



GOVERNING BODY

MINUTES

of the meeting held on Wednesday, 14 October 2015 at 5.40pm

PRESENT

Sister P Ainsworth
Mr P Campbell
Mrs A Fox (Chair)
Mr D Frost (Principal)
Sr. V Hagen
Mrs M Holmes
Mr L Jones
Mrs M Jones
Mr A Lilley
Mr A Noblet
Mrs S Smith
Mrs H Stainton

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr J Barton (Clerk to the Governors)
Mrs AM Cassidy (Director Finance & Funding) (DFF)
Mrs C McGuire (Deputy Principal)
Mr P Woods (Vice Principal Resources) (VPR)

1866 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Apologies for absence were received from Mr P Banks; Mr M Bentley, Mrs H Brown, Mr P Brown, Mrs H Leyden; Ms L Masters; Mr M Stout

1867 **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS** None

1868 **APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS** The Chair welcomed Mrs M Jones (Parent Governor) to her first meeting

1869 **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

The Clerk to Governors invited nominations for appointment to the position of Chair of Governing Body with effect from 14 October 2015. It was

RESOLVED: that Mrs Anne Fox be appointed as Chair of Governing Body for the period 14 October 2015 to the date of the first ordinary meeting of the Governing Body during the Autumn term of the 2016/2017 Academic Year.

1870 **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

The Chair invited nominations for appointment to the position of Vice-Chair of Governing Body with effect from 14 October 2015. It was

RESOLVED: that Mr Les Jones be appointed as Vice-Chair of Governing Body for the period 14 October 2015 to the date of the first ordinary meeting of the Governing Body during the Autumn term of the 2016/2017 Academic Year.

1871 **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 1 JULY 2015**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2015, having been circulated previously, were approved and signed by the Chair.

1873 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Clerk informed Governors that for part of the meeting held on 1 July 2015 the Governing Body was not quorate. Several items were discussed with a view to deferring them for consideration at this meeting. These included:

1. **Management Accounts to 31 May 2015** - At 1 July 2015 meeting Governors received the Management Accounts to 31 May 2015. Governors recommended the approval of the Management Accounts to 31 May 2015
2. **Property Strategy Update; Health and Safety and Safeguarding Reports** - Governors recommended that Governing Body receive the Reports with thanks.
3. **Review of Personnel Policies and Procedures; including 'Appraisal and Pay Progression'** Governors recommended that the proposals made by Personnel Committee at its meeting on 17 June 2015 (minutes 627, and minute 628 refer) should be approved; and noted that the 'Appraisal and Pay Progression' is a standing item on Personnel Committee agenda.
4. **Minutes of Committee meetings:** Governors recommended that the minutes of the Audit Committee (3 June 2015); and Personnel Committee (17 June 2015) be received.

RESOLVED that Governing Body formally approves the recommendations made by the Governors remaining after the 1 July 2015 Governing Body meeting ceased to be quorate.

1874 MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRS OF COMMITTEES

The Clerk to Governors introduced the Report which included recommendations on the membership and Chairs of Committees for 2015/ 2016. The Governing Body considered recommendations made by Search Committee at its meeting held on 14 October 2015 (minute 125 refers). Governors recognised the need to adopt a succession plan for future appointments to Governing Body, and Governors moving into senior roles within the Governing Body. Governing Body also agreed that Mrs H Stainton should be appointed to the Quality and Standards Committee.

As the HE Student Governor, Mr M Stout, has only served an initial year; Search Committee agreed to recommend the extension of his term of office for a further year, so he will have served a period of 2 years, until 28 February 2017.

RESOLVED: that the Governing Body accept the Report, and the recommendations made by the Search Committee on 14 October 2015, regarding the list of Chairs and membership of Committees, and also appointed Mrs H Stainton to Quality & Standards Committee. The following appointments to Cross College Committees were also approved:

Mrs M Holmes	Safeguarding Committee
Mr A Noblet	Health and Safety Committee
To be appointed	Equality and Diversity Committee

to extend the term of office of the HE Student Governor, Mr M Stout, until 28 February 2017.

