

**FINANCE, GENERAL PURPOSES AND ESTATES SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE CITY OF LONDON FREEMEN'S SCHOOL
Wednesday, 6 November 2019**

Minutes of the meeting of the Finance, General Purposes and Estates Sub-Committee of the Board of Governors of the City of London Freeman's School held at Committee Rooms, Guildhall, EC2P on Wednesday, 6 November 2019 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Nicholas Goddard (Chairman)
Deputy Philip Woodhouse (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy Roger Chadwick
Andrew McMillan
Brian Harris
Councillor Chris Townsend

Officers:

Steven Reynolds	- Chamberlain's Department
Roland Martin	- Headmaster of the City of London Freeman's School
Jo Moore	- Bursar, City of London Freeman's School
Stuart Bachelor	- Deputy Head, City of London Freeman's School
Paul Bridges	- Academic Deputy Head, City of London Freeman's School

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies. The Chairman welcomed governors Michael Hudson and Elizabeth Rogula who were in attendance. The Deputy Head and Academic Deputy Head attended via Skype call.

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

Between meetings Governors had received information regarding the insurance values for the School's buildings. There were concerns over the apparent double listing of the Headmaster's House and that some buildings were listed collectively, rather than individually. It was agreed that these concerns be communicated to the Chamberlain's Department, in anticipation of a full report in due course.

RESOLVED, that the public minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2019, be approved as accurate record.

4. **OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Governors received a report of the Town Clerk regarding outstanding actions of the Sub-Committee. It was noted that due to the length of time since the last meeting, some actions had moved on significantly since last discussed.

- Action 4/2019/FGPE – Governors requested that a copy of the delegated and urgent authorities approved within the last year, be circulated to the Sub-Committee by email. They also requested that the full Board of Governors be sent the monthly project dashboard as submitted by the City Surveyors Department to the City of London Corporation’s Project Management Office.
- Action 5/2019/FGPE – A new contractor had been appointed and therefore this action could be marked as complete.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

5. **REPORT ON POLICIES**

Governors considered a report of the Headmaster regarding School policies.

Compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations was identified by Governors as an area of significant importance for the School, and that it may in time need to be added to the School’s risk register.

Regarding the Data Protection Policy and the confiscation of mobile phones, children often have several devices and it was possible that once one device was confiscated, a second (e.g. another mobile, laptop or smart watch) would be used for the remainder of the School day. The best mitigation for this would be for staff to remain vigilant and to continue to educate pupils about appropriate and safe usage.

The Chairman suggested that the use of “shall” in the Data Protection Policy ought to be replaced with “should be” or “will”.

Governors discussed whether the Data Protection Policy should be made available to parents and agreed that due to paragraph 18 concerning the limiting or objection of use of personal data, that it needed to be. It was suggested that the policy could be available within the School’s online “Parents’ Portal” and that parents be directed to the policy within their induction packs.

Clarification was sought on the identity of a “person with parental responsibility” referenced in paragraph 39 of the Data Protection Policy. This referred to individuals such as the assigned Boarding Guardian.

In discussion on the Online Safety Policy the Headmaster confirmed that, like teachers, pupils were presented with an Acceptable Use Policy when they first logged-on to their School accounts each day.

The question of whether the Online Safety Policy also needed to be made available to parents was raised. It was requested that the Headmaster consider the implications of this and update the Sub-Committee at its next meeting.

A Governor raised concerned about the use of expletives whilst online. This was covered within a separate policy.

RESOLVED, that the Data Protection Policy and Online Safety Policy be approved.

6. **TUITION FEE DEBT**

Governors received a report of the Headmaster regarding the School's tuition fee debt.

Of the £5m fees for the 2019 Autumn Term, the School had an outstanding balance of £47k. Of this balance, approximately £25k were from fees in lieu of notice. Whilst all remaining fee debt was expected to clear, there was concern that up to £20k could become bad debt. It was not possible for fees to be cleared within the first 30 days of term as some families were on agreed and actively managed payment plans with the School.

Governors requested that in future reporting on arrears of fees, that data be presented to demonstrate when payments were made, i.e. 0-30 days, 30-60 days, 60-90 days and 90+ days.

Due to a change in reporting, it was not straightforward to compare the level of fees in lieu on notice owed. However, the issue of the value of deposits was something the School and Board of Governors wished to explore and would be reported on at the November Board meeting.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

7. **RISK REGISTER UPDATE**

Governors received a report of the Headmaster regarding the School's Risk Register.

The School's intention was to conduct sessions with the SLT to assess and revise current risks faced by the School with the added intention of bringing the risk register in line with the School's Strategic Intent. Areas of initial thought included operational risks associated with the Main House project, financial planning, sector-wide issues, cyber risks and maintaining academic standards. An updated risk register would be submitted to the Spring meeting of the Sub-Committee, then to the subsequent Board of Governors meeting.

A query was raised about the risk rating assigned to the Main House project. It was acknowledged that matters regarding the project could change very quickly and so the risks associated were always a moving target. It was felt that the impact assessment was fair, but the area of likelihood may vary.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

8. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no other business.

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED, That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

11. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2019, be approved as accurate record.

12. **FINANCIAL INFORMATION DASHBOARD**

Governors received a report of the Chamberlain and the Bursar regarding the School's Financial Information Dashboard.

13. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 12.15 pm

Chairman

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