



GOVERNING BODY

MINUTES

of the meeting held on Tuesday 28 November 2017 at 6.00pm

PRESENT

Sister P Ainsworth
Mr P Banks
Mr P Brown
Mrs A Fox (Chair)
Mr D Frost
Mrs H Leyden
Mrs J McCool
Mr A Noblet
Mrs S Smith

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr J Barton (Clerk to the Governors)
Mrs AM Cassidy (Director Finance & Funding)
Mrs C McGuire (Deputy Principal)

2033 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Bentley, Mr P Campbell, Mrs M Jones, Mrs R Khan, Mr A Lilley, Mr M Renshaw, Mrs H Stainton, Mr P Woods, and Mrs E Hoyle

2034 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS No member of the Governing Body declared a personal interest in relation to any item on the agenda.

2035 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2017

The minutes of the business meeting held on 4 October 2017, having been circulated previously, were approved, and signed by the Chair. It was noted that the Restricted item (minute 2032) from that meeting would be considered later on the agenda.

2036 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

No matters arising

2037 GOVERNORS APPOINTMENTS

The Clerk tabled a paper which detailed the current position relating to Governing Body vacancies/nominations, as at 28 November 2017. Governing Body's Succession Planning strategy is proving effective as several Senior Governors have stepped down and have been replaced by suitably experienced people. Governors noted the following:

1. The Diocese appoints Foundation Governors, and the College has advertised vacancies in the local Parish bulletins. Any applications are forwarded to the Diocese for consideration. Since the last Governing Body meeting we have been verbally informed that Mrs Helen Stainton has been reappointed for a further term of office; and another Foundation Governor will be appointed as from end of November 2017. At the time of writing we are awaiting formal notification. Several other potential Foundation Governors have shown an interest in applying, and relevant information has been forwarded to them. It is expected that the two remaining Foundation Governor vacancies will be filled before the next Governing Body meeting

2037 GOVERNORS APPOINTMENTS

2. Mrs Roxana Khan has been elected unopposed as Higher Education Student Governor; and Governing Body is asked to approve the appointment from November 2017 to October 2019
3. The election process for Parent Governor will commence in December 2017

RESOLVED to approve the appointment of Mrs Roxana Khan as HE Student Governor until 31 October 2019

2039 DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND FUNDING REPORT

The DFF presented her report which included an Annual Review of College activities. She reminded Governors that they have a responsibility to ensure that all College activities are within the principle powers set out in s18 and s19 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 as modified by the Education Act 2011. The College is also an exempt charity under part 3 of the Charities Act 2011 and is regulated by the Secretary of State for Education. In setting and reviewing the College's strategic objectives the Governing Body must demonstrate it has due regard for public benefit and particularly the advancement of education. The Report outlined the statutory powers, and lists the main College activities for 2016/17.

RESOLVED: that the Governing Body approve the undertaking and continuance of the main College activities listed in the Report, considering the statutory powers conferred upon it as a Sixth Form Corporation; and to confirm that they comply with the principle legislative powers, as well as having due regard for the Charities Act 2011 in terms of public benefit.

2040 RESERVES POLICY

The DFF introduced the Report and informed governors that the Charity Commission is advising that all charities should have a Reserve Policy to assist them to secure their viability beyond the immediate future, and provide reliable resources over the longer term. In addition, the new SORP FRS102 requires a statement from the College on its Revenue Policy to be included in the Financial Statements.

The DFF explained the purpose for creating a Reserves Policy, and detailed the current position at Holy Cross. In addition to a general reserve of £850k, the College also holds reserves for improvement of facilities, and a building reserve of £2.2m has been set aside for 2016-2018. This will be used to build a new entrance feature to the front elevation of the College together with a substantial refurbishment of the central courtyard to include a series of walkways around the perimeter and complete resurfacing. Annex A shows examples of Reserves Calculations for various scenarios.

The level of reserves will be monitored and reported on within the monthly management accounts and reviewed by Governing Body.

RESOLVED to approve the Reserves Policy detailed in the Report.

Mr Peter Banks joined the meeting

2041 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal's report, included:

- **Mission and Ethos** – The Principal referred to a number of activities including *One World Day*; *Bury Catholic Education Mass*; *Forthcoming Advent Assemblies in early December*; *Presentation Evening*; and others. Governors were invited to attend any of the activities

All other items included in the Report are to be dealt with elsewhere on the Agenda i.e.

