

## Thomas Alleyne's High School, Uttoxeter

Minutes of a remote meeting (via Zoom) of the governing body held on Monday, 15 June 2020 at 4.00pm.

### Present:

Mr M Prescott (chair), Mr A Barton, Mr M Cruddas, Mrs P Curtis, Mrs B Davies, Mr B Egerton, Mr T Hollins, Mr P Hudson, Mrs M Jary, Mr M Osborne-Town, Mrs L Perry, Mr P Taylor.

Mrs J Rudge (Headteacher)

### Also in Attendance:

Mrs A Maingay (Deputy Headteacher)  
Mr A Storer (Business Manager)  
Mr R Sheldon (Clerk to the Governing Body)

### Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mr S Clarke, Mr J Davey and an apology for late arrival from Mr P Hudson.

## 229. Governing Body Matters:

### a) Membership

Governors were reminded that Mr Prescott's term of office as co-opted governor ceased on 31 August 2020. Governors were also reminded that Mrs Jary, co-opted governor, was to retire as a governor on 31 August 2020.

The chair acknowledged the many years' service given to the school by Mrs Jary as a governor and reported that this would be formally recognised at the next meeting of the full governing body to be held in September and to which Mrs Jary would be invited to attend. The headteacher wished to place on record her sincere thanks for the help and support she had given to the school and in particular her support for school safeguarding matters and with staff interviews.

It was resolved –

- i) That Mr Prescott be re-appointed as a co-opted governor for a further 4-year period with effect from 1 September 2020.
- ii) That governors be requested to consider the need to appoint a further co-opted governor and to submit any names for consideration to the chair or headteacher.

### b) Review of Committee Membership

Governors had been previously circulated with details of the current committee structure and membership:

#### **Learning and Standard Cttee:**

**(9 members)**

Dr M Jary (chair)  
Mr M Cruddas (vice chair)  
Mr A Barton

#### **Managing and Resourcing Cttee:**

**(9 members)**

Mr P Taylor (chair)  
Mrs P Curtis (vice chair)  
Mr P Hudson (vice chair)

Mr S Clarke  
Mrs B Davies  
Mr M Osborne-Town  
Mrs L Perry  
Mrs J Rudge (headteacher)  
Mr M Prescott (chair of governors)

Mrs S Brown  
Mr J Davey  
Mr B Egerton  
Ms R Horry  
Mrs J Rudge (headteacher)  
Mr M Prescott (chair of governors)

The chair asked governors if they wished to move to a different committee for the following year.

It was resolved –

That the committee membership for the school year 2020/2021 be retained as shown but that any requests for change should be submitted to the chair.

c) Appointment of Link Governors

The chair reminded governors that there was a need to appoint link governors to the Eco committee and the Teaching School.

It was resolved –

- i) That Mr Osborne-Town be appointed as link governor for the Eco Committee.
- ii) That the appointment of a link governor for the Teaching School remain under consideration.

d) Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest for items to be discussed at this meeting.

**230. Chair – Report of Actions Taken:**

That chair reported that he continued to discuss several Covid-19 related issues with the headteacher and decisions taken in the best interests of the school.

It was resolved –

That governors support the actions taken by the chair.

**231. Minutes:**

The minutes of the meetings held on 2 March, 2 April, 30 April and 20 May 2020 had been previously made available to governors in Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes be received and approved.

**232. Matters Arising:**

**a) Minutes of Meeting held on 2 March 2020:**

i) Climate Change (Minute 194 refers)

The chair reported that he had discussed with the headteacher the possibility of holding any future meetings remotely even once the school was operating as usual at some point in the future. He suggested that future meetings of the Steering committee be held remotely.

It was resolved –

That governors agree to future meetings of the Steering committee only being held remotely, subject to ongoing review.

ii) School Transport (Minute 199(b) refers)

The headteacher reported that school transport was available for students following the partial re-opening of the school.

iii) Joint English Course (Minute 201(a) refers)

The headteacher confirmed that separate English Language and Literacy courses were timetabled for the following year but this would remain under review for consideration to be given to offering a joint course in future years.

**b) Minutes of Meeting held on 20 May 2020:**

The headteacher reminded governors that this meeting had been arranged to discuss the partial re-opening of the school and confirmed that the agreed Risk Assessment had been revised as necessary and subsequently made available on the school's website.

It was resolved –

That, at a point in the future, consideration be given to incorporating the risk assessment into the school's risk register.

**233. Headteacher's Report:**

The headteacher circulated a detailed report on the work and activities of the school, a copy of which had also been previously made available in Office 365. In addition to the usual matters included in the report, there was also a particular focus on the implications of Covid-19 and details of how the school was responding to this in the interest of students and all other stakeholders. Governors had been asked to read the report in advance of the meeting and to submit any questions in advance for discussion at this meeting.

