

# Minutes of KING EDWARD VI COMMUNITY COLLEGE FGB Meeting Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 22, 5.45pm

*The meeting was held remotely via Microsoft Teams*



**Present:** Jim Lodge (JL), Alan Salt (AS), Michael Young (MY), Karen Sewell (KS), Julian Carnell (JC), Gillian Healey (GH), Jo Cooke (JCK), James Hartridge (JH), Wendy Ormsby (WO) and Antony Power (AP).

**In attendance:** Stephen Corline, Business Manager (SC) and Yvette Elliott, Clerk (YE)

Ref.	FOCUS OF THIS FGB MEETING: Ensuring Clarity of Vision, Ethos and Strategic Direction	Actions
1	<p><b>Welcome &amp; Apologies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apologies, sanctioned by the FGB: Laura Hetherington (LH)</li> <li>Absent without apology: None</li> <li>Declarations of interest: None</li> </ul> <p>JL highlighted that due to some Governor resignations over the last few months, some recruitment may be required. However, this should not be considered until a decision is reached by the Board regarding academisation, as a move to join ESW is likely to result in a restructure. JL noted that whilst there are now fewer Parent Governors on the Board, many of the remaining Governors are parents.</p> <p><i>JCK asked if there are enough Governors currently to fulfil the needs of panels etc that may occur?</i> JL stated that there are, but YE added that this does mean current Governors will need to make themselves available wherever possible and thanks were given for the time provided for these additional meetings.</p>	
2	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>YE to update and save ratified policies</u> – Done.</li> </ul>	
3	<p><b>Review Draft Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021 FGB Meetings</b></p> <p>Part 1 and Part 2 minutes were reviewed and approved. <b>JL to sign.</b></p>	JL
4	<p><b>Review Public Consultation Feedback on Joining Education South West (ESW)</b></p> <p><u>Receive consultation feedback report</u></p> <p>AS's Executive Summary of the 13 consultation responses was shared with the meeting papers. JL noted the high level of support in these responses for AS, the SLT and KEVICC's ethos, which he did not feel were fully reflected in the Executive Summary.</p> <p><u>Discussion</u></p> <p><i>GH referenced an anonymous staff response regarding the potential to lose good staff and asked if this is a real threat?</i> AS stated that it is not. The response is considered, but any staff wanting to work in a school will have to be prepared to work in a MAT. This was likely to be a specific concern around unease from support staff roles, which are likely to be the most affected. A number of meetings have taken place with these staff and these would have been reassuring for most staff. It has not been appropriate for ESW to speak to staff about any specifics</p>	

