



OATHALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting held virtually via Zoom on 16th November 2020

<p>Present: Stewart Boyling (SB), Brenda Brown (Vice-chair, BB), Julie Burgess (JB); Penny Canepa-Anson (PCA); Richard Carter (CRC), Rowena Chalk (Chair, RC), James Horsman (JH); Pete Robinson (PR), Eddie Rodriguez (ERZ), Nicky Wastie (NW)</p> <p>In attendance: Jo Godbolt (JG)</p> <p>Minutes: Alison Carter (Clerk to Governors, AC)</p>		
1	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Carl Day (CD)</p>	
2	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>None</p>	
3	<p>CDP STRAND 4 FACILITIES & FINANCE</p> <p>JG gave a presentation describing the impact of Covid-19 on business operation. It covered two main areas: (1) capacity & workload and (2) finance.</p> <p>She described the necessity for staff to adapt to a constantly and quickly changing situation, and also the frequent, long and densely-written communications from DfE and WS. Staff have experienced a huge amount of change in an unusually short time, and some have suffered stress and anxiety. Communications are far harder when physical ways of talking and meeting are unavailable, and it can be less clear that information has been absorbed. Far more staff time than usual has been spent in listening to colleagues in need of pastoral support, putting additional strain on the working day.</p> <p><u>Spending</u></p> <p>JG detailed the extra spending brought about by the pandemic. This includes: software and equipment for remote delivery of the curriculum and for events (e.g. parents' evenings); safer working measures (cleaning staff and extra equipment, duplicate equipment for safe working, PPE, building adaptations). Some cleaning staff savings were made when a night cleaner resigned during lockdown and a day cleaner was employed, but additional salary costs will be</p>	

<p>c.£13k by year-end.</p> <p><u>Income generation</u></p> <p>This has been better than was anticipated when hire facilities had to be closed. Pioneer Childcare payed rent for the year, and bookings for the all-weather pitch were high as soon as lockdown was eased in the summer. Income may be £10k higher than forecast.</p> <p><u>Catering</u></p> <p>Significant losses have been caused by school closure, and the school budget is subsidising the catering budget. But sales (after the school reopened) exceeded the forecast figure, and the Job Retention Scheme has helped, along with an insurance pay-out for loss of income.</p> <p>Risks in this area are significant: the catering team must work in close contact with each other and so a Covid case would close the canteen. The sending home of whole year groups, or whole-school closure, would clearly cause further loss. The furlough scheme would ameliorate this problem.</p> <p>JG mentioned the furlough scheme bonus. CRC shared via Zoom chat (19:16 hrs) a recently published change: the £1000 bonus was scrapped when the main scheme was extended to March '21.</p> <p>JB asked if students would be expected to bring their own food in the event of a case closing the canteen. JG said they would. The school would have to continue to provide meals for students on free school meals, either via supermarket vouchers or by using an outside caterer.</p> <p><u>Other savings</u></p> <p>JG listed other cost savings including: catering costs reduced by an increase in the number of students on free school meals; reduction in staff travel; refunds of exam fees; inclusion budget savings; low supply teacher spend; six months of vacancies in teaching assistant posts; low CPL costs. By this stage in a normal school year c.80% of faculty budgets would be spent; this year the current figure is c.50%.</p> <p>JG reminded the governors of the £49k of Covid catch-up funding available in this financial year.</p> <p>CRC asked if all additional spend is fully funded i.e. can all savings and income offset losses? JG said that she is now anticipating a year-end surplus, or a balanced budget. She is monitoring constantly with a view to offsetting extra costs with funds from other cost centres.</p> <p>JH asked about the volume and complexity of information coming from the DfE: is it of good quality, thought through and consistent? JG replied that it is variable. A typical problem is changes in guidance which direct the reader to an existing website but fail to indicate where the change appears on the large and complex site. Text tends to be dense and lack organisation. ERZ added that unnecessary detail is often provided while elsewhere the user is left needing clarity. He has sometimes spoken to locality schools in order to make a firm decision on e.g. opening of afterschool/extra-curricular activities, feeling that government information is unclear. JH asked if government is providing too much information for fear of not providing enough. JG agreed</p>	
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	<p>that this was a possibility, and added that WS also sends frequent and bulky updates, and other organisations add their interpretation, creating a very large body of reading.</p> <p>JH thanked JG for a very clear and helpful presentation, and the GB agreed. RC added that the GB rarely finds it has to query or challenge JG's reporting, and that it is easy to understand and always pertinent. She extended thanks from the whole GB to Jo. JB asked if JG has been able to work from home. She reported that she was been at school on every working day.</p> <p>The GB decided to consider JG's business and budget reports at this stage of the meeting, rather than as detailed in the agenda.</p> <p>ERZ and JG reported that the boiler project is almost finished. The school has benefitted considerably from WS funding – several boilers have been repaired.</p> <p>JG left the meeting at 19:35hrs</p>	
4	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12.10.20</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 12th October 2020, and Part II minutes of the same date, were tabled to the meeting and approved as a true record. They will be signed the Chair after the meeting and sent to the clerk.</p>	
5	<p>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS</p> <p>CRC raised the matter of succession planning with reference to the possibility (especially during the pandemic) of officers being incapacitated. RC said that this would be dealt with under her Chair's report (11) but that action did indeed need to be taken.</p>	
6	<p>URGENT MATTERS</p> <p>None</p>	
7	<p>POLICIES AND PROCEDURES</p> <p><u>Medicines policy</u> This policy was approved in principle. The clerk was asked to separate a paragraph into two, to give clarity on the types of drugs in school for medical emergencies, and to check for typos.</p> <p><u>Photography & Filming policy</u> Approved</p> <p><u>Complaints policy</u> Approved</p> <p><u>Inclusion policy</u> This policy was approved in principle. The clerk was asked to check all abbreviations for explanation and consistency.</p>	<p>AMC</p> <p>AMC</p>

