



GOVERNORS' MEETING

Minutes of the meeting
on 4th October 2007

Present: Mr Neil Arlett, Ms Amanda Attfield, Ms Michelle Balcombe, Mrs Carol Clapham, Mr Charles Davies, Mr Rob Doran, Dr Jonathan Godfrey, Miss Jenny Gunning, Mrs Pippa Hadfield, Mr Steve Hancorn, Dr Ken Hopkins, Mr Bob Ing, Mrs Heidi Macdougall, Miss Emily Marshall, Mr Andrew McDonagh, Mr Rob Soutar (Chair), Mr Ravi Tandon, Mrs Margaret Turner

In attendance Dr Ruth Brinton and Mr Peter Cooper (Deputy Principals)
Mr Philip Eyles (Clerk), Mrs Ruth Jones (Finance Director)

1. ELECTION OF GOVERNORS

Neither Ken Hopkins or Emily Marshall were present for this item. Ken Hopkins had been nominated as a Co-opted Governor by the Search Committee on 12 July and Emily Marshall as a Student Governor by the college students, following an election. The Governing Body **AGREED** to elect both as Governors and they then joined the meeting

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Stephen Byatt and Amy Morgan

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS

None

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2007

The Minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record and signed.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The two people who have responded to the advertisement for prospective new Governors (or co-opted committee members) will be interviewed by the Chair of Governors, Principal and Clerk. Minute 9iv refers

6. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk thanked Governors for the return of their declaration forms and said that no Governors have asked to change their committees (Minute 5ii of 12 July refers). A letter will be sent to the few Governors who still need checks with the Criminal Records Bureau, informing them of the way the check is done

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Discussion of the report focussed on the proposed new Wyebridge Academy, which has now received the support of Herefordshire Council. The consultant appointed by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DSCF) has now contacted the Principal, who has already informed him of the disadvantages for young people who study in small sixth forms. Because it would be in an academy, the proposed new sixth-form at Wyebridge would not have to satisfy Herefordshire's general rule that, for any new sixth-form to be considered, its projected size must exceed a hundred students

8. GOVERNORS' HANDBOOK

The handbook was circulated and its contents explained. There was a discussion about publishing Governors' personal details on the College website. It was agreed that their names (but not home addresses) should be published, together with some background information about them

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. Staffing Committee on 19 September

The Committee had examined a staffing update and considered staff absence during 2006-07.

The College's average number of days of absence per employee was 5.9, similar to the average for Herefordshire schools and well below the national average. The rise from the 2005-06 figure of

4.3 days was caused by a few individuals with long periods of absence. Absence management was discussed.

The Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE** the recommendations to adopt

- the same appraisal arrangements for senior postholders as in 2006-07
- the Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedures 2007-08 (including the Committee's proposed amendment)
- the Race Equality Policy and Procedures 2007-08

The form for auditing Governors' skills, now revised into the format requested by the Committee, was approved and circulated to Governors. It is to be completed and returned to the Clerk by the end of October

It was **AGREED** that the Committee's minutes of its 19 September meeting be **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

ii. Audit Committee on 25 September

Following the Committee's recommendations the Governing Body **AGREED TO APPROVE** the

- Annual Report of the Internal Audit Service 2006-07
- Regularity Self-assessment report 2006-07
- Quality Assurance Policy and Procedures 2007-08

There was a discussion of the Clerk's analysis of the Governors' attendance statistics for 2006-07. There had been a decline in attendance, both at full Governors' Meetings and Committees and it was agreed that an improvement was necessary. In order to improve attendance, the Chair of Governors had spoken to two Governors (one of whom has now left) and all Governors were asked to give the Clerk good notice of unavoidable absence so that the dates of meetings may be rearranged, if necessary. Governors with temporary personal difficulties are encouraged to seek leave of absence for a period, if their problems are of a short-term nature.

It was **AGREED** that the Committee's minutes of its 25 September meeting be **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

iii. Curriculum Committee on 25 September

Consideration of the Committee's report on its meeting focussed on its analysis of the **OUTSTANDING** examination results achieved, especially as expressed in terms of 'Value added'. Notable features were:

- the College is at the very top of colleges nationally at AS level, on the 'ALPs' analysis
 - students of all ability bands perform well
 - outstanding General Studies results (once a weak area)
 - many subjects have significantly good results and there are few weaker areas
 - over the years, subjects with weak performances have been coached to improve
- The Governing Body asked the Principal to commend the College's staff on their excellent work

The particularly high enrolment rate from partner schools was noted.

The Committee had also considered the College's Learner Involvement and Personalised Learning Strategy. This document brings together two strands of the government's agenda and demonstrates how the College is progressively developing individuals' needs

It was **AGREED** that the Committee's minutes of its 25 September meeting be **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

iv. Finance and Premises Committee on 1 October

The Minutes had to be tabled, because the original date of the meeting had to be postponed to meet members' availability.

The Committee had received a report on minor building works and monthly management accounts, but most of its meeting had been spent on the Financial Forecast 2006-07 to 2011-12 and the Budget 2007-08. The forecast is sound with surpluses in each year to 2011-12 and a prediction of financial health 'A' throughout the period. However, the final health category may have to dip temporarily if further building work is undertaken. The question of whether more building work is

needed will be addressed in the next update to the Accommodation Strategy, which is due in January

The Committee had considered the monthly management accounts, noting that the financial health category as at 31 July 2007 may be 'B', although it is currently 'A'. However, the dip in July was a planned situation.

The Governing Body **AGREED** to follow the Committee's recommendation and **APPROVE** the

- Financial Forecast 2006-07 to 2011-12 (final version)
- Budget 2007-08 (final version)
- Monthly Management Accounts (June and July)

It was also **AGREED** that the Committee's minutes of its 1 October meeting be **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Thursday 13 December. There will be no preceding Governors' Workshop