1875 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal tabled his report, which included:

- o **Mission and Ethos:** Principal commented on activities and events that demonstrated, and strengthened, the ethos of the College. These included: hosting the Association of Catholic Sixth Form Colleges; charity evenings in College; and responses received relating to the 'Celebration of the legacy of the Daughters of the Cross'.

- **Student Achievement/ Results** The Principal detailed the headline achievements in the context of previous years, and reported that overall the exam results have been strong, but are slightly down from previous years. He identified areas of strengths, and some areas that are underperforming. Governing Body noted the key management actions that have already been taken to address matters, and looked forward to the more detailed reports that will be considered in depth through the Quality and Standards Committee, and the Validation process.

The Principal acknowledged the need to improve the overall Value Added grades. The final ALPS (Advanced Level Performance System) report has not yet been received, but the forecast scores need to be strengthened.

Governors discussed the continued close monitoring of student achievement data, and discussed further methods. The Deputy Principal briefly outlined the 'OFSTED Data Dashboard' which is now available online. She explained how to access the Dashboard, and showed examples of how it can be used. It is a useful tool to monitor progress through examining achievement and student progress. 'Use of the OFSTED Data Dashboard' is on the Agenda of the next meeting of Quality and Standards Committee (20 October 2015)

Whilst accepting the need to address the weaker subject areas in detail, the governors recognised the strong overall picture for much of the Sixth Form College work.

- **Enrolment/ Financial Strategy** the Principal informed the meeting that the College had again grown in numbers, from 2067 to 2095, but the final growth target, 2162, set as part of the last four-year growth plan had still not been met. The final census date for 2015/16 retained numbers is the end of October 2015. The Principal outlined how the financial impact that the enrolment shortfall will create for our plans in 2016/17 (it having no impact this year) may well be offset by other factors; and highlighted some areas for possible further growth and savings.

Governors discussed the factors that are influencing recruitment, and recognised the need to evaluate the College's growth strategy for future years.

- **Financial Strategy** The Principal reminded governors of the difficulty of planning in a situation where there is so much change and uncertainty. Whilst recognising that Holy Cross is in a relatively strong financial position there is still the need to continue prudent financial management. The College needs to revisit aspects of its financial strategy, including identifying new areas for income generation, and possible savings, particularly in regard to the broad outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review which will be announced in early December. The Property and Finance Committee will be beginning to explore some of these areas at its next meeting (10 November 2015).
- **5 Point Plan** The Principal updated Governing Body on progress of the '5 Point Plan' and felt that the College was still on course to meet the Plan's objectives. However, he felt that extra cuts forecast in the Comprehensive Spending Review will probably necessitate a significant review of the current Financial Strategy.
- **Area Based Review** The Principal reported progress of the 'Area Based Review' (ABR) that the Government has introduced as part of its process to review General Further Education Colleges (GFE) and Sixth Form Colleges (SFC). The idea is to look at the resilience of colleges given the cuts that the Government is planning and consider possible mergers or other strategies that could deliver 'larger, more economical institutions'. The Combined Authority of Greater Manchester (GM) asked that GM colleges be in the first wave of Reviews, because of its interest in overseeing skills across the Combined Authority/ City Region.

The College is actively involved in the Review Process, and has had its Site Visit. The Plan is that the ABR team will draft a Report which will make recommendations for Governing Bodies to consider. The timescale for the publication involves a series of meetings in November 2015, with a final Report being shared with Governing Bodies by

1875 **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT** continued

o **Area Based Review** continued

11 December 2015. Governing Bodies will be asked to make plans for implementing any decisions it adopts by the end of February 2016.

Governing Body asked to be kept informed of developments in relation to the Area Review; and the Comprehensive Spending Review.

RESOLVED

To note the Principal's Report with thanks, and record congratulations to all involved in contributing to the College's success during 2014/15.

