



# Gildredge House

## Enterprise Committee Meeting - Minutes

**Meeting Date:** Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024

**Meeting Venue:** via Teams

**Meeting Time:** 5:30pm

**Governors:** Richard Thornhill, *(RT)*, Chair of Governors & Committee Chair  
Julian Mace, *(JM)*, Vice Chair of Governors  
Jonathan Searle, *(JSe)*  
Martyn Ashley Taylor, *(MT)*

**Ex officio:** Craig Bull, *(CBu)*, Executive Head Teacher

**Also in attendance:** Sue Evans, *(HRD)*, HR Director  
Vickie Jenkins, *(HOS)*, Head of Secondary  
Janice Logan, *(DFA)*, Director of Finance & Administration  
Helen Punter-Bruce, *(HOP)*, Head of Primary

**Clerk to Governors:** Rif Aslam *(RA)*

**Apologies:** None received

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## Enterprise Committee – Minutes 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Item	Discussion	Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome and apologies for absence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair welcomed Governors &amp; SLT to meeting.</li> </ul>	
2.	<p><b>Declarations of Interests</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest made.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Minutes of previous Governing Board Meetings</b></p> <p>Chair confirmed that previous Committee Minutes were signed off at the July FGB Meeting.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Committee Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair advised that AL had resigned as a governor. He has acknowledged and accepted resignation. EHT will also write to AL.</li> <li>Chair confirmed he and EHT will focus on recruitment of new governors.</li> </ul>	
5.	<p><b>HR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Voice / Wellbeing – Chair invited HRD her to highlight aspects of paper. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff Pulse Survey – This is carried out monthly. HRD explained improvements. Uplift in score on recommending GH as place to work. Staff satisfaction is now scoring 7 or more. Engagement &amp; motivation scoring in the top 3 categories. 17 out of 21 categories scoring 7 or more. Workload scoring lower but not surprising with impact of Ofsted inspection. Response rate has slipped down but there was a good response rate for Ofsted Survey. Looking to increase uptake by giving timely responses to staff requests, lessening the frequency of surveys and introducing bespoke questions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Governor asked</b> if there was any correlation with uplift in scores in with the investment made in CPD. Positive report but where has the change come from? HRD agreed that there has been a culture shift about people valuing working at GH. This can be seen in the communication question. January 2023 that element scored 3.7. We then began more regular staff briefings, the newsletter etc. Improvement in score marked since then.</p> <p><b>Chair recognised</b> that reduction in frequency of surveys would allow more time for SLT to do something and in turn tell staff what has been done. General agreement that surveys be reduced in frequency from 3 to 2 per term. EHT pointed out that survey goes out to all staff but some of the questions not applicable to everyone.</p> <p><b>Governor noted</b> only 36% of staff complete survey. HRD explained that approximately 70 out of 153 staff teach. More teaching staff complete the surveys than other groups.</p> <p><b>Governors recommended</b> sending targeted questionnaires to specific groups and reducing frequency of surveys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workload &amp; Wellbeing Working Party – this was relaunched this week. Also working with 2 external groups. We have carried out an audit with East Sussex Schools &amp; Colleges Mental Health &amp; Emotional Wellbeing Adviser. HRD and our own Mental Health Lead will be putting in place an action plan to address the recommendations of the audit. Additionally, a benchmarking audit was done in September for the Humankind Staff Wellbeing Award. This will be revisited in January.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staffing <b>Pink Paper</b></li> </ul> <p>DHR left meeting at 17:59</p>	

6.	<p><b>Financial Strategy Update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary Phase – HOS outlined the areas of spend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Classrooms – cleared of clutter. Bookcases and shelving set up. Some further improvement needed.</li> <li>○ Mobile Display Boards – to showcase student work.</li> <li>○ Lectern – part of developing corporate look for parent events.</li> <li>○ Fast Feedback Printers – invested to alleviate teacher workload as well as providing feedback to students. Launched last week to great excitement.</li> <li>○ Lead Practitioner – feedback positive from staff about the masterclasses, CPD in mornings and the support they are receiving from Practitioner.</li> <li>○ Wall Art in Corridors still to be done.</li> <li>○ Outdoor Area – Student Voice requested chessboards and quotes being sought.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• CPD - EHT explained that Ofsted highlighted the need to improve accuracy of assessment for learning. Invested so far in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Formative Assessment – Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) project. In session 3 of a 2 year programme. Involves staff working collaboratively in both Primary &amp; Secondary. Work in pairs and observe each other.</li> <li>○ Leader as Coach – programme continues.</li> <li>○ External Consultant – Maureen Roger continues focus on English.</li> <li>○ Subject leadership mentoring support in PE and Geography taking place. Working with local schools to support our staff.</li> <li>○ Leadership Development Programme in second session supported by Peter Kent.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Primary Phase – EHT outlined spend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Classrooms – redecorated and look great.</li> </ul> <p><b>VCOG echoed</b> comments. Areas show a marked improvement. They look bright and vibrant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Outdoor Play Area – Adventure Trail used every day and enjoyed by children.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chair noted</b> the investment which has already taken place.</p> <p><b>Chair queried</b> whether priorities need to be re-examined in financial strategy. EHT agreed that post Ofsted we will need to review. IT, which is a separate agenda item may need a careful look.</p> <p><b>Chair confirmed</b> that current priorities remain but EHT will undertake a strategic review of the 3 and 5 year plan.</p> </li></ul>	
7.	<p><b>Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Accounts – DFA explained that this is month 1 and always top heavy with expenditure. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pay Grants – these are based on student numbers. Although teachers’ pay agreed early. Grant will not be received until February. Overspend on salaries showing because income has not yet come in.</li> <li>○ Revisions - long term sickness and absence has meant increased spend on staffing. Recruitment is still taking place.</li> </ul> <p><b>Governor asked</b> if there were any issues with cash flow as waiting until February for grants. DFA explained that we are fortunate to have reserves. EHT added that the government has said that any pay increase next year will come in much earlier than the last 2 years. DFA pointed out that DfE financial year runs April to March whereas as ours is September to August.</p> </li> <li>• 3 Year Forecast – DFA referred to paper and pointed out link to previous plan and key changes made. DFA outlined grant funding. Some of the grants will finish next year. There is 20K contingency because of fluctuations in staffing. Supply budget is an issue, but it will be a manageable cost. Slight revision of exam budget. IT support contract more expensive</li> </ul>	

