

CORPORATE GOVERNING BODY OF GODALMING COLLEGE

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Governing Body of Godalming College held at the College on Thursday 11th December 2008 at 7.00pm

Present:	Hugh Pile (Chairman) Peter Bolton Michael Goodridge Margaret Jack David King Valerie Martin-Long Sharon Ward	David Adelman(Principal) Angela Gallagher-Brett Desmond Houghton-Connell Brenda Jenner Michael Laver Sonja Polimac David Wheatley
Apologies:	Stephen Dennison	Jo Thorne
In Attendance:	Stella Halloran(Clerk to the Corporation)	

Hugh Pile welcomed members to the meeting and, as this was the last meeting that Michael Goodridge would attend due to his term of office ending, thanked him for all his work on behalf of the College – a small event to mark Michael's service to the College would be held at the close of the meeting.

ACTION

- 1. Apologies for absence**
Stephen Dennison and Jo Thorne apologised for their non attendance – 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 29th September 2008 were approved and signed.
- 4. Matters arising from the minutes**
There were none that would not be considered elsewhere on the agenda.
- 5. Chairman's Actions**
The Chairman reported that he had signed agreement to four College trips this term (2 in this country and 2 overseas).
As agreed at the meeting held on 29th September, he had signed the approval of the salary increase for all staff by 2.45%.
These actions were endorsed.

The Chairman also reported that, sadly, he had received the resignation of Carol Dunnett as a governor, due to family and work commitments. This would leave a vacancy on the Human Resources Committee (and the Chairmanship of that committee), as well as a vacancy for Child Protection Governor. This would be considered further under the Search Committee report in agenda item 8.

6. **Report of the Principal**

The report had been circulated with the agenda and the Principal highlighted the following:

(a) Student numbers

These had exceeded target by 7 students. The application list for 2009-10 had been closed, as had the waiting list (at 230 students). As a result of the popularity of the College, the process of application for next year had been revised to ensure that the Open Day was held earlier, before any application forms were issued.

(b) Financial Issues

In light of the current financial situation, and the expectation that funding will not keep pace with increased costs, College management have been consulting on making efficiency savings over the next 3 years.

The consultation having closed, Senior Management have agreed that these savings will be made, gradually (and on a natural change basis) by increasing student numbers to 1700 and reducing teaching and tutorial time by a small amount.

Governors agreed that it was important that the College acted ahead of possible problems, rather than reacting when a problem arose. It was reported that staff had had a mixed reaction to these proposals, but by and large had accepted it as prudent.

It was difficult at present to know how College funding would work out in the coming years, but Government had indicated that they were expecting a downturn in student numbers nationally.

(c) Estates Development

This report, in conjunction with the two Finance and Estates Committee meetings explained the thinking on this.

(d) Changes in Government Structures in Education

6th Form Colleges will be a sector in their own right in 2010, under the auspices of the Local Authority (LA) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). The funding and overseeing arrangements have not yet been finalised, which does cause some insecurity.

(e) Drama, Music, Sport and Student activities

All tell of a very active college

7. **Terms of Reference for Committees**

Each committee had considered their Terms of Reference – there had been a few very minor changes from the previous year.

The Corporation approved the Terms of Reference for all Committees as presented.

8. **Committee Reports**

The minutes of all committee meetings, other than the Finance and Estates meeting that had been held immediately prior to this meeting, had been circulated with the agenda.

(a) Remuneration

Hugh Pile, chairman of this committee reported that it had, for the first time, received copies of the appraisals of the Principal and Senior Managers. The appraisals had been very positive and very impressive.

(b) Human Resources

David Wheatley gave this report as the Chairman, Carol Dunnett had resigned.

The Harmonisation of Surrey Allowance was discussed and it was agreed that it was inequitable to have teaching staff paid one amount and support staff paid a different amount.

The Corporation approved the proposal that the Surrey Allowance be harmonised across teaching and support staff as outlined in the paper.

To a governor's question, the Principal assured governors that there were no other allowances that were similarly applied.

(c) Curriculum and Quality

Desmond Houghton-Connell gave this report in the absence of Stephen Dennison (Chairman of the Committee)

He reported that the Self Assessment reports had been the major item discussed, and the result of the deliberations on these was contained in the minutes.

The Committee was looking forward to receiving an update on the consultations about Student Guidance at their Spring Term meeting.

The Corporation approved the Term Dates for 2009/10.

(d) Finance and Estates

Valerie Martin-Long, chairman of this committee, explained that 'Estates Development' had been reported under Item 5c.

The minutes of 19th November 2008 had received the draft accounts for the previous year and the full accounts would be considered under item 11.

The financial performance indicators were now not as comfortable as during the past few years as a lot of cash has been spent, particularly on the new builds and refurbishment over Summer 2008. The number of cash days in hand, although comfortable at present, would become less so by March 2009.

A recommendation from the committee that the overdraft facility for £400,000, previously agreed by the Corporation, now be facilitated with the bank was agreed.

