

Draft Minutes of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of

Katharine Lady Berkeley's School

28th April 2021, 5pm by Zoom

Present:

H Holman (Chair), T Rand (Headteacher), M Clarke, P Adams, R Jackman (Chief Finance Officer), S Plant, G Warnock, B Rousseau, A Covell, B Miller, M Baker, S Weston, C Jenner, F MacMillan and 5 parents/guardians

Apologies: J Cordwell

Welcome and introductory comment

1. HH welcomed those present and then reflected on the current composition of the Governing Body, its effectiveness, and the wide skill set and background of its members. She noted she felt that the Governing Body is in a strong position to embrace both the current educational landscape and the planned changes which lie ahead.

Minutes of the AGM held 11th February 2020 for approval

2. The above minutes were accepted as a true record

Matters arising from the minutes

3. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Formal presentation of the annual report and accounts to end of August 2020

4. RJ then presented and explained extracts from the audit conducted to the end of August 2020. He confirmed that the audit had been clean and positive and was therefore “unqualified”, with the management letter picking up on low risk items around Trustee Declaration of interest forms and a requirement to update the Finance Policy for one off/ exceptional purchases.
5. Turning then to pages 9, 25 and 39 of the accounts, he highlighted the key financial indicators, namely:
 - Overall revenue deficit in 2019-20 of **£10,266**
 - Cash position at the end of August 2020 of £857,244
 - Total revenue carried forward of £446,043
 - School fund account at £48,336
 - An overall balance of £658,668, which is quite a strong position.
6. He noted he meets with the relevant Governor termly to go through the headline accounts.

7. For 2020-21 the teaching staff costs bill is, as expected, the biggest expenditure at £5,000,000 and with considerable additional costs also associated with Agency and staffing cover. Elements of the costs associated with getting the school to a Covid secure state have been met by Government grant, however there are no plans for the Department for Education (DfE) to reimburse any ongoing cleaning costs. Covid Catch up Learning grants have been received (£57k of the expected £90k to date).
8. Looking forward, he noted that the YR 7 intake for October 2021 is at the top end of the Published Annual Number (PAN) of 250, and further that only a small budget deficit is forecast in 2020-21 of £27,631. Both present a positive picture. The National Funding Formula (NFF), which comes into full effect from 2021-22, will result in an increase of funding per student of an additional £415 which is also welcome news. Future fiscal challenges and uncertainties are around the wage bill and the Government plan to raise the minimum teaching salary to £30k by 2022. The plans around the School Build project will allow for savings to be made in terms of daily maintenance, however, additional funding may be required to maximise the benefit of the build. Despite these uncertainties, the headline estimate figures for 2022-23 are relatively strong at this point.
9. In response to a question from one of the parents he explained that the School Fund holds prepaid amounts for trips not taken.
10. Both HH and CJ thanked RJ for his presentation and for guiding the school through the audit so successfully.

Review of objectives from 2019 AGM

11. In opening this item TBR reflected on the past 15 months and how difficult it has been for the school and for families in general. He did however feel that not all aspects of the pandemic were negative in terms of the school learning experience.
12. He reported that all 35 cases of Covid as recorded in the school body during this time have recovered well, with 24 students and 11 staff testing positive. The cases brought challenges around close contact teaching although many students had not lost any learning time as a result. Key through the pandemic has been communication with parents, and this has been well received.
13. Both staff and students have had to learn very quickly new ways of learning and teaching, with the first lockdown focussing on the delivery of set work. The second lockdown, from January through to March 2021, saw a shift in emphasis in the teaching style with a mixture of live lessons and set work which has worked well. He reminded those present that the school had been open throughout to those vulnerable students and for the children of key workers with daily numbers being in the order of 15-50. This unprecedented time has allowed for good relations to develop with several students who have in the past struggled with engagement. A lot of learning has been done in terms of the overall approaches adopted across the lockdowns, with some aspects having gone well, and others where things could have

better. He reflected that it was hard to reach all students and through the period March 2020 to July 2020, and that the home learning environments for students were quite varied. He estimated that there were about 200 students who were considered at risk or vulnerable and they were the priority. However, perhaps more could have been done to support the other 1,300 students?

