



OATHALL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

**Minutes of a meeting held virtually via Zoom on 24th
 May 2021**

Present: Brenda Brown (Vice-chair, BB), Julie Burgess (JB); Penny Canepa-Anson (PCA); Richard Carter (CRC), Rowena Chalk (Chair, RC), James Horsman (JH); Carol MacTaggart (CM); Jon Parry (JP); Pete Robinson (PR) Eddie Rodriguez (ERZ), Nicky Wastie (NW)	
In attendance: Faye Hatchard (FHD); Toby Houghton (TDH)	
Minutes: Alison Carter (Clerk to Governors, AC)	
1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None
2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST None
3	COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN TDH and FHD gave a presentation on the new CDP. They explained that Covid, and the creation of an interim one-year emergency CDP, offered an opportunity to review the way strategic planning is done. Previous CDPs have been multi-layered, with long-term strategy and aims as well as detailed aims and actions. The long-term element is vital, but a three-year plan brings with it the possibility of losing focus from the current academic year's objectives. FHD and TDH's review of previous CDPs also found that some of the more 'day-to-day' actions included are carried out by staff without the need for them to be laid out in the CDP. They presented a list of statements which aim to capture what Oathall is, and what it strives to be. The draft CDP goes on to list three phases within each objective: investigation, implementation and embedding. The investigation stage builds on an Oathall strength – research and trialling. The aim is to encourage all staff (via these development stages) to bring forward new ideas and see what may be effective. The number of items included in each of the four areas (linked to the current OFSTED framework) has been kept within focussed limits. Apart from 'Quality of education', only one or two projects are listed under each heading. Several, it was felt, can make a CDP unwieldy, both for the school and for the governors in their monitoring and questioning work. FHD said that

<p>staff should be able quickly to name the current strategic objectives e.g. literacy.</p> <p>An important element (and a column in the plan) is the ‘why’ column – why is this work being done? This will oblige the school to justify and self-evaluate.</p> <p>After this comes action planning, and the intention here is to include no more than a page of detail and actions for each objective (something that could, for instance, be posted on a wall) with links to more granular material.</p> <p>There is a column for what stage each initiative is currently at, a column for ‘leadership accountability’, and one for ‘resources’. It is hoped that these will be helpful for governors, who can see where the school has got to, who is ultimately in charge, and what are the likely cost implications. The fact that the CDP is a ‘live’ document will be useful in this regard.</p> <p>TDH expanded on the possibility of a limited number of objectives leading to the school ‘taking its eye off’ longer-term strategy. He assured governors that issues such as a larger student roll will be discussed, but the aim of the new-style CDP is to avoid ‘clogging up’ this document with the longer term.</p> <p>Notably, the four areas do not have a specific member of the SLT permanently attached to them. This is deliberate: the aim is to avoid limiting a member of the SLT in how they apply their expertise and develop, to avoid solo creation of action plans, and to allow SLT members to attend any meeting relevant to them. This will inevitably change the way governors meet SLT members. TDH suggested that further discussion will be needed to decide how governors will be involved. RC said that for now, the strands will continue and links to specific SLT members remain, but any governor may attend a meeting with SLT that they feel is relevant to them. JB said that she feels positive about the draft. This new version includes both ‘high level’ strategy, but also the ‘meat’ of actual work to be done. JB said she would like to understand more about how the long-term aims will fit in e.g. growth of the school, and how actions that stretch into a later year will be managed.</p> <p>RC said that the shorter timescale of this CDP will be beneficial, because it is more manageable. ERZ agreed that there is a risk of losing focus on long-term aims. He reminded the governors that consultations with staff, students and governors on strategic aims fed into the creation of the ‘top level’ list of statements in the CDP, and the hope is that the list captures the school’s direction and broader aims. Additional material will be on the website, sitting ‘under’ the statement list, he said, and TDH agreed that this will comprise the material removed from the CDP in order to make it more useable. JB stressed the importance of the governors seeing both detailed and long-term elements.</p> <p>RC said she felt that the statements are better than a single school ‘strapline’, and that matching the CDP to OFSTED areas of inspection will support governors in their day-to-day work. ERZ added that feedback is welcome.</p> <p>JH expressed his appreciation for the high quality of the presentation. He asked about the statement on ‘a culture of high aspiration and high achievement’. He reminded the meeting that these are relative concepts, and that context is needed. How does the school measure these and ensure the added value that is demanded of schools? FHD reminded the governors about national benchmarks e.g. the Gatsby careers benchmark (which Oathall has achieved in all aspects). This benchmark, for instance, shows Oathall ensuring that students have high aspirations to achieve. TDH said that when the opening CDP statements are broken down, the metrics and measures for achievement will be visible e.g. GCSE results can be viewed against national benchmarks, and there are comparisons with other schools. Attendance can be</p>	
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measured against that of other schools. He said that measuring aspiration is more complex: it will be personal to each student. The statement on aspiration and achievement allows for the setting of specific standards (e.g. what is expected by the end of a single lesson) but also encompasses the less tangible idea of individual aspiration. People outside the school will be able to measure the school's achievements via the list of statements, at several levels. JP said he liked the integrated approach - SLT members crossing strand boundaries. **He asked how the governors' financial monitoring fits in.** TDH said that Jo Godbolt is keen to see financial planning more integrated into the CDP. The resources column has always been a part of the CDP, but here there are financial references added, and the new column for leadership responsibility will mean that SLT members have to consider resourcing implications. Appropriate documents from Jo will be attached to the plan. RC added that the formal work of the Finance Committee will continue unchanged. She added that Jo's monthly budget report informs the governors where resources are being allocated, and this will continue. ERZ agreed that governors are kept fully informed in this way, and can align monthly budget figures with their CDP work.

PCA said that it is important to define the statements explicitly. They had been described in a number of different ways, she said - as values, aims and aspirations. Are they 'vision statements' (PCA felt positively that they are much richer than current statements) or are they future objectives and things to be achieved? And if they don't guide what is in the plan, she asked, what is it that guides those actions? She asked why these particular statements, and this limited number, have been chosen. The 'why' column in 'Actions' states where we want to get to, but this is a different thing from where we have started from. PCA reiterated JB's question about how the GB will view and understand longer-term objectives. She finally asked: if SLT members are not assigned to specific areas, where does ultimate accountability lie for progress in that area of focus?

TDH replied that the statements combine both the ambition of the college *and* its current state. They are guiding principles, some running through the school now, some in need of further development. Everything further down in the CDP is informed by them. FHD added that the objectives are never static: there will be a constant and ongoing effort to achieve in the stated areas, even – for instance – in a school judged 'outstanding'. FHD said that the principles have not been formulated at an ideal point in time: Covid has limited both data collection and QA work. SLT have been unable, for instance, to observe lessons. As time goes on, the choice of objectives will be increasingly informed by hard data. TDH agreed that recent evaluations have been 'soft' – we have no national or local performance data for GCSEs, and no KS2 data arriving with incoming year 7s. But it has been necessary to create a CDP for the new academic year. He added that lack of data, although challenging, may turn out to have benefits: staff may look at the first lessons of a Year 7 student and use information that for benchmarking, rather than focussing on older data. The list of statements, he said, has been carefully chosen, and informed by a range of anecdotal and other input, e.g. from our external consultant's advice on a literacy focus. PCA assured TDH and FHD that she understands the work put in, and merely hoped to see better the link between existing work and new objectives.

TDH and FHD left the meeting at 19:50hrs.

4	<p>APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26.04.21</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting held on 26th April 2021, 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 asked for a show of hands on attendance at the governors’ barbecue, June 7th at 19:00hrs. All governors hope to attend.</p>	
6	<p>URGENT MATTERS</p> <p>None</p>	
7	<p>POLICES AND PROCEDURES</p> <p>The following policies were approved by the governors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lettings • Exams Contingency Plan • Exams Internal Appeals • Working From Home <p><u>Notes</u></p> <p><u>Exams policies</u></p> <p>JB found the divisions of the Exams Contingency Plan confusing. JP found that part 2 of the Exams Internal Appeals policy was poorly sub-divided. ERZ reminded the governors that many exams policies are made up largely of guidelines from the JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications). But he will speak to the exams officer to ensure clarity.</p> <p><u>General</u></p> <p>PCA asked about changes to policies, which are sometimes flagged, highlighted or included on front pages and within the text, and sometimes not. She suggested that governors should have a clearer picture of changes. The clerk will email staff involved in the creation and editing of policies, to make sure changes are indicated when policies are presented.</p> <p><u>Working From Home</u></p> <p>JP asked for confirmation that the Working From Home policy covers occasions when the school asks staff to work from home, rather than staff choosing to do so, and ERZ confirmed. PCA pointed out that one of the other school policies referenced in this policy is not listed at the end. This will be amended before the policy is stored.</p> <p>JP felt that the Working From Home policy was well-constructed, and suggested it might be a useful reference point for staff involved in policy creation and amendment.</p>	<p>ERZ</p> <p>AC</p> <p>AC</p>
8	<p>BUSINESS REPORT</p> <p><u>Budget ‘21-‘22</u></p>	