Before going through the detail of her report the headteacher was pleased to inform governors that the partial re-opening of the school earlier that day had gone well with positive comments received from parents. Students had indicated that they had found it to be a positive experience and that they had also felt safe in school. 70% of planned Y10 students had attended and only one sixth former had failed to attend.

A question submitted in advance of the meeting related to the planned opening of the school for the new school year in September and whether consideration was being given to a full curriculum being taught on-line, if necessary? Full discussion around this option followed and the views of governors included:

- It is worth considering various options, including on-line learning, whilst further Government guidance was awaited. Particularly given the current requirements around social distancing.
- Useful to think outside the box to look at ways in which as many students as possible are able to safely return to school, perhaps with a mixture of on-line/school learning.

The headteacher reported that staff continued to work hard to address any safeguarding concerns around on-line learning and that views of parents were also being sought. Advice was also being sought from the local authority's safeguarding team. The headteacher reported that she was confident that all safeguarding measures would be put in place to ensure the extension of on-line learning for larger groups of students, should it be necessary.

a) Partial Re-opening of the School

The headteacher outlined other options being considered to enable as many students as possible being able to attend school from September although current social distancing requirements would make this difficult, particularly for Design and Technology and Art lessons. Consideration was also being given to other areas of the school building, not currently used for teaching purposes, being made available. Governors were advised though that any plans to enable more students to attend school were dependent upon all members of staff being available. There were currently 20 staff in the clinically vulnerable group and therefore not attending school.

The headteacher reported that updated Government guidance for Secondary schools had been received earlier in the day and consideration would be given to this in planning for a September opening. The headteacher also reported that four possible options had been identified for the opening of the school in September and that the senior team was currently considering the four scenarios and necessary actions to successfully implement any of them. These options would be submitted to governors for further consideration alongside any other Government guidance likely to be received between now and September.

b) Safeguarding Issues

The headteacher confirmed that all safeguarding measures remained in place and an assurance given that any actions taken as necessary to ensure student safeguarding. Thanks were given to Mrs Jary and Mr Cruddas for their support with school safeguarding matters. Mrs Jary further reported that a remote safeguarding meeting had been held with Mrs Maingay, deputy headteacher and designated safeguarding lead.

c) Student Teaching and Learning

The deputy headteacher reported that the closure of the school due to Covid-19 would widen the attainment gap for vulnerable students and that consideration was therefore being given to measures that could be put in place to support those students. Action already taken included the provision of laptops to help students access distant learning programmes. A decision had also been taken to extend the 1:1 tuition to the end of July and other summer school options also being explored, with the usual summer school funding being used to focus in particular on English and Maths and pastoral and mental health support. Although the attainment gap was widening for the vulnerable students the current situation had not resulted in an increase in the number of pupil premium students.

The deputy headteacher also referred to a National Governance Association (NGA) document being used to help identify and support initiatives to support vulnerable students. The document had identified 10 specific questions and a response, to show proposed school actions, had been prepared. Arrangements would be made for the clerk to circulate to governors the NGA document and the school's response to the 10 questions asked.

d) GCSE and A Level Arrangements

The headteacher outlined the arrangements made by the school to submit the Centre Assessed Grades for GCSE and A level students and confirmed that this had been a complex process particularly given that there had been no official advice for collating and presenting the necessary data. Governors were assured though that a robust system for collating the data and assessing grades had been put together by Mrs Peers, assistant headteacher, with support also given by Mr Osborne-Town. Details of this process had been fully outlined at recent meetings of the governing body and Mr Osborne-Town confirmed that a very robust process for centre assessed grades had been put in place.

The headteacher further outlined her role in this process to over-ride predicted grades where considered necessary. She confirmed though that this had been kept as minimum as possible. Governors were advised though that the centre assessed grades could result in a number of concerns being received from parents.

e) Sixth Form Applications

The headteacher reported that 143 sixth form applications had been received which was very close to the school's anticipated target. There were no concerns to report regarding this.

f) School Budget

Governors were reminded that the Managing and Resourcing committee was to meet shortly and would look at the detail of the financial implications of Covid-19. The headteacher gave a brief overview of where additional funding had been necessary to support the various measures put in place to support students, whether in school or through distant learning. This included the purchase of PPE equipment, student laptops and meals for students attending school. Funds had also been made available to support a summer revision programme for students. The headteacher was pleased to report that £18 ½K had been raised towards the total costs but that the additional amount would be paid from contingency funds.

The headteacher thanked parents and the local community for the financial support being given to the school through the various fund-raising activities and also wished to place on record her particular thanks to Dove Housing for their support. Governors also welcomed the financial support being given to the school and also suggested that the headteacher considers approaching JCB to see if it might be willing to offer any form of support.

g) Premises

The headteacher reported that staff continued to work hard to ensure that school premises were safe for any student attending school. This included arrangements to maintain the two metre social distancing requirements. Governors were informed that significant work would be necessary should the requirement be reduced from two metres to one metre at some point in the future.

