



DAMERS FIRST SCHOOL.

Minutes of the Governors' meeting held at school on Tuesday 8th May 2012 at 19.00 hours.

Persons Present	CSA	Mr. L. Phillips. Mrs. A. Caldwell Mrs. M. Moss
	Community	Ms. R. Bettenson Mr. T. Putnam
	Parent	Mrs. R. Davis (Chair of Governors) Mrs. P. Campbell Mr. P. Adams
	Acting Headteacher Teacher	Mrs. M. Bearwish. Mrs. S. Limmer Mr. P. Rothman
	Support Staff Clerk	Mrs. S. Scott Mr. D. Hall

Other Persons Present Mrs. Diane Coker (Finance Officer).

1. **Welcome.** The Chair welcomed Governors to the meeting especially Mrs. Margaret Moss (Newly Appointed CSA Governor).
 - 1.1. Each Governor present gave a brief introduction of themselves, as new Governors were present. Mrs. Moss stated that she had previously worked as a Headteacher and SIP before retiring.
 - 1.2. Mrs. Campbell was appointed as Mentor Governor to Mrs. Margaret Moss.
 - 1.3. As a newly appointed CSA Governor Mrs. Moss would be given the opportunity to attend as many as possible of the Committee meetings in the next cycle before deciding which Committee to attend on a regular basis.
2. **Apologies for Absence**
 - 2.1. Apologies were received and accepted from Mrs. S. Hosford, Mrs. D. Taylor and Mrs. T. Gedye.
3. **Declaration of Any Other Urgent Business and Declaration of Interest.**
 - 3.1. **No Urgent Business was Declared.**
 - 3.2. Mr. Paul Adams declared an interest with regard to a discussion concerning paid leave of absence as he was involved with the child care arrangements.
4. **Minutes.**
 - 4.1. Ms. R. Bettenson proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 19th March 2012 were accepted as an accurate record. Mr. L. Phillips seconded. Governors agreed unanimously.
5. **Matters Arising.**
 - 5.1. Action Plan. Item 2. Consider possible candidates as a Parent Governor, CSA Governor or Community Governor and pass on their names to the Chair or Clerk. The Chair stated that this matter was on-going whilst the Governing Body retained vacancies. Mr. Paul Adams, Mrs. Penny Campbell, Ms. Ruth Bettenson and Mrs. Ruth Davies volunteered to attend the New Parent's Evening on Monday 11th June with the intention to recruit some new Governors.
 - 5.2. Action Plan. Item 3. Arrange date for the first meeting of the Governor Visit Working Party. Mrs. Campbell reported that a meeting had taken place and that a draft Governor Visit Policy had been produced. The Policy would be scrutinised further by the Chair and Acting Headteacher before coming to Governors for final scrutiny and possible approval.
 - 5.3. Governors agreed that all the other action items had been completed or appeared on the agenda for this meeting for discussion.
6. **Correspondence.**

