

and the Academy as a local resource. Also included are key objectives of the Academy Strategic Plan and fundamental principles that have been discussed with students and staff.

A Director asked if it was possible to include Dance in the curriculum to complement the successful Drama and Music currently taking place in the Academy. The Principal felt this was unlikely as it was not a government priority but if the opportunity came along it was an area that could be developed. At KS3 there would be more Drama and Dance offered to students. In response to a Directors query how the Academy would become a Hub of Excellence, the Principal explained that this could be achieved in terms of Teaching and Learning by becoming a Lead School. Any decision towards this end should be made with the views of staff being considered.

Page 9 (Point I-5) – this was added to highlight the need for every Director to contribute to meetings and express their views. The Principal also felt it was important that at the end of each Board/Committee meeting Chairs reviewed the performance and participation of Directors. A Director reminded everyone that a skills audit had been planned to take place but had been deferred when the previous Principal gave notification of his retirement. The Chair agreed that this should be rearranged and could be linked with the Working Party on training. The list of named Directors with a specified link also requires updating.

Clerk to contact Directors for interest in Forum membership and Working Party

Page 10 - the Principal added a Feedback Forum to the list of Committees with the aim of seeking the views of Users, parents and staff. A draft Terms of Reference was submitted for consideration and agreement and he asked that, on occasions, the Board meets at 2pm in order for students and School Council and others to be able to express their views. It was hoped that this would be a way of involving interested parties more.

The Code of Conduct for the coming year was also discussed and approved. This will be issued to Directors for signing at the March meeting.

Proposal to accept the Guidance, Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct.

Proposed: Dr Richards Seconded: Mrs Rose
Unanimously agreed.

5 FEEDBACK FORUM

Discussed and agreed in the above item.

6 ACADEMY IMPROVEMENT

a) Academy Improvement Plan

- There were few changes since Christmas. Lesson observations were continuing with a second round taking place, along with Learning Walks and book scrutinies. Two parent Directors commented that they had seen a huge change in feedback for students. The Principal was asked how staff had reacted to this; the Principal said that they liked PAR (Praise, Action, Response), where students have to respond to their marking, and they are getting used to the system.
- A representative from Incyte (school improvement) had visited the Academy to work with the SLT and will be returning next month to work with Middle Leaders. The Academy was also now part of Somerset Challenge working with a ‘family’ of similar schools.
- The Year 11 data looks promising with potential for good results, however this is dependent on the accuracy of staff assessment. GCSE and Post 16 mocks have taken place and underperforming students have been identified, parents contacted and Action Plans put in place. The Value Added will probably not increase this year, but should do so next year.

- A survey of parents, students and staff is being planned and prepared for later this academic year.
- The curriculum has been reviewed and a new offer planned. The Options process has been overhauled and will offer four pathways which will increase choice, particularly for lower ability students.
- Data from LPUK indicated that Post 16 results were the second highest achievement for Somerset Schools with Sixth Forms; this was also backed up by the DfE. This year's taster event for Year 11 and external students was very successful and SLT are undertaking the second round of Futures Interviews.
- A programme for supported peer reviews is being initiated; this will initially be led by SLT but Middle Leaders will take over ownership.

The Principal reported to Directors that he had been in receipt of a letter from David Laws MP regarding the levels of progress for Pupil Premium students at the Academy. The Principal was conscious that this was a key area that needs to be improved and is currently being addressed.

b) Responsible Officer proposal

The current Responsible Officer wished to stand down; he currently attends every Committee and writes regular reports, which does require a lot of time and effort. It is a requirement of the Academies Financial Handbook 2013 that the Academy either has an Audit Committee or a committee that fulfils the remit of the Audit Committee. The Directors agreed that the Finance and Premises committee would fulfil the role of the Audit Committee and TORs would be amended. The Principal and Business Manager had previously circulated a document outlining three possible options that could be adopted. The Academy currently purchased the Responsible Officer internal check services from Somerset County Council.

Business
Manager

The Chair asked if any other Director wished to take on this role. The Principal suggested that under Option 2, the RO may not have to attend every meeting as long as all agendas and minutes were supplied to him/her to work from and to flag up any issues which could be reported back to an Audit Committee biannually. The importance and demand involved in this role was discussed, including the need to keep professional fees down. The Chair said that Mr Wilson-Chalon would be willing to undertake the role if Option 3 was adopted on the proviso that he would not be expected to attend every meeting and could work from agendas and minutes. The Principal said that if this option were adopted it was very important that Chairs applied the six requirements listed in the proposal to all decision making processes involving Academy finances.

