



Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body Held on 11 July 2023 at 4:00pm

Present

Gideon Schulman (Chair)
 Annette Cast (Principal)
 Sundeep Bhandari
 Kate Parsley
 Terry Butland
 Carlton Downie
 Paul Goodman
 Samantha Pickett
 Ramin Hashemian

In Attendance

Bob Pattni (DP Finance and Planning)
 Lois Vassell (VP C&Q)
 Robert Heal (Director of Governance)
 Sonja Devaney (Minute taker)
 Chidi Okolo (AP)
 Stephanie Chittenden (AP)

Observers

Frances Wadsworth (Deputy FE Comm)
 Steven Hutchinson (Deputy FE Comm)
 Mike Bluestone (Co-opted Governor)
 Hannah Butland (Potential Governor)
 Carina Mistry Uppal (Potential Governor)

Observers DfE (item 9 only)

Hem Kothari (Bouygues)
 James Tatham (Jestico & Whiles)
 Rupak Patel (Cascade Communications)

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

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, especially the two potential new governors as observers, the Deputy FE Commissioners and Fiona Chalk –Board Advisor undertaking a review of the College Board effectiveness. The chair noted that the DfE would be joining us for item 9 and that there were no chairs actions.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Viresh Paul, Jean Lammiman, Ying Kay, Kevin Moir and Sweetsan Manijam due to work or other commitments.

3. Declaration of Interests

A Governor identified that his partner had started work at the College this week. The Chair reiterated the confidentiality of the Board meetings for the governor's benefit.

4 Deputy FE Commissioners Report

The Deputy FE Commissioners attended the March Board meeting and agreed on undertaking a proactive strategic review of the college. To cover, how best to maximise the benefits of the redevelopment, local area needs analysis, long term financial planning and to support the Board with strategic recommendations.

The Key messages seen were: Strong aims to be a community college, strong local identity and identification as an 'adult' education provider there was recognition that the College wants to grow and reduce duplication with other providers in the area. Noting the new build and a need to be meeting learner targets; and that 20% learners are in satellite / offsite provisions, meaning that the Curriculum Strategy is extremely important – always need to refresh curriculum especially based on all the changes with the new build etc.

Stakeholders are very positive, especially welcoming links to Harrow services. However, one issue seen was that the Greater London Authority (GLA) are not seeing difference between Stanmore and Harrow regarding provision. The GLA welcomed a focus on courses for creative digital, construction and bringing back apprenticeships. The London Borough of Harrow (LBH) suggested a sector wide gap in SEND provision, with work to be done if the college decides to increase SEND offering. There are a number colleges within a 5 mile radius and therefore there is work to be done regarding differentiation and market share.

For Curriculum & Quality , the recent good Ofsted result sets the baseline and there is now a need for a 5 year curriculum strategy with an aligned 5 year financial strategy and an informed HR strategy.

The Finances are seen to be very strong, with good solvency and a strong balance sheet; and whilst there is a 5 year forecast, it is not directly linked to the curriculum and HR strategy. The Stanmore finances are more aligned with a 6 form college having only 2 funding streams of 16-18 and adults. There is 40% growth in the plan, with subcontracting being phased out, and pay and inflation issues remaining a pressure for education sector.

A sensitivity analysis based on assumptions shows that finances can change rapidly without regular mitigation.

The FEC would support recommendations:

- Provide support for a new curriculum strategy
- The five year Financial Plan needs to flow from the Curriculum Strategy and align with the HR and Estates Strategies and the overall college Strategic Plan
- Progress a CEFSS (Curriculum Efficiency and Financial Sustainability Support) review, which would encompass a review of curriculum planning processes
- Further Strategic Support as these constituent strategic elements develop

Governors had a concern with the growth forecast and removing the satellite and sub contracting too soon especially as schools encouraging students to stay at school. The Principal noted that all decisions would be market led. The Deputy Principal added that there was 43% additional capacity through the capital build, but key satellites could also grow.

Governors sought an understanding of adult education market and the Deputy FE Commission explained that only 19% of colleges met their adult provision targets last year.

The Chair thanked the Deputy FE Commissioners for all their hard work and help and looked forward to working with them again at the strategy day in October.

The Governors noted the Deputy FE Commissioners Report

5 i. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2023

These were accepted as a true record and approved.

ii. Action points review

Action points were reviewed and noted as complete, in meeting or pending DfE response.

iii. Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 23 May 2023

These were accepted as a true record and approved.

6. Matters Arising not on the Agenda

There were no matters arising not noted on the agenda

7. The Principals Report

The Principal gave a brief summary of the report noting that the Ofsted inspection received was Good and apprenticeships required improvement. There have been many good news stories receiving amazing feedback. Inc: Business Forum improved, King Coronation event invited residents, Accountability Plan formally submitted and meeting with Bob Blackman MP shows he is very supportive of the new build community college. The College remains financial outstanding. Open Day – June positive feedback. Extremely busy Summer Term. There is also a flourishing media program resulting in the RESPECT video for which we have had great feedback. A Video of Stanmore 2023 was then shown.