<p><u>Safeguarding & Child Protection policy</u> Approved. BB pointed out to the GB the new material added, including County Lines. Mentioning the size of this policy (97 pages) JB asked if the WS summary is available. BB directed the GB to the summary included in a recent WS Governor Services newsletter.</p> <p><u>Monitoring & Quality Assurance policy</u> Approved. JB asked if the role of the GB should be included in this policy. Governors agreed that their over-arching role lies outside its remit.</p> <p><u>Outdoor Education and Off-site Visits policy</u> Approved. BB asked if there is a governor in charge of signing off on trips. RC confirmed that there is not, and CRC offered to take on the role.</p> <p><u>Consideration of policies for GB approval</u> There was a wide-ranging discussion of how school policies are best scrutinised by the GB. Should they be considered only at FGB meetings, should governors from each strand scrutinise and bring recommendations to the whole GB, or should the initial 'leg work' of scrutiny be delegated to a small working party? The last of these was chosen in principle. RC asked governors to let the clerk know if they are interested in joining the working party. She, BB and SB have volunteered for the work.</p> <p><u>Mobile phones policy</u> ERZ asked for the GB's views on potential changes to this policy. The suggestion for a new draft of the policy is that OCC follow the example of other locality schools in asking that phones be kept in bags, switched off except in lessons where they should be used for educational purposes only and under teacher direction. Staff have seen an increase in phone use during breaks and in corridors, with confiscations remaining high despite the instigation of the current policy in 2017. There is a consensus among staff that phones are having a negative impact on social skills. Camera use has grown exponentially. At a recent Parent Partnership meeting, parents initially felt that a complete ban was appropriate, but after discussion moved to a more nuanced view. Positive uses of mobiles were mentioned – for checking timetables or homework, and for reading. Parents suggested that their child might need a mobile phone in an emergency at school, and ERZ reminded the meeting that schools have procedures in place for emergencies. PCA asked if there is evidence of the impact of mobiles on attainment and discipline. ERZ replied that gathering data in an individual school is difficult, but that studies have shown mobiles <i>can</i> be a constant distraction. He added that many schools prefer the simple policy which is now proposed. CRC spoke about his personal views of phone use, and suggested that long-term and sophisticated education about wellbeing would be preferable to outright bans. He added that some students use phones as a protective device when lonely, and that the student body needs to be aware of this possibility. Society, he said, does not yet know the effects of online behaviour and phone use, and no blame should be attached to anyone displaying poor online and comms behaviour. ERZ added that, after three years of the current policy, it seems a good time to look again at the school's methods in this area and why they were chosen. He noted that in the dining area and library, where phones are banned, students</p>	
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	<p>converse. PR asked if ERZ has spoken to partner schools about their policies. ERZ replied that most have adopted the proposed model – phones switched off in bags. RC asked PR how the policy impacts his teaching. PR replied that mobile phones can be useful in practical lessons e.g. for reading instructions. SB suggested that a new policy might be trialled for the rest of this academic year, for full implementation in September. ERZ felt that a ‘clean break’ approach is more usual, after a period of preparation, but that the new policy can be reviewed again after an initial period of use. It was agreed that a new policy could be introduced in January. Everyone in school is aware that it is under review. PCA sought assurance that parents and students would be involved in the decision-making. RC asked ERZ to give an update on progress at the February FGB, and the GB agreed. CRC asked for reassurance that students would be able to ask a teacher’s permission to call home e.g. when canteen credit has run out. ERZ said this would be included.</p>	ERZ
8	<p>SIMS REPORT ERZ sent a report to the clerk during the meeting for distribution to the GB.</p>	AMC
9	<p>BUSINESS REPORT (considered above, item 3)</p>	
10	<p>ACADEMY/LOCALITY ISSUES ERZ reported that Julian Grant, headteacher of Sackville College, will retire at the end of this year.</p>	
11	<p>CHAIR’S REPORT</p> <p>RC reported on the professionalism of School Improvement Partner Ron Searle during an excellent recent headteacher performance review meeting with ERZ and BB.</p> <p>CD has resigned, effective on the day of the meeting. His work commitments do not allow him to give sufficient focus to his governor work. He has offered his services as advisor. JH expressed his considerable regret at the loss of CD’s skills, and reminded the governors of his tangible achievements in the service of the school. He asked that formal thanks be delivered to Carl.</p> <p>RC reminded the governors that his departure leaves only 8 of 12 GB posts filled, with 3 co-opted posts vacant (a staff governor election is due in December). RC has one possible candidate under consideration. She will add the matter to the agenda for upcoming governor one-to-ones, to encourage current governors to make recommendations. She acknowledged that the allocation of strands will need review, and that officer succession must be addressed, but suggested that increasing the size of the GB is a first priority.</p> <p>RC updated PCA on her request for finance training: a meeting will be set up with Karen Crockford, Assistant Business Manager, and Jo Godbolt.</p>	RC
12	<p>HEADTEACHER’S REPORT</p> <p>ERZ said that the first case of Covid necessitating the sending home of students and staff was reported on the day of the meeting. A year 10 student tested positive. Procedures were implemented, including examining seating plans. It was determined that 37 students should self-isolate at home, and one member of staff. The DfE helpline, ERZ said, has changed since the</p>	

