

**Bedale High School Full Governing Board Meeting
11th May 2021 - Minutes**

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 11th May 2021 facilitated online at 6.00pm
Present: Jan Reed - Joint Chair of Governors (JR), Steve Ingram - Joint Chair of Governors (SI) Tom Kelly – Headteacher (Head) (TK), Kate Loughlin (KL), Lucy Legard (LL), Andy Childe (AC), David Atkinson (DA), Guy Watkins (GW), Christine Inchley (CI), Natalie Mackenzie (NI), Rich McGuinness (RM).
In attendance for all or part of the meeting: Matt Gill – Deputy Head – Curriculum, Louise Woodward (LW) Denise McFarlane Business Manager (DM), Johanna Daniel (JD) – Clerk to the Governing Body.
Apologies: Alison Knight (AK)
Governor Question (GQ)/Governor Comment (GC) (colour coding)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos, and strategic direction b. Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils. c. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent. d. Agreed by the governors

Item	Actions	Gov
8	To enquire about grants in relation to the school building	SI

No	Item	Action
1	Welcome. Governors were welcomed to the meeting.	
2	Apologies for absence and to determine whether absences should be consented to. Apologies were received from AK Apologies accepted and CONSENTED TO.	
3	Confidentiality and Declarations of interest Governors were reminded of the expectations around confidentiality. There were no declarations of interest in respect of items on today’s agenda. JR reminded governors to also check on website for interests outside of school Items deemed as confidential will be noted when they arise during the meeting.	
4	Notification of urgent other business. None	
5	To approve as a correct record the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Governing Board meeting held on 13.04.2021 The Chair advised that the minutes would be considered page by page for both accuracy and matters arising. Two amendments were noted; Page 2: item 7 - important that we recruit someone with finance – this should say preferable finance experience and skills Page 5: change ‘Claire’ and ‘Shannon’ to Head of key stage 3 & 4 Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the Full Governing Board meeting of the 13/04/21 were APPROVED as an accurate record, and signed by JR, Joint-Chair.	
6	To consider matters arising from the minutes for which there is no separate agenda item and to Review Action Points. GB vacancy / GW leaving	
7	Year 7 Numbers	

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	<p>TK: at the last GB meeting the numbers were 101 they are now 103 with another 3 to come through, taking this to a total of 106. Admissions are working through a backlog at the moment. 106 leaves the school 9 short from 115 target but this is 5 more than 6 months ago. This will be discussed further in Item 8.</p> <p>A Head of Maths and Computing faculty has been successfully appointed; Sarah Hall a former Head of department at Wensleydale School. This is a very positive appointment.</p> <p>The two Associate Leader posts have also been appointed; Louise Woodward as Associate Leader for Primary School Engagement and Andy Childe as Associate Leader for Personal Development. SLT are excited about the injection of strategic drive into the leadership team.</p> <p>The teacher assessed grades are underway and progressing well. MG will give a further update on this later.</p> <p>The school advisor James Durran visited the school yesterday. This focus of this was finances, curriculum, staffing, a learning walk, student panel and finally a meeting with TK and will also complete a write up. JD advised that the student panel was the key thing that reaffirmed where the school is on its journey. It was recognised that there are many things to work on however it was a very positive meeting direction of travel.</p> <p>Transition week for year 6's will go ahead this has been increased to a week to mark the issues around COVID and to ensure that these students have more time with the school. In addition to this, a week-long summer school in the holidays will also take place.</p> <p>The school will also have another Head of Faculty vacancy in Science and Technology department. The school are hoping to successfully recruit before the end of the school year.</p> <p>QUESTIONS</p> <p>GQ: is the summer school a mix of subjects?</p> <p>TK: yes, the government have provided a budget for this however this can only be used during the summer holidays. It could be used for other year groups but there are conditions relating to this. They will be able to experience Maths English, Drama and Art activities. Afternoons will be sport and team building using local providers.</p> <p>ACTION</p> <p>N/A</p>	
PART 'B' – SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT		
8	<p>MAIN STRATEGIC QUESTION</p> <p>Are we secure in reaching an in-year positive outturn, and are we successfully addressing our deficit?</p> <p><i>GUIDANCE FOR ALL STRATEGIC QUESTIONS</i></p> <p><i>Do we all understand the question?</i></p> <p><i>Where are we currently in relation to the question?</i></p> <p><i>Issues? Journey? Progress?</i></p> <p><i>Have we confidence in knowing what impact/change we want to see, by when? Could any of us answer the question to an external person, and would we know where to find out further information if needed?</i></p>	