	<p>The budget statement has been submitted to WSCC. The total funds available are £6,392,656.49, and the funds allocated £6,392,656.</p> <p><u>Schools Financial Value Standard; Best Value Statement; Statement of Internal Appeals.</u> The finance committee approved these documents at a meeting of the Finance Committee on Apr 26th, after which they were shared with the whole GB.</p> <p><u>Catering</u> BB asked to record the governors' appreciation of the work of the catering team. After a recent spot check of the catering service, the Mid-Sussex environmental health officer awarded a top score of five. BB reminded the governors that the school is fortunate to have such a skilled catering manager and team.</p>	
9.	<p>ACADEMY/LOCALITY ISSUES</p> <p>ERZ reported that heads and chairs of governors of the federation schools will meet after half term to discuss the future of the federation. There have already been conversations on a full spectrum of plans and issues. An important area of agreement is that the federation wants to pursue the sharing of good practice.</p>	
10	<p>CHAIR'S REPORT</p> <p><u>Staff</u> RC has attended several interviews for new staff. BB will shortly sit on the interview panel for a new teacher of art, and this will mark the end of this recruitment round.</p> <p><u>Governor visits to school</u> RC reminded the governors of the need to inform all relevant parties (the Chair, Clerk and Head) in advance, when they come to school, and to be clear about the content of meetings and other visits. There will be a form available at Reception which governors should complete and return to reception staff, who will send it to the clerk.</p>	
11	<p>HEADTEACHER'S REPORT</p> <p><u>Students</u> Year 11 assessments were completed at the end of the week of May 17th, and on Wednesday May 26th year 7 will have their final assembly. ERZ expressed his thanks to Laura Griffiths for all the work she has put in to making the end of these students' Oathall careers memorable. Staff are now putting together the teacher-assessed grades, which will then be moderated by ERZ and TDH before submission.</p> <p><u>Covid safety measures</u> Following government guidance, rules on the wearing of face coverings have been relaxed. It is no longer recommended that students wear face coverings in class or in communal areas. It is recommended that staff masks in shared areas where social distancing cannot be observed. The school still maintains high standards of hygiene and ventilation, and uses split lunch and break times for Covid safety.</p>	

	<p><u>Site developments</u></p> <p>The school responded to the five options provided by WS architects in March, none of which entirely answered Oathall's needs. The architects have sent a new draft proposal which shows good progress. The project is still at feasibility stage, and there will be costings and discussions to come. Oathall's dining hall capacity is approximately half what is needed. Increasing this capacity will have an impact on the school entrance, and a new design is required. Landscaping of outside areas in need of change – including those used by students at break and lunchtimes - are included in the plans.</p> <p>Now that year 11 has left, use of classrooms in the Humanities suite can be rotated, and the delayed refurbishment completed.</p> <p><u>Pastoral changes</u></p> <p>There were interviews on the day of the meeting for the new Head of Year post.</p> <p><u>Other staffing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ERZ thanked new governor JP for attending an interview panel. Tim Keegan, an ECT, will join Oathall in September on a 0.4FTE contract to teach French and German. MFL is now fully staffed. • DT teacher Vicky Slater departs to further her career at Sackville, and it is hoped that a new DT teacher will be recruited soon. Dan Cannon (currently at the Weald School as a deputy) has been appointed Facilities Manager. 	
12	<p>SAFEGUARDING</p> <p>BB met EG on Thursday April 29th for her regular safeguarding meeting, and will share a report shortly with the GB. She said that the discussion had been good, and included the new 'front door' system of student referral, which is working well, and the progress of Oathall pupils studying at Crawley College. BB had a meeting with Sue Watkin, focussing on checking the single central record (SCR) that makes sure that references, DBS checks etc are collected for all staff and governors. The system is not being used very much at the moment due to Covid, but is functioning, and will get more use in September.</p>	
13	<p>PUPIL PREMIUM MATTERS</p> <p>RC reported that she has spoken to ERZ and will report back at the June FGB. ERZ added that the work done with Marc Rowland of the Durrington Research School PP project is being progressed. As part of her work on the SLT, Laura Griffiths has been leading on development of the pupil profiling system, and there will be a report on this to an FGB before the end of term.</p>	
14	<p>ATTENDANCE</p> <p>Attendance stood at 96.26% on the day of the meeting. Assistant Heads of House are working hard to contact hard-to-reach families.</p>	
15	<p>GOVERNORS' VISITS AND INDIVIDUAL REPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BB and JB met FHD for a Strand 2b visit on May 14th (report stored with these minutes). 	CRC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CRC and NW met TDH on May 17th for a Strand 2a visit, and will provide a report to the clerk for sharing, when time allows. It was a productive meeting with a focus on teacher-assessed grades and the new Learning Pathways document. The clerk told the GB that visits to school need only be reported at FGB meetings if they are considered of interest to the full GB. The important thing is to plan, announce and then record visits accurately. 	
16	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>BB mentioned that an ex-Oathall pupil recently won the TV jewellery talent show 'All That Glitters'. It is hoped that the school can invite him to revisit Oathall.</p>	
	<i>The meeting closed at 20:20 hrs</i>	
	<p>DATE & VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS</p> <p>Summer term: June 21st; July 19th</p> <p>Meetings are virtual until further notice.</p>	

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

FGB meeting action log

Meeting at which action raised	Details	Who?	Timescale	Completed?
24.05.21	Talk to exams officer about clarity in exams policies	ERZ	As time permits	
24.05.21	Email staff involved in policy creation & editing, about flagging up changes	AC	asap	yes
24.05.21	Make correction to Working From Home policy	AC	Asap, before storage	yes
24.05.21	Share report of Strand 2a	CRC	As time allows	
Actions completed				
26.04.21	Preparation of explanatory document: Food Bank lease	AC	By 30.04.21	yes
26.04.21	Plan meeting of new governors & clerk to discuss induction material	AC/JP	As required by participants	yes
26.04.21	Planning of possible GB barbecue	CRC	As feasible	yes