- 6.1. Letter from a Member of Staff requesting a day's leave to support a spouse with suspected heart problems on 14th May 2012. Governors discussed this request.
- 6.1.1. Governors unanimously agreed to this request and granted a paid day's leave of absence.
- 6.2. Letter from a Member of Staff requesting a 2 day's leave of absence to attend a daughter's wedding on Friday 2nd of November 2012. Governors discussed this request.
- 6.2.1. Mrs. Davis proposed that the Governors grant 2 days paid leave of absence in the case of this request after due consideration. Mr. Phillips seconded.
- 6.2.1.1. Governors voted. For; 7 Against 0; Abstentions 4.
- 6.2.2. Governors agreed to consider establishing a written Policy on the granting of leave of absence. This matter to be discussed at the next Agenda Setting Meeting.
- 6.3. A letter from Norman Shamroth requesting a reduction in the hours of employment to 2 days and also to relinquish the current Teaching & Learning Responsibility (TLR). The Chair advised the Governing Body that the Member of Staff was entitled to make this request but that the School had to balance this with any operational concerns within the School. Mrs. Bearwish reported that it was possible to use these 2 days as PPA time linked to special projects that Mr. Shamroth would lead. When questioned if the role in charge of the special projects would have existed anyway, Mrs. Bearwish confirmed that it would have.
- 6.3.1. Governors unanimously agreed to this request.
- 6.4. A Letter of resignation from Mrs. Jo Elworthy as from 31st August 2012. Mrs. Bearwish stated that this was because of the travelling involved for the Member of Staff from Exeter on a daily basis. Governors commented that this would be a great loss to the School.
- 6.5. A Letter of resignation from Mr. Geoff Edge as from 31st August 2012. Mrs. Bearwish stated that this was because Mr. Edge had made a decision to pursue other interests. Governors commented that this would also be a great loss to the School.
- 6.6. A Letter of resignation from Mrs. Sally Limmer as from 31st August 2012 as a Member of Staff and also as a Governor. Governors expressed their thanks to Mrs. Limmer for her contribution to the life of the School.
- 6.7. A Letter of resignation from Mr. Pete Rothman as from 31st August 2012 as a Member of Staff and also as a Governor. Governors expressed their thanks to Mr. Rothman for his contribution to the life of the School. The Chair advised Governors that although Mr. Rothman was resigning as a Teacher Governor, he had expressed an interest in continuing as a Governor of the School. The Chair explained that there was a vacancy as a Community Governor.
- (Mr. Rothman left the meeting temporarily.)
- Governors discussed briefly the suitability of Mr. Rothman to act as a Community Governor for the School.
- 6.7.1. Mr. Phillips proposed that Mr. Pete Rothman be appointed a Community Governor to the Governing Body of Damers First School with immediate effect. Mrs. Davis seconded. Governors unanimously approved.
- (Mr. Rothman returned to the meeting.)
- The Chair informed Mr. Rothman that he had been appointed as a Community Governor for a 4 year term.

7. Item 10. Budget 2012/13.

Governors agreed to consider this item at this point in the meeting as the Finance Officer was present to answer any questions or provide further background information. Governors were circulated with the final budget papers and the assumptions behind the budget sheets and given several minutes to scrutinise them. Governors briefly scrutinised each of the headings giving a total planned revenue spend of £1,669,358.

- 7.1. **Carry Forward.** Governors noted that although the carry forward figure for 2012/13 was a projected £38,860 this included a carry forward figure of £160,000 from the previous financial year. In the long term this was not sustainable. The Chair highlighted section 4 in the Assumptions behind the Budget Sheet which indicated that the percentage of year funding spent on Staffing would be 92%. This was compared to a national average of 80%. Governors noted that with the present resignations of Staff Members, several of which had TLRs and new appointments it was likely that this percentage figure would fall. However Mrs. Bearwish and the Senior Leadership Team would be considering the possibility of investigating possible changes to the Staffing Structure and making recommendations to the Governing Body in order to get the percentage of Staffing costs closer to the national average of 80%. Additionally a note to this effect would be added under section 4 of the Assumptions behind the

Budget Sheet when it was submitted to Dorset LA. The Chair reiterated that in the long term the present Staffing Structure was unsustainable and therefore changes would need to be made. Mrs. Bearwish advised Governors that after consulting Mr. Phil Minns, he had advised that the School retain the 2 TLRs released by the changes in Staff for the present time.

- 7.2. School Development Priorities (SDP).** Governors considered if the Draft Budget matched the priorities in the current School Development Plan. Mrs. Bearwish reported that the current SDP priorities would remain the same until it was possible to discuss any prospective new priorities and the progress towards implementation of the current priorities with the Headteacher when he returned from secondment. Good progress had been made on the identified priorities. The cost to the Budget of most of the identified priorities had been largely covered by supply cover or built in PPA time as Staff had themselves led most of the training. Governors were satisfied that sufficient funds were available to progress the current SDP priorities into the next educational year.
- 7.3. Total Planned Spending, £1,669,358.** Governors noted that this total balanced the income streams and included a carry forward figure of £38,860. This being less than the permitted 8%.
- 7.4. Assumptions behind the Budget Sheet.** Governors together with the Acting Headteacher scrutinised each of the assumptions made behind the budget and were satisfied with the explanations given.
- 7.5. Mrs. Davis proposed that the Governing Body approve the 2012/13 Budget as itemised in Appendix 1 and ask the Chair of Governors to sign it on their behalf. Mr. L. Phillips seconded. Governors unanimously agreed.**