<p>prior to a Governor decision, but informal conversations have taken place. AS thinks KEVICC will be able to retain staff better as a result of joining a MAT.</p> <p><i>GH noted that in Response 13, the Business Manager role is referenced and asks if we know yet what the future of this position is?</i> JL stated that this would be a due diligence matter. Conversations are ongoing with Peter Di Giuseppe and he has made it clear that economies of scale are not ESW's priority and JL has been comforted to hear this. AS added that value for time &amp; money is more about using the money you have in the best possible way for school improvement.</p> <p><i>JCK noted that the anonymous staff response references staff moving between schools and asked how much choice staff have as the cost of living, including fuel, increases?</i> AS stated that the staff most likely to be affected by this are non-teaching staff, such as IT support which would work on a rotation between ESW schools. Technically, ESW would have the power to ask any staff to work in other settings, but they can only legally do so if it is "on reasonable grounds" and they do not currently do this.</p> <p>JCK noted that this could be destabilising for staff and should be considered as the world has changed significantly, even since Governors discussions around academisation began. JL reminded Governors that ESW would become our partners in making KEVICC a success, so they will be careful to retain good staff.</p> <p><i>KS noted that one respondent referenced the ESW Board having the ultimate say and asked if KEVICC will have any representation at this level? Additionally, the MAT Board was seen as being made up of business, rather than educational, specialists.</i> JL stated that KEVICC will not have a representative on the ESW Trust Board as this is not how they work and is a deliberate decision to separate the roles of Local Governing Boards (LGBs). However, there is a committee of Chairs from all LGBs, which feeds comments into Trust Board meetings and this is how they will be held to account. AS added that when MATs started initially, the model was typically to have a Chair from each school on the Trust Board, but there has been a move away from this as it can become unwieldy and also blurs the different jobs of Trustees Vs School representatives. 4 of the current ESW Trustees have come from Governing Board roles and this mix provides a strength to the Board.</p> <p><i>JC noted the low number of responses and asked if this demonstrates general support and acceptance?</i> AS stated that there are a similar number of responses to the Site Development consultation, but staff, parents and community meetings all made it clear that formal responses would be needed for Governors to consider views. Considerably more stakeholders engaged in the process than formally responded to the consultation. JL added that most of the views in formal responses are a good reflection of what was heard in consultation meetings.</p> <p><i>JC noted that some ESW schools are currently Requires Improvement (RI) or haven't been inspected for many years and asked if this is an issue for KEVICC?</i> AS stated that it is correct, but not an issue around school improvement. RI schools within ESW can demonstrate strong practice.</p> <p><i>WO suggested that formal responses are often received when people are unhappy, but there are no guarantees that this is the case. Can we be sure that information was shared adequately to make everyone aware that the</i></p>
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	<p><i>consultation was taking place?</i> AS confirmed that all parents were invited to engage in meetings and respond to the consultation, as were parents of Year 5 &amp; 6 pupils locally. JL stated that Governors can only look at the responses that have been received and should not speculate on why there was a small number.</p> <p><i>WO asked if the structure of KEVICC, with SLT and Heads of Department is likely to change under ESW, resulting in the loss of experienced leaders?</i> AS stated that this will not change, as there are no Heads of Faculty across the entire Trust, but 1-year secondments are possible across departments as training opportunities. School improvement is done mainly by those who are teaching in the schools, with the exception of 3 non-teaching staff. Other trusts do structure themselves with Heads of subjects across the whole trust.</p> <p><i>JL read out a question emailed by LH in her absence: How were the current students consulted &amp; to what extent were they engaged and realised the importance of the step that is about to be taken? This could have served as a great learning tool.</i> JL confirmed that they were invited to engage, just as other stakeholder were, and AS added that he spoke with every year group in the main school and Amy Withers spoke with 6<sup>th</sup> Form students. 2 direct questions were asked and related to the other schools that KEVICC would be linking with under ESW. There was disappointment that no students had formally responded to the consultation.</p> <p><i>GH asked if there has been any feedback from local primary schools?</i> AS stated that they had agreed to advertise the consultation in their own newsletters.</p> <p><i>GH referenced one of the responses and asked why Unions are seen to be so opposed to MATs?</i> AS cautioned Governors as not all Unions are against MATs and reminded them that most members will work in MATs.</p> <p><i>GH asked if any 'red lines' have been confirmed by KEVICC?</i> AS stated that it was agreed any receipts from land sale must be received by KEVICC and the DfE have agreed that this must happen, with assurance required from ESW. The ESW Scheme of Delegation shows the powers delegated to all, including LGBs and Headteachers – land disposal sits with LGBs. Legally, it is problematic to create too many red lines as we will become part of the same organisation. Ethos and structure are priorities and these align. Looking at ESW as it currently is, each school can be seen to be different from the next, retaining its individuality.</p> <p><i>JH highlighted that teaching and behaviour management systems have been successfully set up at KEVICC over time and it would be a shame to lose these if joining ESW results in 'homogenous teaching' and a lack of autonomy over the curriculum.</i> AS stated that there is no single 'Ready to Learn' policy across ESW and each school can tailor its own approach. Regarding teaching, there is a tension between autonomy and best practice. Different exam boards are used for different subjects and these will inform curriculum delivery, but curriculum alignment is always a compromise and utilising teacher skill to deliver the curriculum is the priority. There is no common curriculum across ESW, but this could not be ruled out in the future if it would result in the best for pupils. AS reminded Governors that teachers do not currently choose what they teach and ESW curriculum development can be seen to be done well to result in the best standards for young people. JH was reassured by these answers and will feed back to colleagues.</p>	
