



## **GOVERNING BODY**

### **MINUTES**

of the meeting held on Wednesday, 20 March 2019 at 5.30pm

#### **PRESENT**

Mrs A Fox  
Mr D Frost  
Mrs K Hayhurst  
Mrs R Hyndman  
Mrs I Lewandowski  
Mrs H Leyden  
Mr A Lilley  
Mr N Limb  
Mrs J McCool  
Miss M Shah  
Mrs S Smith  
Mrs H Stainton (Chair)  
Mr J Sweeney

#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Mrs A M Cassidy (Director of Finance and Professional Services)  
Mrs E Hoyle (Clerk to Governors)  
Mrs R Szolkowska (Deputy Principal)  
Mrs T Manning (Head of College Information/Data Protection Officer)

The meeting was preceded by a General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training provided by Tina Manning. The purpose of the GDPR is to give EU citizens more control over the way their personal data is handled, stored, and accessed. It is very important that the College is compliant with the GDPR; making sure everyone knows what to do and take it seriously and do it properly. The Chair thanked Tina Manning for her delivering the GDPR training.

The actual meeting of the governing body started at 6.15pm by a prayer led by the Principal.

#### 2126 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Bentley and Mrs R Khan. This is the last meeting of Miss M Shah, student governor; the Chair thanked Miss M Shah for her input to the governing body and wished her well for the future.

The Chair welcomed Mr N Limb, the new parent governor; all present introduced themselves. Mr N Limb gave a brief description of himself and his intention to serve the governing body and the College.

The Chair presented flowers and gifts to Mrs A Fox as a big thank you from governors and staff for her 24 years of service to the College.

#### 2127 **DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

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

#### 2128 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2018 were approved as correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chair

2129 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Minute 2116 page 5 – A suggestion was made for CLT to put into action how they can manage numbers and timetable improvement on the current site and report back to the governing body. The DP reported that the consultation has started and is continuing.

Minute 2118 – page 7 – The Chair reported that she will pursue the External Review of Governance after the Easter break and will speak to the DFPS re External Review cost.

2130 **GOVERNANCE MATTERS**

The Clerk presented the report and reminded governors who have not submitted the Register of Interests, Eligibility and Skills Audit forms to please do so as soon as possible.

There are 4 Foundation Governor vacancies in the governing body. Arrangements have been made for the vacancies to be advertised in the local Parishes. A Search Committee meeting will be arranged soon to discuss the issue.

The new Parent Governor, Mr N Limb was welcomed by the governing body. NL is employed as a Board Company Executive Director for an International Insurance Company; an Underwriter by trade of Ships, Cargo, Construction Projects, and Terrorism & Cyber Insurance. NL will join the Property & Finance Committee.

Committee membership was discussed. Mrs M Jones resigned from the governing body, leaving a vacancy for Chair of Personnel Committee and Remuneration Committee. Mr J Sweeney has agreed to take on the role of the Chair of Personnel Committee, and Chair of Remuneration Committee. Mr J Sweeney has also accepted the role of Safeguarding Officer. Mrs H Stainton to take on the role of Chair of Search Committee and will also join the Personnel Committee.

The Clerk reported that the recent Governance Effectiveness Audit identified gaps within training matrix. The recommendation of the Auditors is for the College to ensure that all governors receive the training they require to undertake their roles.

**RESOLVED: Governors approved:**

- **The appointment of Mr N Limb as Parent Governor**
- **The appointment of Mr J Sweeney as Chair of Personnel Committee and Chair of Remuneration Committee**
- **The Committee membership**
- **The appointment of Mr J Sweeney as Safeguarding Officer**
- **To inform the Clerk of any training attended.**

2131 **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT INCLUDING UNIVERSITY CENTRE REPORT**

The report was previously circulated to governors and the Principal highlighted the following:

