



GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL

<u>FULL GOVERNORS' MEETING</u>				
Date	Monday, 23 rd January 2012	Time / Location	5:00 pm – 7:05 pm L 7	Quorum 5
Potential Attendees	Initials	Position		Comments
Michael Bamborough	MB	Governor (Chairman)		Present
Sarah Almey	SA	Parent Governor		Present
Tracey Amos	TA	Staff Governor (Head Teacher)		Present
David Cobbledick	DC	Governor		Present
Pat Grimwood-Taylor	PGT	Governor		Absent
Amanda Hornsby	AH	Staff Governor (Non Teaching)		Present
Lorraine Kenneally	LK	Parent Governor		Present
Jacqueline MacLean	JM	Governor		Present
Mark Pluckrose	MP	Staff Governor (Teaching)		Apologies
Richard Rumbold	RR	Governor		Apologies
Jo Simpson	JSi	Parent Governor		Present
Solomon Singh	SSi	Co-Opted Governor		Absent
Jo-Anne Stevens	JSt	Parent Governor		Present
Sam Stocker	SSt	Governor		Present
Tim Watson	TW	Governor		In attendance then Elected at this meeting
David Williams	DW	Parent Governor		Apologies
Rose Elliott	RE	Clerk to Governing Body		Present

PRESENTATION. 4.30pm

Immediately prior to the meeting, the Headteacher gave a presentation on proposals to change the curriculum. These have been discussed in SLT and with the staff as a whole. As governors are aware our intake normally consists of pupils who are significantly below the national average of attainment. The school causing us greatest concern has just come out of special measures; the way this is normally achieved can result in our Yr7 intake arriving with low skill levels. In the past we have been able to raise levels and we are planning to continue to do so, indeed to improve on our past record.

Commencing September 2012 any pupils entering at Level 3 or below will receive extra English and Maths to support them in becoming better learners and develop their skills for future use. From 2013 the "Opening Minds" approach may come into use where learning is linked across subjects not compartmentalised. Yrs 7 & 8 may have 10 periods of this approach plus English, Maths and Science. KS3 may have 2 years followed by 3 years of GCSE mainly in concentrated blocks taking the exam after one year. Pupils will then be able to choose more options than in the past plus new options such as the Duke of Edinburgh award, which counts for UCAS points and continue skills acquisition at the same time. Mr Gove is looking to make the E Bacc. compulsory [Eng., Maths, Sci., Humanities and a language] but this would limit choices options under our present system. This means there is a lot to do and promises an exciting future. Now that we are an Academy we do not have to follow the National Curriculum. [LK arrives]

Governors asked what is known of the next intake group? TRA has requested this information from the feeder schools and is awaiting responses. This year 40% of the 170 were in the low attaining category; apparently the next group have a higher % but this has yet to be confirmed.

The proposed Free School will present a challenge; it will be the first rural free school in England. They will have considerable funding, new buildings and the ability to pay high wages as staff incentives.

TRA also presented Ofsted information to governors. In answer to a question TRA states we had been advised that a school should have a year's grace after becoming an Academy before they are inspected. [SA arrives] Governors thanked TRA for an interesting presentation. A short break was taken at this point to view the examples of the new school uniform on mannequins in TRA's office.

MINUTES

D marks a Decision, I Information shared, R denotes a Recommendation T is for Thanks

2011-12 /GOV /26	Apologies	Apologies had been received from DW [working], RR [medical] and MP. These were sanctioned.	I D
2011-12 /GOV /27	Conflicts of Interest	None declared.	I
2011-12 /GOV /28	Nomination of New Governor	Following the resignation of Mrs Maureen Woolgar MB had sent her a letter of thanks. MB had sent out in advance of the meeting the CV of Mr Tim Watson, prospective new governor at GTS. At MB's request TW gave a short resume of his experience and affiliation to GTS. It was proposed, seconded and unanimously agreed to appoint TW to the resultant vacancy.	T I D
2011-12 /GOV /29	Parent Governor	Tonight is the last meeting before the expiry of the terms of office of JSi and DW. We must have at least two parent governors; we believe we should continue to have more as we believe their involvement is an important part of our function. It was confirmed that this remains the view of the governing body. A recruitment process will therefore commence managed by the Clerk; JSi will not be eligible for re-election (as a Parent Governor) as she no longer has a child at the school. MB raised the question of JSi continuing on the governing body, she stated she would be willing to do so	I D
2011-12 /GOV /30	Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising not on the Agenda	The minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 14 th November 2011 were reviewed, agreed as a true record and signed by MB. There were no matters arising.	D
2011-12 /GOV /31	Minutes of Committee Meetings	<p>Curriculum. SA reported very briefly on this meeting; there were no questions regarding the minutes that had been circulated.</p> <p>Personnel. Minutes had been sent out. The policies that had been adopted had been recorded in the minutes. TRA is very sad to be losing Peter Ash; the advert for his replacement appeared last Friday; there has been a lot of interest already. In answer to a question TRA hopes to be in a position to interview 6 candidates. Governors are invited to meet them on the evening of 8th February between 6.30 and 7.30 pm. There were no other questions. Consideration has been given to the demographic dip in pupil numbers prior to the decision to fill this position.</p> <p>Premises. Minutes had been sent out; DC distributed information documents to allow for full consideration and questioning. This Committee meeting had not been quorate. Recommendations were made to today's meeting for decision as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Reception/admin roof covering. Proposed [DC] we accept County Flat Roofing as the contractor; Seconded [SA]; agreed all in favour [Abstention TRA]. b) CCTV [paper from J Buss], Safeguarding issue. Proposed[DC] to allocate £6,000 for this enhancement Seconded [JSt],Agreed by all [Abstention TRA]. <p>Finance. Minutes had been sent out; DC distributed information documents. This Committee meeting had not been quorate. Recommendations were made to today's meeting for decision as follows:</p>	I I I D D -

<p>2011-12 /GOV /31</p>		<p>a) Prospectus. AB gave a presentation to the committee. We seriously need to consider increasing our marketing budget. Group 39 competition in the area will require each school to raise their game. Proposed DC, Take £5,000 from unallocated funds to allow for a print of our new prospectus; the present one does not do us justice. We are looking at an 8 page glossy A4, which will also be displayed on our website. The proposal was seconded by JSt and agreed by all [Abstention TRA].</p> <p>For the benefit of new Governors DC gave a brief outline of the financial situation. He meets CW monthly and closely monitors the budget. In principle we hold things fairly tight due to projected falling rolls but we do have some funds in reserve. ROK was our contractor when we developed our new music and drama buildings. They are now in receivership and we are in dispute over what they claim we owe as we have a counter-claim against the company for unfinished work. We have funds set aside to cover any decision against us. As we have an under spend we are unlikely to have to reduce staff in the next academic year. Our income is directly related to pupil numbers and this year we had a number of new pupils registered prior to census day. We have been informed that the Pupil Premium income will be raised from £430 to £600 per child from April and it can be claimed for any pupil who has had the benefit of a Free School Meal during the last six years. We have linked the Pupil Premium to the development of our pupil support centre. There were no further questions.</p>	<p>I D I</p>
<p>2011-12 /GOV /32</p>	<p>Report of the Headteacher</p>	<p>This had been sent out in advance along with the SIP [School Improvement Partner] visit report, the content of which were noted.</p> <p>1. The FFTD % shown placed the school is in the top 25% nationally. Current progress is just in line but there are concerns with Maths and English as for both subjects this is the first year through new exam specifications.</p> <p>2. Exclusion data. There has been a decrease in the number of Fixed Term exclusions. This was an intend impact with the development of the Pupil Support Centre and the Pupil Coaches. We now have accurate data on behaviour across the school there has been a rise in the number of pupils sent to Withdrawal but we believe this is due to the new Rewards and Consequences system being followed by all staff. SSt asked whether it is not that we are just being more tolerant in the behaviour of the pupils? TRA quoted an example of one pupil who had been on the verge of exclusion. The school staff worked with the parent and the pupil began to work with us to improve their behaviour. Now more pupils are on the programme their behaviour is better and with our continuing support they are achieving a higher level of enjoyment in their learning. In answer to a question TRA believes hormones are the reason for the Yr10 increase as well as staff setting higher challenges [see Raise online]. The number on school action plus and exclusions were high last year because a significant number of pupils with special needs, who joined from other local schools, were on the point of exclusion as TRA arrived. As they were also poor performers academically they skewed our stats. Without them we would have achieved 63% A* - C including English & Maths. TRA added that there are now managed moves between schools which has proved to be a better system.</p> <p>3. Attendance is good. The Yr 11 dip Autumn 2 and increase % unauthorised absence is due to a number of parents taking children on some long holidays' before Christmas. TRA will not give authorisation to pre-exam holidays and discourages pupils being taken out during term time. Governors indicated their support for this decision.</p>	<p>I I I D</p>