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<p><i>JCK voiced her concerns that this decision needs to be made on the basis of information and evidence available right now and asked how Governors can safeguard against changes in the future, despite an understanding that ESW will want the best for KEVICC as part of the Trust? AS stated that we are all temporary – teachers, Governors, Headteacher, SLT... Many things are already outside of the control of the FGB and he stated that it is better to make decisions from a position of strength when we can see that it will be the best thing for our young people now. There are no guarantees for the future as a maintained school or as part of a Trust. However, the geography of ESW will of change and that helps to make it a simple decision for AS.</i></p> <p><i>JCK raised concern that there may be some issues put upon KEVICC that it will not be able to change and gave an example of canteen problems. AS stated that we have already moved away from using a contractor to in-house catering and any problems with that will be internal under ESW too – they are not trying to make a profit (like a contractor would be) but will want to provide a good service. Regular conversations between ESW Management and what is / isn't working will be needed and ESW has capacity to manage things. ESW will have a vested interest in providing good shared services to all schools within the Trust.</i></p> <p><i>MY stated that the evidence from the consultation responses are not a ringing endorsement of the Governor proposal to academise and this needs recognising. He did not find it encouraging for a Good school to join a Trust with RI schools in it and asked if individual responses would be made public? AS would not have any concerns with information being shared as nothing new arose from the formal responses, compared to informal meetings. The purpose of the consultation is to engage stakeholders and check that Governors have considered everything, including the strength of feeling. AS disagrees that the overall response is negative because the quantity of respondents on which to base this. MY stated that Governor should not assume there is support from those who haven't responded. AS agreed, but suggested that it does demonstrate a strength the feeling either positively or negatively. AP advised that legally, individual responses would not be publicly shared for reasons of anonymity, but the Executive Summary could be.</i></p> <p><i>AP reminded Governors that his professional role is as a Solicitor, specialising in Education Law where he works on many academy conversions. It is typical to receive negative feedback so he was pleasantly surprised by the responses and what shines through is the respect for the school and its SLT, demonstrating that AS and his team are trusted to do the right thing. Regarding the sale of surplus land, a legally enforceable agreement could be set up for the future. AS would strongly encourage this and SC added that the application to the Secretary of State has in-built protection on this matter, with reference to development on the KEVICC site.</i></p> <p><i>JC noted that a number of respondents reference the potential for inflated CEO salaries within Trusts and asked if Governors are satisfied that this is not the case? AS shared a weblink during the meeting to the ESW financial statement for 2021 (a legal requirement).</i></p> <p><i>JC asked how joining ESW could help aid the teaching of science at KEVICC? AS stated that it will help all subjects. The new Head of Science expressed an interest in the consultation to join ESW during his interview and he will immediately have a network of other professionals under ESW so would be well supported. AS anticipates</i></p>
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	<p>more interest in the science teacher vacancy for the same reason as there are many recruitment and retention positives of being part of a Trust. As a maintained school, we have to buy in professional support when it's needed. JC recognised many longer-term advantages.</p> <p>MY has been reassured by AP's contextual response around the consultation responses and noted that the endorsement of staff and SLT comes across from respondents.</p> <p>JL thanked Governors for the rich and useful discussion and invited them to make a final decision about joining ESW, subject to completion of the due diligence process. AP made it clear that up until the point of signing the Financial Agreement, the decision is not final, but he strongly encouraged that any Governors who are not in favour of proceeding to make it known now prior to commencing due diligence. AS agreed that there would be a financial outlay for the next phase of the process if the vote is to proceed, so Governors must be very clear on their decision.</p> <p><u>Vote on whether or not to proceed with academisation</u>  <b>AS proposed that KEVICC proceed with academisation with Education South West (ESW). Seconded by KS.</b></p> <p><b>Governors voted:</b>  <b>9 in favour      0 against      1 abstention      <i>Motion carried.</i></b></p> <p><b>There was unanimous support from Governors to ask for a legal guarantee that proceeds of the surplus land sale at KEVICC are received by KEVICC. <i>Motion carried</i></b></p>	
5	<p><b>Safeguarding</b>  GH noted that there have been some negative Facebook comments recently - she has recommended that these are raised formally with Kirsty Matthews so they can be dealt with properly by the College.</p>	
6	<p><b>Policies for approval this meeting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEND Policy (<i>Rec. by Standards</i>) – <b><i>Ratified</i></b></li> <li>• SEND Information Report (<i>Rec. by Standards</i>) – <b><i>Ratified</i></b></li> <li>• Finance Policy (<i>Rec. by Operations</i>) – <b><i>Ratified</i></b></li> </ul> <p><b>YE to update and save all ratified policies</b></p>	YE
7	<p><b>Meeting closed at 7.20pm.</b>  Date of next meeting – Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022.</p>	

Signed.....

Date:.....

**Jim Lodge, Chair of Governors**

*FGB Minutes – 08.03.2022*