

**Minutes**  
**Surrey and Sussex (SAS) Hub LGB Meeting**  
**1 July 2021 2021 at 4.15 pm**  
**Held virtually via GoToMeeting**

**Present:** Julian Short, Chair (JS)  
 Sarah Baker, Parent Governor (SB)  
 Martin Lowthian, Parent Governor (ML)  
 Amme Hayter, Staff Governor (AH)  
 Will Inchbald, Governor (WI)  
 Lucy McMann, Governor (LM)  
 Harry Moss, Governor (HM)  
 Vicky Perry, Principal, St Dominic's School (VP)  
 Diana Puica, Staff Governor (DP)  
 Dafydd Roberts, Principal, Brantridge School (DR)  
 Lesley Stonebridge, Governor (LS)  
 Janet Tremble, Principal, Grafham Grange School (JT)  
 Mike Wood, Governor (MW)

**In attendance:** Laurie Cornwell, OHCAT Deputy CEO/Executive Principal (LC)  
 Sharyn Purewal, Management Accountant (SP) (items 1-2)  
 Susanne Wicks, Clerk (SW)

<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>	
	JS welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for coming.  With the agreement of the LGB, the Chair varied the order of the agenda items in order to take Finance related matters first.	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Finance and Funding (Management Accounts and Draft Budget 2020-21 / Portfolio 3 report)</b>	
i.	<u>Brantridge School</u>	
	SP was pleased to advise that the soft budget freeze reported to the previous meeting had been lifted. As at April 2021, there were 55 pupils on roll with forecast surplus of £1485. Since then, the numbers have increased and the year to date position is £48K with £266k reserves, equating to 48 days against the OHCAT target of 45-60 days.	
	SP explained that a cautious budget is set for all schools, so for Brantridge the budget had been set on the basis of 57 on roll, with a projected year-end deficit of £12k. All appropriate costs had been included within the budget and savings made where possible with minimal impact on pupils. She reported that the pupils' admission would be phased throughout the year; with 44 in school from September and the remaining pupils to join throughout the year. She reminded Governors that Place Plus funding will be allocated to any pupils over the 44 that join in September.	

	<p>JS asked if the higher numbers would result in a year-end surplus position and SP undertook to re-forecast and respond as soon as possible, but expressed confidence that the school would be moving into a stronger position. DR reassured Governors that the staffing structure in place was adequate to meet the higher numbers on roll and that staffing costs had been factored into the budget.</p>	SP
ii.	<p><u>Grafham Grange School</u></p>	
	<p>SP reported that April's management accounts projected a year-end surplus of £117K based on 49 students on roll, with reserves of £726K, equating to 121 days.</p>	
	<p>With regard to the 2021-22 budget, SP advised that it had been set on the basis of 58 students, with staffing costs accounting for 69% of total expenditure. A break-even budget had been set with a small surplus forecast at year-end of £1200. As with Brantridge School, the increasing pupil roll had been phased in, with some assumptions made about Place Plus funding, which will be applied for the first time, as this is the first occasion the school is predicting the roll will go above the PAN of 52.</p> <p>MW noted the healthy reserves and asked about plans to invest them. JT outlined some of the planned works which were largely needed to accommodate the admission of girls to the school and all of which would be to meet students' needs.</p>	
iii.	<p><u>St Dominic's School</u></p>	
	<p>SP reported that, as of April 2021, the number on roll was 139 students, with a year to date position of £576k and a year-end forecast surplus of £742k and reserves of just under £2m, equating to 129 days. She highlighted that staffing costs account for 66% of expenditure but reassured Governors that the staffing structure in place is sufficient, and some savings have been made by not recruiting to some high level posts.</p>	
	<p>SP advised that the budget for 2021-22 had been set on the basis of 149 students, against a high needs threshold of 150, so no Place Plus funding had been included in the budget. She reported that she and VP had gone through the staffing structure very carefully and it is hoped that some high level posts would be filled during the academic year. A break-even budget had been set with reserves of just under £2m. JS asked how some of the reserves would be invested by the school and VP detailed some of the works scheduled to take place over the summer, as set out in the school's Estates Strategy, which would enhance the curriculum offer and improve the school for the benefit of students.</p>	
	<p>HM asked if any of the reserves can be clawed back by local authorities and SP explained that any surplus can be carried forward in reserves for the school to spend as and when needed. In accordance with external audit advice, the Trust's policy is for schools to build between 45-60 days of reserves and to develop strategies to invest monies over and above that level. JS added that it's not a question of "use it or lose it" but noted that excessive levels of reserves could lead to questions from local authorities about the levels of funding allocated.</p>	
iv.	<p><u>Portfolio 3 report</u></p>	
	<p>In terms of PF3, JS highlighted that:</p> <p>SP would revise the forecast level of reserves for Grafham Grange School in the light of the cost of the works and any successful CIF grants.</p>	SP

