



GREAT TORRINGTON SCHOOL
Academy Trust

Company Number 769819. A Company Limited by Guarantee, Registered in England

<u>GOVERNORS' BOARD MEETING</u>				
Date	Monday, 26 March 2012	Time / Location	Quorum 5	5:00 pm [4.30 for Presentation] L7
Potential Attendees	Initials	Position	Comments	
Michael Bamborough	MB	Member Governor (Chairman)	Present	
Sarah Almey	SA	Parent Governor (Vice Chair)	Present	
Tracey Amos	TA	Member Governor (Head Teacher)	Present	
David Cobbledick	DC	Member Governor	Present	
Marten Gallagher	MG	Parent Governor	Present	
Pat Grimwood-Taylor	PGT	Co-opted Governor	Present	
Amanda Hornsby	AH	Staff Governor (Non Teaching)	Present	
Lorraine Kenneally	LK	Parent Governor	Present	
Jacqueline McLean	JM	Co-opted Governor	Present	
Mark Pluckrose	MP	Staff Governor (Teaching)	Present	
Richard Rumbold	RR	Member Appointed Governor	Present	
Jo Simpson	JSi	Co-opted Governor	Present	
Solomon Singh	SSi	Member Appointed Governor	Apologies	
Jo-Anne Stevens	JSt	Parent Governor	Present	
Sam Stocker	SSt	Member Appointed Governor	Apologies	
Tim Watson	TW	Member Appointed Governor	Present	
Rose Elliott	RE	Clerk to Governing Board	Present	

MINUTES

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

4.30 pm	Presentation		
2011-12/GOV/40	Apologies	Apologies were received from SSt and SSi; these were sanctioned. Therefore a quorum is present. RE also apologised for arriving late [during item 42]	I, D
2011-12/GOV/41	Conflicts of Interest	No conflicts of interests were declared regarding this agenda no one reported any changes to business declarations previously made. MG has returned his signed Declaration of Interest Form. Other Governors have also completed this document; these are on file.	I I
2011-12/GOV/42	Confirmation of Governor Membership and Nomination of	MB explained that fuller detail is required to be minuted in addition to minutes 2011/GOV/02 & 2011/GOV/19 regarding reconstitution of the Governing Board. MB confirmed, what he had outlined pre Academy, that the Company incorporated on	I

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was proposed [RR], seconded [DC] and agreed that Lloyds TSB, 5 High Street, Bideford, Devon is appointed as bankers to GTS • It was proposed [DC], seconded [MB] and agreed that Bishop Fleming, Coburg House, Mayflower Street, Plymouth, PL1 1LG , is appointed as accountants to GTS • It was noted that appropriate insurance cover is in place including employer's liability insurance and directors' indemnity insurance and resolved that this would be maintained; our broker is Education Practice, Capital House, 1-5 Perrymount Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3SY • It was noted that the school address has been used as the registered address of GTS Academy Trust Ltd and the accounting reference date is the standard end of the month in which the company was incorporated • A template in the form of the current headed notepaper which has been revised for Academy status, [copy attached] was approved • The current form of agenda for Board meetings was also approved • Since we became an Academy after January 2011 we will be an exempt charity. The Charity Commission has advised that an Academy does not need to register as such, nor submit accounts to the Commissioners • We are aware of the need to be appropriately registered for VAT • Governor training will be undertaken as required. We have bought in to the Learning and Development Partnership (Babcock LDP) Governors' support services and as have free access to the GEL education facility, which provides online Governor training courses. Governors are also encouraged to attend any other training courses that would help in enabling them to carry out their duties. Please liaise with the Chairman regarding attendance fees where appropriate. 	D D I D I D D I I I
2011 -12/ GOV /45	School Improvement Plan/ HT Report	<p>TRA took this opportunity to liaise with Governors on an urgent matter that has arisen recently; this and the next topic, will replace her review of the SIP. TRA reported that she has been in correspondence with the parents of a Yr 9 pupil on the topic of Dance in the GCSE curriculum. The reason is that due to insufficient response it has not been possible to run a Dance option next year. Initially only 9 pupils opted for Dance; TRA & Peter Ash [PA] reviewed the situation with MP and by following this up a few more pupils have since expressed an interest, however we still fall short of the absolute minimum of 16 pupils we need at GTS for a subject to run, 18-22 being the norm for Dance and Drama and 20 – 30 for other courses. The pupil and parents are particularly</p>	I

