

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF GODALMING COLLEGE

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Godalming College
held on Monday, 10th July 2023 at 4.30pm

Present:

	Jeremy Pattison, Chair (JP)	
Rachel Grey (RG)	Lee Henderson (LH)	Stuart Hibbert (SH)
Geoff Howes (GH)	Peg Hulse (PH)	Justin Knight (JK) (online)
Dawn Reves (DR)	Nigel Roberts, Vice-Chair (NR)	Ed Sylvester (ES)
	Helen Warren (HW)	Emma Young, Principal (ELY)

Apologies:

Julie Wagerfield (JW)		

In attendance:

Sarah Baudains, Assistant Principal (SB)	Ken Kehoe, Clerk (KK)
Oliver Stevens, Vice-Principal (ODS)	

1.	Second term for Jeremy Pattison
	<p>NR took the Chair and JP left the meeting.</p> <p>NR advised that JP had completed his first term as a Trustee and the Board needed to decide whether he should be invited to serve a second term.</p> <p>The Board unanimously agreed that JP should be invited to serve a second term as Trustee.</p>

	JP returned to the meeting and agreed to serve a second term as Trustee. He then took the Chair.
2.	Apologies for Absence
	JW had sent her apologies. The Board accepted her apologies.
3.	Declarations of Interest
	PH declared an interest in the relationship with Glebelands as a Governor of that school. JP declared that he was currently employed by the AQA, the largest examination board used by the College.
4.	Minutes of the meeting held on 27th March 2023
	The minutes of the last meeting on 27th March 2023 were approved by the Board as an accurate record.
5.	Matters Arising
	<p>The Board agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JP and ELY should draft and circulate the Governance SAR for the first meeting of the next Academic Year; • All Trustees should have completed the training log and skills audit by the first meeting of the next Academic Year; • The training area for Trustees, including on Safeguarding, should be updated by the first meeting of the next Academic Year. <p>Action: JP and ELY should draft and circulate the Governance SAR for the first meeting of the next academic year.</p> <p>Action: All Trustees should have completed the training log and skills audit by the first meeting of the next academic year.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to update Training area for Trustees, including on Safeguarding, by the first meeting of the next academic year.</p>
6.	College Update
	<p>The Principal briefed the Board on the key developments affecting College, highlighting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Open Evening the previous week had been attended by 1400 families. It had gone very well. • The Going to Godalming Days had had the highest ever attendance at 80% across the two days. • This had been a successful year for the College, including in art, drama and sport. • External developments were affecting the College, particularly Government policy on BTECs. 68% of students nationally were affected by the Government's latest position. ODS advised that the Business BTEC may be funded for another year which was good news. He also advised that there was also lobbying to retain the travel and tourism

qualification. ODS informed the Board that Pearsons, the principal provider of BTECS, have said that they will announce in July 2023 which courses they will continue to provide.

Action: ELY/ODS to update the September Board meeting on Pearson’s announcement on BTEC provision.

- The Labour Party had updated their policy on BTECs to one of “pause and review” if they took office after the General Election.
- The importance of the creative subjects was being increasingly recognised, which was welcome. The impact of the English Baccalaureate and funding on feeder schools had had an adverse effect on the numbers of students taking creative subjects. Trustees noted that the focus on STEM subjects had also played a role.
- The School Teachers’ Pay Review Body were rumoured to have recommended a 6.5% pay increase for school teachers. Sixth Form Colleges were not directly affected but it provided context for the negotiations between the sector and the unions. The unions had asked for an 11.3% pay increase. But the sector could not afford that level of pay award. Industrial action was likely to continue into next year. There would be a meeting with the unions, probably in September.
- There had been no pay agreement for 2022/23; the pay award had just been paid.
- ELY had asked OFSTED for advice on the timing of the next OFSTED inspection. She was still awaiting a response. Policy on OFSTED was being looked at by the SFCA and the Labour Party. There might be some change of approach with the change in the Head of OFSTED over the summer, but any substantive change was unlikely before the General Election.
- Glebelands School was joining a Multi-Academy Trust with 6th Form provision. ELY would be meeting the Chief Executive of the MAT and the Head of Glebelands to seek assurances that the College would remain the main 6th Form provider for the school.
- A specialist 16-19 Maths School in Guildford would be opening in September 2024. It would take about 60 students.
- Surrey Payroll Services had notified the College the previous week that they are going to cease to provide payroll services to external institutions such as the College. SB was undertaking urgent work to secure a new payroll services supplier. The aim was to have a new supplier in place by October, with November as a back-up and December as the final possible date for the change. SB advised that the cost was about £12k per annum and that, based on her recent discussions with potential suppliers, costs should not be significantly higher.
- The Assistant Principal for Safeguarding and Support (CXH) had decided to step down from 1 January 2024. She had agreed, however, to cover a maternity leave vacancy for the Director of Safeguarding. Trustees would be involved in the appointment of the new Assistant Principal. The new AP would have a handover with CXH.