(Mrs. D. Coker left at 19.58 hours)

8. Chair's Report. (Appendix 2).

The Chair spoke to her report. The following points were highlighted;

- 8.1. OfSTED Framework.** The Chair briefly summarised the changes to the inspection process, the four key areas of inspection and how achievement would be judged in the future. Governors noted that a school would only be judged outstanding in the future if all 4 areas were judged outstanding. The Chair stated that the challenge for the Governors, Staff and school was to retain the outstanding status. The Chair encouraged all Members of the Governing Body to check the links that had been included with the Report in order to familiarise themselves with the changes.
- 8.2. Safer Recruiting Training.** The Chair highlighted the fact that this course was organised through the Human Resources Department of Dorset LA and that it was important that several Governors had been trained in order that trained safer recruiting Governors were available to form interview panels. The Chair asked for volunteers to apply for the training.
- 8.2.1.** Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Moss agreed to apply for the training and Mrs. Taylor had previously indicated that she would be willing to be trained. The training would take place on 20th November 2012. Further details were not available at the present time. The Chair agreed to ask Mrs. D. Coker to arrange the training for these Members.

9. School Evaluation Partner Type C Annual Review of the School's Self-Evaluation. (Appendix 3)

- 9.1. Background.** The School had supplied the evidence for their judgements in the 4 main areas being inspected under the new OfSTED Framework. Mark Loveys had reviewed each section and considered the evidence. The comments contained in the Report were very positive. Governors noted that the main issue with regard to the School retaining the outstanding judgement from 2009 would be if the Teaching and Learning was judged as outstanding. Mark Loveys had commented that he saw no reason to doubt that the Teaching and Learning would be judged as outstanding. Mrs Limmer asked that it be minuted that the School has continued to strive for further improvement under the Leadership of Mrs. Bearwish and in conjunction with the quality of the current Staff.
- 9.2. Summary.** Governors had scrutinised the Report and were satisfied that there were no formal recommendations and that the areas noted for further development were those that had been identified by the School.
- 9.3.** No further questions were asked by Governors. The Clerk asked Governors to place the SEP Report in the correct section of the Governors' Handbook as this was a key piece of documentation.
- 9.4.** Governors congratulated Mrs. Bearwish and Staff for such an excellent Report about the School. The Clerk thanked Governors for their commitment to the School and the time and expertise that they offered. He stated that in his opinion the support and challenge of an excellent Governing Body was essential if a School was to achieve high standards.

10. Strategic Development Plan

10.1. Governors had previously whilst considering the Budget, ensured that the recommendations from the SEP matched priorities in the SDP.

10.2. Key areas for development as detailed in the previous OfSTED Inspection. i.e. To develop the use of information and communication technology, building on work already in hand to support subjects across the curriculum. Mrs. Bearwish reported that substantial progress had been made in this area and that details of this progress had been reported on several occasions to the Governing Body. This area of work still remained a priority in the current SDP. The Community Cohesion requirement had now been dropped from the new OfSTED Framework.

11. First School Provision in Dorchester.

11.1. The Chair advised Governors that the Foundation Stage was currently full with 90 Pupils. As this number progressed through the school there would be accommodation problems when this number needed to be housed in the mobile classrooms and that the present situation was unsustainable. The Chair stated that the School was presently unaware of their position on the new build list. The Acting Headteacher and the Chair of Governors intended to write to the new Director of Child Services once he/she had been appointed about the situation the school found itself in. Consideration of becoming a convertor Academy was also not possible at the present time as the Hospital owned the land that the school buildings were positioned on. In the case of Convertor Academies the land had to be transferred. This was not possible in the case of Damers First School. Governors discussed several sources of information that suggested that the School might move before 2017. Several Governors were concerned that restrictions on the capital expenditure on the present building without a firm date for a move to a new site was an impossible situation for the School.