The Governors noted the Principals Report

8. Ofsted Update & Post Inspection Action Plan

The Ofsted Post Inspection Action Plan has been created based on 4 key areas the college needs to improve on with key monitoring dates. All areas that were identified the College were already aware of. The Action Plan will go to the C&Q Committee.

The Governors noted the Ofsted Update & Post Inspection Action Plan

The Board broke for refreshments at 5:30pm

The Board resumed at 5:50pm

The Bouygues Team from the DfE were invited to attend for the next item.

9. DfE Capital Build Update and Planning Application

The Bouygues team presented an update to the Board. There is a communication strategy in development and planning consent is to be applied for shortly. The team have consulted with the Board and key stakeholders. A key consideration is that the new building should be a very sustainable and energy efficient building. The College have met with Councilor Marilyn Ashton and Bob Blackman MP which was positive, and the team have a pre-application meeting planned with Harrow Council to finalise the requirements of the application. The team have also arranged to meet with the local Residents Association before the main public consultation on 20 July. A final application will be presented to the planning committee by the end of the year.

Governors challenged the considerations and were advised that the same number of parking spaces will be maintained and that the team will manage the construction traffic routes to support governor comments. The plan requires a very small number of student decanting, and the College will look at different ways of timetabling to minimise this.

The Governors noted the DfE Capital Build Update

The Bouygues Team from the DfE left after this item.

10 i. Key Performance Indicators

Governor's challenged student applications and were advised that numbers are slightly down at present, but offers were significantly higher after a change in recruitment process.

The Governors noted the Key Performance Indicators

10 ii. Risk Register

The Governors noted the Risk Register

11. The Annual Report on Safeguarding

The College reaffirmed the Ofsted Good rating and reported a solid safeguarding position. There is an increase in overall reporting of cases and the safeguarding team are currently drilling down to understand the underlying issues; however, this may be due to staff development and improvement in reporting. The reports are regularly reviewed in Safeguarding team and where appropriate shared with Heads of School as part of a triage

system. Governors, GS and KP (safeguarding lead) attended an externally provided safeguarding qualification course. New governors will be asked to attend their annual safeguarding training next academic year.

The Governors noted the Annual Report on Safeguarding

Committee reports

12i. C&Q Committee report

The committee Chair gave a brief report from the 16 May meeting. The Committee Chair was reappointed for the next academic year. The Committee reviewed the situation with ChatGPT and suggested that student disciplinary and code of conduct policies be reviewed in line with the development of AI. Students gave a report on their Respect film, which was great to see. The Committee reviewed the KPI's, Risk Register and Quality Improvement Plan and had the initial Ofsted feedback; noting key issues with attendance and punctuality but congratulated the College on the Good result. In year Retention & predicted achievement, best & worse case scenarios were discussed with the impact of TAGS in previous year noted. The Teaching & Learning report generally demonstrated good progress with Governors encouraging the use of e-learning and digital curriculum improvements. The Curriculum Plan has seen a significant change to support maths & English attendance, with good access to services and revised timings and is recommended for approval by the Board. The annual careers report showed good compliance and good accountability. The committee Terms of Reference were updated, the observation policy was approved.

The Governors noted the C&Q Committee report

12i. Curriculum Plan

The Curriculum plan was presented to the Board. Governors challenged the revisions and were encouraged to see the improvements to Math's and English attendance planning.

The Governors approved the Curriculum Plan

13i. Audit & Assurance Committee report

The Committee Chair met with the Auditors for a Private Update. The Committee reappointed the Chair for the next academic year. Ying Kay was appointed Vice Chair. The changes to the Post 16 Audit Code were noted and the Terms of Reference changes to match the ONS announcement that colleges are now part of central government were approved. The committee reviewed the outstanding ESFA financial assessment, the college financial benchmarking, Risk Register, KPI's and college accounts directions, which were all in good order. The internal audits were reviewed for Key financial controls, Learner number systems GLA subcontract controls; with substantial assurance and low priority actions arising. FE Emerging issues were noted, and the draft annual RSM internal audit report was approved. The Internal & External audit strategy for approval. The capital build register was reviewed, and it was noted that this requires some additional work. The Management accounts show a good forecast surplus, but the situation with pay and outcomes is unclear due to college pay agreements not yet being resolved.