	SP would re-calculate the five-year forecast which currently assumes increases in expenditure but not in rates of funding which ends in a deficit at the end of the period, to see the overall effect on the schools' budgets. However, he noted that the different local authorities' banding systems makes forecasting very complex and can impact on staff recruitment.	<b>SP</b>
	JS thanked SP for her detailed reports and she left the meeting at 4.40 pm.	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were received from Liam Cranford and Leigh Edser.	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> No declarations were made.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Constitution and Appointments</b> The LGB agreed:	
	i To recommend the appointment of Julian Short as an academy governor for a three-year term commencing 01.09.21.	
	ii To recommend the appointment of Julian Short as Chair of the Local Governing Body for the academic year 2021-22.	
	iii To recommend the appointment of Leigh Edser and Martin Lowthian as joint Vice-Chairs of the Local Governing Body for the academic year 2021-22.	
	iv To recommend the appointment of Kate Palmer and Dean Else as Parent Governors (St Dominic's School) for a three-year term commencing 02.07.21. JS noted that both applicants had a very strong set of skills which would be an asset to this LGB and confirmed that he had spoken to both of them in advance of this meeting.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Review of Portfolio Allocations</b> Governors noted that that the Chair would contact them individually to discuss their portfolio role, which would be agreed in advance of the start of the autumn term.	<b>JS</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b> The minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and would be signed by the Chair as soon as possible.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>	
	i The clerk undertook to upload the LGB skills matrix to GovernorHub.	<b>SW</b>
	ii Governors confirmed receipt of the latest version of KCSIE shared via GovernorHub on 03.06.21.	
	iii VP confirmed that the St Dominic's School policy schedule has been shared with JT and DR.	
	iv DR undertook to send the Brantridge School admissions procedure with the clerk who would send it to ML.	<b>DR/ SW</b>
	v The clerk confirmed she had asked for all Governors to be set up with a secure SAS Hub email address and would share details as soon as this had been done.	<b>SW</b>

9	<b>Portfolio Reports / Principal's Reports</b>	
	The Chair invited each of the three Principals to introduce their report which had been shared with all Governors prior to the meeting.	
i	<u>Brantridge School</u>	
	<p>DR introduced his report and highlighted the use of the OHCAT template, and in particular the introduction of “where are we”, “what is working well” and “how do we move forward” sub-sections which he felt was a useful way to report to the LGB. He welcomed comments and questions.</p> <p>For the benefit of new Governors, DR explained the TES schedule and offered to give more detailed information outside of this meeting.</p> <p>Noting the YTD attendance rate of 82%, JS asked how attendance is measured in the context of lockdowns and home learning. DR explained that some parents chose to keep their child at home and not all of them engaged in the home learning offer. The DFE advice is that attendance must be measured by those physically in the building, which Governors noted seemed unfair, given how hard all three schools had worked to maintain teaching and learning at home.</p> <p>Noting the decrease in the number of physical behaviour incidents, HM asked if there were lessons to be shared with other schools on how this was achieved. DR noted that the comparison was with 2016/17 levels, and there had been a gradual decrease, with all staff playing their part. SB observed that the introduction of more one to one support had had a really positive impact on her child’s behaviour.</p> <p>JS pointed out that levels of staff sickness absence at Brantridge Schools seems to be lower than at Grafham Grange or St Dominic’s and asked if there were any explanation for it. DR replied that there is no specific policy or approach which helps other than looking after staff and treating them with respect. DP added that the supportive approach of SLT contributes to staff attendance and retention.</p> <p>With regard to the school’s Ofsted rating, JS asked if there was an action plan in place to ensure the school would make progress. DR advised that the school had recently welcomed David Scott and a colleague for a three-day visit, the outcome of which would feed into the revised School Development Plan. In addition, there is regular input from senior colleagues in OHCAT. DR reassured Governors that there are clear KPI and direction of travel for school improvement and JS suggested that the actions identified be included in future Principals’ reports.</p> <p>LS asked if there were any areas of concern highlighted by the Dashboard and DR advised that there were not but explained that his areas of focus currently were quality of teaching and curriculum as they impact on all other areas of school life.</p>	<b>DR</b>
ii	<u>Grafham Grange School</u>	
	<p>JT introduced her report and picked out some highlights. She welcomed comments and questions.</p> <p>With regard to each PAL producing a case study to show the achievement and progress of a specific student, SB asked if every student would be the subject of a case study. JT confirmed her aim for each PAL to lead on two students so all would be covered, but</p>	

