

**Confirmed Minutes of the Full Governing Body virtual meeting via Google
Meets on Thursday 18th March 2021 at 5.00pm**

Governors *denotes absence		Initial
Tom Arbuthnott	Educational Sponsor Link, Careers Governor	TA
Walter Boyle	Founding Head Master	WBO
David Churchill		DCH
Sue Dudley	Vice Chair, Chair of Curriculum Committee, SEND and Pupil Premium Governor	SDU
Rachel Harris	Chair of Bursaries Committee	RHA
Mark Jones	Chair of Welfare Committee, Safeguarding Governor	CMJ
Ben McCarey	Head Master	BMc
Gill Monk	Chair of Nominations and Successions Committee	GM
Karen Neale	Chair of Audit and Risk Committee	KNE
Bruce Powell	Chair of Governors, Chair of Finance Committee, Chair of Strategy Committee	BP
Johnny Robertson		JRO
Lorraine Wales	LAC and Wellbeing Governor	LW
Chris Wilton		CW
In attendance		
Graham Alford	Head of Sixth Form	GAL
Adam Bicknell	Assistant Head teacher	ABI
Liz Critchlow	Clerk to the Governors	LC
Steve Gardner	Deputy Head, Head of Boarding	SGA
Serena Hedley-Dent	Observer	SHD
Daniel Hubbard	Assistant Head teacher	DHU
Michelle Stokes	Bursar	MST

Item No	Discussion	Action Lead
1	Apologies	
1.1	There were no apologies. CW was welcomed to the Governing Body as Parent Governor following his success in the recent election. SGA was also welcomed as new Deputy Head and Head of Boarding.	
2	Any Other Business	
2.1	No other business was declared.	
3	Declarations of Interest in the agenda	
3.1	There were no declarations of interest in the agenda.	
4	Approval of minutes of meetings on 03.12.20, matters arising and update of action list	
4.1	Governors approved the minutes of the meetings on 3rd December as a true and accurate record. The action list was updated. <u>Matters arising</u> BMc has had a conversation with the Regional Schools Commissioner's office, in accordance with the conditions of the ESFA funding, to discuss whether there would currently be any benefit for the College to join a MAT . There is currently no known available MAT that would add value to the operation of the College or with whom it would be beneficial for the College	

	to join. The view of the College's sponsor is that now would not be the most beneficial time to join a MAT and that if it were to consider doing so in the future a MAT with which the sponsor had involvement would be preferable. Governors were in agreement that it would not be beneficial for the College to join a MAT at the current time.	
5	Head Master's Report	
5.1	The College has received the highest number of preferences for Year 7 places since it opened. It is anticipated that the College will be full in both Year 7 and Year 9 in September. It was noted that every year there is movement in the boarding cohort as some students who are allocated a place in March have previously accepted offers elsewhere. There are plans to review and amend the school's processes before next Autumn, with a view to be able to confirm offers earlier.	
5.2	Sixth form admissions for September 2021 are looking positive; of 99 places offered to day students 87 have so far been accepted. Boarding places have been accepted by 19 girls and 12 boys for Year 12 and it is hoped that boys will be fully subscribed by September.	
5.3	The Sixth Form Admissions Policy was sent to Governors and some slight amendments were made following comments. Governors approved the revised policy, as tabled.	
5.4	During the recent lockdown between 80 and 120 students attended on a daily basis, including 50 boarders. Attendance figures were affected by those who were eligible to attend in person during lockdown but chose not to, who were marked as absent.	
5.5	There has been one permanent exclusion this term but there have been less exclusions overall compared to this time last year.	
5.6	The majority of student facing staff attended school in person during the lockdown. There have been some challenges with staff absence this term, including a small number of medium to long term absences and some COVID-related absences. In total, 97.5 teaching days have been lost to staff absence since January and, to address this, cover supervisors' hours have been increased and occasional supply staff have been brought in.	
5.7	There are now fewer vulnerable students joining the College in Years 7 and 9: 3 students with EHCPs, 1 who is looked after and 6 who are post looked after are due to join Year 7 in September, and no vulnerable students are due to join Year 9.	
5.8	SDU has visited the SEND department and reported excellent processes and support being provided for students. The department is proactive in responding to consultations for new students.	
5.9	Historically the College has experienced very good levels of staff retention, however several members of staff have applied for other positions this year and it may not be possible to offer the same degree of flexibility in regard to notice periods as in previous years, due to the disruption already caused by the pandemic. It was confirmed that exit interviews are conducted. Governors asked if there was any concern about the quality of candidates applying for vacancies. There is no concern in this area and the College is seeing an increase in numbers of high quality candidates, which is a good reflection of the success of the Sixth Form and the reputation of the College. Governors suggested that it might be worthwhile to consider widening access for teacher training in the future.	
5.10	MST has done a sterling job of coordinating the processes for COVID testing and has had a fantastic team of volunteers to carry out the testing. Governors wished to place on record their gratitude to both MST and the team of volunteers and commented that this was a credit to the community	