It was proposed to adopt Option 3 with the amendments discussed.

Option 3

In addition to Options 1 and 2, the Responsible Officer will also provide an 'independent oversight' of the academy's financial affairs and provide the governing body with on-going independent assurance that:

- *the financial responsibilities of the governing body are being properly discharged;*
- *resources are being managed in an efficient, economical and effective manner;*
- *sound systems of internal financial control are being maintained; and*
- *financial considerations are fully taken into account in reaching decisions.*

The Responsible Officer will receive agendas and minutes of all Full Board meetings, Committees and Huish Leisure Board meetings, and provide reports on a quarterly basis to the Full Board and Finance and Premises Committees.

Proposed: Ms Innis
Unanimously agreed

Seconded: Mr Baker

c) Directors' monitoring reports

There were no reports made. The Chair asked if a further programme of planned

visits to classrooms could be arranged. **This was agreed.**

Clerk to
implement

The Principal reported that he and the Chair of the Finance and Premises Committee had met with Rupert Cox (Chair of Langport and Somerton Rotary Club) to explore business link opportunities with Huish Leisure. A further meeting is being arranged. They had also met with the Business Manager to discuss reducing the risk of Huish Leisure; the results of this discussion will be included in a Business Plan which will be presented at the next Leisure Board meeting.

d) Risk Register

The Business Manager has included the risks discussed at the last Academy Board meeting; any changes are listed at the front of the document for ease of identification. The Chair highlighted that at the last meeting it was stated that if the Leisure Centre became unprofitable the Academy would not be liable; however as the staff are employees of the Academy she sought clarification that the Academy would be liable for any redundancy costs, should they arise. The Business Manager confirmed that the Academy would be liable.

The Principal also informed Directors that Mr Joel of SSDC had made it clear that if the Leisure Centre had financial difficulties the Council would financially assist Huish Leisure to keep it open. SSDC does currently not give any financial assistance to the Centre for the delivery of community sport. The Chair asked whether this commitment could be put in writing to the Academy.

Principal

e) Summary of Academy management accounts

Full accounts were sent to Directors earlier this week.

f) Summary of Leisure accounts

The accounts are due to be presented at next week's Leisure Board meeting. They currently show in red an outturn of £11,718 profit. The Huish Leisure accounts for the year ending 31 August 2013 showed a profit of £4k. However, the Business Manager had reviewed the transactions between the Academy and Leisure Centre for this period and found that a £6k contribution for gym equipment had not been paid over from the Academy to Huish Leisure. This would have increased the profit for the year to £11k. In the current financial year the Academy will make two payments of £6k. The Chair questioned whether the late payment would alter the percentage of the share costs between the Academy and Leisure Centre for the current year. The Business Manager said this would not be the case; the percentage is correct and calculated on the usage figure of the Centre. The shared costs are applied termly. A Director asked what the impact of the floods had been on the Centre. The Business Manager said that the effect had not been identified to date.

7 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Christmas Concert** – Directors that attended had thought the concert was fantastic and the students' enjoyment and confidence was wonderful. The Chair had written to Ms Stoffell congratulating her on the event.
- **Les Miserables production** – tickets for the Friday performance sold out within a few hours of going on sale; since then all tickets for all performances had also sold out.
- **Change of date of next meeting** – due to the above production it was decided to move the next Board meeting from 6 March to 19 March with a 4.15pm start. Directors agreed not to hold a specific meeting with parents this year but would still issue an Annual Report. The Feedback Forum would provide the opportunity for parents to ask questions and the Principal can be contacted if necessary.
- Dr Richards reported that a former Governor had died and he would be attending the funeral; he asked if the Board would also like him to represent them. **This was agreed.**
- The Academy had been invited to attend the DfE Awards at the Octagon

Theatre in Yeovil on 5 March.

- The Business Manager had submitted the Annual Accounts Return to the EFA. This was based on the Annual Accounts approved by the Directors in December. She has also submitted two bids to the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund for £54k for windows and £202k for roofing

9.00 The Business Manager left the meeting

Confidential minutes of the Pay and Personnel meeting 22 October 2013 – The Chair reported on two new posts for Student Support Workers that had recently been advertised which will increase pastoral capacity at the Academy. The new Pay Policy had also been approved.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.