- Deputy Principal appointment
- Strategic College Improvement Fund (SCIF)
- Self Assessment
- 5 Point Plan - Further development

RESOLVED: To receive the Report with thanks, and note its contents.

2042 ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT 2016/17

The Chair of Audit Committee (Mr P Banks) presented the Annual Audit Report, which had been circulated previously. He highlighted various items, and expressed congratulations to all concerned in producing a strong balance sheet that reflects the ongoing success of the College. The Finance Manager (FM), and the Director of Finance & Funding (DFF) were thanked for the work they had done in achieving such strong audit results. Governors discussed the changes in the method of reporting in the Accounts; particularly in relation to the Pension Fund Assets/ Liabilities. It was noted that the Auditors are seeking some further confirmation from GMPF before signing off the accounts.

RESOLVED To approve the recommendations included in the Report:

- (a) to approve the Annual Report of Audit Committee
to approve the Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service (Appendix 1), and the Internal Audit Strategy 2016/17 (Appendix 2)
- (b) to approve the Audit Findings Report 2016 – 2017, and to note the comments of the External Auditors (Appendix 3)
- (c) to approve the Financial Statements and Report for 2016 – 2017 (Appendix 4)
- (d) to approve the appointment of auditors for 2017 - 2018
- (e) to note the self-assessment checklist (Appendix 5)
- (f) to approve Annual Risk Management Report and Risk Register (Appendix 6)
- (g) to approve the signing of the letters of representation in respect of the financial statements, and the regularity audit; subject to clarification of audit matters.

2043 PROPERTY STRATEGY UPDATE

The Principal presented the Report which included progress on the 'New Entrance and Reception' Project. Governing Body (GB) noted that the Project commenced on 31 July 2017, and Phase 1 is scheduled to complete by 2 May 2018. Phase 2 is due to commence around 2 July 2018, with a completion date of 2 October 2018. Work is running according to programme.

GB noted that regular meetings have been held with the Architects (Walker Simpson); and that the Project Monitoring Group (PMG) have met regularly to review proposals. Property and Finance Committee received the Site Progress Meeting Report from Walker Simpson Architects (WSA) dated 3 October 2017; and the Contractors Progress Report from HH Smith, dated 3 October 2017 at its meeting held on 7 November 2017 (minute 655 refers)

RESOLVED to note the progress of the New Entrance and Reception Project.

GB discussed the Building Contract Insurance Bond provision on the HH Smith (HHS) building contract. GB discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the contract; and:

RESOLVED not to take out the Insurance Bond, but keep the Building Contract sum at the same level.

The Principal referred to the discussion P&F Committee had which considered a case for expanding the College site; including two possible projects that could alleviate some of the issues raised. Committee discussed the benefits of extending the College site to cope with student needs and future developments, whilst recognising the issues a-new build project would create. The initial problem would be to purchase more land, and Committee examined two suggestions included in the Report.

GB supported the P&F proposal that the feasibility of the two projects should be examined further; and a report submitted to a future Property and Finance Committee meeting

RESOLVED GB agreed that the feasibility of the two projects be examined further, and a report be submitted to a future P&F Committee meeting

2044 HEALTH AND SAFETY/ SAFEGUARDING REPORTS

The Principal presented the Report which included:

- Health & Safety Executive and other enforcement Agency - no inspections
- Health & Safety Training
- Accident Incident Summary Support
- Progress on Safety related activities – Hostile Intruder event; Emergency Planning and serious incident; Panic attack alarms offered to staff
- evacuation/ Health and Safety Committee meetings/ Departmental Safety Audits
- Health and Safety Committee meets regularly

Update on activities relating to Safeguarding/ Prevent

- existing and new staff receiving training on safeguarding. PGCE Students have received Safeguarding briefing. Training updates offered throughout the year.
- new security arrangements are being introduced to enable staff at all levels to manage serious incidents that may occur in case of a terrorist attack or other threats to life on campus
- there are currently 279 students with confidential log entries recording one or more of a range of pastoral issues. This includes 170 who have disclosed some degree of mental illness.
- College hosting higher level of WRAP (workshop to raise awareness of Prevent)
- GB congratulated the Head of Learning Support (Liz O'Donnell) on being appointed as a Senior Leader in Education

RESOLVED: To accept the Report with thanks.