	spirit of the College. It was agreed that BP would write a letter of thanks from the Governors to the volunteers.	BP
5.11	Governors received the current COVID risk management strategy and communication with parents regarding wider opening on March 8 th .	
5.12	Governors asked if there were any concerns about staff wellbeing. This is on the whole good with various initiatives in place to support staff, including a new staff workroom. In response to a staff survey Wednesday breakfast has been reintroduced and all staff who have attended during lockdown have been offered a flexi-day this half-term. The response from the leadership team to recent challenges has been phenomenal. All members of the team have played a vital part in supporting this response whilst ensuring that the welfare and education of the students is prioritised.	
5.13	A second language (French) has been introduced to a group of 20 Year 7 students during co-curricular. GCC has been very supportive of this initiative and it is hoped that more students will be encouraged to take two languages at GCSE in the future.	
5.14	The staff response to remote teaching has been very impressive; staff have embraced technology and have continued to provide an excellent educational offering. Remote provision has been evaluated against the DfE framework and the College scored highly in the majority of areas. Internal quality assurance has been conducted using parent and student surveys. Feedback from parents/carers has been on the whole very positive and a framework has been put in place to identify and address any concerns.	
5.15	The College has so far received £28,500 in catch-up funding and £4,750 has been spent on the national online tutoring programme for Maths, English and Science for selected Year 7, 10 and 11 students. This programme will be expanded in the Summer Term following the next internal assessment data. It was noted that this funding can be carried over into next year and the College will look into other ways of using catch-up funding in the summer term and beyond. Governors agreed that high quality teaching is crucial to support students with catch-up and that additional creative ways to encourage catch-up would also be beneficial.	
5.16	Sixth form mock exams took place in the week after half term. Students were offered the opportunity to attend in person and 20% of students took up this opportunity. Results from these exams will be used to inform estimated grades. GAL wished to place on record his gratitude to the Exams Officer who worked tirelessly to ensure that these exams went smoothly. Governors enquired about the progress of Year 12 students. There is less certainty than usual about the progress of these students as they have not yet been formally assessed. They will complete formalised assessments over the next two weeks and any gaps will be identified. It is anticipated that attainment will be similar to previous years but progress data is likely to be lower than usual due to higher baselines following Centre Assessed Grades awarded last year.	
5.17	Ofqual and the DfE have issued guidance on the process by which schools will award GCSEs and A levels in the summer. A process has been developed by which grades will be awarded, although this is subject to amendment should there be any changes to the guidance issued. The aim of this process is to allow for grades to be both fair and a true reflection of students' abilities, without creating a disproportionate amount of work for students and teachers. Estimated Grades will be given to Year 11 and Year 13 students based on their performance in the mock exam and their prior performance since the beginning of the course. These Estimated Grades will form the baseline for decision making when final grades are awarded. However these	