	<p>spring and has been outsourced from the DfE to a call handling organisation which mainly follows a call script and asks for data on cases and isolation, rather than offering guidance. In addition, nobody was available to speak to the school until c.14:00hrs.</p> <p>Parents of children sent home were understanding. Follow-up calls will be made by staff, and students who are vulnerable or have special needs will be monitored by SEND staff.</p> <p>The new Teach Stream software (lesson live streaming) has not yet been used in earnest following training, and will not be used in this case because only a small group has been sent home.</p> <p><u>Adapted timetable</u></p> <p>The new timetable, created in accelerated fashion by Laura Gyngell, is in use. It has reduced pupil movement and the situation is now more manageable. Hand sanitiser is available at every classroom entrance. Teachers report that new additional cleaning measures – a teacher sprays each desk and every student wipes their own desk – are going well.</p> <p><u>PE changing</u></p> <p>A new ventilation system has been installed in the boys' PE changing rooms, and two appropriately cleaned classrooms made available for changing. This has allowed students to come to school in uniform and change for PE – a much improved situation.</p> <p><u>Assemblies</u></p> <p>Virtual assemblies have been held to encourage concerted efforts in safety e.g. the wearing of masks.</p> <p><u>Attendance</u></p> <p>Attendance is very strong and well above national averages. ERZ shared a sheet of figures that is stored with these minutes. Oathall is achieving rates of c.96%; the national average is c.86%. Ron Searle, School Improvement Partner, commented on these figures at the recent Performance Review meeting.</p> <p>Staff absence is at a record low, which has made the work of the school during this time easier. Teaching staff report feeling far happier to be working in their accustomed teaching areas.</p> <p><u>Parent consultations</u></p> <p>Despite some trepidation about delivering a parent consultation with a new and untried piece of software, feedback after the October year 11 evening was extremely positive. It was felt that being away from the noise of the school hall has a good effect, and the booking system worked better. Staff reported getting more bookings than usual. Time limits on each appointment, and on the evening as a whole, tended to be helpful.</p> <p><u>School Link Advisor</u></p> <p>Claire Conley-Harper, now back as link advisor after a gap during lockdown, visited virtually recently. She asked for information on Oathall's response to Covid-19, and also praised the school's website material.</p>	
13	<p>SAFEGUARDING</p> <p>BB reported on her safeguarding meeting with Emma Green. She had provided a report to the governors, stored with these minutes. She commented on the increase of students and families</p>	

