

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF GODALMING COLLEGE

Minutes of the meeting of the Full Board of Trustees of Godalming College held virtually on Monday, 14th September 2020 at 4.30pm

Present:

Peter Aitken (PA)	Hamish Cameron Blackie (HCB).	Adam Duce (AD)
Geoff Howes (GH)	Rachel Gray (RG)	Elizabeth Graham, Chair (EG)
Douglas Jack (DJ)	Justin Knight (JK)	Jeremy Pattison (JP)
Shirley Price (SP)	Hannah Radwanski (HR)	Dawn Revesse (DR)
Nigel Roberts (NR)	Anne Wakefield (AW)	Helen Warren (HW)
Emma Young, Principal (ELY)		

In attendance:

Sarah Baudains, Finance Director (SB)	Dominic Ferris, SU President (DF)
Sharon Harmon, Clerk (SH)	Oliver Stevens, Deputy Principal (ODS)

1.	Apologies for Absence
	None.
2.	Declarations of Interest
	There were no declarations of interest.
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 6th July 2020
	The minutes of the last meeting on 6 th July 2020 were approved by the Board as an accurate record.
4.	Matters Arising from the previous minutes
	None.
5.	College Update
	<p>Reopening</p> <p>The Principal provided the Board with a detailed overview of the arrangements for College reopening. The Principal confirmed the College was following government guidance and a full COVID Risk Assessment had been carried out. It was noted that the Risk Assessment had been shared with the Board and any feedback is welcome. The Principal set out the many measures in place for social distancing and explained the College's blended learning approach involving a delineated timetable split into 2 cohorts. The delineated timetable allows for greater social distancing and is a balance between proving a full timetable for students and managing risk. The Principal confirmed this position will be kept under review. The Principal reported that attendance to date has been good. The Principal further reported that there is not yet definitive and clear guidance from exam boards on assessment for 2021.</p> <p>DF provided the Board with a student perspective on the blended learning approach.</p> <p>The Board discussed the challenges involved in having all students return to campus and maintaining social distancing.</p> <p>The Board discussed the impact on teaching staff of delivering the blended approach. AD and HR explained some of the challenges and positives they had experienced.</p>

The Board recognised that the blended learning approach can be tough on teaching staff, delivering to students both in the classroom and remotely, but agreed for the time being at least it was the right approach. The Principal explained that the blended learning approach will be kept under regular review according to the ongoing situation.

The Board asked whether there would be a Staff consultation before making decisions on if and when to bring all students back onto campus full time. The Principal confirmed that staff and students will be consulted where possible before decisions are made.

The Board asked what plans the College has in place should the situation arise that tighter restrictions and possible College closure should be imposed again. The Principal explained that the current blended approach provides the flexibility to relatively easily move between a fully remote or in person timetable and that staff are equipped and experienced should the situation arise.

The Board asked how the College could help ensure students have the appropriate equipment necessary to take part in remote learning. ODS explained that an audit of students had been carried out at the start of term and had been followed up by Personal Tutors. SB confirmed the College offers a bursary scheme for qualifying students who may have difficulty accessing necessary technology.

The Board acknowledged the tremendous amount of work that Senior Management and staff were doing to support students and manage the College in these challenging times. The Board agreed that a formal communication should be sent to all staff expressing the Board's appreciation for all of their hard work.

Action: EG to send out communication to staff on behalf of the Board.

Results

The Board reviewed the College's results for the 2019/20 academic year. The Principal confirmed the results were overall up on last year's results. The Principal reported that the post results period had been challenging to navigate in light of the government's management of centre assessed grades and the subsequent reversal on downgraded results. The appeals process also proved difficult. The College provided support to many students who struggled with understanding their results and the appeals process. The Principal reported that once the government confirmed it would honour centre assessed grades most students were happy with their results and able to progress on to their chosen destinations.

The Board discussed the appeals process and how centre assessed grades were determined. The Principal confirmed the centre assessed grades followed a process which was evidence based.

Enrolment

The Principal reported that enrolment had gone very well. Enrolment numbers are higher than last year and higher than forecast. The Principal provided the Board with an overview of the enrolment process and noted that staff had worked very hard to manage the enrolment process to make it as safe as possible and at the same time ensuring students were well supported and felt welcome.

The Board discussed factors that might have informed the strong enrolment numbers. The Board recorded its thanks to staff for all the hard work that had gone into managing the recruitment process so successfully.

	<p>The Board discussed the student admissions cycle for enrolment 2021. It was noted that the autumn Open Evening will be a virtual event, building on the success of the virtual 'Going to Godalming' days in June.</p>
6.	Board of Trustees Business
	<p>Register of Interest The Chair reminded Board members to complete their Register of Interests forms for the academic year 2020/21 and return to the Clerk.</p> <p>Committee Membership update The Board reviewed the committee membership. The Board noted the following updates to committee membership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – HW has joined the Audit Committee – NR has joined the Governance and HR Committee – DR Has joined the Finance and Estates Committee <p>Succession Planning – Chair The Chair reminded the Board that her term of office as Chair would be ending in April 2021. The Clerk advised the Board of the process for nomination of a new Chair and informed the Board that nominations would open in October 2020.</p> <p>Attendance Figures 2019/20 The Board reviewed the Board of Trustees meetings attendance figures for the academic year 2019-20. The Board noted an overall attendance rate of 84% which is up on last year's rate which was 82%. The Board agreed this is a good attendance rate but the aim is to improve on this attendance figure in the year ahead. The Chair thanked Board members for their commitment and support throughout the year.</p>
7.	Draft 19/20 Year End Management Accounts
	<p>The Board reviewed the draft Year End Management Accounts to 31st August 2020. The Finance Director provided the Board with an overview of the figures and reported an overall underspend on the 2019/20 budget.</p> <p>The Board asked to what extent the COVID pandemic had impacted the College's expenditure for 2019-20. SB reported that in the academic year 2019-20 the College has incurred c.50K direct costs as a result of the COVID pandemic. A large portion of this sum was spent on supporting the College's catering function, as per government guidance; the remainder was spent on COVID related supplies. SB also reported that there would be additional COVID related expenditure in the year ahead and that College had started budgeting for this.</p> <p>The Board asked what support is available to students facing financial hardship in this increasingly challenging time. SB reported that a College Bursary Fund is available for qualifying students and that this fund is being actively advertised to students.</p> <p>The Board confirmed it was satisfied with the draft Year End Management Accounts to 31st August 2020.</p>
8.	AOB
	<p>The Board recorded its thanks the College's Senior Management Team and all staff for their continued hard work.</p> <p>The Principal thanked the Board for its support.</p>

9.	Dates of future meetings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday, 7th December 2020 at 4.30pm • Monday, 29th March 2021 at 4.30pm • Monday, 5th July 2021 at 4.30pm
10.	Confidential Item
	None.

The meeting closed at 6.30 pm

Signed Date.....