**Mission and Ethos**

- **Parish & Diocese** – The Hope in the Future project launched by Bishop John has now extended to educational institutions as 'Hope in the Future (Schools)'. The aim is to build closer links between schools and colleges and the parishes they actually sit in. The Bishop's wish is that Holy Cross College focus on links with St Marie's and have a member of staff and a Governor, who both attend St Marie's to act as Parish Links. Mrs H Leyden agreed to be Link Governor to St Marie's and St Joseph's.
- **Daughters of the Cross & Chapel** – Some of the detailed fixtures in the Chapel that have been in storage have now been installed: the tabernacle veil and the crucifix above the altar. The wooden Stations of the Cross is presently being repaired. They were left by the Daughters when they closed the Convent, and were given in memory of Sister Emily Mary. They will be sited sensitively and simply along the north wall.
- **Student Activities** – The RE and Chaplaincy team continue to encourage students, who are also very proactive, to be very engaged in charity work. The College, once again won the Catenian debating shield, and the Lourdes group is preparing for the Diocesan Pilgrimage. The College held great Marie Therese Day with all students, engaging with the College's FC values.

**College Restructure** – The Collective Consultation process with the unions has now successfully completed three full meetings and some others are planned for around Easter time. The Voluntary Severance agreements have gone very well and substantial savings can be

made towards the target. There is still a need to continue with other parts of the strategy: the pastoral changes, the curriculum leadership changes, and some support changes. The applications from support areas, though fewer, will help to take some more areas out of scope. The next stage of the process, now beginning, is the appointing to the new roles in both curriculum and support, which are part of the restructure. The Principal is updating the Chair regularly on the various stages of the restructure.

A question was raised on 'How far are we from ensuring people not be at risk?' for which the Principal replied – the voluntary severance offer does not save the full amount that the College needs to save; there are sufficient savings on the Curriculum side; pastoral changes will go ahead; some areas in support are now out of scope and some within scope.

**Raise the Rate** – The campaign for more funding for Sixth Form Colleges continues both national and locally. The Principal encouraged everyone to join the campaign and to visit the Raise the Rate website to learn more and get involved. The government reduced the base funding for sixth form from £4,750 to £4,000 some years ago; there is no replacement for putting the basic rate up again.

**Performance Tables** – The Principal was delighted to confirm that the college has done brilliantly this year in the DfE 16-19 performance tables for Progress. Holy Cross is 4<sup>th</sup> in the North West; above average Progress and in the top 20%.

**New Student President** - The new President of the Student Representative Committee is Sarina Azari, from Parrenthorn. The Vice-President is Max Ramsahoye from St Gabriel's.

2132

### **UNIVERSITY CENTRE MATTERS**

The Principal reported that the aim to increase recruitment in the University Centre continues with two new courses agreed for this year – Health & Wellbeing, and Theology (Philosophy) & Religion – with other courses being considered for 2020 entry: Psychology & Education, Business Management and Law – these are not yet finalized or dates for introduction set. The UC is looking at new Med/MA opportunities and Post Graduate Certificates in areas that may greatly appeal to teachers and others – such as on Dyslexia and Autistic Spectrum issues.

**University Centre Report 18/19** - The University Centre Report 18/19 was circulated:

**QAA** - The University Centre underwent a successful Quality Review in May 2018. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) for Higher Education, in its findings, fully endorsed the quality of the academic provision and student experience at Holy Cross College. The QAA team identified no areas for development or specified improvements. This is the highest result any university or college can achieve. The QAA review team concluded that there can be confidence in academic standards and the quality of the student experience. Unfortunately, due to the new framework, areas of good practice are no longer identified in the published report. The Principal is delighted that since the successful Quality Review, Governors have integrated University Centre quality monitoring into mainstream business.

A celebration of the life of John Barton, the founding Director of the University Centre was held in Middleton. John was also the Clerk to Governors until January 2018. A number of staff and governors attended to pay tribute to John. John came to the College with huge experience with Adult Education, and expanded the University Centre. John has given his life in helping and serving young people. Mrs A Fox mentioned that John should never be forgotten and all the things he had done for the University Centre and the governing body.

**St Mary's College, Blackburn** – Due to continuing uncertainty regarding the relationship with St Mary's College, Blackburn, CMT feels that the College has a responsibility to implement a contingency plan for the HE students at this campus; and would want to ensure the continuation of all the existing core and margin bid students while ensuring ~~and cease recruiting~~ new applicants to SMC campus were on SMC numbers.