The Governors noted the Audit & Assurance Committee report

13ii Internal Audit Strategy

The Governors approved the Internal Audit Strategy

13ii External Audit Strategy

The Governors approved the External Audit Strategy

13iii Draft Annual Report to the Board

The Governors approved the Draft Internal Audit Annual Report to the Board

14i Resources Committee Report

The Vice Chair of the Committee reported that the college has entered into a contract with Chelsea Football Club, within the delegated authority of the Principal and approved as a Chairs action, it is presented to the Board as part of this item, for retrospective approval. An update was given on Martyns Law and it was agreed that Mike Bluestone would become the link governor for security to support its future implementation. The HR report showed a significant improvement in staff absence management. The committee Terms of Reference were updated and the risk register and KPI's were reviewed. The latest management accounts note a forecast outturn surplus, but it was also noted that the college pay award remains unresolved. However, the College remains Financially Outstanding. It was understood that the College funding is decreasing by £309k next year due to less enrolments this year and lagged funding. It would be worse, but this was offset by some funding increases. The committee reviewed the Sub-contract and Direct Delivery plans, the Capital expenditure and DfE capital build plans, and the indicative budget, which was presented to the Board for approval.

The Governors noted the Resources Committee report

14ii The Chelsea FC Contract

The Chair approved the contract. Governors challenged the timeline and how this is to be delivered. The College confirmed the contract as marketing based with College direct delivery.

The Governors approved the Chelsea FC Contract retrospectively.

14iii. Indicative Budget

The Governors approved the Indicative Budget

14iv. Policies for approval

Fees Policy

Sickness Policy

Collective Grievance Policy

Subcontracting Supply Chain Policy

The Governors approved the Policies

15i. Governance Committee Report

The Committee Chair presented the report. Board succession planning was discussed, and new prospective candidates were interviewed and are proposed for appointment. The Committee Terms of Reference were approved and the Chair and Vice Chair re-appointed. The Board work plan was reviewed and is presented to the Board for approval.

The Board standing orders were amended to reflect a maximum of 2 terms or 9 years and are presented to the Board for approval.

An ambassador scheme was proposed to consider distinguished governors at the end of their terms, so that they can maintain their support for the college and act as representatives at employer events and award ceremonies. And is presented to the Board for approval.

The Governors noted the Governance Committee report

15ii. The Board Committees for 23/24

The Governors noted the Board Committees for 23/24

15iii. The Board Work Plan for 23/24

The Governors approved the Board Work Plan for 23/24

15iv. The Board Standing Orders

A change was made to reflect Governors serving a maximum of two terms or 9 years.

The Governors approved the changes to Board Standing Orders

15v. Ambassadors scheme proposal

The Governors approved the proposed Ambassadors scheme

15vi. Policies for approval

Gifts & Hospitality

SPH (AoC model) Policies: Grievance, Capability, Disciplinary

The Governors approved the Policies.

16. All Committee Terms of Reference

All Committee Terms of Reference were amended by the respective Committees.

The Governors approved the Committee Terms of Reference

17i. Report on Chairs Performance

The Chair was asked to retire for the first part of the next item

A survey was sent to the Governors to consider the Chairs performance and the outcomes were discussed by the Board. The outcome was a strong support for the chair with noted exceptions of the Chair undertaking annual Governor appraisals. Some Governors challenged that they were unaware of certain issues if they were covered in another committee.

The Chair was invited to return and was advised of points arising

The Chair suggested that Governor appraisals be considered and developed over the next academic year. The Chair also noted that there are chairs actions, Committee reports and minutes provided in Board meetings, but would consider a Chairs report alongside the Principal at Board meetings. It was noted that there is no current successor to the Chair, who has 2 years left on his Governor term of office. It was also noted that there is a Chair development program available to prospective Chairs.

The Governors noted the Chairs Performance and gave approval to the Chair.

17ii Election of the Chair & Vice Chair for the forthcoming year

It was proposed that Rabbi Gideon Schulman remain Chair and that Sundeep Bhandari be Vice Chair.

The Governors approved the election of Rabbi Gideon Schulman as Chair and Sundeep Bhandari as Vice Chair.

The Chair asked observers to retire whilst the next items were discussed. The observers retired.

18. Governance new appointments

The Governance committee Chair overviewed the interview of the three candidates and recommended them for appointment to the Board.

The Governors approved the appointment to member of the Board of

Governors of:
Mike Bluestone
Hannah Butland
Carina Mistry Uppal

The Board agreed effective immediately.

The Observers were invited to return and advised of their appointment to the Board.

19. Meeting Review and Evaluation

Governors expressed that they were happy with meeting, it was a good meeting that covered a lot. It was insightful and uplifting with succinct challenging and robust questioning. It was noted that the meeting had overrun but that it was necessary.

The Chair noted it was the last meeting of a number of long- term governors and wished them all well.

The Chair thanked the Deputy FE Commissioners for their report and support.

20. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 10th October 2023

Meeting ended at 7:00 pm

Signed

Chair

Date

The Chair then asked all staff governors to retire for Part 2

Action Points

Item	Action	Responsible	Deadline
Previous	Governor Insurance and senior pay setting under revised ONS regulations	BP	Pending DfE