

Extra ordinary Governors Meeting 7th December 2010

Present: A Dearden, L Wilson, I Reed, R Alsoraimi, C Anderson, J Arnold, H Jamiseon, J Coyne, P Killen, G Lunt, R Owens

Apologies: K Awad

Item	Matters Arising/ Discussion/ Information	Action taken/to be taken
<p>1. Whole School Strategic Development</p>	<p>The Chair of Governors opened the meeting and explained that the meeting had been convened for three reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The result of the recent mock Ofsted inspection • The recent letter from Michael Grove around academies • The recent whitepaper <p>The Headteacher informed the Governors that Shorefields is seen as a low attaining school with falling pupil numbers and despite extensive marketing we have only received 59 first place preferences for places in September 2011. The reorganisation of BSF has resulted in the threatened closure of Shorefields and one other school in Liverpool and the Headteacher felt that consideration of academy status may be the best option for the future of the school.</p> <p>If we had a visit from Ofsted in the near future she felt that we would no longer obtain good with outstanding features.</p> <p>Whilst investigating the procedure for academy status the Associate Headteacher and Headteacher had visited Colin Hankinson (Executive Director of Academy Development) at Chester University to obtain further information to their approach to academy status.</p> <p>The advantages of academy status with Chester would be Mr Hankinson's close connections with the DFE and additional funding.</p> <p>This additional funding will be essential as the top slice which normally goes to the LA would be divided between the school and Chester (4%). Other additional funding could include funding a for new school uniform.</p> <p>Chester University has expressed a strong interest in</p>	

sponsoring Shorefields to become an academy. The Headteacher has spoken to other schools that have transferred to an academy and has received positive feedback. At a recent meeting with Tim Warren the Headteacher was informed that as the school is under threat of closure and academy status with the support of Chester University would be our best option. If this did not happen the school could be transferred to academy status with the local authority as its sponsor or closed..

A number of questions were asked:

What would the impact of academy status have on staff?

The restructure will still go ahead but the staff who remain will still keep their current pay and conditions and it will secure their jobs. Teachers would be able to stay in the pension scheme.

Is a decision needed tonight?

The Chair felt that it would be in the best interests of the school to see more information about other options available to the school before a decision is made.

The Headteacher stated that Chester University is our only sponsor at the moment.

The Headteacher needs to ensure the process does not impact on the school improvement process and that additional pressure is not put on the Senior Leadership Team.

The Associate Headteacher spoke about his initial concerns for academy status but feels that the offer of sponsorship from Chester University will be the best one we will have and stated that:

- If the school does not take up this opportunity soon convertor academies that are looking for sponsors may be chosen by the university.
- Good teachers will leave Shorefields.
- There would not be any guarantees for the terms and conditions of staff if the school is forced to become an academy by the LA
- Chester University will offer CPD discounted UCAS points for students to go to the university
- The university is more than happy to continue with it's links with JMU.

- If we become a sponsor academy we will be in a much better financial position.

The opinions of the Governors differed and some felt that they needed to have time to think and come back in the new year for a ballot.

The Associate Headteacher informed the Governors that staff were unaware of discussions regarding academy status and at the moment the school was very unsettled.

J Burke (Academy consultant) joined the meeting at 4.45pm.

Introductions were made to and from Jim Burke. Mr Burke informed the Governors that Chester University had sponsored an academy in Ellesmere Port with another opening in 2011 in Birkenhead. They have also been asked to sponsor 6-8 more. Ellesmere Port academy obtained 22% 5 A*-Cs before being taken over and this year the figures had risen to 38% .

The Vice Chair voiced her concern regarding Trust status as the Trust is about to go through the process of land conveyance and does not want to go through this process if academy status is going to be implemented. Mr Burke stated that he would have to look into this although the new academy in Birkenhead had transferred over its lease without any problems.

Mr Burke stated that:

- He would anticipate that the current Governing Body would transfer its role if the school opened as an academy.
- The current Trust would be dissolved and the DFEE would provide a great deal of legal support.
- Opening the school as an academy would mean a fresh start for the students and with the support of the university and a new name would ensure success and make it a popular school.
- Shorefields will become a family of schools and would be protected against closure.
- Staff's pay and conditions will be protected.
- If academy status is agreed Shorefields will open as an academy in September

2011.

- A DFEE advisor would be appointed to ensure everything is done legally.
- HR, finance and ICT support would be put in place.
- Governance training would be available
- If the school introduced any new initiatives such as KIPP the university would support this and provide opportunities for research which is school based.
- The Governors must decide by mid January if they wish to transfer to academy status with Chester University as their sponsor because of certain constraints.

If academy status is agreed a letter from the Headteacher and Chair of Governors would be sent to Chester University and they would contact the LA. J Burke thanked the Governors and left the meeting at 5.50pm.

The Governors discussed the options and it was stated that academy status may appeal to the local community.

A Staff Governor felt that the idea to become an academy was favourable as pay and conditions would not change and the staff would be guaranteed a job. The Headteacher informed the Governors that in her previous role staff were totally against academy status at first but eventually agreed that it would benefit both the students and staff. . She felt that a great deal of consideration would have to be taken into account on how she manages the staff and the reasons why it would be an advantage for them to transfer to academy status.

A Governor stated that he wanted the best for Shorefields and the advantages outweighed the disadvantages and a decision will have to be made as soon as possible.

The Vice Chair of Governors voiced her concerns regarding the political changes that are due to take place as Chester University is under a tremendous amount of financial pressure due to university fees increasing and having a massive funding gap.

	<p>The Chair of Governors suggested that the Headteacher and herself should arrange to meet with the Governing Body of Ellesmere Academy before the Christmas break to answer any queries .</p> <p>The LEA Governor stated that he would like to speak with the LA to ask if there were any more options for the school and felt that staff should be made aware that academy status is being considered.</p> <p>Extra Ordinary Meeting arranged for 12th January 2011 at 4.00pm.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 6.25pm</p>	<p>The Headteacher will arrange a meeting at Ellesmere Port Academy and produce a report regarding their findings</p> <p>The Governor will speak to the LA and will email the Governors of the outcome.</p> <p>Staff are not to be consulted at the moment</p>
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