

CORPORATE GOVERNING BODY OF GODALMING COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Governing Body of Godalming College held at the College on Tuesday 8th December 2009 at 7.00pm

Present:

Hugh Pile (Chairman)	David Adelman(Principal)
Peter Bolton	Stephen Cooper
Stephen Dennison	Robin Galliver
Helena Hockridge	Margaret Jack
Brenda Jenner	Philip Knights
Michael Laver	Valerie Martin-Long
Neil Parsons	Sharon Ward
David Wheatley	

Apologies: Victoria Elliott
Sally Seymour
Angela Gallagher-Brett

In Attendance: Stella Halloran(Clerk to the Corporation)

Hugh Pile welcomed Helena Hockridge to her first Corporation meeting as a Parent Governor.

He notified the governors of the death of Tom Waring, who had been Chairman of Governors from 1984 to 1991 and promoted creative arts education in the College and after whom the Waring Building was named. The Corporation recorded its condolences to his widow. Hugh Pile will attend the funeral on behalf of the Corporation.

ACTION

- 1. Apologies for absence**
Apologies were received from Victoria Elliott , Angela Gallagher-Brett and Sally Seymour – these apologies were accepted.
- 2. Declaration of Interests**
No member had any interests to declare on items on the agenda.
- 3. Minutes**
The minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2009, were approved and signed.

The only matter arising from these minutes that would not appear elsewhere on the agenda was:

Item 12 – governors did not recall having received an email of the slides from the Principal's presentation. He agreed to attend to this.

D ADELMAN

- 4. Chairman's Actions**
Hugh Pile reported that he had authorised the payment of the salary increases to staff and had signed off three College trips during the term.

Governors were informed that the Celebration Evening and Prize giving in the Summer would be held on Friday 2nd July 2010 from 5 – 7.30pm. Governors would receive invitations nearer the time.

5. **Report of the Principal**

David Adelman highlighted the following from his report, which had been circulated with the agenda:

(a) Machinery of Government Changes

This would be dealt with under Item 7.

The Principal explained that the Skills Funding Agency would only be responsible, as far as College is concerned, for data collection, which they would then pass to the YPLA (Young People's Learning Agency).

(b) College Activities

Governors agreed that the range of activities undertaken by the students was fantastic. Best wishes were passed on to those students progressing to further rounds in their competitions.

6. **Committee Reports**

(a) Remuneration

The Chairman of the Committee underlined the agenda item concerning the excellent appraisals of the Senior Management team and the clerk.

(b) Human Resources

The chairman of the committee, David Wheatley, informed governors that since the meeting, new information had come to light regarding the Employment Procedures policies and that therefore they could not be recommended to the Corporation at this time.

The matter of 360 degree reviews had been discussed, as it was of interest to the committee. Time constraints meant that the application of these was limited and therefore performed on a voluntary basis.

There was discussion about Safeguarding and the governors' responsibilities with regard to this. ISA was explained as the Independent Safeguarding Authority. It is anticipated that Carol Horlock will attend a Corporation meeting to explain the Safeguarding requirements in greater detail; it is an issue high on Ofsted's agenda at the moment. Meanwhile clarity would be sought on whether or not all governors should be CRB cleared.

*D ADELMAN /
CLERK*

(c) Curriculum and Quality

Stephen Dennison presented the report; there was little to add to the minutes. He reiterated the committee's thanks to Dave Cartwright and May O'Keeffe for their input to the meeting.

The Term Dates for 2010- 2011 were unanimously agreed by the Corporation.

(d) Finance and Estates

Valerie Martin-Long explained that the committee had met twice, once on 23rd November 2009 and again immediately prior to this meeting.

She reported that the new accounting system was up and running and proving to be very helpful.

Accounts to 31st July 2009

The Chairman of the committee explained that these accounts had taken in the costs involved in the closure of BTS and that once these figures had been taken into account there was an underlying deficit for the year of £220,000 compared with a budgeted deficit of £430,000. Savings had been made on the expenditure budget during the year which had helped reduce the deficit.

The BTS costs had been detailed in the minutes of 23rd November meeting.

Questions were asked about the pensions liabilities due to Surrey's Local Government Pension Scheme as a result of the closure of BTS. David Adelman explained that he hadn't finally accepted the College's liability on this and that a full explanation was being sought.

A governor asked what the final position of BTS had been and the Principal explained that it had closed in the red but closer to breaking even than might have been the case, largely due to the KOPTA money that had been received.

Valerie Martin-Long explained that the current ratios were better than those indicated on the balance sheet. This was because at 31st July the BTS costs influenced the ratios and meant that July was a low point. By the end of November cash stood as 1.2 million pounds and the cash days in hand were 45.

The Corporation's approval of the accounts to the year ending 31st July 2009 was proposed by Brenda Jenner, seconded by Sharon Ward and unanimously agreed.

The Management Accounts to the end of September showed a favourable position although they represented only 2 months of trading.

A governor questioned what the funding situation was likely to be in the future, given the bleak forecast of public sector funding. The Principal reported that the efficiency savings put in place to reduce expenditure over the next three years would cushion the College to some extent, but until the size of the cuts became clear, it was difficult to assess the full impact. There were still some additional cut backs that could be made – in back room services and if recommended by the SCFC, a pay freeze.

Health and Safety Policy

The change to the policy that was recommended – removal of the requirement for the Chairman of Governors to be the final signature on College trips authorisation – was fully discussed.