	<p>School Improvement Plan/ HT Report</p>	<p>unhappy because the pupil wishes to study the subject beyond 'O' level. The GCSE covers more than the pupil's current focus as a member of Streetz and has displayed a high level of commitment.</p> <p>The issue, however, is funding; as DC has reported in common with other secondary schools in the area falling rolls will significantly reduce our overall funding income in the coming academic years. Starting in September this year our project pupil roll number is 30 less than this year. Therefore, as any GCSE course requires a two year commitment to start one that is already below the critical minimum number would exacerbate an already fragile financial situation. TRA has already explained to the parents the reason for the decision, which has resulted in their recent letters of appeal to the Governors. In answer to a question on what other avenues have been explored TRA was clear that a staff member cannot be asked to take on additional work e.g. during lunch time and/or as an after school activity, without the offer of an appropriate payment. MP stated that a staff member has indicated that they are considering volunteering their services to make this possible, however she is soon to take maternity leave and may not be back at work before the start of the next school year. TRA added that the replacement teacher is newly qualified so does not have the same background to draw on to help out in such a situation. In answer to a question TRA responded that it was not essential (or even necessary) to have a dance GCSE to enrol for further study in dance at a later date; it was more important to obtain a thorough grounding in the traditional academic subjects.</p> <p>Governors gave their views and discussed seeking a resolution to satisfy the aspirations of the pupils. Eventually they supported the proposal made by [RR], seconded [MB], that the best that could be justified within the limited resources was to ensure that the pupils could have Dance assessed as an element of the PE GCSE. TRA and MP abstained from this decision.</p> <p>JSi, JSt and MP apologised but needed to leave at this point [5.55pm].</p> <p>TRA continued by informing Governors about the current staffing issue and the effect on the School. The Deputy Headteacher has taken early retirement effective at the end of March. TRA has already lightened the teaching load of PA to allow him to work on the timetable for next year; he will concentrate on this and other SLT issues after March. Consideration has been given to hiring someone to produce the timetable but as PA has done this in the past, and knows the school so well, it would be better to let him get on with it. The Deputy Headteacher [DH] has been absent due to illness since January, which has increased the workload of the SLT and TRA in particular. The LA has offered to second</p>	<p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>D</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p> <p>I</p>
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		<p>a DH (at cost) but it was considered better to avoid the disruption and distraction of helping a temporary senior staff member read into the job, especially as s/he would have to leave at about the same time they got to grips with the requirements. It was decided to go for a permanent replacement straight away and, as there is only just time to recruit and appoint a new DH for September, TRA will need to finalise arrangements during the Easter vacation. TRA has investigated whether it would be possible for the newly recruited SLT member, to replace PA in September, could be released early from her current school. Unfortunately this was not possible. Another SLT member has also handed in their resignation today, to take retirement with effect from 31 August 2012. This was not unexpected but adds to the pressure to replace yet another senior staff member as soon as possible. On the plus side, however, it allows for an almost complete reorganisation of SLT at a time of important curriculum and other changes. TRA will not be replacing a recently vacated full time teaching post and is considering the viability of reducing SLT by one member. TRA indicated that it would make better economical sense to cut a senior post rather than a teaching post, but to achieve this it is recognised that SLT members will need to be released from more of their teaching time; such a reduction would, however, help towards balancing the earlier reported reduction in income. Inevitably this has slowed down the planned curriculum development.</p> <p>In view of pressures of work DC asks what Governors can do to help. MB answered by encouraging the Governing Board to continue to provide, or better, the level of support that they had achieved in the past. MB then stated that as she was enjoying precious little of the life element in the work-life balance, he suggested that as the main aspects of the meeting had been covered, TRA be released to get home at a reasonable time for once. This was agreed and TRA left.</p>	<p> </p> <p> </p>
2011 -12/ GOV /46	National Governors Association	There has been an administrative delay in confirming our membership; it is hoped that this has now been rectified and magazines and emails will reach you soon.	
2011 -12/ GOV /47	Financial Agreement	Still not yet received a resubmission from the Teacher Unions.	
201 1-12/ GOV /48	Parent Forum	MB sought a volunteer to replace David Williams as a link with this organisation; as none was forthcoming he will attend on behalf of the Governors at the next meeting.	-
2011 -12/	Youth Club in	PGT briefed Governors on the content of a meeting she attended on 14 th March as a part of the Redeem Our	-

GOV /49	Torrington	<p>Communities conversation held at Torridge Vale Centre. PGT will be abroad when the next meeting takes place where anyone is welcome to attend to discuss the local needs. Their plan at present is to submit a bid to fund a feasibility study, form a business plan with a view to erect a purpose built centre for youth that can also be used by other agencies as appropriate. PGT asked if someone else from the Board would be attending? LK will be attending in connection with her Police role so can report back. MG reported that he is aware of a bid being formulated by Angela Fleming of the Junior School. PGT added that she personally was not aware of this potential bid but in their considerations the group had gone for a new build over the Junior School site because of the latter's proximity to a residential area. MG recommended that there be a link between the two groups to ensure that they were not working against each other in trying to achieve the same purpose.</p>	LK I
2011 -12/ GOV /50	Policy Documents	<p>It was proposed [MB] seconded [SA] and agreed [MP abstained] that the E-Safety and Data Protection Policy, with the amendment from the Curriculum Committee, be adopted.</p> <p>Governor Visits. MB produced a new signing-in register for Governors to use when visiting the school. As all Governors have now been issued with a GTS ID badge this has obviated the need to sign-in as a visitor. He then stated that the register will show which Governor visited, when, where and who, better than any other document. As visit forms are no longer required, but can still be submitted if preferred, a Governor who makes a school visit will have to take responsibility for feedback to Ofsted. This is required, in conjunction with the SIP, on their interactions with their specific school links. MB suggested that if a visit form were not submitted, Governors should at least keep their own notes on who they met and what they discussed so that they can provide appropriate input if and when called upon at an Ofsted inspection.</p> <p>JM reported that she had attended a meeting recently with Natalie Bray and the DCC Careers Adviser; she had offered help to pupils on university visits.</p>	D I I I I
2011 -12/ GOV /51	Chairman's Comments	<p>MB reported back from his attendance as the Secondary Academy Governor member on the Devon Education Forum. He used this opportunity to speak about the local Free School proposal that would be one of the first rural free schools in the country. It comes at a time when local secondary schools [GTS, Bideford, Holsworthy and Budehaven] are dealing with the effect of falling rolls, and a slowing of home building. It therefore does not make economical sense to open a 600 place competitor when there is considerable spare capacity within existing schools. At another meeting he attended, of</p>	I

		<p>the SW Region NGA, Emma Knight, Executive Chair of the NGA, spoke to MB about this because she felt it was an important issue. MB has agreed to write an article for a forthcoming issue of the NGA magazine, but will liaise with the other (3) schools in case they wish to be co-contributors. He will share his draft by e-mail for Governor comments. Several Governors added their own comments to this item. MB advised Governors that it had been made known by the Free School that they had the support of GTS when all that had actually happened was that TRA had sent an acknowledging response to their contact e-mail.</p> <p>RR informed Governors that the Olympic Torch would be carried through Torrington on 21st May. Former pupils will carry the torch both here and in Torquay. RR will liaise with TRA regarding whether or not any GTS pupils will line the route.</p>	I RR
2011 -12/ GOV /52	Dates & Times of Next Meetings	<p>Curriculum, Meeting Room 1, Monday 21st May 2012 at 5.00 pm</p> <p>Personnel, HT's Office, Wednesday 23rd May 2012 at 5.00 pm</p> <p>Premises/Finance, Meeting Room 1, Monday 28th May 2012 at 5.00pm</p> <p>Full Governors' Meeting, L7, Monday 11th June at 5.00pm, preceded by a presentation at 4.30pm</p>	