

Governors present	Marisa Childs Janice Thomas Sherine Addie Joannie Andrews Philip Borel Fiona Clarke Madeleine Davis Corrine Ffinch Lorraine Groom Kitty Stewart Jacy Templeton Colin Hutchinson	Co-opted Governor and Chair of Governors Executive Headteacher Staff Governor Co-opted Governor Parent Governor Parent Governor Parent Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Co-opted Governor Parent Governor Local Authority Governor
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Observers / Contributors	Terry Corpe, Head of School Louis Harris, Deputy Head (Curriculum, Behaviours for Learning & Computing) Lower School Phase Leader Ben Bignall, Assistant Head (Teaching & Learning, Literacy) Rebecca Milne, Inclusion Lead (SENCo & Safeguarding) Daljeet Panesar, Deputy Head (Assessment, PR & Year 6 Support)
Clerk	Tom Thorn – thomas_thorn@hotmail.com / 07817 503 846

Minutes of a Confidential extra ordinary meeting of the governing body of Lauriston School, held on Wednesday 12th July at 6:00pm

1. Apologies and Consent for Absence

1.1 Apologies had been received from Pauline Abbie who had been unable to attend the meeting in person.

1.2 However, the Chair advised that Pauline had asked that she be given opportunity to vote on the proposal forming item 3 on the agenda, via a phone call.

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

2.1 The Chair asked that Governors declared any interests that they had regarding the substantive item of the agenda and to consider whether any of these should prevent their participation in voting.

2.2 Janice Thomas declared that as Executive Headteacher she had an interest in the outcome of the vote. However, having sought advice in advance of the meeting she confirmed that she was entitled to vote.

2.3 No other Governors declared an interest.

3. Decision to Consult to Federate

3.1 The Chair welcomed Governors and members of staff in attendance.

3.2 She reminded Governors that the one substantive item on the agenda was the reaching of a collective decision on whether the Governing Body would seek permission from Sebright and Daubeney Federation to consult on federating with these schools and, on receipt of this, move to consultation.

3.3 She reminded Governors that discussions had been ongoing for a year around the options that were open to the school. She said that the option to federate with Sebright and Daubeney

would no longer be available to the school if a vote was not passed this evening which was in favour of consulting to do so. She felt that voting for this option would be in the best interests of pupils and the school.

3.4 A Governor pointed out that a hard federation with Sebright and Daubeney, or a return to standalone status were not necessarily the only options available to the GB. Given the importance of the decision, she urged the GB to give serious consideration to an alternative proposal that had been circulated to Governors via email earlier in the day. This proposed that time be given to explore whether a new medium-term strategic partnership arrangement with Sebright and Daubeney on a non-federated basis could be achieved. She summarised this as a middle way position that did not rule out eventual permanent federation but recognised that she felt we had not yet built the shared vision nor got the full confidence of stakeholders. She had circulated examples of such arrangements, and suggested that this be explored through facilitated discussions involving the Governing Bodies of Lauriston and of the Sebright and Daubeney Federation, the Executive Headteacher and members of her team, and the Hackney Learning Trust.

The Governing body then took a vote on whether or not to proceed as planned to vote for or against the original proposal of Federating with Sebright and Daubney, the majority agreed to vote as planned.

3.5 The Chair thanked the Governor. However, she noted that research and discussions had been ongoing for some time, and that there had been significant advance notice that the 12th July was the deadline by which the school needed to make a decision on a way forward. She reiterated that the option to consult to federate with Sebright and Daubeney would no longer be open without a vote on seeking permission to do so in this meeting.

3.6 A Governor challenged this view. She said that there had not been opportunity for full group discussions with the Sebright and Daubeney Federation Governing Body in order for this to be determined.

3.7 The Executive Headteacher fed in at this point, confirming that the Sebright and Daubeney Federation Governing Body had made the collective decision that any request by the Lauriston School Governing Body to consult on a proposal to join their federation would be refused if this was not submitted to them on the morning of the following day. This was to allow for an effective exit strategy to be put in place which provided the best possible stability for both Lauriston School and the federation of schools also. The Executive Headteacher confirmed that the Sebright and Daubeney Federation Governing Body was unwilling for the federation to continue in or to agree a revised partnership arrangement beyond 2017/18.

3.8 A number of Governors asked for clarity on what they were being asked to vote on, and whether a majority voting in favour would constitute a decision to federate.