12. **Membership of Committees.** Governors were asked to complete a questionnaire concerning the present arrangements for Committees. The Chair asked that Governors complete the questionnaire by 17th June and hand into the Clerk for collation. The results would be available for discussion at the next meeting of the Full Governing Body.

13. Current Issues of Committees and Groups.

13.1. Report of Environment & Premises Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 17/04/2012 Appendix 4)

Mr. Phillips spoke briefly to the minutes.

13.1.1. Proposed Capital Expenditure on the Swimming Pool. Governors had been previously asked in the Chair's Report to consider section 4 of the Environment & Premises Committee Minutes which detailed the proposed capital expenditures and reason for this. Governors discussed the proposals. The Governing Body was informed that £7,000 remained of the funding given by the Dorchester Baths Trustees. Several possible scenarios with regard to the future maintenance of the pool were discussed and a lengthy discussion was held.

13.1.1.1. Mr. Phillips advised Governors that a meeting had been arranged with the Director of Tourism West Dorset District Council to consider the 5 year Maintenance Plan for the Swimming Pool discussed at the Committee meeting. There was a possibility that some help with future maintenance might be offered.

13.1.1.2. **Mrs. Campbell proposed that the Governing Body approve the capital works to the pool to include the replacement boilers, heat exchanger and pipe work and the installation of an automatic top up water feed. Mrs. Davis seconded. Members unanimously agreed.**

13.1.1.3. Mr. Phillips agreed to approach the Dorchester Round Table with regard to obtaining help with funding future maintenance requirements at the swimming pool.

13.2. Report of Curriculum Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 19/04/2012 Appendix 5)

Mr. Putnam spoke briefly to the minutes.

13.2.1. He stated that Members of the Committee had received Mr. Edge's resignation with sadness at the meeting.

13.3. Report of Finance & Staffing Committee. (Minutes of Meeting 16/04/2012 Appendix 6) _____

13.3.1. **Headteacher's Spending Limits and Virement Controls.**

Mrs. Campbell proposed that the Governing Body approve the following Headteacher's Spending limits and Virement Controls. Mrs. Limmer seconded. Governors unanimously approved;

13.3.1.1. **The Governing Body to delegate the day to day management of the Budget to the Headteacher.**

13.3.1.2. **To have recourse to a limit of £5000 without reference to the Governing Body.**

13.3.1.3. For major capital works between £5001 & £10,000 prior approval is needed from the Governing Body using best value principles and in line with the procedures outlined in the Financial Management Policy.

13.3.1.4. All virements to be minuted and accepted at the meetings of the Full Governing Body.

14. Governor Visits & Training.

14.1. Feedback from Governor Training. Governors together with the Clerk reviewed the effectiveness of the present arrangements for training. Governors were satisfied that notification of forthcoming courses was effective through the committee structure and via the e-magazine 'Dorset Governor'. Several Governors were of the opinion that there were less courses available than previously.

14.2. Feedback from Governor Visits. Governor Visits and the updated Governor Visit Policy to be a separate agenda item at the next meeting of the Full Governing Body.

14.3. New Governor Induction. Governors reviewed the present arrangements for the Induction of New Governors. Mr. Adams commented that he had found the present induction arrangements useful. Mrs. Campbell was of the opinion that New Governors were better informed under the present arrangements when they attended the New Governor Course run by Governor Services.

15. Any Other Urgent Business.

15.1. American Teacher Exchange. Mrs. Bearwish informed Governors that Naomi Hudson had been successful in her application to exchange with a Teacher in America. Unfortunately this was only for a period of 1 term as Naomi had requested a year. A Teacher from Ohio would be joining the School for 1 term from September 2012.

15.2. Card from Chris Brotherwood. The Chair read out loud the sentiments expressed in the card thanking the Governors for their gift and their good wishes.

The meeting concluded at 20.59 hours.

Date of next meeting, **Monday 2nd July 2011** at 19.00 hours in school. To include a presentation by Junior Governors.

Certified as a true record.

Chair Date

D. A. Hall.

Clerk / Manager to Governors.

11th May 2012.