The Board thanked ELY for her briefing.

Turning to the SDP, Trustees posed the following questions:

Was the Rank 3 appropriate for Item 21 on online safeguarding? ELY advised that this was a key target for the Safeguarding Team and that it worked in support of other educational and safeguarding activities.

	<u>How aspirational was the 61% target for higher grades?</u> ELY said that the target was based on 2019 outcomes for Godalming College.
7.	Risk Register
	<p>ELY advised that the Risk Register had been reviewed by the Audit Committee and reflected the comments made by the Board at its last meeting. Following discussion, the Board agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The change in payroll provider should be added to the Risk Register; • SB should reflect on whether, and to what extent, the Collège is dependent upon other individual suppliers; • ELY should reflect on whether other political risks should be included in the Risk Register. <p>Action: ELY to add the change in payroll provider to the Risk Register.</p> <p>Action: SB should reflect on whether, and to what extent, the Collège is dependent upon other individual suppliers.</p> <p>Action: ELY should reflect on whether other political risks should be included in the Risk Register.</p>
8.	Financial Reports
	<p>Management Accounts</p> <p>SB briefed the Board on the Management Accounts to the end of Period 9. There was an underspend of £200k on the revenue account, but an overspend of some £700k overall was still anticipated, reducing the College’s cash holdings. The Catering operation was still in profit, but margins had been squeezed. Prices would rise in September to ensure the operation remained profitable. The College’s CIF Bids had been unsuccessful, but the College would press ahead with the work on the roof of the 900 building. The project to replace the windows of the 600 building would not proceed. The £108k allocation to the Bursary Fund would be used. No significant changes were expected in the following periods.</p> <p>Trustees asked whether there was any risk in not proceeding with the 600 Building windows project. SB advised that users would be colder but the windows were not unsafe.</p>

	<p>College Budget 2023/24 and 3-Year Financial Plan</p> <p>SB introduced the draft College Budget for 2023/24 and the medium-term plan, noting that it had been reviewed and recommended to the Board by the Finance and Estates Committee. The budget was very lean and had been the subject of much internal scrutiny. It assumed pay awards of 4% to allow for a balanced budget. Pay awards more than that assumption would probably lead to overspend, which would have to be met from the College’s cash reserves. The budgetary position of the College would improve in 2024/25 because of the increase in the numbers of students on roll. ELY noted that there may have to be a reduction in enrichment courses and departmental workshops.</p> <p>Trustees asked:</p> <p><u>Whether the costs of any changes necessary in the wake of the Government’s decisions on BTEC had been included in the medium-term plans?</u> SB and ELY advised that the costs were not included as there was not sufficient certainty about the plans. The costs of change would, however, affect next year’s budget.</p> <p><u>Was the Gill extension project reflected in the medium-term plan?</u> SB advised that the project was not included in the plan as the College was still awaiting ESFA approval for the sale of the cottage and planning permission for the extension. The cottage had been valued at between £500k and £700k.</p> <p>The Board approved the 2023/24 Budget and the plans for 2024/25 and 2025/26.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Committee Reports</p>
	<p><u>Curriculum and Quality Committee -</u> PH reported that the C&Q Committee had discussed student support and that it was seeking further analysis of the impact of College’s support on student outcomes. The Committee had also discussed the outcome of the External Quality Review into Barriers to Learning. The Report had been excellent. There were areas for further improvement, and these would be taken forward over the coming year.</p> <p><u>Governance and HR –</u> NR reported to the Board on the Committee’s consideration of the College’s HR data. Staff sickness absence data was trending down which was welcome. He also advised the Board of the agreed changes to the information that would be published on the Trustees’ annual declarations of interests. The other issues discussed by the Committee were covered elsewhere on the agenda.</p> <p><u>Finance and Estates –</u> JK noted that the principal issues addressed by the Finance and Estates Committee were covered elsewhere on the meeting’s agenda.</p>

