

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES - ONLINE ZOOM MEETING

4th February 2021 – 1.30pm

PRESENT

Ms Collette Buck	Mr Ian Burton	Mrs Sue Donnelly	Mrs Clare Gaskell
Mr Kevin Grimes	Ms Sarah McCarthy	Mr Mike McGarry (Head)	Ms Jane McNeice
Ms Karen Owens	Mr Paul Povey	Mr Jim Rimmer	Dr Richard Snowdon
Ms Jackie Talbot			

APOLOGIES

Mr Jonathan Mumford (teaching), Mr Paul Povey (present at beginning but teaching at 2.20 p.m.), Ms Sarah McCarthy (present at the start – but leaving at 3.15 p.m.), Miss Cathy Morris (prior engagement)

ALSO PRESENT

Mrs Pauline Neilson (Clerk)	Mrs Judith Gordon	Mr Tom Dolly (DHT)
Mr Andy Pritchard (Res. Dir.)	Dr Carolyn Ainsworth	

20/39	WELCOME	ACTION
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The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.

20/40	DECLARATION OF BUSINESS INTERESTS
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There were no declarations of interests in relation to the agenda.

20/41	MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF 3 rd December 2020
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Accuracy

Trustees agreed the minutes as a true and accurate record subject to the following changes:

- 20/29 – final section- change to say “*the current perception was that other schools were doing this better **in some quarters***” Also to say “*a few parental expectations had been unreasonably high*”.

Matters Arising

20/28 – Members meeting – December - M Thomas had been officially confirmed as a Member.

OFSTED Training- this had now taken place

20/34 – **KPI reports** - on going

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

OFSTED Focus Group – a meeting had been arranged but had been postponed due to lockdown; a new date would be agreed.

20/35 - Marketing group – this was currently in abeyance- a meeting would be scheduled before the summer break.

20/36 – Link Reports- excellent – another round was to take place before the end of the year.

Parents' Evenings – the Y12/13 evenings had been held using telephone appointments and feedback had been positive. For the other evenings, the school had invested in a new cloud based system to hold face to face meetings. There had been some initial teething problems, new software had been used but there had been obvious advantages such as time saving travelling etc.

Dr Snowdon said that the meetings attended for his child in Year 11 had gone well. The cut off feature had presented no real issues as a timer had been shown allowing participants to judge when the meeting would end.

He recommended offering a follow up appointment in case there were any further issues.

Another Trustee confirmed that her Yr. 7 meeting had worked well. It had been quick and there had been a lot of excellent information provided.

Ms Talbot said the teachers felt the meetings had gone well and welcomed the new software.

20/42 MINUTES OF AGM- 3 December 2020

The minutes had been circulated for information. Trustees in attendance confirmed the minutes as an accurate record.

20/43 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE 19th January 2021

The minutes had been circulated for information, and Trustees accepted them as a true record.

Mr Pritchard provided some additional information about Compliance Education. The company had provided an excellent service and had been very proactive with a number of inspections.

The monthly Health & Safety meetings had been particularly helpful, allowing for any gaps in processes to be addressed.

The company were also able to provide an Educational Visits package and school was now considering moving away from the LA SLA when it was next due to be renewed. The only aspect that would need to be

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

retained was the CLEAPPS science service. Everything else could be provided by Compliance Education.

Mr McGarry said the company had dealt with issues in a timely manner and had provided reassurance for Trustees. A number of minor issues had now been tightened up, resulting in the school being in the top percentage of compliance within Sefton.

Question: Would the review be carried out on an annual basis?

Answer: AP said he assumed it would, but would check with the company to make sure.

20/44

FINANCE UPDATES

The Minutes of the Audit Committee had been previously circulated.

Details of Balances had been included. The projected deficit had fallen and there was scope for it to fall even further over the coming months.

School was working to submit all the statutory documentation required by the ESFA by Monday, well before the prescribed deadline.

Revised Finance Plan

A lot of work had been done on this, and the situation now looked a lot more positive with it now looking as if there would be no need to proceed with any compulsory redundancies in the near future.