5.18	<p>may change dependent upon the performance of the student in the Summer Term. In the first half of the Summer Term, students will complete between two and four pieces of assessed work per subject. These assessed pieces of work will be used to validate or change the Estimated Grade already awarded. Any student who feels that the grade in any particular subject is not a true reflection of their abilities will then have the opportunity to sit a full paper, in exam conditions, and the result of this paper will be used to raise their grade if it supports the awarding of a higher grade. Following the completion of these additional papers, departments will meet to review the available evidence and award the Final Grade for each student and subject. Students will be informed of their final grades in August and there will be an appeals process available for any student who is unhappy with their final grade. Information about this process for awarding grades has been sent out to students and parents and consultation meetings will be held next week. Governors asked if the College had considered external moderation with another school. There is no requirement in the guidance for external moderation and as there is already a high workload for teachers it has been decided not to enter into external moderation with another school. It is not yet known if students will have the opportunity to sit exams in the autumn. Staff will be available in the summer when results are announced to provide to students who require advice and support.</p> <p>Following a review of boarding by SGA, a proposal has been made to restructure the Houses. House Masters are currently responsible for the 150 students in their House, including 100 day students. Graduate Assistants' accommodation will not be compliant with the proposed changes to the NMS for boarding in September, which require appropriate protection and separation between boarder and staff accommodation. It is suggested that the College no longer employs Graduate Assistants and instead has four Day House Masters who look after pastoral care for all day students, which will allow House Masters to focus solely on boarding students. This proposal has been presented to GWC where Governors were supportive and agreed that it would be beneficial to the College and would reinforce safeguarding arrangements. The savings resulting from these changes would be mostly channelled back into boarding to enhance enrichment opportunities. There has been an informal consultation with Housemasters and the overriding feeling is that the proposals would benefit students at the College. SGA highlighted some of the concerns raised by Housemasters and would ensure that BMc is kept fully informed of the content of further discussions. Governors were supportive of the proposals and agreed that they would provide an opportunity to make positive changes. It was agreed that BMc would seek legal and HR advice on how to proceed and that he and SGA would keep CMJ informed on the progress of the proposals. BMc and SGA were thanked for their reports.</p>	BMc
6	Bursar's Report	
6.1	<p>Governors received management accounts until the end of January which showed a forecast year end deficit of -£352,000, against a forecast deficit of -£402,000 at the end of December. Since these accounts were prepared the ESFA have announced additional in year funding for those schools which have had an increase in 16-19 numbers. The school is not fully funded for the increase this year but will receive additional in-year revenue of £74,5000 which will be accounted for in the February management accounts. The Bursar's report includes a number of opportunities and risks and there is still provision in the accounts for a 2 week closure of boarding which will be reviewed in April.</p>	MST

6.2	All management accounts, cash flow statements and GFC minutes are sent to the ESFA. The College has made an appeal for in- year funding for the Year 7 bulge class; this has been referred to the ESFA who will put forward a business case on the College's behalf. This increase in numbers is currently being funded in-house and therefore impacts the year end position.	GFC
6.3	An increased number of boarders are remaining in school at the weekends and there has been an additional spend to provide activities to keep students occupied. There is a higher level of boarding debt than would usually be expected and a few parents have applied to the College's hardship fund. There will be a full review of debtors at the next GFC meeting in June.	
6.4	A new Force Majeure clause has been added to the Boarding Agreement and SHD has reviewed this agreement and a few small changes have been made in agreement with MST and the admissions team. The existing contract allows for all boarding parents to be updated onto the new contract. The agreement will be sent out before the end of term when parents are advised of next year's fees.	
6.5	The initial amount of £250,000 of ESFA loan funding has been drawn down but not yet been used. The College is waiting to hear from the ESFA regarding the date for the next SRMA visit.	
6.6	There have been discussions regarding two potential residential lettings to take place during the summer holidays.	
6.7	Governors commended the excellent work of MST and the finance team, in particular in managing relations with boarding parents and in liaising with the ESFA throughout the challenges of recent months.	
7	Audit and Risk Committee	
7.1	Governors received the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 25 th February.	MST
7.2	MST will arrange a remote internal scrutiny visit with Bishop Fleming and will agree a programme of work.	
7.3	The Committee have reviewed the list of Priority Risks and would like to ask SLT to review the full Risk Register in the Autumn and to assign ownership of risks to individuals. Governors noted that the Risk Register is a constantly changing and useful document. MST is investigating options for software to manage the Risk Register.	
	Having reviewed the Risk Register, the Committee recommended that a high level risk should be added in relation to exams being cancelled in the summer. It was agreed that the risk "Objects of the Academy are controversial or may attract a high level of public interest" could be removed from the priority list as this was less of a risk than when the school was opened. It was agreed that the pandemic risk should be broadened to include health and safety, reputational, financial and compliance risk. It was confirmed that SLT had reviewed the priority risks and any comments had been taken on board.	SLT
7.4	Governors suggested that a column for proximity of risk could be added to indicate if a risk is potentially imminent, medium or long term and it was agreed that this would be reviewed at the next Committee meeting. KNE was thanked for her report.	
8	Finance Committee	
8.1	Governors received the minutes of the GFC meeting on 9 th March.	
9	Curriculum Committee	
9.1	Governors received the minutes of the GCC meeting on 10 th February. The Committee commended staff for having delivered a high quality of education during a very difficult period.	
10	Welfare Committee/Safeguarding	