	with social, financial and welfare problems, and on the strong Oathall team dealing with an increased and heavy workload.	
14	<p>PUPIL PREMIUM MATTERS</p> <p>BB and RC will attend a PP meeting on 1.12.20, and will report to the December FGB. ERZ has signed the school up for external review by the Durrington Research School. This is a major new project looking at how PP is used. WS is seeking urgently to improve its poor record in reducing the gap between PP and other groups of students.</p>	
15	<p>ATTENDANCE</p> <p>No separate report.</p>	
16	<p>GOVERNORS' VISITS AND INDIVIDUAL REPORTS</p> <p>RC reported on a recent meeting of the West Sussex Governors Association. She has been invited to sit on a panel with Claire Lansley (Governance Advisor) and Paul Smith (Director of School Effectiveness) on driving wellbeing CPL in schools. RC will be asked to talk about Oathall's exemplary work in this field.</p>	
16a	<p>At 20:41 ERZ was placed in the Zoom waiting room so that the GB could consider the matter of pay.</p> <p>RC reported that the Pay Committee met virtually before this FGB (governors attending: BB and JH & RC).</p> <p>RC reported that in his recent performance review ERZ was shown to be a very high achiever, especially in response to Covid-19. Those attending the review meeting struggled to set an objective, although they were keen to stretch ERZ professionally. RC and BB described a suggested pay increase pathway. They also shared with the GB a plan to end anomalies in SLT pay, creating parity, and to reward SLT members who have been for some time 'stuck' at the top of pay bands, or are on different pay scales altogether.</p> <p>The GB agreed a 2 point pay rise for ERZ and the suggested pathway to amend SLT pay.</p> <p>ERZ was invited back into the meeting at 21:08hrs.</p>	
17	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>None</p>	
	<i>The meeting closed at 21:10 hrs</i>	
	<p>DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS</p> <p>Autumn term: December 14th, virtually.</p>	

Distribution: Governing Body, Leadership Team, Head's PA, WSCC

FGB meeting action log

Meeting at which action raised	Details	Who?	Timescale	Completed?
16.11.20	Medicines policy: clerk to check for typos and make one correction in paragraph structure, p.8	AMC	asap	yes
16.11.20	Inclusion policy: clerk to check all abbreviations for explanation and consistency.	AMC	asap	yes
16.11.20	Mobile phones amended policy introduction. Progress report at February FGB	ERZ	For Feb '21 FGB	
16.11.20	Distribution of Nov SIMS report	AMC	asap	yes
16.11.20	Formal thanks to CD	RC	asap	