

ST HELENS COUNCIL
COWLEY INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY
OF COWLEY INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON
THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER 2024 AT 5 PM

Members:

(Based on
Constitution = 16)

Co-Opted Governors

*Mr Garry Anders (Chair)
*Mrs Stacey Hill (Vice-Chair)
*Mr Innes Arnold
*Mrs Margaret Bellis
*Mrs Justine Kellett
*Mrs Angela Farrell
Vacancy (1)
Vacancy (2)
Vacancy (3)
Vacancy (4)
Vacancy (5)

Local Authority Governor

*Cllr Anthony Burns

The Principal

*Mr Russell Cormack

Staff Governor

Mr James Hunt

Parent Governors

*Mr Karl Van Der Laan
*Mrs Sharon Ahmed

*denotes those present

Also attending:

Mrs Jennifer Merrills, Governor Services, acting as Clerk
Mr Paul Worthington, former Co-Opted Governor (Part 1 only)
Mr Cameron Sheeran, former Executive Principal (Part 2 only)
Mr Andrew Moorcroft, CEO of The Challenge Academy Trust
(TCAT) (Part 2 only)

Part 1

The meeting was opened by Chair informing the board that Mr Worthington, Co-Opted Governor (present) had resigned. Chair expressed his thanks to Mr Worthington on behalf of the board. Mr Worthington said he has really enjoyed his time at Cowley as a Governor and wished the school and board every success for

the future. The board presented Mr Worthington with a gift as a token of their appreciation. Mr Cormack also expressed his sincere thanks to Mr Worthington for his support throughout his time as Governor.

Mr Worthington left the meeting at 5.10pm.

1. Apologies and Consideration of Consent to Absence

Apologies were received from James Hunt. Governors consented to his absence.

The meeting was quorate.

Councillor Burns arrived at the meeting at 5.15pm.

2. Declarations of Interest

No new declarations of interest were declared.

The outstanding declarations of interest on Governor Hub have been actioned.

3. Terms of Reference and Review of the Governing Body

Review Constitution

Review Committee Structure / Membership

- Finance

Following Mr Worthington's resignation, Mr Van Der Laan was voted in as Chair of Finance Committee (having previously been Vice Chair of this Committee) and Angela Farrell was voted in as Vice Chair of this Committee.

- Quality of Education

Mrs Hill has some proposals for QE committee, Mrs Hill and Mrs Barry have reflected on this. Governors require training on outcomes etc. The next meeting is early November. They will do the usual presentation of KS4 & 5 results, but will also do a refresh of curriculum development issues. Mrs Hill has asked Mrs Barry to gather data for results, but leave everything else until after the next meeting.

Mrs Hill said that any Governors who are not on the QE committee are welcome to attend the meeting.

Mrs Kellett commented that it would be nice for those Governors who are able to come into school to do the monitoring, to see the work in practice.

Mrs Hill is looking at recalibrating the terms of reference for that committee.

Review Link Governor Roles

These will all come under review as we move towards academisation.

Governors to agree, adopt and sign Governor Code of Conduct

This was dealt with under item 7 below.

4. Governor Membership

Mrs Kellett's term of office expires on 16/11/24. Mrs Kellett confirmed she was willing to continue in her role as Co-Opted Governor and Governors agreed to extend Mrs Kellett's term of office for the usual period.

There are now 5 x Co-Opted Governor Vacancies

Mr Cormack is aware we need to recruit and has the "feelers out" has approached a few people (one with SEND links, another associated with Cowley / Charity), these individuals are currently considering whether they would be interested in the role. Mr Cormack has looked at the Skills Matrix, it was noted the board has lost Mr Worthington with his business / finance expertise.

Mr Van Der Laan suggested that he could move to Co-Opted Governor from Parent Governor if there was another parent potentially interested.

The board felt that they are a strong board, and only want to take suitable candidates that will add value to the existing board / skills matrix.

Question: Would the Governing board be smaller post-academisation under a MAT?

Answer: Mr Cormack said that will be up to the board, but the board will be different under a MAT.

Governors commented that they felt it was better to have smaller numbers who regularly attend than a large number who do not commit.

SCR / DBS

SCR is up to date.

There is no DBS for Parent Governor Mrs Ahmed

Action: Governor Services to note new term of office for Mrs Kellett and update Governor Hub.

DBS required for Mrs Ahmed.

5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 July 2024

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

6. Matters Arising from the above Minutes

There were no matters arising.

7. LA Standard Items

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

Governors confirmed they had all read this.

Mrs Kellett informed Governors that there are Safeguarding audits and Governance is looked at during the audits, so need to ensure that Governors have completed their declarations on Governor Hub.

Governors have to do mandatory Governor specific safeguarding training when they are appointed. Mr Cormack suggested we could make this an annual thing for Governors, like it is for the school staff.

Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024

Governors confirmed that they had read the statutory guidance.

Financial Regulations

These have been approved on Governor Hub

Charge Card Procedures

These have been approved on Governor Hub

2025-2026 Holiday Pattern

Governors approved this.

2026-2027 Admission Arrangements

Governors approved this.

Governors Code of Conduct 2024

Governors noted and agreed to abide by this.

8. Financial Management

Mrs Callaghan had provided updated three month projections to Governors prior to the meeting. Governors had duly noted the same.

NB – Clerk was not provided with figures, so these will need to be inserted.

	Total Resources £	Projected Expenditure £	Surplus / Deficit £
2024/2025			
2025/2026			
2026/2027			

9. College Improvement Plan

Governors noted the same.