Governors were informed that a new electronic authorisation process was being developed and would probably come into full use from September 2010. It was considered to be important, from a risk management point of view, that the internal auditors looked at the new system when ready.

It was therefore agreed that the Health and Safety Policy would remain in place without this change until the new electronic system was in place, and that therefore the Chairman of Governors would continue to be the final signature on College visits paperwork until that time.

(e) Search

Following the parent governor election, Helena Hockridge had been appointed.

As a result of advertisement, there had been 6 applicants for the vacancies arising from the ends of terms of office of Margaret Jack (31st December 2009) and Valerie Martin-Long (May 2010).

The prospective governors had visited the College twice, once together for a tour of the College and a general discussion of the requirements of Governors and a second time for interview.

As a result the Search committee recommended to the Corporation that:

Clive Morton be appointed to the Corporation from 1st January 2010. He had agreed to replace Margaret Jack on the Audit committee.

Karen Bryan replace Valerie Martin – Long in May.

Both had accepted and were delighted.

The Corporation approved these appointments.

It was also agreed that Stephen Cooper replace Margaret Jack on the Remuneration Committee.

It was hoped that one of the other candidates could be retained on a waiting list should another vacancy arise, although none was foreseen at present.

It was further agreed that Stephen Dennison and Sharon Ward be appointed for a further four years when their terms of office end during 2010.

(f) Audit

Sharon Ward presented the committee's annual report to the Corporation.

She reported that the internal and external controls continue to be very strong. There were no items reported that were of significance; only trivial points were raised.

It was requested that congratulations to all members of the team were recorded.

The annual report was approved by the Corporation.

Discussion followed about the necessity for such a lengthy internal audit; Tenon had been asked to review the amount of time they spent

on Governance.

The Letters of Representation, "Audit of Financial Statements" and "Regularity Audit" were agreed and signed, following one small amendment to the spacing on the Financial Statements letter.

(g) Chairman's Forum

- **Marketing Plan** – the new plan had been presented at Chairman's Forum. Governors discussed the purpose and need for a plan. It was explained that the plan aimed to ensure that the College remained popular in an increasingly competitive market place. The objectives of the plan picked up on the objectives of the new Strategic Plan.

It was noted that one of the aims was to build a strong community position in the light of the demise of BTS. This was already happening with a large number of students volunteering help in local schools. It was thought that it might be useful to keep a record of ways in which the College works with the community.

The Corporation approved the marketing Plan.

- **College Charter**

The reference to wider activities in the Charter gave rise to discussion about whether the SF Bac should be mentioned in the future. The SFBac is being piloted and should it prove valuable will become a part of the College's expectation of students.

The College Charter was approved.

- **Governance SAR** (taken out of order)

With the exception that governor's access to the Governance section of Sharepoint would not be ready for January 2010, the Governance SAR was accepted.

7. Machinery of Government Changes

The Principal spoke to the letter from the DCSF inviting Sixth Form Colleges to consider whether, from 1st April 2010, they wished to be designated as a Sixth Form College or as a FE College, or otherwise. This re-designation would make Sixth Form Colleges a separate legal entity from FE colleges.

He explained that the status of the College would not change, the Instruments and Articles would be reviewed, but significant changes were not anticipated.

If the College were to re-designate, the College would come under the auspices of the DCSF, with the LA having responsibility for commissioning and quality, to some extent. The motivation for this change was understood to be an attempt to simplify 14 – 19 education arrangements, although it was unclear how this move would assist the process.

The Principal recommended, and the Corporation unanimously agreed that:

The Corporation of Godalming College wishes, under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act, that the College be designated by the Secretary of State as a Sixth Form College from 1st April 2010.

H PILE

The Corporation further authorised the Chairman to communicate this decision to the DCSF as specified in their letter, by 21st December 2009.

8. **College SAR and Development Plan 2009/10**

The Principal explained that the 09-09 Plan had been examined in detail in committees throughout the past year, that almost all targets had been met and that there were good reasons why the rest had not been met. The College had graded itself 'Outstanding' in each of the 5 Ofsted categories. Governors agreed.

The Development Plan for 2009-10 had been informed by the 3 year Strategic Plan agreed at the September meeting of the Corporation. There were 65 targets in the plan and the Principal drew the attention of governors to the following:

- The targets set in Section 1 were minimum floor targets, with the exception of A - B grades, which was a stretching target.
- Piloting the SFBac and changes to Student Support were to be noted
- A new Environmental Policy was in place and the College had signed up to the 10:10 initiative.
- The College would work constructively with the Local Authority when it comes under their auspices.
- There was a lot of work going on in ILT.

The Corporation approved the Plan.

9. It was agreed that this item should be treated as confidential.

10. **Risk Register**

The Principal explained that the closure of BTS had reduced the College's liability in terms of Risk, particularly financial risk. The nature of the Risk register was discussed and it was agreed that this could be looked at further in the Summer.

The Risk register was accepted.

11. **Dates of future Corporation meetings:**

Tuesday 16th March 2010 at 7pm
Tuesday 29th June at 7pm

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

As this was Margaret Jack's last meeting as a governor, the Chairman thanked her for her 14 years of service to the College and wished her well

for the future.

The Corporation as a whole thanked Margaret for all that she had done for the College, especially for the part she had played in all the new initiatives that had been introduced during her time as a governor, and as Chairman of the Corporation - eg new buildings and changes in personnel.

Signed:

Date: