

**MINUTES OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY**  
**Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

Present: David Arnold (Chairman)      Jenny Ayres  
Steve Tucker                              Matthew Bindon  
Jeremy Fothergill                        Nick Grodhunce  
Anita Johnson                             Sarah Anderson  
Kathryn Dunning                         LizMatthews  
Roger Pope

In attendance: Lis Collard

Prior to the meeting Governors took the opportunity to visit the annual Art Exhibition. The Chairman will write to the Art department to recognise the outstanding work this year culminating in both the Photography and Art exhibitions. Nick Grodhunce suggested that the students should be encouraged to sell their artworks.

David

The Principal also showed Governors the e-Magazine 'Abridged' on the College website which had achieved national recognition in the Shine Award. Governors queried whether it was clear that students' work could not be copyrighted/distributed without permission. Roger will check.

**1. Election of Chairman and Vice Chair of Full Governing Body**

The Clerk confirmed that the votes cast had been scrutinised and confirmed that David Arnold has been unanimously elected Chairman and Jeremy Fothergill Vice Chairman of the Governing Body.

**2. Election of Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of individual Committees**

The Clerk confirmed that the following Governors had polled the most votes in the election and were therefore elected:

Chairman of Finance & Strategy Committee	Jeremy Fothergill
Vice Chairman of Finance & Strategy Committee	Steve Tucker
Chairman of Learning & Community Committee	Jenny Ayres
Vice Chairman of Learning & Community Committee	Nick Grodhunce

**3. Apologies for Absence**

Rob Johnstone

**4. Minutes of last meeting**

The minutes of the last formal meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> April, the extraordinary meetings dated 10<sup>th</sup> May 2011 and 21<sup>st</sup> June 2011 were all confirmed and signed as a true and correct record.

There were no additional matters arising.

The Principal advised Governors that an announcement as to which first 100 schools out of 23,000 will be designated as Teaching Schools was expected on Friday.

**5. Governors Business**

**5.1. Points of Interest from Committee Meetings:**

The minutes of Committee meetings were noted and the following additional points noted:

*Strategy & Quality Committee*

Jeremy confirmed the content of minutes from the last Committee meeting which had been circulated to all Governors. He confirmed that he had spoken with Rufus Gilbert but had not elicited Rufus's agreement to attend a meeting. The Principal confirmed that he had held a useful meeting that morning with Ross Kennerley and Jon Parkinson from South Hams District Council and was now awaiting further proposals from them

following these discussions. He also confirmed that despite multiple emails he was still awaiting confirmation of the YPLA contribution to the costs of the Leisure Centre but that they appeared totally overwhelmed with schools converting to academy status at the present time. There is still no formal confirmation of the final budget allocation from 1<sup>st</sup> September.

#### *Community*

Jenny reported that the restructuring of the Teaching Assistants and changes to the Business Management structure had been approved by the Committee. The Principal advised that the TA restructure is now complete, with three TAs choosing not to apply for posts in the new structure and one TA being unsuccessful in her application. He felt that the new structure had given the Learning Support Department a leaner, stronger team clearer in their focus and understanding of their team ethos.

### **5.2. To report on Governor Training Opportunities**

Matt Bindon confirmed he had attended a New Governors' course. Steve advised that no H&S course had been rearranged following its cancellation earlier in the year. The Principal suggested that rather than Governors individually attending a centrally organised DGS course, he arrange for Paul Brooks to run a session on data and its interpretation for all Governors.

Roger

### **5.3. Register of Business Interests**

Governors were given the opportunity to update their Register of Business Interests.

## **6. To consider the Principal's Report to Governors**

The contents of the Principal's Report to Governors were noted and the following additional points raised:

#### *Learning Section*

- FROG is now embedded into departments. The Principal highlighted how powerful its use was particularly in the way in which it opens up differentiation, as well as fulfilling a vital function in terms of communication between staff, parents and students. Students use FROG, for example, for catching up work missed, extending able students, exam revision and practice questions. He confirmed that students' use can be tracked but that this was usually done on an overall rather than individual basis.
- Foundation Learning Course: the Principal confirmed that this course is designed for the small cohort of students who find it difficult to access the main examination curriculum. The College is working with other schools in the South Hams to co-ordinate appropriate courses.
- As link Governor for History, Sarah Anderson drew attention to the need for starboards in two History rooms. The Principal confirmed that these will be installed in the Autumn term.
- Governors concerned that IT no longer able to give lesson time to CVs although it was understood that these will be addressed in tutorial time. Jeremy suggested that it was a little too early to expect students to be able to produce a comprehensive CV and that these should be more focussed along the lines of a personal statement or give direction to future examination/career choices. The Principal will discuss this with Vero Thomas.
- The Principal advised that the Assessor for Investors in Careers was in College today and had recommended that the College achieve this award. Huge credit to Vero Thomas for all her work in achieving this prestigious accolade for the College.
- The Principal confirmed he was in active dialogue with the Media department about their equipment needs but asked Governors to recognise that this was an extremely well resourced department in comparison with many others in the College. He advised Governors that the results from the Media Diploma courses this year are stunning with some students who would have found it difficult to access an academic

Roger

Nick

curriculum achieving results equivalent to 3 A Levels at Grade A. Nick Grodhunce advised that he had canvassed independent advice from media companies and that this advice was that Macs were the media preferred standard. He will send the Principal the report from Gilly Hancock of Logo supporting this standpoint. He also has contacts for potential work experience placements and will forward the information to the College.