2045 GOVERNANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

This Report provides the outcomes of the Governance Self-Assessment for 2016/17. The process adopted is outlined, followed by the strengths and areas of improvement identified. A plan for action is also included. For information a copy of the Governing Body's Performance Indicators 2016/17 is included at Appendix B)

The Governing Body agreed the elements that should be included in each Section; and amended Section D to include an Aim related to developing a robust strategy of succession planning.

RESOLVED to

- (a) approve the outcome of the 2016/ 17 Governance SAR – 'Leadership and Management'
- (b) approve the 2016/17 Governance SAR
- (c) approve the areas that should be included in the Quality Improvement Plan
- (d) agree a proposed Grade 2

The Self-Assessment report will be reviewed on 6 December 2017 by an external validation panel which may suggest amendments.

2046 QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Deputy Principal outlined the contents of the Report which included items discussed at the meeting of Quality and Standards Committee held on 11 October 2017 i.e.

1. **Key Performance Indicators and Corporate Targets:** these have been streamlined, and now include Progress; Attainment; Retention; GCSE English and Maths; Destination; University Centre; and Finance. Governors discussed the appropriateness of the targets which had been recommended by Quality and Standards Committee, and sought clarification on various issues.

RESOLVED to approve the Performance Indicators and Corporate Targets recommended by Quality and Standards Committee

2. EXAM RESULTS AND VALUE ADDED: The Report includes:

- **Results** - The overall pass rates at level 3 and level 2 have improved in 2017, however, changes to the way retention is measured means that retention appears to have fallen at level 3. This is because, for Linear A levels, and other two-year courses, retention is now measured over the full two-year period. The level 2 results are pleasing in the light of the higher numbers of students following level 2 courses, as a result of the broader curriculum offered by the Progression course.

GB noted that following inspection, the College has focused on raising the proportion of high grades achieved, and improving value added. Staff training has taken place; learning walks conducted; 'Student Shadowing' undertaken, and departmental meetings held to assess the impact of the training. These actions, combined with other initiatives has had a positive impact as the proportion of A* grades and A*-B have increased. Governors agreed that, while this improvement is to be commended, further progress is needed, particularly in subjects highlighted below (see point below)

- **Performance of Individual Subjects** - GB noted the performance of individual subjects which were grouped under the following categories:
 - High performing subjects with ALPS scores of 3 or above 14 subjects
 - A number of subjects with disappointing results. Rigorous judgements have been made about these subjects in the self-assessment process in the light of comments from inspectors about ALPS grade 5 not being strong enough for self-assessment at grade 2. External validation took place early November. The GB discussed the 12 **subjects causing particular concern**, and asked that their progress is regularly monitored.
- **Performance of other qualification** - Achievement rates for Level 3 Diploma qualifications and in GCSE Maths and English are comfortably above Sixth Form College and Further Education national averages. There is a drop in the GCSE results arising from a lower achievement rate in Maths. However, the declining trend of achievement on the Level 3 Certificate, largely due to a fall in retention, is priority to address this academic year.
- **Outcomes by Equality and Diversity Group** - There are no significant patterns of underachievement by gender. At level 2 Pakistani heritage students achieved less well than white students. Students in receipt of free school meals have a slightly lower achievement rate at level three. The achievement rates for students with learning difficulties and disabilities are lower than for students without learning difficulties or disabilities.
- **Value-Added Performance** - The internal measure of value-added performance is based on the ALPS system. The college's overall value-added outcomes at AS level – with a reduced number of subjects - (12) improved to Grade 2 in 2017. In 2015 and 2016, grades 5 and 4 were achieved respectively. At A Level ALPS score remain grade 5. For BTEC diploma courses, college gained Grade 3 ALPS which is a great improvement on the last 2 years, though this was largely a result of Applied Science and other subjects did not perform well.
- **Attendance** - In 2016-17 attendance improved very slightly for the second consecutive year. The college will aim to improve attendance further through continued implementation of the Intervention Strategy.
- **Destinations** - The most recent Key Stage 5 DFE Performance Data shows that 91% of students from Holy Cross stay in education or employment for at least 2 terms after 16-19 study, 4% above the local authority and 3% above the average for England. Progression of students to university is very high. The progression of students on level 2 courses is also high.
- **Significant Management Actions for 2017-18** - Governors decided that the College should continue to focus on developing leadership this year, sharing good practice across departments, and further develop common ownership of self-assessment and action planning; Support and Progress actions will continue where relevant; a key focus on value added will continue; strategies to improve retention of BTEC Certificate courses will be

2046 QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE REPORT continued

2. EXAM RESULTS AND VALUE ADDED:

- introduced; achievement of different Equality Groups will be investigated further and actions to address any issue as necessary will be identified.