The Chair praised the detailed long-term planning that had now been put in place.

20/45

HEADTEACHER'S REPORT

This had been previously circulated and was taken as read with the following issues highlighted:

Lockdown

A lot of work had been done with staff before Christmas in terms of infrastructure and training; this had meant that the lockdown situation since then had been much easier to manage in terms of teaching/learning. Staff had been fantastic.

Mr Dolly had provided a vital strategic role and there had been no negative feedback from staff although some had raised some initial concerns around workload. The feedback from parents had also been very positive.

There were a number of students in each day over 3 zones. They were mostly key worker or vulnerable children, but there had also been

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

some children who had found it difficult to engage with remote learning. The balance of on line and face to face teaching had been difficult, but teaching staff had been very well supported and had been helped by Cover Supervisors, Mentors etc.

Dr Snowdon congratulated the school on its provision, saying that he felt it was greatly improved. His own child had established a good routine and there had been lots of interaction.

Other Trustees supported his comments by saying the teaching had been of a very good quality. Trustees asked for their thanks and congratulations to be passed on to all staff.

COVID-19 - in school testing

School had tested about 200 pupils and all to date had been negative. The testing was very time consuming and there were some logistical concerns about how the expected 2 tests were to be carried out once children returned.

It was hoped that it would be possible to use paid volunteers when school returned. A small amount of training had already taken place and more was scheduled for the following week. Plans were in place to use the 2-week notice period prior to a full return to carry out some testing.

Staff testing was taking place every Monday and would continue to be offered once school returned. Dr Snowdon said that some positive tests were only to be expected, so school needed to consider any requirements for home learning as well.

Catch up plans

Some catch up sessions had taken place before lockdown, and it had been hoped that there would be sessions on Saturday mornings, Easter holidays etc, but these were currently on hold.

Staff were very tired and additional sessions would need careful planning.

Trustee Reports

These had been excellent and some interesting points had been raised. The reports would be discussed in greater detail at the OFSTED focus group meetings. It was noted that It would be helpful to have one more visit before the end of the academic year.

Question: Was there any facility for Trustees to attend the presentations to parents?

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

Answer: Yes. There were plans to develop a parental consultation group and Trustees would be welcome to attend this.

Exams (Summer)

The consultation on exams had closed the previous Friday. Upwards of 95,000 responses had been reported. It seemed there would be no final exams, but there may be an agreed assessment process, in order to maintain consistency across the board.

The process may be a little more difficult this year as there was less information to go on.

A rationale for the school's BTEC January exam series had been included in the report.

Audit Committee

It is hoped that school will achieve reserves of 2-3% of total income by the end of 2022/23, making the running and planning of school much easier.

PAN

There had been an extra-ordinary meeting to discuss this. Since then, the LA had said the process could not happen for 2022 as it needed a 6-week consultation period, and this was now no longer possible in the time available.

The 21/22 budget had been planned and there were no real issues. It was noted that the EFSA had honed in on what it regarded as unrealistic student number predictions, so to reduce the PAN would be seen as a positive move.

Pastoral Structure

The consultation had closed the previous Friday. There had been very few responses, none flagging any major issues.

Based on discussion and the feedback received, the Trustees formally agreed the school move to the new Pastoral system.

Question: Dr Snowdon asked what plans had been put in place to maintain links with families that had children across the years?

Answer: Leadership were committed to making the system work and some leadership responsibilities had been identified to address this matter.

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

MAT

Mr McGarry said he had met the Head of Formby High recently and there had been a lot of positive informal discussions. Conversations had also taken place with the Regional School's Commissioner, but school was still a long way from any formal actions.

OFSTED

Links to documents had been given in the report. School was not realistically expecting any visit in the near future, but was ready and well prepared.

Staffing

Details had been given in the report.

It was noted that Janet Merrony – Catering Manager - was leaving after 26 years at the school. She would be sadly missed and best wishes were offered for her future.

20/46

REMOTE LEARNING - TOM DOLLY

Attention was drawn to the Remote Learning Policy that had been previously circulated.

