certified copy of the school's voluntary account for both QEHS and HMS (copies filed in minute book).

### **LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORTS –**

**Copies of documents available on the personnel page at:**  
[www.northumberlandlea.net](http://www.northumberlandlea.net)

## 14. Update of HR Policies and Procedures

Governors noted that every HR Policy and Procedure that was currently part of the Personnel LMS Manual was to be updated over time. These updates are driven by legal requirements, particularly the Equality Act that came into being in October 2010. Governors particularly noted that all Trade Unions had been consulted and were in agreement.

**Staffing Committee**

### **Recruitment & Selection Code of Practice**

Governors noted that this was a new, school specific code based on the previous corporate code. It was further noted that the code meets all of the requirements of the safer recruitment guidance.

Governors noted specific changes to practice that were required.

Governors then agreed to delegate consideration of the code of practice to the Staffing Committee.

### **Criminal Records Code of Practice for Staff & Volunteers in School**

Governors noted that this was again a new, school specific code based on the previous corporate code. It was noted that the code consolidates all current practice into one document and follows national guidance as well as County Council Policy.

Governors noted the possibility of future changes due to the on-going review of the vetting and barring system.

Governors then agreed to delegate consideration of the code of practice to the Staffing Committee.

### **Criminal Records Code of Practice for Governors**

Governors noted this new code of practice that would apply to all Governors from 1 January 2011. Governors again noted the possibility of future changes due to the on-going review of the vetting and barring system.

Governors then agreed to delegate consideration of the code of practice to the Staffing Committee.

### **Equality in Employment Policy**

Governors noted that this policy applied to all staff and was designed to replace the equal equalities statement that had been in the Personnel LMS Manual. This Policy complies with the Equality Act 2010 and all applicants for posts would receive a copy with their application pack.

Governors further noted that the Governing Body has overall responsibility for the policy and the Head teacher responsibility for implementing it within the school. Governors also noted that the Head Teacher has duty to ensure that discrimination and/or harassment does not take place in school.

Governors agreed to delegate consideration of the policy to the Staffing Committee.

as agreed that the \* committee would take this forward.

### **Dignity at Work Policy**

Governors considered the new Dignity at Work Policy. Governors noted key changes to the policy including the duty on employers to take steps to prevent harassment by third parties.

Governors agreed to delegate consideration of the policy to the Staffing Committee.

## **Redundancy Procedure**

Governors considered the new redundancy procedure and noted that the process remains the same and application of the process should include all permanent and fixed term contracts where redundancy occurs.

Governors agreed to delegate consideration of the policy to the Staffing Committee.

## **Alternative Employment Policy**

Governors considered the new alternative employment policy and whether or not they would give priority consideration to staff from other maintained schools or elsewhere in the County Council.

Governors adopted the policy and decided that they would consider on a case by case basis whether to give priority consideration to staff from other maintained schools or elsewhere in the County Council should the school have a suitable vacancy.

## **CONCLUDING ITEMS**

### **15. Urgent Business**

Refer to Part II of agenda.

### **16. Dates of Future Meetings**

Governors agreed the date of the summer term meeting as follows:

- Wednesday 22 June 2011 at 5.00pm

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

## **INFORMATION ITEMS – Governors noted items sent to Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors.**

- **HR Policies and Procedures outlined at item14**
- **2011 Census information**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Chair**