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JR opened the discussion around the question and asked how well are we achieving this

SI: this can be broken down into 3 key questions;

- Are we reaching in-year positive out-turn as part of our budgeting process?
- Are we reaching a secure positive out-turn? And are we secure in it?
- Are we successfully addressing our deficit?

DM gave an overview of the current and historical financial position of the school and presented the summery document;

DM joined school a few months before the financial year end which was already running a £340,000 loss. The headteacher had also undertaken a restructure which took effect summer 2015. The budget for 2016 did not have the anticipated outcome regardless of the restructure. The school then had nowhere to go at that point. Work continued with the head teacher in relation to non-teaching staffing costs. SLT worked towards a focused restructure. 2017 saw another restructure as student numbers continued to fall. There was a change of headship in 2018 and a financial review from the LA took place. The school came out of the ROSLA building and there was also a small admin restructure.

More recently, the last 2 years have posted small surpluses.

The summary document shows the proposed 1st forecast which is a 29k deficit and the following year a 29k deficit again. This forecast based on 102 students but fairly confident that there will be 106. The proposal can be amended to 106 students which will then bring back to balanced budget.

The totals column shows the projection for project 600, the top line indicates a cautious growth for year 7. This moves up to 120 which is only 15 students following with another 5 further down the line. According to forecasted demographics, students' number will go up for the next two years before dropping again in 2024 and then another increase in 2025.

The summary position shows income expenditure and summary position. The current year starts with a 675k deficit but if all goes according to plan these figures will be reduced down to 406k

TK explained the student numbers; in September 2018 BHS only had 48% of catchment area attending the school. In 2019 this went up to 60.4%. 2020 saw this rise to 73% of the potential catchment schools. This has dropped to 63% which could be due to COVID and being unable to hold evenings etc but other things too such as how the school is marketed.

For 2021 the total pool of students for the catchment area is 134, 84 of those students are coming to BHS and others coming from other areas.

The data for the next few years;

Year	Total No of students
2022	172
2023	176
2024	152
2025	163

The data moves up quite significantly over next few years, in year movement will also occur however this is reasonably reliable moving forward.

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The forecasts are quite conservative but this is where the new role will come in and where relationships with primary schools will be improved.
SI explained that only two things can change this; the student numbers and the amount the schools spends.

SI thanked DM for her excellent work she has done with the finances. The school is at a level which can be compared on benchmarks and is on a par with other schools of a similar size. The numbers on roll need to be targeted. It is fundamental make the school as attractive as possible and ultimately to be oversubscribed. This is the ambition.

GQ: are we still in period of time going through a soft landing?

DM: yes

GQ: when will the full policy be implemented

DM: the funding for 2021/22 is based on a soft implementation. All of the harder aspects of the funding haven't yet been confirmed.

22/23 and 23/24 have been calculated on the soft implementation and haven't told us when the harder implementation will be introduced.

GQ: are we expecting to benefit from this?

DM: can't comment at this point

GC: initially North Yorkshire is one of the lowest funded county councils in the country

DM: it is now £5,000 per student. This was increased recently. Last time an estimate was done the school gained 30k but this did not greatly affect the budget.

JR: the GB understands that the school has a deficit. After looking at the history of the finances today staff numbers were dropped by a third over the last 4/5 years but the school was going through some difficult times. The school received its worst Ofsted report as the numbers started to fall and deficit built up during this period. Although the deficit was very high, this is not uncommon across schools of this size and the LA are worried about the speed that schools are reducing their deficits. BHS has tackled this much sooner than other schools in the same position and it is unusual for a school to have such a strong strategic plan.

