

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF GODALMING COLLEGE

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Godalming College
held on Monday, 25th September 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)	Julie Wagerfield (JW)
Helen Warren (HW)		Emma Young, Principal (ELY)

Apologies:

In attendance:

Sarah Baudains, Assistant Principal (SB)	Ken Kehoe, Clerk (KK)
Oliver Stevens, Vice-Principal (ODS)	Carol Horlock (Assistant Principal) - Item 4 below

1.	Election of Chair for 2023/24
	<p>The Clerk took the Chair.</p> <p>JP was nominated to serve as Chair for 2023/24; there were no other nominations. JP left the meeting.</p> <p>The Board unanimously agreed that JP should be invited to serve as Chair for the year 2023/24. JP returned to the meeting. JP accepted the appointment.</p>

	<p>NR was nominated to serve as Vice-Chair for 2023/24; there were no other nominations. NR left the meeting.</p> <p>The Board unanimously agreed that NR should be invited to serve as Vice-Chair for the year 2023/24. NR returned to the meeting. NR accepted the appointment.</p>
2.	Apologies for Absence
	There were no apologies for absence.
3.	Declarations of Interest
	PH declared an interest in the relationship with Glebelands as a Governor of that school.
4.	Trustee Annual Safeguarding Update
	<p>CXH briefed the Board on the provisions of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and the update to the PREVENT Duty. She highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increased emphasis on online filtering and monitoring; • the increased focus on absence from education; • the increase in the legal marriage age to 18, and • The changes to the PREVENT guidance, including clarification that the risk of radicalisation did not just apply to vulnerable individuals. <p>Trustees asked the following:</p> <p><u>Does programme for filtering cover all electronic traffic?</u> CXH advised that it covered the College's network, but not the personal networks of staff or students.</p> <p><u>Would CXH raise any concerns about with sites visited with individual students or members of staff?</u> CXH advised that she would, if necessary, but it would depend upon the context. There were often false positives e.g. a History student seeking details on the Holocaust.</p> <p><u>Did the College have a list of blocked sites and are there reports on trends?</u> IT Department maintained the list of blocked sites and received weekly reports.</p> <p><u>Do students know that traffic is monitored and is it in the Student Code of Conduct?</u> Yes.</p> <p><u>Are there enough resources for monitoring and filtering?</u> Yes.</p>

	<p>CXH advised that the College would carry out an online safety audit this year.</p> <p>The Board agreed that:</p> <p>Action: Clerk to circulate CXH presentation to Trustees;</p> <p>Action: Curriculum and Quality Committee to review absence data in view of increased Government policy focus.</p>
5.	Minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2023
	The minutes of the last meeting on 10th July 2023 were approved by the Board as an accurate record.
6.	Matters Arising
	<p>There were three matters arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting between ELY and the Head of Glebeland had not yet happened; • The Clerk should circulate the link to the Training Log for Trustees to complete; and • ELY briefed the Board that there had been 6 requests from students for pronoun changes last year, and there had been 3 so far this year. 37 students had requested use of the “they/them” pronouns. In response to a question, ELY advised that the College would decide whether to discuss the matter with parents on a case-by-case basis. The College tried to be gender neutral in its communications.
7.	College Update
	<p>The Principal, Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal (Finance and Resources) briefed the Board on the key developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College’s 2023 examination results made it the best performing 16-18 Academy in Surrey. The proportion of grades A* to B was less than last year, as expected, but higher than in 2019. The QAR was 88% just above the benchmark for 6th Form Colleges. The ALPS score of 3 was similar to the 2019 level, which placed the College in the top 25% of schools and colleges nationally. The 6 Dimensions score was 0.18, which was just above the national benchmark. The Chair asked that the Curriculum and Quality Committee look at the margin of error around the scores. ELY noted that the College would use the SAR process look at areas for improvement such as A Level sociology and media studies. • There had been 163 requests for marking reviews, but there had been only 10 grade changes. This was low historically, but it appeared to be in line with the experience of the S7 Colleges. • Enrolment was higher than ever before and there were 2371 students on roll as of that day. The budget was based on a roll of 2275, so this was good for the College financially. The College were running 3 sets of Further Mathematics and extra sets in other subjects too. Trustees asked whether the College had enough resources for the extra students. ELY noted that it had been tight. The College was close to capacity on classrooms and tight on social space. The College Hall had been converted to a social space as a temporary measure. Trustees noted the importance of the planned

	<p>development of additional social space. Trustees also asked what was driving the increase; ELY explained that it was partially demographic, but it was also potentially affected by developments in other institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government had announced additional funding in July. The uplift in the funding rate equates to 3%. Meetings on staff pay were imminent. In response to Trustee questions, ELY confirmed that some staff were members of the NASUWT but that she was not aware of any of them working to rule. • As far as the Estates Team were aware, the College had no RAAC, but another survey was taking place on that day and the following day to confirm whether there was RAAC. The cost of the survey was about £1.5k. The summer works programme had been completed on time and to budget. The Board congratulated the Director of Estates. • The ESFA had given approval for the sale of the cottage. This meant that the proposed extension of the Gill Building could commence in March, with a scheduled completion date of Christmas 2024. • The Assistant Principal (Safeguarding and Support) was stepping down. The recruitment process for her successor was in hand. • Cintra had been appointed as the College’s payroll provider following Surrey County Council’s decision to withdraw from providing the service to external bodies; • Staff costs had increased because of the 6.5% pay award and the increased spending to accommodate the extra sets due higher student enrolment; • OFSTED had confirmed that the College would be inspected by September 2025. <p>The Principal and Deputy Principal also briefed the Board on the impact of the proposed Level 3 reforms. The following points were made in discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hospitality BTEC would be gone by 2024 and there was no replacement. The College currently had 40 students on Hospitality BTEC. Pearson’s was looking at a new Applied General Qualification from 2026. The staff that currently delivered Hospitality will be delivering the Travel and Tourism BTEC; • Hundreds of students would be affected by the proposed cuts to BTECS by 2026 but the College was looking at alternative qualifications; • Double Media Production would also be gone. There may be a T Level I the same area, but the College would need to find work experience. The College had good facilities. • The Labour Party have said that they will pause the Level 3 reforms should they form the Government after the next election; • Information on what courses would be offered by the College would be placed on the website, rather than in the prospectus, to allow the College to respond to the changing policy environment. <p>The Board also discussed the 2023/24 Development Plan and agreed that “Partly Achieved” should be replaced by “Not achieved”.</p>
8.	Chair’s Report
	<p>The Chair briefed the Board on a complaint that he had reviewed. The Complainant had begun legal action at the SEND Tribunal against the College. The College’s solicitors were dealing with the matter and the College’s insurers had been informed.</p>
9.	Board of Trustee Business

	<p>Committee Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Board approved the Committee Terms of Reference for 2023/24, subject to an amendment of the Finance and Estates TOR to refer to the Disaster Management Strategy.</p>
10.	<p>Draft 2022/23 Year End Management Accounts</p> <p>SB briefed that there had been an underspend of £306k in the revenue budget and overspend of £819k on the capital budget. Therefore, the College’s cash holdings as of 31st August 2023 was £3.65m, compared to £3.85m 31st August 2022. Some invoices had not been paid in August, however, and if these were taken into account, the cash balance would be about £3.3mn.</p> <p>The College had made a small reduction in the accumulated Bursary surplus that had built up in previous years.</p> <p>In response to Trustee questions, SB advised the catering operation was operating at maximum capacity and that the College would seek external advice on the catering operation when the re-design of the kitchen was required.</p>
11.	<p>Draft Governance Self-Assessment</p> <p>The Board agreed that each Committee should draft one or two objectives for this year this term and, in the summer term, draft one or two objectives for the following year. The objectives should fit within the College’s strategic priorities and should be time bound to the year for which they are set.</p> <p>The Board also agreed that all new Trustees should undertake a basic training programme.</p>
12.	<p>Documents for Approval</p> <p>The Board ratified the following documents:</p> <p>Safeguarding Policy, <i>subject to the reference to “peer on peer” on pages 4 and 24 being amended to “child on child”, and the removal of the reference to staff conducting “interviews” with students at the top of page 8.</i></p> <p>LH explained the importance of the Achieving Best Evidence guidance in supporting any later Court cases.</p> <p>Action: LH to send article on ABE to ELY.</p> <p>Action: ELY to raise with the SFCA.</p> <p>Data Protection</p>
13.	<p>Governance</p> <p>Appointment of Trustee</p>

	<p>The Vice-Chair briefed the Board on the interview that he, ELY and PH had conducted with a potential Trustee, Peter Flew. He briefed the Board on Peter Flew’s background and skills. The panel recommended that Peter Flew be appointed as a co-opted Trustee.</p> <p>The Board agreed the appointment of Peter Flew as a co-opted Trustee, subject to the completion of the required checks.</p> <p>Staff Trustees</p> <p>The Clerk briefed the Board on the provisions of the Academy Trust Handbook 2023 regarding the appoint of members of staff to the Board of Trustees. The Board considered the matter and unanimously agreed that, given the importance of having insight into staff views and the value of staff Trustees in helping the Board to triangulate, the Clerk should be instructed to seek nominations from staff who would be willing to serve on the Board as a co-opted Trustee. If there were more nominations than the current vacancy, then the Clerk should run a ballot to determine which member of staff should be proposed to the Board.</p> <p>Action: Clerk to seek nominations from staff to fill the vacancy for a co-opted Trustee.</p>
14.	SALIX Funding
	<p>SB briefed the Board that the College would not be seeking SALIX Funding to replace gas boilers with air source heat pumps as such pumps would cost some £7.5 mn and the grant was capped at £1.9mn. The technology was currently too expensive, and the grant was insufficient to proceed further.</p> <p>The Board took note but underlined the importance of embedding energy efficiency in any new builds.</p>
15.	Any Other Business
	There was no other business.
16.	Dates of future meetings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday 11th December 2023 at 4.30pm • Monday 25th March 2024 at 4.30pm • Monday 8th July 2024 at 4.30pm

The meeting closed at 6.40 pm

Signed Date.....