**Student Issues** – Staff Student Liaison meetings are held four times per academic year giving students opportunities to present aspects of good practice and areas for improvement to enhance their courses. The report contains examples of SSL minutes of meetings; issues raised and discussed; examples of feedback to issues; and the National Students Survey – in the North West, HCC did best on Question 27.

The Chair thanked the Principal and everyone involved in the University Centre.

**DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES REPORT****1. Management of Accounts to 31 January 2019**

The Management Accounts showed the activity for the first six months of the new academic year.

- Funding for 2018/19 is based on lagged student numbers of 2148 students calculated from recruitment in 2017/18. Recruitment for 2018/19 and lagged funding for 2019/20 will be based on 2037 students, 111 lower than the previous year.
- The revised forecast outturn for 31 July 2019 is showing a deficit of £317k down from £385k. This is mainly due to increased funding for students with high needs, savings on pay costs for staff who have left the college and have not been replaced. Non-pay costs forecast has increased due to the costs incurred for the site expansion exploratory work.

The report included:

1. Income and Expenditure Account – the cumulative operating deficit for the 6 months ending 31 January 2019 is £168k compared to the original forecast deficit of £267k.
  - ESFA Main Allocation – the report showed a table which sets out the basis of the income shown in the accounts.
  - Student Numbers – the report included a table showing the position in terms of student numbers.
  - University Centre Income and Expenditure to 31 January 2019 – a table showed the actual expenses, original budget and the revised budget.
  - Student Bursary Funding and Free school meals
  - Pay Expenditure – the original budget for the year was £7.85M. Actual pay costs to date are £3,808k compared to £3,922k budget.
  - Non-Pay Expenditure – the overall annual budget for non-pay excluding depreciation is £1.89M. Total expenditure on non-pay items is currently slightly over budget, £1,068k actual against £1,015k budget.
  - Catering – the trading position to date is showing a deficit of £1,344 with a Gross Profit % of 51.82%.
2. Balance Sheet
  - Fixed Assets – there has been asset additions, refurbishment and feasibility costs of £623k.
  - SLC/LH Debtor – the outstanding tuition fees due as at 31 January 2019 is £527k mainly from the Student Loan Company (SLC) for the second term's fees.
  - Cash and Bank – the balance as at 31 January 2019 was £1,052k.
  - Treasury – the college has invested surplus funds of £1.77M on treasury deposit with Lloyds Bank.
  - HE Partners/SLC Creditors – HE Partners Creditor of £42k is for tuition fees outstanding and in the hands of the debt collection agency which will subsequently be redistributed to Liverpool Hope University and St Mary's College Blackburn.
3. Cash flow – the cash flow by the end of the year is £2.5M.
4. Performance Indicators – the financial health grade of the College assessed within financial forecast using the key performance indicators is Good.

**RESOLVED: Governors approved the management accounts for 31 January 2019.**

**2. Property Strategy Report**

- Main Entrance and Walkways Capital Project – following many hours of investigations, the issue on the heating of the main reception has now improved and the underfloor heating is now working correctly. Investigation is still ongoing regarding the issue around the automatic doors at peak times when students are entering and leaving the building which brings down the temperature rapidly. Works are continuing on completing the snagging of the project working in conjunction with the new Estate Manager.
- Financial Statement – Final Account –The College advisers Simon Fenton Partnership have been working with HH Smiths and in liaison with the DFPS

agreed a final account of £1.965M inclusive of all additional works agreed by the Governing Body. The final account was reviewed and recommended at the Property & Finance Committee.

- **Future Works, Planning and Costing** – The College received at the end of January, a ring fenced capital grant of £143,000 following the Government's 'little extras' initiative as part of Philip Hammond's Budget pledge in November 2018. In addition, the College receives around £50k each year earmarked as devolved capital fund for maintenance and refurbishment. The funds are to be used solely for capital projects or equipment. The following works are being considered to develop a new Property Strategy starting this summer and working over the next 2 to 3 years:
  - Toilet refurbishment (student facilities) in the Mary Kelly Building and Emilie Mary Building – this is the number 1 priority.
  - Extension of the courtyard paving
  - Secure access to the central courtyard assessing feasibility of suitable barriers near to the kitchen
  - Relocation of some services to smaller spaces
  - Simple corridor link between Marie Therese building and Mary Kelly building – single storey

The Property & Finance Committee approved the cost of feasibility works of £4,900 plus VAT which will help to develop of Property Strategy proposal. Once the feasibility report is completed, Governors will be able to review the recommendations and discuss priorities.