	<p>than expected. Finance system needs an update. Curriculum reserve created to provide flexibility.</p> <p><b>VCOG noted</b> usefulness of KPIs at the end of the paper.</p> <p><b>VCOG asked</b> how we compare to the other schools in terms of pupil teacher ratio. DFA agreed that our staffing costs are high and need close monitoring. EHT added that 3 year pay protection is reflected in figures. Heads of school will examine middle leadership roles, but Ofsted has highlighted importance of curriculum leadership. Recruitment situation makes it difficult to save on staff costs. We need to create additional revenue to mitigate pressures on the budget.</p> <p><b>Chair recognised</b> costs are high, but we can see the benefits they bring. School has improved and that justifies expenditure. However, circumstances will change over 3 to 5 years, and this will need to be reviewed.</p> <p><b>Governor observed</b> that commercial income needs to be addressed now Ofsted is done.</p> <p><b>Governor suggested</b> that option of an exam centre for external candidates needs to be explored.</p> <p><b>Governor offered</b> his assistance in exploring potential revenue streams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal Audit Report – DFA referred to paper. Recommendation to place Annual Accounts onto the school website. Other schools do this.</li> </ul> <p><b>Governors approved including Annual Accounts on website.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Admissions Update – EHT gave an outline of the current number of applicants for both Primary and Secondary. Both indicate positive news.</li> </ul>	
8.	<p><b>Health &amp; Safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update - DFA referred to paper and added that Lockdown drill will now be moved to January. JM is Lead Governor H&amp;S and has already met with DFA. He will arrange a monitoring visit next.</li> </ul>	
9.	<p><b>IT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infrastructure Items - EHT explained replacement of servers and switches, upgrading Wi-Fi and migration to the Cloud was to have been completed over summer. However, returning after summer saw difficulties. Project was not managed well by IT contractors. Emergency support from them partially resolved some issues. They promised to rectify over October half term. Some compensation received from them to offset costs. DFA added that the servers are still not replaced. They will now be doing that at their own cost in the evenings. Rolling programme of IT refreshment continues. SIMs upgrade due too.</li> </ul> <p><b>Governor questioned</b> when the work will be completed. EHT advised that the contractors will provide a date by the end of this week.</p> <p><b>Governor urged</b> EHT not to allow timeline to slide.</p> <p><b>Chair requested</b> update on proposed end date. EHT agreed to chase contractor and update Chair.</p> <p><b>VCOG asked</b> if these contractors were on the ESFA recommended list. DFA confirmed yes.</p> <p><b>VCOG</b> if problems have been reported to ESFA. DFA advised that we have to manage ourselves.</p> <p><b>VCOG suggested</b> that ESFA should be told. EHT advised Monkston are supporting us to hold contractors accountable. We've been reassured by what has been done to rectify the situation and received compensation for their lack of project management.</p> <p><b>Governor asked</b> if Monkston cost us every time they are used. EHT advised that their service is under a contract instigated 2 years ago.</p> <p><b>Governor offered</b> his assistance should any further failures arise.</p> <p>Chair thanked DFA for input into the meeting.</p>	EHT
10.	<p><b>Risk Register</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update - EHT advised that there are a lot of positive moves with Ofsted having validated many. Risks to Teaching &amp; Learning and Professional Standards are therefore much less.</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Governor suggested</b> that risk relating to Pension Schemes has the potential to be massive. Although it may be outside of the school's control, it still needs to be monitored closely. Discussion ensued around the potential of being forced to use reserves to address government gaps.</p> <p><b>Chair emphasised</b> the need to protect assets for the benefit of our students.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Pay Committee</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update – EHT thanked the Pay Committee for their support. AH-CL had put together case studies which allowed the Committee to moderate decision making of SLT.</li> </ul> <p><b>VCOG agreed</b> it was a valuable process.</p> <p><b>Chair echoed</b> comments. He thought it was a well run and efficient meeting.</p>	
12.	<p><b>Any other urgent business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EHT advised that DFA has notified him of her intention to retire in May. She has been with the school since its inception. EHT congratulated DFA on her tenure and the positive impact she has had on the lives of students. EHT recognised that this will be a significant transition for the school, requiring succession planning.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chair and governors thanked</b> DFA for over a decade of valuable service.</p>	
13.	<p><b>Confirmation of future Governor Meeting Dates for 2024/2025</b></p> <p><b>FULL GOVERNING BOARD:</b>  12<sup>th</sup> December 2024  27<sup>th</sup> March 2025  3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025</p> <p><b>EDUCATION COMMITTEE:</b>  23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025  15<sup>th</sup> May 2025</p> <p><b>ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE:</b>  13<sup>th</sup> February 2025  12<sup>th</sup> June 2025</p>	
	<p><b>Meeting Closed</b>  Chair thanked SLT and governors and closed meeting at 19:08 hrs.</p>	