

PATCHAM HIGH SCHOOL
GOVERNING BODY
MINUTES

Meeting of:	CHAIRS of COMMITTEES and CHAIR of GOVERNORS
Date/Time:	8 th June 2020 6.00 pm
Location:	Held virtually by Zoom
Distribution:	FGB, website
Quorum:	Decisions would need to be ratified by full governing body.
Present:	Governors (voting) Richard Eeva (RE) Chair of Finance Health and Safety Committee Sarah Fitzjohn-Scott (SFS) Chair of Governors and Chair of this meeting Caroline Greenfield (CG) Chair of Behaviour Attitudes and Personal Development Committee John McKee (JM) Headteacher Andrew Saunders (ASD) Chair of Quality of Education Committee Other (non-voting) Janet Johnson (JJ) Clerk to Governors
Apologies:	Mike Sandeman (MSD) Vice Chair - accepted

DISCUSSION AND DECISION	
1	<p>PRELIMINARIES:</p> <p>1.1 The meeting had been convened at the request of JM to consult with governors over the latest risk assessment and plans for wider reopening of the school. The usual 7 days' notice had not been possible due to the rapidly changing situation.</p> <p>1.2 Declarations of Interest for consideration. No new interests were declared.</p> <p>1.3 Apologies. MSD had given his apologies and they were accepted.</p>
2	<p>WIDER OPENING</p> <p>Papers: Risk assessment</p> <p>2.1 JM was invited to comment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He was seeking feedback from governors on the risk assessment. • The school was ready for wider reopening on the 15th June but this may not go ahead if the local authority indicated that would be inadvisable. • He had met with the headteachers of secondary schools and they were in the same position. • The local authority at the moment did not consider that schools were ready to open and their guidance was currently that it should not take place until 22nd June. • The headteachers had asked to speak to the lead Councillor, John Allcock. • JM had reviewed the data and the risks, including balancing the risks to children of being in school and not being in school. • John Allcock had taken Unions' views into account. • The unions had requested a BAME risk assessment for the community; however, this had been perceived as racist at the school.

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DISCUSSION AND DECISION

2.2 In discussion governors noted:

- The increase in cases in Brighton.
- The lower admissions currently.
- The local authority's advice was not to open. All the secondary schools, including the academies, did not wish to go against the local authority's advice.
- The local authority was the employer.
- JM forecast of the number of days pupils would be in school (4).
- The buildings were prepared for social distancing.
- The risk assessment was detailed and appeared very thorough.

2.3 They were concerned the local authority seemed to be looking at the narrow risk of pupils in school and had not taken into account that in reality they were already mixing outside. They felt it likely the local authority would look to find a problem with one of the '5 tests', such as track and trace, to support a delay in reopening. The risks of vulnerable children being out of school remained and governors questioned JM closely on reasons for non-attendance from this group, whether particular year groups were more exposed and if there were other options.

They checked staff were comfortable with the risk assessment and set up of the buildings for social distancing. JM added that numbers had been increasing so the school had already become tight on enforcement.

2.4 **Will The Bridge open?** It will eventually but there is plenty of space at the moment. We have systems in place to manage them.

Are there any individual children with behaviours that you are concerned about? Not really. We do have some high tariff children coming in but we are managing them.

If the local authority did not give the go ahead to open would staff be reluctant to attend?

JM: I think they would support our decision. We do not know what is going to happen and there will always be an element of risk.

What happens should a member of staff catch the virus? JM explained the process to governor satisfaction.

2.5 JJ passed on advice from the National Governance Association re governor liability. ASD had attended a Chairs of Governors meeting with the local authority and fed back that no additional points had been raised.

Governors deliberated on whether 4 days education was worth the risk. They felt JM and the school knew the community and the children so would support his decision whether it be to reopen or be more cautious. They acknowledged the children had to return at some point. The virus would be around in varying degrees for a long time and eventually a mind-shift was likely from being afraid to living with it.

2.6 **As the local authority guidance is to delay until June 22nd are you minded to delay till then?** Yes.

All the governors supported JM's approach of working with the local schools, headteachers and following advice of the local authority. Governors felt it might be better for children to go to school but there was a need to work collectively with local authority and the other secondary schools.

JM informed the risk assessment mitigation was in place and they were expecting 50 people next Monday. JM clarified matters to governor satisfaction relating to toilets, cleaners, cleaning and PPE, public transport use, FMS voucher system and masks. Information was awaited from the local authority about the school buses. He added staffing levels were currently sufficient.

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DISCUSSION AND DECISION	
	<p>Do you have many staff that cannot return on 22nd? JM: a few. Risk assessments had been completed. Some people who had been off have returned. They hadn't coerced anyone. We are in a good position.</p> <p>Are you waiting for any equipment? No but we will stockpile some cleaning materials in case there is a difficulty. One of the deputy headteachers is writing the timetable as he would normally for September. We anticipate the need for planning during the summer.</p> <p>Are you planning on opening over the summer? I don't think so.</p> <p>Governors supported this stance, recalling the school had been open since February half-term and a break was needed. JM pointed out that there were some issues with work falling disproportionately on staff.</p> <p>2.7 School improvement JM informed this was largely on hold pending greater clarity of the future position. It would take into account the new skills learnt and the more embedded team ethos that had developed from working and communicating more effectively. We would be looking at the curriculum and making things more exciting.</p> <p>2.8 Headteacher wellbeing JM assured governors he was in a good position and well supported by staff. Those staff coming into school were able to spend less time in school.</p> <p>2.9 Safeguarding JM informed the school had been split into 3 areas: in school, home learning and elsewhere. Referrals are being picked up efficiently.</p> <p>2.10 Further governor comments Governors who were parents praised the communications, which included the website and from the heads of year. The home learning too had gone well. Another governor informed they had heard nothing but positive comments from community and parents.</p> <p>JM agreed to inform governors should anything material change and when there was a confirmed date for wider reopening.</p>
3	<p>ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>In discussion governors agreed committee meetings could continue on a virtual basis as could 'virtual' monitoring at the discretion of committee chairs or governors with individual responsibilities.</p>

Signed..... dated.....

Signature authorised at meeting held 15.7.20