Following an in-depth questioning from governors, it was **RESOLVED** to receive the Examination Results and Value Added report

3. POST INSPECTION ACTION PLAN (PIAP) -

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and answered queries raised. She reminded GB that the Plan seeks to address the weaknesses identified in the Inspection of January 2017.

The Action Plan has been updated since the Quality and Standards meeting, and the Key Priorities have been reviewed and the overall impact targets for 2017 - 18 set. Based on the strengths and weaknesses of the Inspection Report the PIAP identifies three main strands for improvement

- Strand A: Improving Leadership
- Strand B: Improving Students' Progress
 - B1 - Assessment and progress tracking
 - B2 - Intervention to promote work ethic and progress – 'chasing down'
- Strand C: Promoting Teaching and Learning that challenges all students
 - C1 - Teaching and Learning Strategies
 - C2 – Systems to support development of Teaching and Learning

Governors sought clarification of the monitoring arrangements that have been introduced, and welcomed the progress so far. They asked that the outcomes be regularly reported to Quality and Standards Committee.

RESOLVED to approve the Post Inspection Action Plan

4. MONITORING SCHEDULE 2017/18 –

The DP presented the Quality Monitoring Schedule 2017-18 which includes the following elements; the timetable; and the senior member of staff responsible for initiating action

- Results Reviews
- Scheme of Work progress check
- PDR check
- Regular checking with Head of Subject including L2 Coordinator
- Regular Checking with Senior Tutor
- Analysis of Key Assessment, VA and Estimated Grades
- Work Scrutiny
- Learning Walks/Lesson Observation/Self Reflection
- Learner Shadowing
- Learner Voice Surveys
- Focus Groups

GB asked that regular feedback to Quality and Standards Committee be added to the Monitoring Schedule

RESOLVED to receive the Monitoring Schedule with thanks

5. ASSESSMENT STRATEGY -

The DP introduced the Assessment Strategy which has been recently reviewed and significant changes made.. The college recognises that regular assessment and effective feedback makes a major contribution to the development of learning and in enabling students to realise their full potential. The report highlighted that for Assessment to be effective it needs to be: regular; appropriate, fair and accurate. Governors welcomed the changes made to the Strategy, and asked that its effectiveness be monitored regularly,

RESOLVED to receive the Assessment Strategy document, and ask that it be reviewed in June 2018 to assess its effectiveness,

2047 STRATEGIC COLLEGE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Principal informed Governing Body that a new Funding opportunity has arisen for Colleges to apply for grant from the Strategic College Improvement Fund (SCIF). Applicant Colleges will work with a higher-performing partner college to provide peer-to-peer support to enable applicant colleges to deepen its understanding of its quality challenges, develop a rigorous and costed programme of

2047 STRATEGIC COLLEGE IMPROVEMENT PLAN continued

work, and use the experience and know-how of the partner college to put its quality improvement programme in place.

Governors sought clarification how the proposed Project would complement Holy Cross's current Quality Improvement Plan; and how the Project will be funded. Having received assurances the GB

RESOLVED to approve the application for a Pilot Project of the Strategic College Improvement Fund

2048 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE REPORT

The Deputy Principal introduced the Report which included proposed amendments to the Capability Policy for Designated Senior Post Holders; and the Capability Policy for Members of Staff (other than Designated Senior Post Holders). After clarifying issues Governing Body

RESOLVED to approve the Capability Policy for members of Staff (other than designated Senior Post Holders); but refer back the Capability Policy for Designated Senior Post Holders to Personnel Committee for further scrutiny.

2049 MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS:

The Chair of Governing Body asked the Governing Body to formally receive the minutes of the following Committee meetings, which had been circulated.

- Quality and Standards 11 October 2017
- Property and Finance 7 November 2017
- Audit Committee 8 November 2017

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Committees be formally received and accepted by the Governing Body.

2050 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Staff Governor and members of staff left the meeting

2050 RESTRICTED ITEM - (minutes on a separate sheet)

Meeting ended 9.15pm