JR opened the floor for governors; where do we see ourselves going for the next 5 years?

GQ: what pressure can the LA put on the school to damage our plans?

SI: we have been asked to explain ourselves about the deficit. This was a full exercise whereby everything was examined in great detail. BHS is doing well compared to similar schools. There has been tough choices and changes. Then the school got to the point where it was breaking even. This reduced their concern, however discussions in relation to federations began however this was never picked up. Although the school were open to any changes they would need to be beneficial to the school. This was happily discussed however project 600 was presented and therefore this was established as the school's target. The numbers will need to be increased before the debt can be decreased. This was accepted by the LA and the new AD Amanda Newbould. A meeting was held with her before Christmas last year where the deficit was discussed again, the school's plans were again presented and it was raised that this is not a single school issue. This is across the county which needs to be dealt with innovatively.

As the school is in a large deficit the LA could take financial control of the school. However, there are other schools within the LA that have higher deficits and others that may be catching up.

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Historically the LA had a fund for this purpose, however this has now depleted. It is a big problem throughout the county.

JR: advised that due to the deficit, technically the school is on notice. This is how they acknowledge this is a problem but this also means that they can give the school additional support. For example, additional time with James Durran.

SI: taking everything into consideration this means that everything comes down to how does the school increase student numbers.

TK: hoping that the governors have had the opportunity to read LW's application form. This highlights both short and long term priorities. Candidates were asked to talk through their ideas for the role within the interview. TK and LW will meet later this week to discuss the role further. To implement an action plan and strategy moving forward next year and beyond. LW will be extremely effective in this role.

LW: explained that she is excited to start within the new role it. There are certain strategies that can be easily put into place immediately. It will be possible to hit the ground running and have a comprehensive overview mapped across the next academic year before the summer holidays.

TK: it is also important to target the parents, BHS is a strong academic school and it is important to push this side too.

JR: what do governors think?

GC: welcomed LW, it will be great to have a fresh start for the school as everything rests on increasing student numbers. How it is going to tie in with not only selling the school to primary schools but also listening to them about what they need and what the gaps are? How will you manage pulling this together whilst also communicating with SLT?

LW: transparency is crucial and key to the success of this. I will be going to meet with the schools and establishing the contacts and keeping in constant communication with them. Transparency with SLT isn't a problem and will be a team approach.

TK: explained that he will manage both AC and LW directly rather than adding to MG and AK's workload. Meetings will be held both weekly or fortnightly. They will also attend SLT to ensure that they receive sufficient support and interaction.

GC: its great and the school has got a real chance of growing the numbers. However, it is also worth raising that when children are looking around various options there are other schools in the area which are prettier than the BHS. They offer a more modern smarter look. There isn't much we can do to change the building but we need to push the quality our academic results. We don't shout about our achievements. We might not have the best building but we have great facilities and this is a big thing; that we can achieve better grades. The schools should be confident and shout this out. If parents don't know we are achieving the results they may not choose the school. It would also be beneficial to involve the current students within their roles as ambassadors and promoting developing and promoting the school.

GC: there is a real misconception about what our students are achieving

SI: there may potentially be some funding available for the building however this would be limited.

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GQ: how do we promote the high standards of teaching and the results that students are getting? How else can we communicate this?

TK: this is ongoing, parents can see certain things on Facebook such as the wellbeing garden, local care home and supermarkets work. Other things will also come into AC's new role i.e. personal development of student's, activities and opportunities. The school does quite well but also other things such as signage in school and the displays etc that could be made more attractive. There are lots of different things that feed into this.

GC: I agree that we do not talk enough about academic results. The school is too modest, and this may not be a comfortable thing for the school to do but it is important to highlight the results to parents of potential students.

GC: lessons can be learnt from private schools, what can we take from those they have a very high academic levels etc but it is also about how they communicate those values to parents.