	<p>initially they would focus on those who are more difficult to engage, or may have experienced trauma and how they have been supported to achieve, which cannot always be evidenced by data.</p> <p>VP thanked JT for hosting the football tournament earlier in the day and both she and JT welcomed the positive interaction of pupils from both schools.</p> <p>VP offered the support of St Dominic’s School with regard to the provision of a BTEC in Creative Media and invited colleagues from Grafham Grange to join a forthcoming middle leader training event.</p> <p>ML noted the variance in behaviour incidents across the three schools and asked if this was due to the needs of the cohort in each school. JT explained that the three schools may not be using the same criteria to report incidents and suggested it would be more useful to look at trends for each school across the year rather than compare the three schools, which have different students with different needs. She suggested it may be useful for Governors to receive information on any spikes in incidents over the course of an academic year. VP added that this is being considered on a Trust-wide basis, particularly in terms of how incidents are categorised and reported.</p> <p>With regard to the SEF, JT confirmed it would be updated by the end of the school year in the context of the latest available evidence and JS suggested that it would be useful to receive an update in future Principals’ reports.</p>	
iii	<u>St Dominic’s School</u>	
	<p>VP introduced her report and picked out some highlights. She welcomed comments and questions.</p> <p>VP undertook to share the link to the promotional video of the school when available on the school’s website.</p> <p>HM asked about the seasonal variation in Health &amp; Safety incidents and accidents data for staff and visitors presented in the report and VP explained that it was difficult to compare this year’s data with last year’s due to the impact of the pandemic.</p>	<b>VP</b>
iv	<u>Portfolio Reports</u>	
a	<u>Teaching &amp; Learning</u> Report received.	
b	<u>Safeguarding</u> Report received.	
c	<u>HR &amp; OD</u> SB noted how positive an experience it had been to go into Grafham Grange School and noted the benefits for parents and Governors to visit in person. She observed how engaged students had been on the day she visited and noted that staff morale seemed to be high. VP, JT and DR welcomed all Governors to visit their school at the earliest opportunity.	

	d	<p><u>Business Development and Marketing</u></p> <p>JS asked about plans to cover the now-vacant Admissions Officer post. VP reported that St Dominic's have appointed someone on a part-time basis (three days per week) to start in September. JT and DR advised that the admissions function will be managed by current staff in each school, but they may consider a joint appointment if it proves necessary. JS and ML commended the previous Admissions Officer for her excellent work and suggested that it may be useful for the schools to consider a joint appointment again in the future. Governors would receive an update on the arrangements in the new academic year.</p>	
<b>10</b>	<b>Governor Visit and Developments</b>		
	i	<b>Other visit reports</b>	
		<p>LM reported that she had visited Brantridge School as she works nearby and looked forward to visiting other schools in autumn term.</p> <p>ML advised that he visited Grafham Grange School in the previous week and noted how great it was to be back on site. He described how fantastic it had been to observe the boys mixing so well with others at the Football Tournament and noted the transformation in the school from how it used to be.</p>	
	ii	<b>Training</b>	
		Governors noted that the annual Governors Conference will take place on Friday 8 October 2021 at Epsom Downs Racecourse.	
<b>11.</b>	<b>Deferred Items</b>		
		<p>At the suggestion of the Chair, Governors agreed to defer the following items to the next meeting. The clerk noted that reports on each of the items were available in GovernorHub.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Careers Framework</li> <li>• Equality and Diversity Report</li> <li>• Centre Assessed Grades</li> <li>• RSE Curriculum and Policy.</li> </ul>	
<b>12.</b>	<b>Policies and Procedures</b>		
		Governors noted the policies and procedures approved by the OHC&AT Board on 26 March 2021, details of which have been shared on GovernorHub.	
<b>13.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>		
		ML reported on a recent meeting with JT where they discussed support he could offer to Grafham Grange School in preparing for an Ofsted inspection. He undertook to share further details when appropriate and welcomed input from other Governors.	<b>ML</b>
<b>14.</b>	<b>Dates of Future Meetings</b>		
	i	<p>Governors approved the following dates for their meetings in 2021-22:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18<sup>th</sup> November 2021</li> <li>• 10<sup>th</sup> March 2022</li> </ul>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.</li> </ul> <p>All to start at 4 pm.</p>	
	ii	The clerk undertook to liaise with Principals and relevant Governors to arrange the Pay Committee meeting next term.	<b>SW</b>
<b>15.</b>	<b>Confidential Items</b>		
	A confidential matter was discussed and is captured in the Part B minutes.		

The meeting closed at 6.00 pm.

Signed: ..... Date: .....

**Julian Short, Chair of LGB**