3.9 The clerk advised that a majority vote in favour of the proposal would result in the Governing Body to seek the permission of the Sebright and Daubeney Federation Governing Body to consult its stakeholders on a proposal to federate with Sebright and Daubeney. In the event of Sebright and Daubeney Federation Governing Body giving this permission, both Governing Bodies would enter consultations with their stakeholders. At the end of this process, both Governing Bodies would review and vote on a proposal to federate.

3.10 In response to a question, the clerk confirmed that this meeting was not holding a vote on a proposal to federate.

3.11 A Governor said that she was very concerned at feeling forced into making a decision this evening.

3.12 Another noted that Governors had spent significant amounts of their own time on research and on preparing alternative proposals, but that this meeting was refusing to hear these.

3.13 The Chair thanked Governors but disagreed with these points. She said that a dedicated committee and a number of Full Governing Body meetings had reviewed options in detail over a considerable period. The deadline for a decision on whether to seek to consult was the end of this meeting, and this had been known about for some time. The Chair appreciated the tabling of the paper this evening and its circulation in advance of the meeting. However, this did not alter her view that a decision should be made tonight on something that would no longer be in the school's capacity to make after this evening, and on which she and a number of other Governors felt to be the best way forward.

3.14 She pointed out that the decision would be a collective one, with all Governors having a vote. Governors not agreeing with the proposal were entirely free to vote against it. She had asked that the clerk deliver a closed vote in the interests of privacy and said that Governors should vote absolutely freely.

3.15 On the last point around the decision being reached a collective one, the Chair said that she hoped that Governors on different sides of the debate would be able to come together and move forward whatever the outcome. However, she fully accepted that opinions were strongly divided in some cases. Whilst she hoped that Governors would feel able to stay on the Body whatever the outcome and support it, she also appreciated that those unable to do so would need to consider their positions.

3.16 Two Governors said that they were very keen that the vote be held.

3.17 One agreed with the Chair that significant explorations had been made of a range of options.

3.18 Another said that not making a decision this evening would be hugely unfair to staff who had worked to deliver significant improvement to the school over three years, and would not be in the interest of pupils. She felt that the huge improvements that the school had delivered for pupils in recent years would be at risk if the Governing Body continued to hold off a decision.

3.19 Another Governor noted that whilst some Governors had dedicated their own time to research and the development of other proposals and discussions of these, that the group had not been inclusive in their approach. The Executive Headteacher had not been invited to partake in these discussions despite being a Governor. Other Governors had also been excluded in some cases.

3.20 A Governor said that there had been no intention of exclusion of Governors who did not have what she considered to be a conflict of interest in matters. She maintained that the paper circulated earlier in the day and tabled at the meeting had some very good points, which should be considered.

3.21 The Chair thanked Governors. She suggested that the appropriate way forward was to hold a vote on whether to proceed with a vote on the proposal at this point.

3.22 On calling a vote, the majority voted in favour of holding a vote.

3.23 The clerk circulated paper voting forms. Governors voted on the proposal below by selecting one option from three (Yes, No, Abstain):

“Vote on whether to seek permission to consult on proposal to federate with Sebright and Daubeney”

3.24 The Clerk also spoke to Pauline Abbie and marked a ballot paper according to her instruction.

3.25 Following the receipt of completed ballot papers, the clerk exited the room to conduct a count.

3.26 On his return, the clerk confirmed the result as per below.

Result of vote on statement “Vote on whether to seek permission to consult on proposal to federate with Sebright and Daubeney”

In favour: 9

Against: 4

Abstentions: 0

3.27 The Chair thanked the Clerk. She confirmed that the result meant that the Governing Body would now seek permission from the Sebright and Daubeney Federation Governing Body to consult on a proposal to federate.

3.28 She advised Governors that the decision reached should remain confidential to the Governing Body until September. She also said that at the point at which information was shared, that all Members of the Governing Body would have a legal obligation to give support to the collective decision made.

3.29 She thanked the Governors and staff for their interest and engagement throughout the process.

3.30 At this point a number of Governors said that they wished to pay tribute to staff. The Chair thanked Terry Corpe, Head of School, who had worked tirelessly and effectively throughout the year. She and all other staff had been instrumental in the recent Ofsted findings.

3.31 Other Governors thanked Sherine Addie and Ben Bignall who the school was very sad to be losing, and Becky Milne for her significant contribution to inclusion.

3.32 Joannie Andrews wished to record her thanks to the full Senior Leadership Team and her congratulations on the Ofsted report.

4. Any other business

4.1 There was no other business.

Meeting finished 7:20pm.