1876 **PROPERTY STRATEGY UPDATE**

Vice Principal (Resources) (VPR) gave a brief verbal update on:

- o Mary Kelly Extension
- o Portakabin Disposal
- o possible future capital projects

1877 **MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 JULY 2015**

The Director of Finance and Funding (DFF) introduced the Management Accounts for the period ending 31 July 2015, and clarified matters raised. These included:

The DFF commented on various areas of the accounts, including Financial Performance Indicators; Higher Education provision; Catering provision; and emphasised that the College was in a healthy financial position at the end of the financial year, but will face very significant challenges in the coming years.

Governors agreed to transfer the sum of £108,000 from 'planned maintenance reserve' to general reserves

RESOLVED: to approve the Management Accounts, for the period ending 31 July 2015; and agree the transfer of £108,000 from planned maintenance reserve to 'general reserves'

1878 **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Voluntary Severance Scheme The Chair of Personnel explained the background to this item, and outlined recommendations made by Personnel Committee at its meeting held on 7 October 2015 (minute 636 refers). The Personnel Committee agreed to amend Section 9.3 of the Voluntary Severance Scheme to read:

'All eligible applications (which must include a completed expression of interest form and application form) received within the defined timescale will be considered. All applications will be considered in the light of the interests of the College and decisions will be subject to approval by the Principal whose decision is final.

If there is an allegation of a failure to follow procedure correctly, such an allegation will be dealt with under the procedures set out in Appendix 1 of the 'Procedures to be used for the Reducing the Staffing Establishment' (RSE).'

and,

the Committee asked the Principal to submit a proposed timescale for the implementation of the Voluntary Severance Scheme; allowing time for a 'Voluntary Severance Monitoring Group' (VSMG) to meet to discuss the implications of any proposed changes to the overall College Staffing Plan. Such a meeting to take place before the 'notification of the outcome of applications, and offers made to successful applicants'. The VSMG should consist of Governors and Members of CLT.

1878 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE continued

Voluntary Severance Scheme continued

The Principal tabled a paper outlining the timescales for implementing the Voluntary Severance Scheme, The Governing Body discussed the role and membership of a VSMG, and it was agreed that such a Group be established. The Chair of Governing Body should determine the governors to serve on the Group (excluding Chair and Vice Chair of Governors); and the Principal should decide which members of Management should attend the meeting. The Group's role should be as outlined in the Personnel Committee minute i.e. **to discuss the implications of any proposed changes to the overall College Staffing Plan**. It was agreed that if the Group could not reach a consensus on any matter, then the matter should be referred back to Governing Body

RESOLVED to approve the amended Voluntary Severance Scheme, and accept the proposed timescales for implementation, whilst recognising that the final elements of the Scheme should not be introduced until agreed by the Voluntary Severance Monitoring Group.

1879 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

The Clerk to Governors requested the Governing Body to formally receive the minutes of the following Committee meeting, which had been circulated:

- Property and Finance 23 June 2015

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Property and Finance Committee be formally received and accepted by the Governing Body

1880 INTERNATIONAL VISITS:

The Governing Body approved Overseas Visits to:

New York and Washington	Business Studies	2/8 July 2016
Frieburg	Music Tour	30 June/ 5 July 2016

1881 RISK REGISTER (GOVERNING BODY):

The DFF introduced the Report which included an updated Governing Body Section of the Risk Register. Governors discussed various items, including:

- Ensure College is a going concern - Changes to Action taken
- Compliance with Government/ FE Funding Body Policy – changes to Action taken
- College Strategic Plan, College Financial Plan and academic performance – changes to Action taken
- Ensure the sustainability of HE provision – change to Source of Assurance
- Ensure Catholic ethos of the College – changes to Action taken

RESOLVED to approve the proposed amendments, and ask the DFF to amend the Risk Register accordingly.

1882 ANY OTHER BUSINESS None

Meeting ended 8.20pm