10.1	Governors received the minutes of the GWC meeting on 4 th March. The Committee analysed ethnicity data and confirmed that there were no particular concerns. There was a large peak in safeguarding referrals in November 2020 and there has been a high volume of safeguarding issues post-lockdown. There have been some heightened tensions and an incident involving a few students in recent weeks which have reflected issues currently being discussed in the national media; the school is working with individuals where necessary and is formulating strategies to address these matters. The Committee will continue to monitor and support the College with this work. CMJ was thanked for his report.	GWC
11	Nominations and Successions Committee	
11.1	Governors received the minutes of the NSC meeting on 11 th March.	
11.2	Diversity information was reviewed and discussed by the Committee. The following percentages of white Caucasian heritage were noted: student body 64%, staff composition 68%, RBWM residents 86%, Governing Body 100%. It can therefore be seen that, although the student and staff bodies are more diverse than the surrounding population, the Governing Body currently lacks elements of diversity. This is something that the NSC is taking steps to address and they are considering the use of a specialist agency to assist with recruitment.	
11.3	The Committee reviewed the results of the recent Skills Audit and were pleased to see that there is a good range of skills on the Governing Body and all areas are covered. The appointment of CW also adds further to the board as he brings a wide range of skills. It was agreed that the expertise of a state sector educationalist would further enhance the skillset of the Governing Body and that BP would follow up on several possibilities. Following the end of SHD's terms of office on 16 th March and SH's resignation on 20 th November there is now one Co-opted and one Member appointed vacancy and there are no other terms of office due to end until next year.	BP
11.4	The Committee has reviewed the committee structure and proposes to add two Governors to GCC. They would like to ask BMc to review executive membership of committees in the Autumn. The Committee has proposed that CW join GFC and JRO join Bursaries Committee. Governors approved these appointments. BP will look outside the Governing Body for an independent member (non-governor) to bring specialist skills to the Audit and Risk Committee.	BMc
11.5	GM was thanked for her report.	BP
12	Policies	
12.1	<u>Child Protection Policy</u> This policy has been amended to reflect the fact that, owing to the United Kingdom having left the European Union, schools no longer have access to EU databases and so references to these have been removed. Governors approved this updated policy.	
12.2	<u>Looked After and Post Looked After Children Policy</u> This policy is up to date and compliant with the latest guidance. Governors approved this policy.	
12.3	<u>Sixth Form Admissions Policy</u> This policy was approved by Governors (as above 5.3).	
12.4	<u>Governor Protocol</u>	

	Slight amendments have been made to this Protocol by GM and it has been circulated to Governors. Governors approved the amended Protocol.	
13	Chair's Action: to note any urgent action taken by the Chair since the last meeting	
	None.	
14	Governance Update	
14.1	<u>Link Governor Visits</u> SDU has visited the SEND department and her visit report was circulated to Governors.	LC
14.2	<u>Governor Training</u> The Clerk will circulate the updated training schedule from Achieving for Children.	
14.3	<u>Meeting Schedule 2021-22</u> The meeting schedule for 2021-22 has been circulated and was approved by Governors. The Chair will consider the approach to Governor attendance at meetings going forward as lockdown eases and will report back to Governors at the next meeting.	BP
15	AOB	
15.1	On behalf of all Governors, staff and students, Sue Dudley thanked Serena Hedley – Dent for her significant contribution towards making Holyport College the success it is today. Serena joined as a Governor in January 2013 and was involved in all aspects of setting up the College from its foundation stage, including planning, arranging for funding, recruitment and publicity. Without her forensic attention to detail and legal knowledge the College would not be where it is now and at every stage of the College's development Serena has offered measured good counsel and judgement. She will be immensely missed and Governors and Senior Leaders are grateful for her time and energy over the last 8 years. Serena will always be very welcome to come back and visit the College and she is wished all the best for her future endeavours. Serena said that it had been a pleasure to have served as a Governor. She could remember visiting school in its foundation stage and said that it could not have been imagined then that it would turn into the amazing institution it is today. Serena wished all at the College the very best for the future. The meeting closed at 7.05pm.	
16	Date of next meeting	
	Thursday 24th June 2021	

Signed:

Date:

Bruce Powell (Chair)