Nick

- The Chairman confirmed that with great pleasure and on behalf of the Governors, he will write to Lyndsay Chell, who is retiring from her post as Head of Science, to thank her for all she has achieved during her time at the College.

David

#### *Community Section*

- The acronym PTu stands for Personal Tutoring.. Lis will add to the glossary!
- Sarah Anderson drew attention to the large cohort of boys in Year 9. Given that boys are usually outperformed by girls at GCSE, this may make a difference to the College's results in two years' time!

Lis

#### *Strategy & Quality Section*

- Nick Grodhunce confirmed he had been working with Alex Lammie to finalise the planning application which is due to be submitted next week. In conjunction with Steve Tucker and Matt Bindon, he had reduced the pitch size to fit the camber of the field. He confirmed he had spoken with Malcolm Elliott who had confirmed that the application will be submitted under delegated powers which means that it is processed within an 8 week period. Steve Tucker confirmed that the planners were happy for the College to commence the burn off of grass and preparatory work with the agricultural machine and that this will take approximately two weeks. Nick confirmed that he was also proposing to meet with landowners of neighbouring properties to advise them of the plans to pave the way for a successful planning application. Thanks to Nick, Steve and all involved with this project for their persistence, patience and hard work.
- Governors passed on their congratulations to the excellent work being done by the student editors involved with the Academy Gazette.

## **7. To consider the draft CIP**

The Principal explained that this is now Year 3 of the original 3 year plan and that although the original targets have been retained for information, there is a considerable shift in emphasis under the areas of learning and dynamic learning which are now being welded together into a coherent whole. This summer's results will be the test of the impact of this shift in terms of outcomes.

The contents of the draft CIP were noted and the following additional points raised:

- The main changes to this is the diminishing emphasis under the new Ofsted framework of areas such as community cohesion, economic wellbeing, but a more focussed approach to the culture of positivism and achievement which have become embedded into the plan under the new leadership of Wendy Ohlson.
- The success benchmarks for dynamic learning. No quantification targets and some of the target dates appear to be incorrect. The Principal will check.
- Liz Matthews advised that in her discussions with the Food Technology staff, she had been advised that they had been unable to take students out on visits because of the lack of a minibus driver. The Principal confirmed that now that the College is an Academy the new insurance arrangements mean that any staff who hold an appropriate driving licence may drive a College minibus with the stipulation that staff take a one hour familiarisation course with an approved instructor.

Roger

The Principal confirmed that although the Ofsted mantra is that Academies will not be inspected, there will still need to be a method of benchmarking outstanding schools against schools in other categories. He also advised that the College may still receive an individual subject inspection by Ofsted. A new Framework for Inspection is being introduced from September and the priorities of this will drive the self-evaluation, thinking and priorities within the DFE and it will be important to align our school processes with these.

Next steps? Challenge Partners and Teaching Schools. These will put the College in the top 'clubs' in the country and will ensure that the College becomes part of an elite national network. This will provide the challenge, creativity and innovation to ensure that the College moves up a gear and continues to be challenged to ensure its continued and growing success. In terms of vocational courses, the outcome of the Wolf report makes the Government's agenda clear in that whatever a school decides to do, it should do it properly and professionally and not use vocational courses as a driver to raise GCSE statistics.

## **8. To discuss Challenge Partners**

The Principal gave a brief overview of Challenge Partners to Governors. The Challenge Partners group of schools has emerged from the successful London Challenge. Under this initiative schools worked together in order to raise standards not just in their own but across their cluster of Partner schools. Challenge Partner Schools focus on three strategic areas:

- (1) Network of excellence: the aspiration is for all the Partner Schools to become outstanding, growing through learning partnerships and rigorous quality assurance processes.
- (2) Engine of Improvement: Using the stronger schools to help the weaker, reducing the disparity in performance
- (3) Source of Efficiency: To enable schools in the group to achieve group purchasing discounts; the aspiration is that these efficiencies will eventually save the cost of the subscription.

Subscription level is currently £7 per student. 15% of this goes towards the central running and management costs of the network. Each school receives a two-day review visit in the Autumn Term, carried out by senior leaders from other schools and an HMI. This helps give rigour and quality assurance to the school's own self-evaluation, identifies areas of strength that it can contribute to other schools in the network and areas of need in order that it can become outstanding. Both Tina Graham and Paul Brooks have undertaken this training and were impressed at the quality and rigour of the process.

The fee also covers the cost of core school improvement activities (eg teaching and learning in core subjects, good to outstanding teacher development programmes).

It was agreed that Challenge Partners formed an ideal toolkit to meet the requirements of being a Teaching School which itself encompassed four main strands:

- To develop new programmes of initial teacher training in partnership with the University of Exeter
- To develop coherent staff development programmes across partner schools to run as a continuum from teacher training through to headship
- Responsibility to accredit Specialist Leaders of Education (SLE) to lead specialist subject development
- To intervene in underperforming schools

Exciting times ahead!