The headteacher wished to thank in particular Paul Brewster and Carl Martin for all of the work they were undertaking to ensure that the site continued to run smoothly during the absence of their line manager, and with no uplift in salary. There were no specific concerns to report regarding the school premises.

The business manager also confirmed that all compliance work continued to be undertaken as necessary.

h) School Profile

Governors discussed the fund raising that had been undertaken by the school in recent months and which had raised around £25K. The headteacher was requested to consider producing an article for the local paper to highlight this fact and to help raise the profile of the school. The chair recognised the current workload and priorities for the headteacher and offered to help with the writing of such an article.

In discussing the profile of the school Mr Hudson reported that during his recent communication with Staffordshire County Council and members of the local community, recognition had been given to the headteacher and school staff for all that they were doing to support students at this difficult time.

i) Staff Training

The chair thanked the headteacher for the comprehensive staff training programme that had been put in place and reported that the detail of this would be considered by the Steering committee.

It was resolved –

- i) That the headteacher be thanked for her comprehensive report and all information relating to the measures that had been taken to address the implications of Covid-19, whilst also preparing for the school to hopefully fully re-open in September.
- ii) That governors place on record their thanks to the leadership team and all other members of teaching and support staff for all the work they were doing in support of the school.
- iii) That governors approve expenditure to fully support the more vulnerable students, including the continuation of 1:1 tutors during July and for funds also to be made available to enable Y8 middle school pupils to have the opportunity to visit school before the start of the new school year.
- iv) That the Managing and Resourcing committee be requested to review the increased workload, and consider an upload of salary, for Paul Brewster and Carl Martin in recognition of their work in ensuring that the school site remained safe for both students and staff.
- v) That a further meeting of the governing body be held on Monday, 6 July at 5.00pm to further review plans for the re-opening of the school in September, taking account of the four possible scenarios being put together by the leadership team.

**234. Performance Management Process:**

The headteacher confirmed that mid-year reviews were currently being undertaken for teaching staff, as requested by the CEO of the Uttoxeter Learning Trust. This would,

however, result in a very short gap between the mid-year review and the final review undertaken during the autumn term. Governors requested the headteacher to keep them updated regarding the performance management process.

**235. Managing and Resourcing Committee:**

Minutes of a meeting of the Managing and Resourcing committee, held on 5 May 2020, had been previously made available in Office 365.

It was resolved –

That the minutes of the Managing and Resourcing committee be received and noted.

**236. Learning and Standards Committee:**

Minutes of a meeting of the Learning and Standards committee, held on 12 May 2020, had been previously made available in office 365.

It was resolved –

That minutes of the meeting of the Learning and Standards committee be received and noted.

**237. Covid-19 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:**

The headteacher reported that the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy had been updated to take account of the implications of Covid-19. Changes to the policy had taken account for local authority guidance.

It was resolved –

That the Covid-19 Safeguarding and Child Protection policy be received and approved as presented.

**238. Uttoxeter Learning Trust / School Representation Board Update:**

The chair reported that trustees had met to review the partial re-opening of ULT schools, taking account of school risk assessments. The CEO had also recently undertaken a site visit of the school. Trustees had subsequently agreed not to re-open ULT schools until 15 June. The reasons for this were outlined at a recent meeting of the School Representation Board where thanks were given to the chair of the trust board for giving schools more time to prepare for their partial re-opening.

**239. Evidence for KPIs:**

The matters considered at this meeting met the following key performance indicators:

- KPI 4 – governors provide challenge and hold the headteacher and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching, pupils' achievement and their behaviour and safety  
Evidenced through discussions around the impact of Covid-19 and the enforced closure of the school. The headteacher was challenged to explore all options for the

future education of students, whether present in school or through remote learning. (Minute 233).

Evidenced through the discussions around the school site and the importance given to it remaining safe for both students and staff. (Minute 233).

- KPI 6 – governors ensure solvency and probity, and that financial resources are made available to the school and are managed effectively

Evidenced through consideration of the financial implications of Covid-19 with approval given for additional funding to be made available as necessary to help support the more vulnerable students. (Minute 233).

#### **240. Confidentiality:**

Governors were reminded of the need for confidentiality with regard to a number of issues discussed, and documents received, during the meeting but it was agreed that there was no need for any of the issues to be recorded in a confidential appendix of the minutes.

#### **241. Date of Next Meeting:**

It was resolved –

- i) That the next meeting of the full governing body be held, as previously agreed, on Monday, 6 July 2020 at 5.00pm to consider arrangements for the re-opening of the school in September 2020.
- ii) That the next planned termly meeting of the full governing body be held on Monday, 21 September 2020 at 4.00pm. (If appropriate, to be preceded by a training session to start at 3.30pm). A decision would also be taken nearer the time whether the meeting would be held in school or remotely via Zoom.

Signed.....  
M Prescott

Date.....  
21 September 2020