The Management accounts to the end of September 2008 had indicated that the deficit was better than that forecast and that the apparent shortfall of income from 'Train to Gain' was a timing issue. The new format for budget monitoring has already been used and is proving a useful tool for ease of monitoring the budget, and anticipated outturn, throughout the year.

The updated Health and Safety policy had been received and recommended to the Corporation by this committee.

The Corporation approved the Health and Safety Policy.

(e) Search

Hugh Pile, Chairman of this committee reported that a search for replacement governors for Michael Goodridge and Jim Laity had resulted in 4 responses, three of whom governors on the panel had thought suitable. CVs of these three were tabled at this meeting.

In light of the resignation of Carol Dunnett, the recommendation from the Search committee was that all three, Stephen Cooper, Robin Galliver and Philip Knights, be appointed as governors.

This was unanimously agreed by the Corporation.

The following appointments to committees were agreed:

Philip Knights to audit
Stephen Cooper to HR
Robin Galliver to Curriculum and Quality.

*HUGH PILE TO
CONTACT THEM
CLERK TO SEND
DOCUMENTATION*

David Wheatley had agreed to take the Chair of Human Resources and the Child Protection Governor position was yet to be filled.

*HUGH PILE TO
PROGRESS*

(f) Audit

Sharon Ward, chairman of this committee spoke to her report to the Corporation that had been circulated prior to this meeting.

Sharon assured the Corporation that the committee was satisfied with all the internal control frameworks. She pointed out that for external audit of the accounts to the end of July 2008, the auditors had had to extend the time spent in College by a considerable amount as the paperwork and supporting documents were not available at the start of their audit process. The Corporation could be assured that the Principal and Chair of Finance and Estates had put in place a procedure to ensure there was not a repeat of this next year.

The Corporation accepted the report of the Chairman of Audit, with thanks.

The Audit committee had been looking for a co-opted consultant to fill the vacancy on the committee that had been left by Jacqueline Kingsnorth.

It was agreed that Melanie Richardson be appointed to fill this position.

(g) Chairman's Forum

Hugh Pile reported that this group had looked at the SAR and Development Plan very thoroughly.

The Governance SAR was approved and it was reported that the actions in it were being implemented.

9. **College SAR and Development Plan**

Every committee had considered their area of the review section and plan for 2008-2009.

The Principal reported that the 08 -09 plan had evolved a little during the review process:

- An additional 'retention' target had been included in Section 1
- In Section 4 the emphasis was on the development of a new tutorial programme
- Section 5 had targets on buildings, efficiency savings and Framework for Excellence. David Adelman had agreed to give a presentation on framework for Excellence at the Spring term Corporation meeting.
- It was time for a new College environmental policy
- There were ambitious plans for MIS and ILT, and good progress was being made on these already

The Principal drew governors' attention to the fact that a new 'Strategic Plan' was needed for 2009 – 2012. This would be considered in the Summer term and would involve consultation across college and corporation.

The recommendation that all 5 areas of the SAR be graded 'Outstanding' was agreed by the Corporation.

To a question about progress with the new financial software package, the Principal reported that a tender document had been issued to three companies and it was expected that interviews for selection of a package would take place in February (a governor would be required for this).

10. **Risk Register**

The Chairman's Forum and SLT1 had considered this in depth.

There were no high impact risks for 08-09.

BTS income and student numbers is less secure, especially this year with the financial climate.

The Corporation accepted the Risk Register and agreed that there was nothing fundamental to worry about.

A governor questioned whether the change to a new financial management package should feature as a risk and the Principal agreed to consider this, although the risk should be low if tested appropriately.

11. **College accounts to 31st July 2008**

Valerie Martin-Long presented the accounts for approval, in accordance with the recommendation from the Finance and Estates Committee meeting just prior to this meeting.

The following points were drawn to the attention of the Corporation:

- Income was £204,000 above that budgeted for the year.
- Expenditure was £39,000 below budget for the year (due to the £100,000 land sale accrual), but had increased by 6.5% on the previous year.
- The operating deficit of £163,000 for the year was therefore less than that budgeted.
- The cash position is strong, but will weaken, hitting a low by

March 2009. It was therefore proposed that the overdraft facility for £400,000, previously agreed by the Corporation, should now be facilitated with the bank to give a safety cushion. This will enable the College to meet the LSC cash requirements and improve the current ratio.

- The depreciation on new building works was explained, particularly emphasising that the Performing Arts building would depreciate by £3 million over 50 years.
- Staff costs were £25,000 over budget.

The Corporation approved the accounts for the year to 31st July 2008 and agreed that the Chairman and Principal should sign them.

HUGH PILE
DAVID ADELMAN

The letters of representation (Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity Audit) were approved for signing.

12. **Dates of Future Meetings**

17th March 2009

8th July 2009

The meeting closed at 8.55pm

Signed:

Date: