

Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body Held on 9 July 2024 at 5:00 pm

Present

Gideon Schulman (Chair)
Annette Cast (Principal)
Sundeep Bhandari (Vice Chair)
Kate Parsley
Paul Goodman
Mike Bluestone
Kevin Moir (KMO)
Hannah Butland
Julian Davies (online)
Kay Ying (online)
Samantha Pickett (online)

In Attendance

Anjana Jonathan (Dir. Finance)
Lois Vassell (VP C&Q)
Gayle Brown (Dir. Student Services & Safeguarding)
Michael Douglas (Head of Estates)
Kalust Manukyan (KMA) (Dir. Marketing & Communications)
Lorna Elliot (Exec. Dir. HR)
Peter Roberts (DfE) (online)
Ian Atkinson (Curiosity360)
John Kirk (Interim Director of Governance)

Observers

Natasha Jindal (Director of Governance designate)

1. Chair's Opening Remarks and report of any Chairs Action taken since the last meeting:

The Chair welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the year and thanked everyone for all their work and support throughout the year.

Some items would be taken out of order from the agenda to facilitate staff presenting single items.

2. Apologies for Absence

None had been received.

3. Declaration of Interests

None

4 i. Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2024

The minutes were accepted as a true record and approved.

The Board agreed that board and committee minutes no longer need to be signed in ink.

5. Matters Arising not on the agenda

none

6. New Build Update and Timeline and Capital Working Group Meeting

Peter Roberts noted the stage conditions that need to be closed prior to demolition and build.

There is another planning agreement not yet completed, but the risk is with Bouygues and this is not expected to cause a delay.

There is a risk of further discovery of asbestos, and a report is awaited to determine the impact on timing, if any.

There is an excellent project manager and confidence on good progress is high. Neighbours have been contacted and all feedback so far has been positive.

KMO asked if the asbestos was within the building.

PR confirmed this, but not an unexpected risk. The quantum is yet to be determined.

KMO asked if adverse wet weather would impact completion.

IA the hold up for asbestos and weather can be completed together, and wet weather is advantageous for demolition in controlling dust.

MB Asked about traffic flow increasing during the build stage.

PR, it will but it is cyclical and will be managed around busy times.

MB noted the local roads can be very difficult with tight and blind corners.

IA all contractors have been made aware, with signs for the public to contact developers if problems occur.

SB asked if a progress timeline is in place.

IA confirmed there is, but it is too early in the process to be accurate or very meaningful.

IA confirmed there is some funding contingency for asbestos, etc. There are likely to be further planning issues that will need to be addressed as development progresses.

Bouygues have been accommodating with senior managers having the skills and experience of major projects. Site setup is secure, passing all Health and Safety and construction inspections.

There will be no changes in layout or entrance until later next year.

SB asked if foundations will be in before Christmas.

IA said this was expected to be on track.

MD asked about access to the boiler room.

IA had taken steps to ensure there would be access in time for colder weather.

KP confirmed that all questions had been addressed and was pleased with the positive contact with neighbours. IA noted the site is registered with Considerate Construction list.

MK asked about a timing schedule for local traffic. IA confirmed Bouygues have traffic marshal and banksman on site and can provide an 8-week schedule of movements.

Action: The board requested a log of contacts from neighbours from local concerns.

HB asked about tree planting as part of sustainability.

IA noted that on-site planting has been settled, and there will be further offsite planting to be confirmed.

KM asked about a record of all queries and complaints from the Residents Association, actions and clarifications, with response times.

IA confirmed all contacts were responded to on the same day. There is also a dedicated local police officer.

MB noted there have been some local domestic break-ins.

IA noted there is full CCTV, but there will be permanent on-site security after the demolition phase.

The Board received the Capital Build Risk Register (DfE template), which will transfer into the Contractor driven risk register in about 6 weeks.

The board thanked Peter and Ian for their excellent reports and presentations. Both then left the meeting.

10. Marketing Vision and New Website

KMA presented the key priorities and direction in the PowerPoint presentation.

The new website is the 'shop window' and attracts most enrolment. The current website is at end-of-life and cannot be updated. A new agency was selected which ensured the new website is 'future proof' by using Wordpress, so can always be updated without closing down.

The launch will be in October after the recruitment cycle.

The presentation showed sample pages, with concept, look and feel. Logos and colours can be changed at any time by the marketing team, and the website data will link to ProSolution to prevent much of the current duplication.

GB noted the governance section requires a general update, with regular uploads of documents to ensure compliance.

Action: JK to provide compliance requirements.

PG asked about student involvement and about safety of hosting.

KMO this will be hosted on Google which has excellent security.

LE noted that students had been involved from the outset and are regularly asked for input. It also includes tools for the students to build their own courses for their requirements.

KMO asked to ensure all the documentation is in place for the hosting for security purposes.

SB asked about a list of users with read, write, amend, capability?
KMA confirmed there would be, and there would be only a few superusers.

JW asked about the process for updating, and what budget is for social media driving traffic.
KMA noted that updates would mostly be done by the marketing team, with HR adding vacancy content.

KMO asked about analytics.
KMA noted most referrals are from Google Ads and some from Facebook and Instagram.
Email is the second most converted channel but is not yet monitored. There will now be a CRM to monitor all emails and calls.

HB noted that Hubspot had been very effective at Berkhamsted, and is highly recommended.

The board was greatly appreciative of this presentation and thanked Kalust for this exciting presentation.

SP noted that a media success and failure report was due to come to Resources.
KMA will produce this for the next Resources Committee Meeting.

KMA left the meeting.

Action: KMA to produce Media Success and Failure Report for Resources Committee in October.

9. Safeguarding: Presentation and End of Year Report, and Bursary Report

GB presented a PowerPoint, highlighting four new staffing posts, updates on KCSIE for September 2024, priorities for 2024/25, and updates including new definitions in Prevent

There was discussion about the increased numbers of mental health and wellbeing reports.

GB noted that these increases are well known across all levels of education, though high numbers can demonstrate effective protocols in responding to concerns.

SB asked about sexual harassment.
GB noted this was down from 15 to 7 this year.

LE noted there is sense checking to ensure reliability and accuracy of numbers.
LV noted that some reports are not safeguarding, but these reports are forwarded and addressed elsewhere.

MB asked about support from external agencies.
GB confirmed that these agencies are providing good support, and all are followed up to ensure outcomes are completed.

KMO asked about staff training.

GB noted that there is contact training and monitoring, including on behavioural issues. The increase in numbers of EHCP learners is provided for, and there is support from the local authority.

KMO asked about cyber security training.

GB noted there is specific annual training for all staff and governors coming soon from AoC, which will be adapted for Stanmore.

GS noted a local incident of a street attack and asked about training for students on street safety.

GB confirmed all students receive personal safety training in tutorials.

MB asked about how governors might help with Safeguarding.

GB asked that governors regularly challenge managers about processes and protocols.

LV noted that the discussion session covered all the aspects of reports.

The board thanked GB and LV for this thorough and informative report and presentation.

GB left the meeting.

7. The Principal's report

The Principal gave a brief summary of the report.

It has been a very busy time and this excellent report was warmly welcomed by the Board.

GB asked if the local MP, Bob Blackman, had been congratulated on his re-election. AC confirmed this had been done, and noted his support for the college.

The Governors received the Principal's Report.

14.iii.c Fire Risk Assessment Nov 2023

MD presented the fire Risk Assessment which was conducted by an external party which, but not completed in time for the Resources committee meeting.

MD Noted that the main concern was the Larch server room. The new build will need to run pipes and cables through, compartmentalised and with added fire retardant

The Hawthorn Building has no compartmental sections on the pipework. This will be surveyed shortly.

MD note that the 2016 cladding on Hawthorn was not completed with fire retardant. Bouygues will be asked to look at this.

JW asked about any insurance risk.

MD/AC will check and confirm for the next Resources Committee

It was agreed this updated report will come to every Resources committee, with a column for ownership of each risk. All main legal areas will be green at the next update, with clarity of priority.

The Board thanks MD for taking time from his annual leave to present this report.

Action MD/AC to check and confirm insurance risk relating to the Fire Risk Assessment

8. KPIs and Risk Register

AC Summarized the KPIs end of year report. Attendance and punctuality are still major issues, but have improved, as has behaviour, though they are still a long way behind pre-Covid levels. Schools Liaison is now an emphasis to counter this.

There was discussion about more aspects of quality and curriculum coming to the Board so that governors have a greater understanding of detail. AC confirmed curriculum design will involve students far more to ensure the curriculum offer, the college's 'product' is appropriate.

KMO thanked managers for this report.

ANJ summarized the Risk Register, which was largely unchanged from the June version which came to the Resources Committee in June.

11. Accountability Statement

The Principal confirmed that this has been approved at the Audit Committee in June, signed off and submitted.

Consent Agenda and Committee Reports

12. Curriculum & Quality Committee

KP Summarized the report and welcomed the excellent Safeguarding presentation and report from GB.

KMO asked about AI training.

LV noted that AoC will issue a directive on this.

LV presented the Curriculum Plan 2024/25. There was only one change with the addition of the EPQ Extended Project Qualification.

The Governors approved the Curriculum Plan 24-25

13. Audit & Assurance Committee

SB summarized the report and presented the Internal Audit Strategy, the External Audit Strategy, and the Draft Annual Audit report.

Finance Grade is still Outstanding, though teaching costs are too high. Settlement issues were discussed in light of new Financial Handbook, and considered to be workable.

KMO asked about the Internal Audit Strategy insurance risk assessment as an IT health check.

SB noted that the last health check showed a number of gaps which needed to be addressed.

The Board approved both the Internal Audit Strategy the External Audit Strategy

14. Resources Committee

PG thanked ANJ for her excellent budget forecast presentation.

The Chair presented the Indicative Budget and Forecast 2024/25, which is for five years due to the new build project.

The Board approved the Indicative Budget and Forecast 2024/25

PG noted again that staffing costs are still a major concern.

There is still no national pay award settlement, due to the change in government.

Policies from meeting:

- Collective Grievance Procedure 2023-24
- Fees Policy 2024-25
- Caterlink Contract Extension.
- Fire Risk Assessment Oct 2023 (taken earlier)
- Health & Safety Framework 2024-25

The Board approved the four policies as recommended by the Resources Committee

The Board approved the two-year Extension to the CaterLink Contract

15. Governance Committee

The Chair reported on the committee's deliberations and highlighted the need for recruitment and succession planning which would be a priority in the September.

The Board and committee work plan was presented, and it was agreed that each committee would be responsible for its own annual plan from next year.

Noting the increase in the Gifts and Hospitality Policy from £50-£75 pounds, and the changed preamble to the Code of Conduct to bring it in line with the AoC code of Governance, and that the model policies were unchanged,

The Chair thanked the Principal that student governors for next year had already been elected, and looked forward to welcoming them at the Board Meeting in October.

The Board Approved the Gifts and Hospitality Policy, the Governor Code of Conduct, and the Senior Postholder Model Policies

16. Committee Terms of Reference

DoG reported on the addition of new clause to the duties recommended by Internal Audit to the Terms of Reference of the Resources Committee:

- to receive regular Management Accounts and financial monitoring reports

The Board approved the new Terms of Reference.

Item 17. Election of the Chair and Vice Chair of Board of Governors for 2024-25

The Board unanimously approved the election of Gideon Schulman as Chair and Sundeep Bhandari as Vice Chair for 2024/25

Item 18.

Meeting Review

Members view the meeting as generally excellent, requested more time allocated to core business, and more time on teacher recruitment. **It was agreed to hold an additional board meeting for a deep dive into curriculum matters.** This room, Elm 212, has poor audio and alternative equipment should be considered as those online found it difficult to hear.

DoG to circulate dates and times of all meeting for next year.

Date and time of next meeting:

Meeting – 8 October 2024 at 6:15 pm

The meeting finished at 8.10 PM

Action Points

Item	Action	Responsible	Deadline
6.	The board requested a log of contacts from neighbours of local concerns.	IA	October 24
8.ii	Website Compliance Requirements to Marketing	JK	July 24
10.	Media success and failure report for Resources committee	KMA	Oct 2024
14.iii.c	Confirm any insurance risk relating to the Fire Risk Assessment	MD/AC	Oct 24
18.	Additional Board Meeting be scheduled for a deep dive into curriculum matters	NS	Oct 24
18.	DoG to circulate dates and times of all meetings	JK	July 24

DRAFT