	<p><u>Audit-</u> GH briefed the Board on the strong assurances that had been provided by the reports from the Internal Auditor. He also briefed the Board on the Committee’s consideration of the College’s new Disaster Management Strategy. Other items were covered elsewhere on the Board’s agenda.</p>
10.	<p>Chair’s Report</p>
	<p>The Chair advised that he held regular meetings with ELY, covering amongst other issues the complaints procedure, finances and industrial action.</p> <p>In discussion, Trustees considered how the Board would respond to hostile posts by third parties on social media, given the new Disaster Management Strategy. The Board asked that JP and ELY consider whether this could be considered as part of the Board’s Annual Conference.</p> <p>Action: JP and ELY to consider whether how the Board would respond to hostile social media posts could be considered as part of the Board’s Annual Conference.</p>
11.	<p>Documents for Approval</p>
	<p>The Board ratified the following documents:</p> <p>Bursary Policy</p> <p>Whistleblowing Policy, subject to an amendment on page 3 to read “from attributable sources”.</p> <p>Buzzacott Audit Plan</p> <p>Redundancy Procedure</p> <p>Sabbatical Policy</p> <p>Complaints Policy and Procedure</p>
12,	<p>Governance</p>
	<p>The Board agreed that a Special Written Resolution should be submitted to Members seeking the appointment of Shirley Price as a Member of the Trust.</p> <p>The Board noted that 3 potential candidates for trustees would be interviewed by NR, PH and ELY on 22 September. The Board agreed that if the candidates were suitable then they should all be recommended for appointment.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that the ballot for the Staff Trustee had closed. Unfortunately, the winner of the ballot had withdrawn from the election shortly before the ballot had closed. The Board</p>

	<p>agreed that the Clerk should run a new election at the start of the new academic year and should investigate alternative voting systems to avoid a recurrence of the problem.</p> <p>Action: The Clerk should run a new election at the start of the new academic year and should investigate alternative voting systems to avoid a recurrence of the problem.</p> <p>The Board agreed the Committee memberships for the next academic year. The Board also agreed that other Trustees could be invited to attend if there was concern that meetings would not be quorate. Several Trustees indicated their availability to attend additional Committee meetings.</p> <p>The Board agreed the meeting dates for 2023/24.</p>
12.	Safeguarding LINK Trustee Report
	<p>DR briefed the Board on her discussions with the Designated Safeguard Lead, CXH. She drew attention to the publication of the 2023 Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance and highlighted that staff would receive safeguarding training at the start of the new year. DR briefed the Board on the work on behaviour management, including a 3-strand disciplinary system, and a focus on developing the skills of the teachers in the classroom.</p> <p>DR also advised that the College's new insurance policy provided a 24/7 helpline for students which was important for student support over the summer holidays. If there were significant issues, these could be referred to the College.</p> <p>DR had also discussed CXH's resignation and the arrangements for continuity. She had been reassured.</p> <p>The Board thanked DR for her update. Trustees asked whether the leadership team had any sense of potential demand on the safeguarding team from the incoming cohort. ELY explained that issues were sometimes picked up in the course advice sessions but that feeder schools had a duty to send safeguarding data to the College.</p>
13.	Any Other Business
	<p>JP thanked ES for his service on the Board.</p> <p>Trustees asked about the number of students that had asked for changes to their preferred pronouns.</p> <p>Action: ELY to provide data on the numbers of students asking for changes to their preferred pronouns.</p> <p>The Board also agreed that titles should be removed from College application forms.</p>

	Actions: ELY to direct the removal of titles from College application forms.
14.	Dates of future meetings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monday 25th September 2023 at 4.30pm

The meeting closed at 6.35 pm

Signed Date.....