BRINE LEAS SCHOOL

Governors' Meeting

Held on Wednesday 24th February 2010 at 6.45 pm

MINUTES – PART 1

Present: Mrs E Boffey, Mr F Castelain, Mr A Cliffe (Headteacher), Dr M Draper, Mrs J Furber (Chair), Mrs C Jones, Mr W Kinrade, Mrs P Lockett, Cllr A Martin (left early), Mrs A Ridgway, Mrs D Rowlands, Mrs J Sanders

In Attendance: Mr S Ascroft (Deputy Headteacher) and Mrs E Fletcher (Clerk)

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, Mrs Furber (Chair) requested that item 8 was discussed out of sequence in between items 4 and 5. This was agreed by governors.

1.	**APOLOGIES** Apologies were received from Mr C Bromiley, Mr G Dowding, Mr M Joule, Mr C Paterson and Mrs A Sanders. **Outcome:** Governors accepted all apologies. Apologies were also received from Mr J Hattersley (LA Link Officer).
2.	**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** Declarations of interests were shared by Mrs J Furber and Mrs E Boffey who informed governors that they know the person appointed as auditor of the School Trust (see Site and Finance Committee Feedback).
3.	**MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING** The minutes of the previous meeting were given prior to the meeting. **Amendment:** Mr W Kinrade was present at the meeting held on 2nd December 2009. Subject to the above amendment, a proposal was made that they were a true and accurate record of the meeting. **Outcome:** All governors accepted the minutes as a true and accurate record subject to the above mentioned amendment.
4.	**MATTERS ARISING** There were no matters arising.

Minutes Approved by Chair of Governors ……..…. Date: ……

8. **POST-16 UPDATE**

Governors received a Post-16 committee report prior to the meeting and Mr Cole provided an update from the recent post-16 working group meeting and also more recent developments.

It was highlighted that student consultation on the post-16 dress code is still to be undertaken but it is looking probable that the code will be smart casual.

Staff appointments are on track and student recruitment is going very well with current information indicating that 80% capacity should be reached. As a result of interviews with both internal and external student applicants, there have been some changes to courses, however, interest has still been shown for all courses being offered. Timetabling is being worked on.

Governors were notified that staff and Year 11 students have all had the opportunity for a tour of the new building and dates for governors will be arranged.

It was highlighted that building works continue to progress at pace. Since the committee report was produced, glazing installation and rendering work has commenced and internal walls/doorways are also being installed.

Governors were informed that the prepared disruption management plans have not been needed as envisaged and disruptions to the running of the school have been minimal.

Mr Cole confirmed that another working group meeting will be arranged for the near future.

Mrs Furber informed governors that, in accordance with the post-16 plans, a new substation is to be built and requires governors agreement to the site transfer in order for this to take place.

Proposal: That governors approve the transfer of land in order that the build of a substation to service the post-16 building can proceed.
Outcome: All governors were in agreement with the proposal.

5. **COMMITTEE MEETING FEEDBACK**

- **CURRICULUM, TEACHING & LEARNING, STAFFING AND PASTORAL MEETING**

  The committee confirmed that they had read all supporting documentation which was provided to the full governing body prior to the meeting. The following items were discussed in more detail and/or require governor approval:-

  - **Curriculum**

    Governors' attention was drawn to the problems being encountered with the transportation of Diploma students. This is an ongoing issue.

  - **Teaching & Learning**

    An updated Teaching and Learning Policy was put forward for approval.
    Proposal: The committee recommended the approval of the updated Teaching & Learning Policy
    Outcome: All governors accepted the proposal

  - **Staffing**

    Governors were notified of the following additions to the list of staff appointments included on the committee report:-
    Mr M Farrell – Teacher of Business Studies & ICT
    Mr T McLellan – Teacher of Law & Politics
    Mrs P Hughes – Teacher of Psychology & Sociology
    Governors were informed that the recruitment process is going well and previous appointments show that this is rigorous and successful.

Attention was drawn to the recent joint Nantwich EIP Inset Day which was hosted by Brine Leas and proved to be a very successful day. Governors wished to express their thanks to Mrs Fletcher for her input into organising this event.

- **Pastoral**

The amount of charity fundraising was highlighted. Governors all agreed that the amount of money raised was impressive and wished this to be passed on to the staff and students involved.

Two policies were put forward for approval – Race Equality Policy and Sex Education Policy.

Proposal: The committee recommended the approval of both the Race Equality Policy and the Sex Education Policy.

Outcome: All governors were in agreement with the proposal.

