

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE CITY OF LONDON FREEMEN'S SCHOOL
Thursday, 21 November 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors of the City of London Freeman's School held at Committee Rooms, West Wing, Guildhall, EC2V 5HH on Thursday, 21 November 2019 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Philip Woodhouse (Chairman)	Michael Hudson
Deputy Roger Chadwick (Deputy Chairman)	Alderwoman Susan Langley
Deputy John Bennett	Andrew McMillan
Nicholas Bensted-Smith (Ex-Officio Member)	Graham Packham
Deputy Kevin Everett	Deputy Elizabeth Rogula
Nicholas Goddard	Councillor Chris Townsend
Tracey Graham	

Officers:

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
Matt Robinson	- Head of Junior School, City of London Freeman's School (Skype)
Ola Obadara	- City Surveyor's Department
Steven Reynolds	- Chamberlain's Department
Polly Dunn	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman Bronek Masojada, Brian Harris, Deputy James Thomson and Lady Gillian Yarrow. Hugh Morris was to join the meeting briefly by Skype. Both Stuart Bachelor, Matthew Robinson and Paul Bridges would be joining the meeting by Skype.

The Chairman welcomed to the Board Deputy Kevin Everett to his first meeting.

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

Governors noted a typo within item 10 of the agenda, in which "boarder Corporation governance review" should read "broader Corporation governance review".

RESOLVED, that subject to this correction, the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2019, be resolved as accurate record.

4. **PUBLIC OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Governors received a report of the Town Clerk regarding the Board's public outstanding actions. The following matters were raised:

- 9P/CLFS/2019 – The Board's annual dinner was due to take place on 18 March. The Chairman asked for a document to be circulated at each meeting with all forthcoming dates of both the Board, its Sub-Committees and events such as Prize Day.
- 11/CLFS/2019 – Alternative dates had been identified but needed to be finalised before circulation.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

5. **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, GENERAL PURPOSES AND ESTATES SUB-COMMITTEE**

Governors received the draft public minutes and non-public summary of the Finance, General Purposes and Estates Sub-Committee meeting held on 6 November 2019.

6. **DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC & PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE**

Governors received the draft public minutes and non-public summary of the Academic and Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 6 November 2019.

It was noted that the start time of the meeting required correction.

7. **HEADMASTER'S REPORT**

Governors received a report of the Headmaster regarding an update on general School activities. The following matters were raised:

- Governors noted that the Headmaster was the current Chair of the Society of Heads.
- Following the Hong Kong visit, 14 offers for boarding places had been made and candidates had until the end of the autumn term to respond. One pupil had already accepted their place and three families were due to visit the School in the coming weeks. Whilst the School was conscious of not filling the Boarding House with students solely from Hong Kong, a balance needed to be struck as it was also important that the boarding places be filled.
- Governors requested that a report be submitted to the Finance & Estates Committee in January, and the Board meeting in February 2020, regarding the School's fundraising and development activities and projections.
- The Duke of Edinburgh Award and the substantial number of volunteer hours committed by the School's pupils was discussed by the Board. Governors wished for the Award to be raised by the Headmaster at the

forthcoming Heads' Forum and with the fellow heads of the City's Family of Schools.

Governors received a presentation from the City of London Freeman's School's Director of Learning, Teaching and Innovation after which the following matters were discussed:

- A Governor asked how the School consolidated its position as a Safe Space with a need to uphold freedom of speech. Freedom of speech was encouraged by the School through networks such as the Free Minds programme (for Sixth Form) and the debating society. It was important, however, that there was a framework in place to safeguard pupils, requiring teachers to be vigilant, identifying and flagging any rhetoric that caused concern.
- The School had made significant progress on the area of Learning and Teaching within the last year having focussed their attention internally, whilst networking locally. Governors were informed that the City of London Freeman's School, when considered alongside its local competitors, was leading the way in this sector.
- Meetings took place regularly with staff who also participated in surveys which evidenced the programme's progress and success. Pupils also submitted feedback through surveys and assemblies. The programme was discussed regularly at formal meetings with Heads of Department and formed the focus of the School's Learning and Teaching Committee.
- A Governor enquired as to whether technology and innovative approaches had been considered in a way that would challenge the School's top quartile of achievers and to develop its lower quartile. It was fundamental that the first step towards this would be ensuring that staff were supported in receiving necessary training to be confident in the use of technology. There were plans to explore this area further through the forthcoming Digital Strategy. It was noted that innovation in teaching and learning did not always mean *digital* innovation.
- Regarding peer-to-peer learning, the School wished to foster a culture where teachers engaged in sharing amongst themselves best practices and constructive feedback. More teachers were now encouraged to go on Learning Walks, as the SLT had been doing.
- With regard to change management, the School felt it was paramount that the vision was clearly communicated to staff and that measurable outcomes were established. Informal Common Room support, affirmation on good practice and a shared vision were all vital to help with those who might otherwise be reluctant to change. Any individual issues with embracing change were monitored closely.
- Consultation with David Bettancourt had fed into the Learning and Teaching programme primarily through the adoption of a coaching model

and the development of a new observation form. In addition, during the past year, 200 classes had been observed using a new BLINK model.