		SEF. DSEFs were given out to link governors to assist in their visits and monitoring. Vacancies for Link Governors were discussed. SST agreed to link with Maths and TW agreed to link with Art/CDT. MB will add a Science link to his brief. LK has recently attended a review as Link Governor and will send in a report.	D LK
2011-12 /GOV /33	Proposed Calendar 2013-14	This had been sent out in advance [copy attached]. The allocation of holiday dates is a standard procedure. Of the five training days one is replaced by peer observations, 2 twilight sessions replace another 2 days and the remainder fall at the beginning of term in September. TRA has noted that the long autumn term is hard on staff and is the worst for absence; she has therefore allocated an occasional day on 26 th Nov to make a long weekend. This is the only occasional day not next to a holiday. The main dates are LA based. TRA is trying out the options regarding aligning days with the May Fair and will decide the future after the event. The dates as presented were agreed. TRA adds that October half term varies a bit across the country so in future this may need to be reviewed too.	I D
2011-12 /GOV /34	Governors as Directors	MB confirmed that being a Governor is synonymous with being a Director. Registration forms were given out and asked to be completed and returned to CW [the Company Secretary] as soon as possible. It was recommended that the school address be used for Section 4 as this is published; 4A the home address is not.	I
2011-12 /GOV /35	National Governors Association	MB referred to his personal membership of the NGA for which he pays £32. School membership cost £250 MB has trialled it and it gives access to a lot of useful information which he feels should be available to all, for example the Know Your School eg. MB believes it gives good value for money. MB has attended the AGM for SW Governors. It gives us a voice and keeps us up to date. MB proposed GTS signs up to full membership so that all can look for themselves; SSt seconded and it was agreed.	I D
2011-12 /GOV /36	Financial Agreement	MB explained what he had discovered regarding the Facilities Agreement. Each Local Authority [LA] school loses 8% top slice of the county budget. One thing this funds is an agreement to support the 6 teacher unions which appears to be using public money in support of union activities. LA schools have no choice and the Associations work closely with DCC officers on policy consultation, compromise agreements etc. All cogs and wheels are oiled by this procedure. We obtain policy documents from DCC through our service level agreement. Professional Associations say they will charge fees on each occasion they attend for HR meetings unless there is an agreement. This was presented in a plan at a recent meeting MB attended. He felt it was a poorly presented document and Associations were eventually asked to do it again making their case more clearly. MB has consulted FASNA and NGA who say all LAs have similar agreements. The DfE confirm they do not consider this to be a problem and are not investigating. MB was initially very much against this but he now believes one off expenses could be greater than the facilities fee. MB asks governors to think about their view on this; he will send revised proposal letter from the unions when received and call for e-mail comments and votes then will take majority. For information MB adds that union duties are different to union activities. We do not have a regional representative here but we could do.	I All I
2011-12 /GOV /37	Policy Documents	It was proposed that amendments, in the light of new information, made to the following two policies should be adopted: 69. CRB Disclosure. It has been clarified that three yearly	

		<p>rechecking of CRB disclosures is not now required in all cases. GTS reserves the right to check as necessary and the policy has been amended accordingly. It is anticipated this will be a financial saving.</p> <p>8. Behaviour and Rewards. Changes to the points criteria for awards information had been made [copy of the revision attached]. It was proposed, seconded and agreed to adopt each of these revisions.</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>D,D</p>
2011-12 /GOV /38	Chairman's Comments	<p>MB has been monitoring the Academy conversions in Devon. Of the 37 secondary schools 17 have converted, 3 are in the process of conversion and the remainder remain with the LA. MB continues as the Secondary Academy Governor Representative on the Devon Education Forum.</p>	<p>I</p>
2011-12 /GOV /39	Dates & Times of Next Meetings	<p>Curriculum, Meeting Room 1, Monday 12 March at 5.00 pm</p> <p>Personnel, HT's Office, Wednesday 14 March at 5.00 pm</p> <p>Premises, HT's Office, Monday 19 March at 5.00pm</p> <p>Finance, HT's Office, Monday 19 March at 5.30pm</p> <p>Full Governors' Meeting, L7, Monday 26 March 5.00pm</p>	<p>I</p>