- **SITE & FINANCE, E-LEARNING AND ARR MEETING**

The committee confirmed that they had read all supporting documentation which was provided to the full governing body prior to the meeting. The following items were discussed in more detail and/or require governor approval:-

- **Site and Finance**
  - The committee informed governors that Site, and Health & Safety issues, including a list of recent accidents, were discussed.
  - The committee confirmed that approval had been given for Mrs Bradshaw to investigate short-term solutions for the alarm system as outlined in the site section of the committee report.
  - The committee confirmed that a detailed discussion of the budget statement had taken place and confirmed to all governors that there is a possibility of an overspend of some £28k at the end of the financial year.
  - The committee reported that they had discussed feedback from the recent FMSiS audit.
  - The committee discussed the request to approve the transfer of £30,000 between computer codes.
    Proposal: That governors approve the internal transfer of £30,000 between computer codes as detailed in the site and finance committee report.
    Outcome: All governors were in agreement with the proposal
  - The committee were requested to approve the Manual of Internal Procedures. Mrs Furber informed governors that the manual has yet to be seen and approved by the members of the committee absent from the meeting, but recommended that governors gave approval of the Manual pending this.
    Proposal: That governors approve the Manual of Internal Procedures, in principal, pending the approval of the absent Site & Finance Committee members.
    Outcome: All governors were in agreement with the proposal.
  - The committee were requested to approve the following polices - The Scheme of Delegation, School Fund Report, Acceptable Use Policies and the E-Safety Policy.
    Proposal: The committee recommended that approval was given to the Scheme of Delegation Policy, the School Fund Report, Acceptable Use Policies and the E-Safety Policy.
    Outcome: All governors were in agreement with the proposal.
  - The committee confirmed that the first draft of the 10/11 budget was discussed and informed all governors that we may be in a position where we set a deficit budget, however this will not be finalised until we have more information concerning likely post-16 income and expenditure.

It was felt that we could operate with a deficit budget but must have a fallback plan in place. It was highlighted that this was an early draft and will be continuously worked on and updated.

- The committee were requested to approve the appointment of the School Fund Auditor, Mrs J Warrington (see item 2, Declarations of Interest).
  Proposal: That governors agree to the appointment of Mrs J Warrington as School Fund Auditor.
  Outcome: All governors were in agreement with the proposal.

- **ARR**

  Approval of the ARR Policy was sought. The committee confirmed that this policy had been discussed and proposed its approval subject to the removal of the first bullet point in the governor's section.
  Proposal: That governors approve the ARR Policy subject to the removal of the first bullet point in the governor's section.
  Outcome: All governors were in agreement with the proposal.

6. **HEADTEACHER'S REPORT**

Mr Cliffe discussed the contents of the Headteacher's Report, a copy of which was provided to Governors prior to the meeting. The following were highlighted as areas for governors to note in particular:-

- **Projected Results**

  Mr Cliffe shared that the target for A*-C including English and Maths is expected to be achieved. Some intervention work is taking place with students where data indicates that they are likely to achieve either English or Maths but not both. Technology intervention has been taking place and this is looking positive. Geography results are likely to show an ongoing improvement.

- **SDP Monitoring**

  Governors were provided with a copy of the colour coded SDP prior to the meeting and Mr Cliffe confirmed that most areas are where they should be at this stage of the year. The following areas where highlighted in particular:-
  - Pupil voice on lesson feedback needs to be addressed further, although this is being done on an informal basis.
  - Mr Cliffe confirmed that the Teacher Learning Academy status which the school is working towards is twelve months behind schedule.
  - Governors were notified that work into a new hall is not progressing at all currently. Previously discussions with Elim College have not continued and BSF is not looking likely.
  - Mr Cliffe confirmed that boys' performance in languages is not an issue and should not have been coded red.
  - Governors were notified that schools are required to teach Sustainable Schools within the curriculum and Mr Cliffe confirmed that this is taking place but requires auditing.
  - How safe students feel in school was discussed and Mr Cliffe confirmed that student opinion has been sought and as part of the New Visions Programme for new headteachers, two primary colleagues are visiting Brine Leas and will be looking at this issue.
  - Mr Cliffe shared that Leadership and Management is continuing to grow and that a middle management course is taking place with effect from tomorrow. A second cohort has already signed up.
  - Governors were notified that electronic registration has now been introduced and will be reviewed.

- **Poor Weather**

  Mr Cliffe shared that staff have continued to work throughout the poor weather conditions and heating issues meaning that teaching was maintained throughout. Governors requested that their thanks were extended to staff for their commitment during this period. It was also requested that thanks were passed onto students.

- **Trust Status**

  Mr Cliffe proposed that this issue was re-visited as there is the possibility that it will generate income for the school. A group of governors was formed and it was agreed that a meeting would be arranged to discuss this in detail.

- **Gaining Ground**

  Governors were notified that this initiative is going well and involves a variety of colleagues in the school.

- **Site**

  As part of the post-16 build project, new signage will be produced for the school. Governors were requested to consider and agree the school name for this purpose. The following was proposed:-

  Brine Leas School
  A Specialist College of Technology, Modern Languages and Applied Learning

  A discussion took place around this proposal and the possibility of including a reference to the sixth form. The outcome of this discussion was that the reputation of the school was positive and it was felt there was no need to include a particular reference to the sixth form in the title, particularly as the BL6 building will be a clearly visible within the school site.
  Proposal: That governors approve the proposed school name for new signage.
  Outcome: Governors were all in agreement with the proposal.

- **Music**

  Mr Cliffe brought to governors' attention the fact that music within the school is moving forward quite significantly. It was highlighted that this is due to the new staffing within the department plus the additional support of a dedicated volunteer worker.