Governors suggested that the need to recruit new Governors to fill the current vacancies should be stated in the Governance section.

10. School Newsletter

Governors noted the same and commented that it was a high standard, colourful and engaging publication which Governors enjoy seeing

11. International Trips

Mr Cormack updated Governors as follows:-

Stuttgart trip in November 2024 for the choir. They will fly overnight, perform, then return the next day. Cllr Burns put them in touch with Cowley and Mr Cormack thanked him.

New York trip scheduled for February 2025.

12. Wellbeing of Students

There has not been a Pupil Behaviour and Wellbeing Committee meeting yet this academic year. Mr Cormack provided a verbal update to Governors.

Outcomes – summer.

- Turbulent year last year nationally.
- Improvement - we are still anticipated a 4.
- Some areas did v well - performing arts, geography, technology. Others not as well – maths, mfl, history.
- Unvalidated data – IDSR will be out soon. So can compare Cowley with other schools nationally and ask questions.
- Re-marks – put quite a few in. Only 13% have gone up.
- Some results are unacceptable. Holding HODs to account – meetings.

This academic year

- Strong start to the year – attendance etc.
- New SLT structure – smaller SLT. New roles. Working well, they are working hard.
- Lots of new staff have started this year – Gobs will have opportunity to meet them.
- Focus on QE. A real shift change. Teachers in pods, doing specific learning. This should all support attendance, behaviour, outcomes.

Sixth Form

- Staffing changes – interim structure after Mrs Faulkner left for her new role elsewhere.

- Mr Watkins is doing really well, bringing a new energy.
- 163 at Sixth Form intake this year.
- Y12s are settling well, enjoying different more adult environment.

Year 7

- 250 intake. Doing really well. Polite and considerate cohort.

Behaviour

- New “Cowley Way” – work on expectations - primary schools also did work around this.
- 99% of students’ behaviour in lessons is good / outstanding.
- 1% persistent disruptees - not good. Year 8 is a problem.
- 3 x Permanent Exclusions this term, have rescinded one.

Attendance

- Attendance a priority nationally and here.
- Not yet seen the impact of all the changes.
- Focus still on FSM children.
- Y10/11 – some bad persistent absentees. Y7 great.

TCAT Support

- Support from TCAT. Improvement programme – experts in subject areas coming in – departmental reviews and improvement plan. No such support provided by LA.
- Mr Bennett has attended attendance / behaviour meetings at TCAT.

Staffing

- Some have left at the beginning of term.

Question: How is the mobile phone policy going?

Answer: Mr Cormack thinks it is going really well. He has been approached by BBC to feature in a news item about it, currently considering the pros and cons of this. School are keeping the momentum going re the policy. On the whole parents are supportive. Once everyone gets used to it, it becomes the norm. School have had to invest in more activities for breaks and lunches than before, e.g. chess etc.

Question: Mrs Kellett notes that Queens Park Year 6 children have been invited to the show this year. Mrs Kellett asked are other feeder primary schools also invited?

Answer: Mr Cormack said yes. Mr Rowland is now in charge of transition and is really active, he is out there in the primary schools delivering assemblies etc.

Recruitment into Y7 next year is important as we know the pupil numbers drop, so we need to build these relationships.

Question: How are the numbers for Year 12 next year looking?

Answer: Year 11 results have an impact, if they don't get grades they need etc. We are now looking at how can we support our community and provide a wider offer - some students offered a 3 year programme.

Progress 8 data - GCSE resits are not included in this data set. Disappointing as particularly English they did really well on GCSE resits. The majority do November resits. If they get the grades they can then move to alternate course. If they do not get the grades in November resits, they have to resit again in the summer GCSEs.

Question: How is the change of leadership going now that it is just Mr Cormack, following Mr Sheeran's resignation as Executive Principal?

Answer: Mr Cormack feels it is going well and thinks he has put his stamp on things.

13. Policy Review

Flexible working and leave policy for schools

Governors approved the policy.

Menopause policy

Governors approved the policy.

Whistleblowing policy

Governors approved the policy.

Resolved: Policies approved

Pay / appraisal policy – to be added once got from HR

Policy awaited.

14. Governor Development

Mrs Kellett has done the Governor specific safeguarding training.

Mrs Farrell is booked on for the Head Teacher Performance Management training.

Mrs Ahmed has booked onto a few, including the 2 part “New to Governance” training.

Chair thanked Cllr Burns for his continued commitment to the school and the board in light of his new job as Cabinet Leader. Chair also expressed his thanks to all Governors for their commitment.

15. Governing Board meeting dates for the academic year

Governors noted Full Governing Body meeting dates are:-

- Thursday 19 December 2024 at 5pm
- Thursday 3 April 2025 at 5pm
- Thursday 17 July 2025 at 5pm

Governors noted the proposed meeting dates for committees as set out in the agenda.

Regarding the Pupil Behaviour and Wellbeing Committee meeting dates, these need to be reviewed. Mrs Kellett has a staff meeting at her own school on Tuesdays and Mr Van Der Laan also has a regular work conference call on a Tuesday, Tuesdays are an issue. Mr Cormack will look at revising dates. This committee has to be a 3.30pm start due to pupils attending at the meeting.

Action: Pupil Behaviour and Wellbeing Committee meeting dates on Tuesdays to be rescheduled

16. Urgent

Safeguarding

It is important to ensure that the SCR is checked by Governors. The Safeguarding Link Governor is Mr Anders. Mr Cormack will arrange for Mr Anders to meet with Mrs Callaghan to go through it.

Action: Meeting to be arranged for Mr Anders to review the SCR with Mrs Callaghan