MG: this is correct, not only do they market their academic attainment but also more about how they tell parents. The school did not see the benefit of better teaching till 2019. If we compare these outcomes to other schools there are only 2 schools that beat us; SFX and Ripon grammar. However, parents do not know where to find this information.

GC: I don't think we need to educate the parents, but have information which is correct but not misleading. For example, using statements such as 'BHS did the best on English in the county' or '20% of high achieving students have gone the universities of their choice'. But pick out the relevant data and create statements for the website. Parents are more likely to remember statements like this rather than data and statistics.

GC: after quickly looking at Ripon Grammar school website it is possible to see similar statements. For example; 'Best performing state school in North Yorkshire'. In comparison to BHS, we are not promoting our achievements enough.

GC: the alumni speakers which the school has coming is fantastic but is there an opportunity to get more recent students from the last 5 years to come in and speak about their achievements about getting into universities or apprenticeships etc. Having alumni from 70's and 80's is great but might be great to get more relevant and recent alumni in to speak to students. The school could request this through Facebook and through the community, many parents will still be living in the area.

GC: these are great ideas but this is reverting back into operational rather than strategic.

TK: this is a fair comment from governors, the school could more effectively promote our academic strengths. It is equally important to focus on current parents as well as new ones so they are confident in the school. It is great that LW was able to attend this meeting as this will all feed into her role.

GC: current parents and students are the greatest marketing tool. if they are talking about it they are marketing the school.

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GC: it is a case of looking at where we want to be, when do we need to be building these relationships to have an impact on them. How do we make sure we are touching and reaching out to them? It is important that targets are set. If they are set in 2022 it is essential that the impact of the work is seen further down the line in 2025. We are now in a position with LW starting to decide what we need to do to achieve them in the 5 years we have? Where do we go next?

TK: a plan will be drawn up and will naturally have mile posts in it, this is priority. Also, to understand what can we do between now and the first decision making in autumn.

GQ: What can governors do?

TK: maybe to become involved as things come up. As it is key for LW to build positive relationships in primary school opportunity to get to the parents through these key staff. If Governors have any links they can recommend? However, this it is more operational rather than strategic.

GC: it would be beneficial for governors to see any action plans. It would be constructive for us all to have a unified message for example if a parent asked anybody why they should send their children to the school governors could answer this question in a consistent way.

GQ: is this straightforward to do?

TK: Yes

GQ: what else do we need to do other than project 600 i.e. fundraising. What other options are available to us beyond project 600? What does the finance committee need to be focusing on strategically moving forward?

GC: It is difficult discussion for the governors not on the finance committee, it would be useful to hear from the other governors.

GC: this could be how do we change the building to make them more attractive? It may be possible to seek funding for this.

GC: there are schools out there that are getting things done through grants. Is there anyone in the LA that can find money for us? This may be difficult, but worth enquiring.

JR: asked the new parent governors their thoughts in terms of improving and what priorities should be?

GC: I am the parent that looks at the stats online. Yes, the building maybe needs more money spending on it however I am pro BHS.

GC: my thoughts are in line with the previous comment, however I have not been further inside the school other than a meeting room. Due to not being from the area I chose BHS based on other parent's thoughts and word of mouth.

GC: fundraising should also be considered. It was such a shame that nobody outside the school could attend the blood brothers. This is such a great fundraiser promotes the school whilst selling tickets raises funds and it's a way to showcase the school. Other fundraisers such as the colour run, this was not a school activity but hosted by the school which will get non high school children into the school and promote the school.