7. **COMMUNITY COHESION**

A copy of a community cohesion report was provided to governors prior to the meeting. Mr Cliffe shared that Community Cohesion is a section within the SEF that, when discussed at the summer governors meeting, required clarification on what was meant by the term and also how the school was meeting this requirement. Governors were notified that after looking into it further, it shows that the school is doing well in this area.

9. **LINK GOVERNORS**

A copy of the new link governor grid was forwarded to governors prior to the meeting. Mrs Furber shared that roles have been allocated following liaison with governors. A copy of the framework for link governors was also provided prior to the meeting and Mr Cliffe highlighted that this was intended to be a guide for governors when meeting with their link departments.

Staff have yet to be informed of who their link governors are but this will be shared with them and meetings will be arranged by Mrs Fletcher (Clerk). It was envisaged that these meetings will take place during the summer term.

	Mrs Furber confirmed that a meeting will need to be arranged for governors linked to Safeguarding plus the appropriate members of the school leadership team. Mrs Fletcher (Clerk) will contact all relevant governors to arrange a suitable date and time.
10.	**GOVERNORS WEBSITE** Dr Draper presented the changes made to the governors section of the school website. It was highlighted that there is a public area to store information for general viewing and also a private area for governors/school leadership. It was agreed that Part 1 minutes, agendas and policies would eventually be put onto the public domain. Governors discussed the role and responsibilities included on the website with regard to parent governors. It was agreed that this should be amended to cover all governors as the responsibilities are the same. Mr Cliffe shared that a governor protocol document had been drawn up to include responses to FAQs etc. It was agreed that this will be issued to all governors. Dr Draper suggested that the website could also be utilised to archive minutes, agendas and associated documents. It was highlighted that this would not replace the main school paper records as this would still be a requirement but it could provide easy access of past documents for governors. Concern was raised about the upkeep of the website, highlighting that it would need to be constantly maintained. Dr Draper confirmed his commitment to this during his term as a governor. It was highlighted that there are no current plans to change the method of issuing meeting documentation to governors and that once the website is fully up and running, a review will be undertaken. Mrs Fletcher will arrange for governors to be issued with log-ins and passwords for the website.
11.	**DIRECTOR'S REPORT** A copy of the report was provided to governors prior to the meeting. Mr Cliffe urged governors to read through the document and drew particular attention to the proposed changes to admission arrangements. Governors were notified that consultation is currently taking place with a view to removing the 'feeder school' category. This would mean that the criteria would be as follows:- Cared for Children, SEN, In Area, Sibling Link, Out of Area It was highlighted that currently there is a category which sits after the 'sibling link' category but before the 'out of area' category and this is for children who live out of the school's catchment but currently attend a feeder primary school. Governors were notified that as a Foundation School, Brine Leas does not have to follow the County guidelines and could have its own admissions criteria, however, there are administrative and litigation implications which would need to be explored fully. Mr Cliffe provided governors with a copy of the consultation document at the meeting together with a list of anticipated strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities of the proposal. Governors discussed the situation and it was agreed that the views of partner primaries needs to be sought. It was felt that some schools may feel this change could affect their future intake numbers. It was also highlighted that it could have an impact on transition work as it is currently carried out based on the fact that, in general terms, the natural progression for feeder school students is that they will undertake their secondary education at Brine Leas. Mr Cliffe also highlighted that the proposed cut off point for sibling links is Year 10 which goes against the school's plan to take this through to Post-16.

	Governors' attention was also drawn to items 6 and 11 of the Director's Report.
12.	**CHAIR'S ACTION** Mrs Furber informed governors that the Part 2 minutes of the previous meeting were approved via a Chair's Action. All governors confirmed they were happy to approve this. Governors were notified of an order to Novus Networks in the sum of £31309.78 which was approved via a Chair's Action. It was highlighted that this expenditure had previously been agreed by the Finance Committee two years ago and that it was included in the DFC budget. All governors were happy to approve this Action.
13.	**COMMUNITY/PARTNERSHIP GOVERNORS VACANCIES** Mrs Furber put forward Mr B Radford for the role as community governor. It was highlighted that he has previously served as a parent governor and has a significant amount of experience. **Proposal:** That governors agree the appointment of Mr B Radford to the position of Community Governor. **Outcome:** All governors accepted the proposal. Governors were also informed that a self nomination for the position of partnership governor has been received from Mr T Court who is employed within ICT Infrastructure for Barclays Bank. **Proposal:** That governors consider the nomination and decide whether to go ahead with the appointment of Mr T Court to the position of partnership governor. **Outcome:** A proposal was made to accept the nomination and all governors were in agreement for the appointment of Mr Court. Mrs Fletcher will contact both Mr Radford and Mr Court with regard to their appointments.
14.	**DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS** Governors were provided with details of meetings for 2009/10, which are also shown below:- • Wednesday 24th March 2010 (Finance Committee only) • Wednesday 19th May 2010 (Committees at 5.30 pm, Full Governors at 6.45 pm) • Wednesday 7th July 2010 (No Committees, Full Governors at 6.00 pm)

End of Meeting (Part 1)