- Governors hoped that going forward pupils would adopt and demonstrate the Six Classroom Principles for Excellent Learning and Teaching.
- Governors thanked the Director of Learning and Innovation for their presentation and asked for a copy of the slides to be circulated by email after the meeting.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted

8. **HEAD OF JUNIOR SCHOOL REPORT**

Governors received a report of the Head of Junior School. The following matters were raised:

- The Junior School had arranged and would be running its own General Election on the 12 December.
- The School had voted for its chosen charity for 2019/20. The charity, Sightsavers, had been selected. Sightsavers' goal was protecting sight and fighting for disability rights.
- The Shakespeare Schools' Festival performance at Leatherhead theatre was due to take place on the evening of the 21 November 2019, not on Monday 26 November as reported.
- Following a recent visit, the Chairman remarked that the Junior School had a very happy atmosphere.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

9. **HEADMASTER'S REPORT ON POLICIES**

Governors received a report of the Headmaster regarding School policies. The policies included as appendices to the report had both already been approved by a Sub-Committee of the Board of Governors, however, the Headmaster felt that they were of significance to the School and requested that the Board formally note these new policies.

Governors thanked the Headmaster for the policies, particularly Online Safety, which they felt were excellent. The work that the Deputy Head had done in this regard was acknowledged.

RESOLVED, that the report and the policies at appendix 1 and 2, be noted.

10. **DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019 FOR THE CHARITIES ADMINISTERED IN CONNECTION WITH THE CITY OF LONDON FREEMEN'S SCHOOL**

Governors considered a report of the Chamberlain regarding the Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2019 for the Charities Administered in Connection with The City of London Freeman's School.

The accounts had been to the Audit Review Panel, Audit and Risk Management Committee, Finance Committee and had been accepted.

RESOLVED, that the report be noted.

11. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019 FOR THE CITY OF LONDON FREEMEN'S SCHOOL BURSARY FUND

Governors received a report of the Chamberlain regarding the Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2019 for the City of London Freeman's School Bursary Fund.

Governors discussed at length whether more funds could be made available to the School for bursaries for the 2020/21 admissions round. Whilst figure of £20,000 was initially discussed, it was proposed that £40,000 be released from the Bursary Fund. This amount would enable one additional candidate to be identified through the Royal National SpringBoard Foundation on a full boarding basis and be supported through the City of London Freeman's School Sixth Form. Based on the accounts presented, this additional provision was considered a lower risk commitment than to fund one pupil with a 100% bursary from 11+. Governors acknowledged the enormous increase in voluntary income into the Fund and queried whether that was likely to be sustainable for future years, this further demonstrated the need to a full report on the School's fundraising activities, as discussed earlier in the agenda.

For context, the Headmaster explained that in 2015 there were only 3 pupils at the School on significant bursaries (e.g. 80+%). In 2019, the School had 28 pupils on significant bursaries, at least six of which were on 100% bursaries. The School still had some older pupils on more significant scholarships, however, any recently awarded scholarships were limited to a value of 5%.

RESOLVED, that

- An additional £40,000 from the City of London Freeman's School Bursary Fund, be released to the School to be put toward a full bursary for a Sixth Form boarder, to be identified as part of the School's imminent admissions and bursary applications procedure.
- The report be noted.

12. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD
There were no questions.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

Following an expression of interest, Governors were invited to consider the appointment of Brian Harris to the Academic & Personnel Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED, that Brian Harris be appointed to the Academic & Personnel Sub-Committee.

14. **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.

15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2019, be approved as accurate record

16. **NON-PUBLIC OUTSTANDING ACTIONS**

Governors received a report of the Town Clerk regarding the Board's non-public outstanding actions.

17. **DRAFT NON-PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, GENERAL PURPOSES AND ESTATES SUB-COMMITTEE**

Governors received the Draft non-public minutes of the Finance, General Purposes and Estates Sub-Committee meeting held on 6 November 2019.

18. **DRAFT NON-PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC AND PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE**

Governors received the draft non-public minutes of the Academic and Personnel Sub-Committee from the meeting held on 6 November 2019.

19. **HEADMASTER'S NON-PUBLIC REPORT**

Governors received a report of the Headmaster regarding updates on various School matters.

20. **BURSAR'S REPORT**

Governors received a report of the Bursar regarding updates on financial and operational matters.

21. **FEE DEPOSIT REPORT**

Governors considered a report of the Bursar regarding fee deposits.

22. **PROPOSED 2020/21 REVENUE BUDGET**

Governors considered a report of the Chamberlain and the Bursar regarding the proposed 2020/21 revenue budget.

23. **REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENTS FUND**

Governors considered a report of the Chamberlain, Headmaster and City Surveyor regarding the School's Repairs, Maintenance & Improvements Fund.

24. DELEGATED AUTHORITY REQUEST: APPOINTMENT OF MAIN CONTRACTOR FOR THE MAIN HOUSE PHASE 2 WORKS.

Governors considered a report of the City Surveyor regarding a delegated authority request for the appointment of the main contractor for the Main House Phase 2 works.

25. SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

The Headmaster provided a verbal update on safeguarding matters at agenda item 19.

26. ACTION TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS

Governors received a report of the Town Clerk regarding action taken between meetings.

27. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE BOARD

There were no questions.

28. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE BOARD AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 1.10 pm

Chairman

**Contact Officer: Polly Dunn
polly.dunn@cityoflondon.gov.uk**