**RESOLVED: Governors accepted the report and thanked the DFPS.**

2134

#### **MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- a) **Property & Finance – 12 February 2019.** The minutes has already been discussed by the DFPS under Minute 2130.
- b) **Quality & Standards – 6 March 2019.** The Q & S Chair gave a brief update of the meeting. The policies on Fitness to study; Equality & Diversity Objectives, and the Single Equality and the Protocol of Link Governors were discussed in detail at the last Q & S meeting and members recommended the policies for governors' approval. The APQ, Mrs S O'Connor and the Acting APC, Mr N Howarth gave a verbal progress update of under-performing subjects. The DP gave the College and Subject in-year Progress Report. The staff survey held in November 2018 was discussed. The Principal gave an update on the University Centre, this was discussed earlier under Minute 2129.
- c) **Audit Committee** – The Chair of Audit Committee gave his update on the last Internal Audit Progress Report. Whilst established governance processes are in place, the Auditors noted three areas where they considered improvement could be made to the existing processes. These related to the reviewing and updating of Committee Terms of Reference, the design of the governor skills audit process, and the provision of governor training.

**RESOLVED: Governors accepted the Committee minutes and thanked the Chairs of Committees for their brief updates.**

2135

#### **APPROVAL OF POLICIES**

- **Student Representative Committee Constitution and Code of Conduct** – The Constitution has been amended but has not been seen by the students. Following discussion, governors decided to put the discussion and approval of the above on hold. The Student Representative Committee will look at the Constitution and Code of Conduct and will bring back to the governing body for approval.
- **Equality Objectives** – Governors approved the Equality Objectives subject to amendment to Point 3 to read - 'Ensuring reasonable adjustments are routinely considered as part of the student application and staff recruitment and selection processes'.

- **Single Equality Scheme** – Governors approved the Single Equality Scheme subject to removing 'Gender Identity' from the Protected Characteristics (Point 3).
- **Fitness to Study** – Governors approved the Fitness to Study policy.
- **Protocol for Governor Links** – Governors approved the Protocol for Governor Links

2136

#### **RISK REGISTER**

The Risk Register 2019 was distributed at the meeting. The following were added/amended:

- G3 – Indicative Risk – Ofsted Inspection grade was changed from RI to GOOD. The College is on a continuous improvement journey and is aiming for outstanding in a time of severe financial constraint and organisational change.
- G9 – Indicative Risk – Insolvency regime-possible impact for Governing Bodies. Action to be taken – Governors update on the Insolvency regime required by May 2019.
- G12 – Ensure succession planning for Governing Body. The governing Body needs to ensure members are well informed and up to date with current issues and sector risks. Action – Provide ongoing CPD and training opportunities for Governors as well as updates from college staff on emergencies issues, e.g. GDPR; Insolvency regime.

The DFPS agreed to give a governors' training on Insolvency Regime at the next governing body meeting in May 2019.

2137

#### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 8 May 2019 at 6.00pm preceded by a training on Insolvency Regime at 5.30pm. Mrs S Smith gave her apologies for the next meeting.

Staff and Students governors left the meeting at 8.15pm while the remaining governors discussed the Restricted Item.

2138

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair reminded governors that the next Coffee and Chat Session with staff will be held on Thursday, 28 March and invited them to come to the session if they can.

#### **WHAT HAVE WE DONE IN THIS MEETING TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR COLLEGE FOR THE BENEFIT OF STUDENTS?**

- Approved the policies on Equality Objectives; Single Equality Scheme; Fitness to Study; and Protocol for Governor Links
- Discussed the University Centre Matters and its successful Quality Review in May 2018.
- Discussed the Committee minutes and special consideration was made towards governor training to help governors fulfil their strategic roles.

Meeting finished at 8.45pm