This offered a structured, uniform approach across the board, with flexibility as required.

Question: Reference was made in the Policy to differentiated learning. How was this enabled?

Answer: Google classroom has a number of documents and forms that allow for this, as well as extension tasks.

It also offers an opportunity for live teacher drop ins, tasks to be tweaked, and 1:1 support if needed.

Question: Was school encouraging students to take up practical subjects? How was this being dealt with when there had been no opportunity for hands on this year?

Answer: This was not straightforward, but some things were possible through live chats. School was exploring a number of solutions.

Trustees accepted the Policy and thanked Tom Dolly and the Team for all their hard work.

20/47

SIXTH FORM UPDATES – CAROLYN AINSWORTH

The report had been previously circulated and was taken as read with the following items highlighted:

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

Numbers September 21 - currently 80 Year 12 applications, consisting of 61 internal and 19 external applications.

It was hoped this would end up at about 110+. There was a lot of work taking place such as video meetings and the prospectus and other information was being sent out.

Mr McGarry said that things were very difficult under COVID-19 and thanked Carolyn for all her hard work.

It was noted that the Range had the best 6th form results in the whole of Sefton. Children had been kept in school as much as possible and the support given by staff had been excellent.

Question: How was the UCAS process going?

Answer: The deadline for applications had been pushed back to 29th January. Many students had not known what to do. There had been no in-person visits and many had not wanted the student experience seen this year. There had been 63 (out of 68 possible) final applications and some had deferred to 2022. Others had simply applied as backup. School was continuing to give ongoing support.

Autumn Term Reports

Details had been covered in the Headteacher Report

OFSTED was still a focus and school was actively planning for any visit

Dr Snowdon commented on the progress that had been made on SEND.

He highlighted 2 key issues:

- The short/ medium term capacity/ workload mismatch. This was very challenging but extra EHCPs would bring in additional funding.
- The model for SENCO needed to be resolved. School currently had good support but the present model was very expensive; a way forward needed to be agreed.

Mr McGarry said work had already begun looking at the job pack for any future appointments and funding had been identified for when this could be put in place. School was waiting for the new pastoral structure to settle in so it could be seen who in school may be suitably qualified. It was a very detailed role to undertake, with specific expertise required and specialist training commitments. There were a lot of complex processes to undertake and there were clear advantages in getting a suitable experienced external candidate.

Trustees discussed this issue briefly.

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

It was pointed out that EHCP funding was not always a win/win situation as school would then need to fund the first £6k of any initiatives from its own money.

20/48

POLICIES

First Aid Policy

This was a new statutory policy, based on a model policy. Trustees agreed to accept the policy and to delegate it to the Headteacher.

First Aid training was in progress.

Support for Pupils with Specific Needs including Medical Needs

Dr Snowdon had supplied some useful comments and the some of the policy terminology had been revised. A comment had been added about checking EpiPens to ensure they were still in date. Mr Pritchard confirmed these were checked weekly.

Trustees accepted the Policy

Gifts and Hospitality

This had been amended slightly in light of the recommendations from auditors. Trustees accepted the policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Mr Cregeen (Designated Safeguarding Lead) had been unable to attend this meeting.

The LA policy now had had an addendum on lock down procedures and further details had been added as advised.

It now included a section on pupil wellbeing. Mr McGarry explained the current plans.

Question: Had there been any safeguarding issues during lockdown?

Answer: Nothing substantial, just a few minor issues. These had been dealt with and extra controls put in place as per LA updated guidance.

Trustees ratified the policy.

It would now be put on the school website.

20/49

Training feedback forms – Trustees

A few minor comments had been raised and issues addressed.

RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

The Chair raised the issue of Strategic planning. There had been no real meeting to discuss longer term issues. This would need to be addressed when circumstances allowed.

20/50**AOB**

None

20/51**DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

18 March 2021

29 April 2021

24 June 2021

(Start times to be confirmed)

Meeting closed 3.40 p.m.

Signed Chair

Date

18 March 2021