

## Dorset Studio School

### Minutes of the Governors meeting held on Thursday 11 February 2021, 4.00pm held virtually via Zoom due to Covid-19

<b>Governors (GB)</b>	*Kaye Chittenden; *Andy Daw; *Mark Gibbens (Chair); Avril Harrison; Robert Lasseter; *Joanne Manley (Parent Governor); *Annetta Minard (Executive Principal); *Luke Rake (Member); *Jim Tirrell (Member); Martha Vigar	
<b>Other Attendees</b>	*Vanessa Gifford (KMC Clerk ); *Anna Carvisiglia (Finance Director KMC)	
* <i>Indicates actual presence at this meeting</i>		
<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>		<b>Challenge and Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b></p> <p>Representatives of Kingston Maurward College (KMC) and The Thomas Hardy School (THS) reaffirmed their standing declaration of interests in items relating to the financial / legal relationships between those sponsoring bodies and the Dorset Studio School (DSS).</p> <p>There were no further interests declared.</p>	
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>APOLOGIES</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and noted from Robert Lasseter and Martha Vigar.</p> <p>The new Chief Financial Officer was welcomed to her first meeting.</p>	
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 14<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021</b></p> <p>The Governing Body (GB) <b>APPROVED</b> the minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021 as a true and accurate record and <b>APPROVED</b> the non-confidential minutes for website publication.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</b></p> <p>The following matters arising were <b>NOTED</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Grievance Procedure still had to be shared to the GB.</li> <li>• It was noted that the Exclusions Policy had been reviewed by the SLT and would be presented to the next meeting.</li> <li>• It was agreed to carry forward the curriculum update for Year 7 and 8 as they had an Inset Day the following day.</li> <li>• The Working Group to investigate MAT options was due to meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March.</li> </ul>	<p><b>AM</b></p> <p><b>AM</b></p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Executive Principal confirmed that the ESFA had advised that the guidance in the Academies Handbook relating to the appointment of Chief Financial Officer related to new appointments only.</li> <li>The Executive Principal advised that the Reserves Report was pending discussions with the DfE on accommodation.</li> </ul>	
<p>5.</p>	<p><b>MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 DECEMBER 2020</b></p> <p>The Management Accounts to 31 December 2020 were discussed and the following points <b>NOTED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Executive Principal and CFO had discussed the accounts prior to the meeting and it was noted that there was further work to be undertaken as the accounts did not reconcile. The CFO advised that she would be reviewing the format to ensure that the GB received an appropriate summary before the next meeting.</li> <li>It was noted that Covid Catch up funding had been received and the plan circulated on GVO. It was agreed to circulate an updated version in due course.</li> <li>The CFO advised that she needed to understand how the travel arrangements worked within her review of the accounts.</li> </ul>	<p>AC</p> <p>AM</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b></p> <p>The Executive Principal updated the GB and the following points were <b>NOTED:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All students were undertaking remote learning, including online conferences. Sub-groups had been introduced for the different ability groups eg Gifted and Talented and for Intervention. Feedback from parents had been positive.</li> <li>Student followed a daily programme, as they would at school, and attendance was being monitored.</li> <li>Outside activity was still being carried out for PE; Forest School; and Animal Care activity.</li> <li>It was noted that around 50 students were attending school, being vulnerable or children of key workers.</li> <li>The Executive Principal considered that staff had become proficient with remote learning and had become well trained which was a positive out of the situation, with it benefitting the personal development of the teachers.</li> <li>All assessments, parents' evenings and Inset activity was being undertaken online. It was agreed that some activity would carry on online.</li> <li>It was noted that support was being provided for those with mental and social issues.</li> <li>Attendance was noted as just above 90% which was positive in the current circumstances. Behaviour was being managed, alongside safeguarding awareness.</li> <li>It was noted that there were 170 applications for Year 7, first and second places.</li> <li>The Executive Principal updated on her discussions with the DfE relating to the accommodation issues which required urgent resolution. It was noted that agreement had been received from the DfE that it would fund the move to the Poundbury split site, and the DSS would draw down the funds from the ESFA. The</li> </ul>	



	<p>Executive Principal advised that the GB had to be clear on the associated costs and she was still investigating this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The DfE had undertaken to carry out all alterations and refurbishment to the site.</li> <li>• It was agreed that Poundbury was a suitable site being attractive, self-contained, and close to the sports centre and community gardens.</li> <li>• The Executive Principal advised that the current scope reported that there were insufficient classrooms. There was also an issue relating to the Mezzanine stairway which had been installed by Weymouth College without building regulations. Other buildings were being investigated to accommodate further classrooms.</li> <li>• There was an issue relating to a shared entrance with another leaseholder which caused safeguarding concerns. The DfE would install electronic gates but due diligence had to be undertaken. The other leaseholder was one company with three employees and they had agreed to carry out a DBS check, but there were concerns over other trades people that were in and out.</li> <li>• The KMC Principal advised that the DSS Executive Principal was working hard to find resolutions, however it was ironic that the Dorset Council had recently purchased a redundant rural independent school for £10m which would solve all the issues, with the DfE not confirming what was happening with the DSS for September 2021, and time was running out.</li> <li>• It was agreed that the GB had to be stringent and if the Poundbury site was not appropriate another solution would have to be found. It was suggested that a letter from the GB setting out the safeguarding concerns could be issued if necessary.</li> <li>• A draft operations appraisal for £545K had been provided to the DfE.</li> <li>• Governors were concerned with the timescales if the site was not complete by September 2021. It was agreed that the DfE had to be accountable as the only option that it was considering was the Poundbury site. It was agreed that safeguarding of the students could not be compromised and it was agreed that if the Executive Principal considered that the project was not on course she would inform the GB at the earliest opportunity.</li> <li>• The Executive Principal advised that the Health &amp; Hygiene extension, where planning had commenced the previous January, was not now being funded following a recent meeting. A portacabin was now being considered and the Executive Principal was in discussion with the KMC Estates Manager. The Executive Principal advised that without this additional resource three year groups of students would not fit. It was noted that the DfE would have to seek planning permission for any portacabin, as the project would be managed by the DfE.</li> <li>• It was noted that the Risk Register had not been updated with details of the split site as formal confirmation had not been received at that time, although it had since the papers were circulated, and Treasury approval was now required. Formal notification of all the details; timing; and funding was expected in due course.</li> <li>• The ICT Strategy had been shared with the GB, and it was interesting to note that the DSS was being treated and funded as a new academy. It was agreed that the DSS was now secure, although any capital build would not be quick.</li> </ul>	
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7.	<p><b>CORPORATE RISK REGISTER</b></p> <p>The Corporate Risk Register was <b>NOTED</b>, with no additional risks identified until more information was available from the DfE.</p>	
8.	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS FOR REPORT</b></p> <p>The following business was <b>NOTED</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Those Governors who were employers, reported that in the current exceptional circumstances the school was still managing to engage and deliver work experience. The Parent Governor supported this advising that her son was really engaged with the online learning, with work experience breaking the week up.</li> <li>The Safeguarding Link Governor questioned whether the Safeguarding Policy had been updated following the updates to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and the Executive Principal agreed to investigate and to gain GB approval via GVO.</li> </ul>	AM
9.	<p><b>2020/21 MEETINGS</b></p> <p>The following meeting dates were <b>NOTED</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29 April 2021</li> </ul>	





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 17 June 2021</li></ul>	
<i>The Meeting closed at 5.55pm with no further business</i>		

Chair ..... Date .....