14. The key issues from September 2020, and on, has been around continuing to ensure safety for all including promoting social distance in school and mask wearing. He thanked parents and staff for supporting the school in helping to ensure a safe learning environment. Mental health and wellbeing for both staff and students has also been a key priority, as some have really suffered through this time. Attendance however has been higher than that at the same points in the year pre pandemic. At the start of the new Academic Year it was clear that priorities had to be rebalanced, with the focus being on the Covid recovery plan. Given this shift in priority not all previously held objectives had been met which is understandable. Certainly, the pandemic has brought about huge challenges for everyone, but he was positive about the new skills gained by the students around IT competency, independent learning and an improved resilience. The national day of reflection in March allowed students to share their experiences through these times, looking both at the challenges they have faced, and met, and the positive experiences and skills gained.
15. One parent made the personal observation that she was delighted with the level of engagement through this time which she witnessed in her son and applauded the support he had been given which she described as phenomenal. She noted the impressive support that Ms Jon had given her son.
16. TBR thanked the parent for this positive observation and comment, and thanked her for the recognition of Ms Jon, noting he was thankful for the efforts of all staff through these months.
17. Turing to the objectives for 2019-20 and the GCSE and A level results from Summer 2020, he noted that the GCSE awarded Centre Assessed Grades were well deserved and fair. This resulted in a Progress 8 Score of 0.33 which he felt was an appropriate assessment of the progress made by the year group. The A level results were outstanding with an ALPS score of 2, placing the school in the top 3-5% of schools nationally.
18. One of the key objectives for 2019-20 was to improve the effectiveness of Teaching and learning, and he set out what has been achieved so far including the excellent appointment of Kate van den Broek, Assistant Headteacher, and the established group of 24 teachers now working in groups and sharing their teaching experiences and practice. The reviewed curriculum for Years 7 and 8 was implemented for September 2020 with the focus now being to review the curriculum for Year 9. Going forward the key strategy is to improve teaching and learning across the school but with a clear focus on improving numeracy and literacy outcomes for those disadvantaged learners.

19. He reported that the new behaviour system was working well, however pockets of poor behaviour remain, which is being addressed through early intervention. The alternative provision on offer through "The House" allows for individual mentoring and support for those who are struggling to engage. He noted the high compliance of students in maintaining social distance and mask wearing.
20. Communications and engagement with parents have been paramount in the past 15 months and parental support has been appreciated. Parent focus groups have however rather fallen by the wayside, but these will be reinvigorated going forward. Virtual parent evenings have worked well, which prompts the question whether this is the way forward?
21. Unfortunately, with the forced change in priorities, the sustainability agenda has been compromised as has staff development where the focus is more on keeping staff well and supporting them to deliver their best teaching.
22. Other positives include the new website and revised prospectus.

The School Development Plan (SDP) for 2020-21 and beyond

23. TBR noted that key to the SDP is of course the Covid recovery programme, which is being delivered against the backdrop of ambitious learning, enjoyment in being at school and successful outcomes for all. He noted the importance of recognising and rewarding success.
24. He again reiterated the review of the curriculum for Years 7 through 9 and the introduction of both cultural capital and vocational elements in the same.
25. "Recovery" for younger learners he felt has a different pace as there is plenty of time for them to get to where to where they need to be, however it is undoubtedly a slow recovery with a clear emphasis on remaining positive and focussing on what they can do. Support is on offer through the National tutoring programme and Year 14 students have been brought back to school to help in an academic mentoring capacity. Sixth formers continue to work incredibly hard and they have high standards for themselves. Former teacher Mr Penman has been helping students as they consider their options beyond school.
26. In terms of personal development, the key focus will be around diversity, driven in part by the Black Lives matter movement. This will be seen as an integrated thread running through the curriculum rather than an "add on" consideration.

The School Build Programme

27. TBR note that the school was one of the early recipients of Government support for a significant school rebuild and noted that over the next two years the Gym, changing rooms, DT block, School Hall, Drama room and Staff room will be replaced. The estimated £12-13 m project will hopefully start in May 2022 with a build time of 12- 18

months ready for September 2023. The new hall will be replaced with bleacher style seating and there will be a multi activity room /Gym. It is hopeful that learning will not be disrupted too much through the build process. He reflected that this is an exciting time for the school.

28. HH thanked TBR for his detailed presentation and invited questions.

29. By way of comment, one parent remarked on the very positive impact of the Year 14 academic mentors. He considered their support to be well targeted and timetabled, and he suggested an evaluation of their impact should be undertaken. He noted that these former students should be very proud of what they have achieved.

30. In response to a question asked by a parent, TBR noted that students were identified to receive additional support by a number of means including for example, by departmental recommendation, identification by staff, self- referral and recognised vulnerability. Those who were struggling with their mental health and disadvantaged learners were also identified as key recipients of this additional support.

Report from Katharine Lady Berkeley's School Foundation

31. HH invited MC to present the annual report of the Foundation.

32. MC directed those present to the report and noted the role of the Foundation. No questions were asked.

33. HH thanked MC for her presentation.

Closing comments

34. HH thanked all in attendance, noting it was an enjoyable meeting. She reasserted the well aligned work of the Governors in supporting the school to deliver the SDP. She thanked those who presented and declared the AGM closed at 6.30pm.