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	<p>GC: if we look at what the finance committee is doing and any other ways to look at the marketing and link this all in with LW. It is all about connecting this.</p> <p>GC: the GB will get the feedback from the meeting with TK, LW and AC and a timeline can be developed</p> <p>ACTION: To enquire about grants in relation to the school building LW left the meeting 19:36</p>	
PART 'C' POLICIES & STATUTORY REPORTS		
	<p>Policies: The following policies are all school policies not NYCC policies; <u>Alternative provision Policy</u> TK explained that the school currently use 4 alternative provisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daisy Chain • Academy 21 • Boxwell • Bilborough Country Classrooms <p>The provisions are used for individual student that have specific needs and reasons for doing so. This is AK's policy and she has liaised with other schools that use alternative providers.</p> <p>Questions GQ: Is there an NYCC policy that we have not used? TK advised that if there is an NYCC the school would normally use them; GQ: I read the policy and wondered why we needed one? But if the school need on this is fine. But a general point about policies is that they can cause problems for the school if they are challenged. For example, when AK ties herself to visit the alternative providers she hasn't said how often she is going to do that so this might open up problems? This is a generic point and not specifically directed at this policy. It is good to consider the purpose for having policies. TK: this came from a collaborative safeguarding team. It is not a statutory policy, but one that is sensible for schools to have.</p> <p><u>Relationships & Sex Education Policy</u> AC explained that this is now a statutory policy. Now that this is in place this also need to be placed on the school website. Additionally, a consultation with stakeholders needs to take place i.e. parent views what should be included in curriculum, students and staff too. But this can be done after the policy appears on the website as long as the policy states 'this is a draft and will be reviewed'. A timeline will be planned for the consultation which will be completed by the end of the summer term.</p> <p>Questions GC: this is a really terrific policy, it is really clear and I like way it is set out and colours etc. The holistic approach to this subject also echo's very well in talking about the 3 C's. the only thing I would bring to it and want to share with you is that I am a trustee of a charity that deals with online sex abuse for children. Because I am aware and up to date with regards to the information on this I think that it is quite late to start this for those in year 11. There are currently 300,000</p>	

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	<p>reports 70% self-generated images most girls aged between 11-18 and some 5-6 years old. So, the earlier this is included in the curriculum the better.</p> <p>AC: There is a recurring theme from year 7 and goes into more depth through the years. Year 8 includes safe sexual relationships and online safety. By writing this policy it has brought to my attention how soon we should be introducing some things to students. What was previously suitable for year 9 might now be suitable for year 6 as things move on so quickly. This is constantly reviewed.</p> <p>Centre Exam Policy</p> <p>MG: this is largely based on the JCQ template and has been tailored to BHS with the timeline and historic data etc. This also highlights all the things which are being done across the school. It is a really important policy to follow, staff have all read it and will follow it. It is difficult to have a generic system across the school; however, it has been sent off and if there are any issues there will be a meeting with head of centre.</p> <p>AC: Edexcel have received approximately 724 policies so far and have not had double figures in stage two. Hopefully this will be signed off.</p> <p>Questions None</p> <p>ACTION The policies were UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by Governors for approval</p>	
, PART 'D' – FINANCE		
<p>10</p>	<p>Budget setting</p> <p>DM: explained that this is produced at this time every year, and proposed that the student numbers are amended to 106 on the forecast before this is submitted.</p> <p>DM advised that a summary will be brought to the next GB meeting which will show approximately 67k surplus. It has been a very odd year with COVID and savings etc.</p> <p>Questions None</p> <p>ACTION This was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED by Governors for approval</p>	
PART 'F' – OTHER BUSINESS		
<p>11</p>	<p>Any Matters arising from item 4</p> <p>GB Vacancy / GW Leaving</p> <p>SI thanked GW for his time and contributions across the board, help with committees and panels and being a great member of the team and wishes GW every success in his new position and role. This was echoed by all.</p> <p>GW thanked SI and the GB.</p> <p>The next Strategic Question will be; Are we empowering students to develop interests & talents, supporting them in becoming courageous, committed, and compassionate individuals through their experience at school?</p> <p>The meeting after June will be the July review which will hopefully be in person.</p> <p>JR reminded governors that termly visits will be part of the July review meeting and that these will need to be completed for then.</p> <p>GQ: will the question be emailed?</p> <p>JR: yes, this can be sent now.</p> <p>GC: it might be beneficial to let governors know how to think about this strategic question</p>	

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12	Date of next FGB meeting: 15th June 2021 Items carried forward to February FGB: N/A	
13	The meeting closed at 7.57pm.	

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