



GOVERNORS' MEETING Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2011

Present: Mr Neil Arlett, Ms Michelle Balcombe, Mr Charles Davies, Mrs Pat Gaze, Dr Jonathan Godfrey, Dr Ken Hopkins (Chair), Mrs Heidi Macdougall, Mr Andrew McDonagh, Mr James Miller, Miss Ellie-Mae Davies, Mrs Helen Powers, Mr John Pratt, Ms Blair Priday, Mr Ravi Tandon, Miss Christine Wright (15)

In attendance: Dr Ruth Brinton (Deputy Principal), Mr Philip Eyles (Clerk), Mrs Ruth Jones (Finance Director)

[The meeting was preceded by Governor Training on Audit and Legal Issues]

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Katarina Blair, Carol Clapham, Rob Doran, Tony Leach (4)
Peter Cooper (Deputy Principal) was also unable to attend

2. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2011-2012**

Ken Hopkins was nominated and elected as Chair of Governors
Heidi Macdougall was nominated and elected as Vice Chair of Governors

3. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS**

None

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 MAY 2011**

The minutes were **APPROVED** as an accurate record and signed

5. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Minute 4: No reply had been received from Bill Wiggin MP to the College's letter complaining about the government's drastic cut in Enrichment Funding

Minute 9ii: The Chair of Governors has written letters of thanks to long-serving members of staff who are leaving the College

Minute 10: There was a brief discussion of the approach that may be made to parents after the Presentation Evening, in order to encourage them to make gifts to the College

6. **CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk thanked Governors for responding to the consultation from the Department for Education on the new Instrument and Articles of Government. No objections to the proposed changes had been made

7. **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The report began with staff changes, student applications (which should lead to the College meeting its November enrolment target of 1817) and the repair of the defective surface of the tennis courts.

It then covered the bids by partner schools to become academies and students' and ex-students' successes. The Sutton Trust has recently analysed students' progression to Higher Education nationally, and this analysis showed that students from the College did exceptionally well, with 30% going on to the 'top 30' universities.

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He also reported on national issues, and it was these that led to the longer discussions, as follows:

The phasing out of the Educational Maintenance Allowance during the coming academic year was regarded as a serious risk to the College, because the effect of this change on recruitment and retention is unpredictable. Another new risk is the uncertainty relating to the revised funding methodology that will apply to 2013-2014 and subsequent years, following the Wolf Review. Teachers' industrial action was discussed: twelve teachers went on strike for a day recently. The final national issue was the National Audit Office's report on Value for Money in Post-16 Education and its recent discussion by parliament's Public Accounts Committee. The Board was proud that the College Principal had been the person who had spoken to the Committee on behalf of all sixth form colleges nationally.

8. MONITORING OF THE 2011 OPERATIONAL PLAN

All objectives have been achieved this round, although little progress has been made in moving forward on the items that were reported to the Board's meeting in May as having been deferred. The success rate in achieving this year's objectives to date is 95.5%.

9. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Membership was reviewed and Governors were encouraged to consider joining the Audit Committee, which currently comprises four Governor members and a co-optee.

10. REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS AND RESPONSES

The Clerk reported that there had been no complaints to or about the Corporation.

The Principal gave details of the eighteen complaints that the College had received. Fourteen of these had been resolved without further complaint, but the remaining four were repeated complaints during May about noise from the Sixth Sense Fitness Centre and the Gymnasium's fan. The College is now seeking to eliminate noise and is keeping local residents informed of progress.

The Board concluded that the complaints were all of a minor nature and *judged that they had been handled appropriately*

11. GOVERNING BODY MEETINGS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND BUSINESS SCHEDULE

The schedule of dates and business was discussed briefly and **ADOPTED**

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. Audit Committee on 5 July

The Auditors had given an opinion of **SUBSTANTIAL ASSURANCE** following their reports on Learner Numbers, Key Financial Controls and Information & Communication Technology Procurement and had also reported that the College has made **GOOD PROGRESS** on following up previous recommendations. There had also been an Advisory Review on Safeguarding, with the College noting, and agreeing to respond to, the three recommendations made.

The Committee had discussed and approved the Audit Needs Assessment and Plan for the period to 2013-2014, and had also reviewed the auditors' performance, concluding with a recommendation that they be re-appointed.

There had been a long discussion of risk assessment, including the implications of the Bribery Act 2010. The more serious risks were each reviewed carefully.

After its own discussion, the Board of Governors **AGREED TO APPROVE** the

- Risk Management Policy and Procedures, 2011-12
- Risk Analysis and Register, June 2011
- Risk Analysis Action Plan, 2011-12
- Re-appointment of RSM Tenon as the College's internal auditors for 2011-12

The Committee's Minutes were then considered and **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

ii. Finance & Premises Committee on 7 July

The Monthly Management Accounts for May showed a strong financial position, with a surplus of £228 000 currently being forecast for 2010-11

Most of the Committee's time had been spent considering the first draft Budget 2011-12 and the Financial Forecast for the period to 2014-16. The forecast deals with the challenges provided by declining funding, the phasing out of transitional relief and inevitable inflation, especially in utility costs. The plan for 2011-12 assumes that the small loan, which will then be £74 000 is paid off in April.

After considering the Committee's Report, the Board of Governors **AGREED TO APPROVE** the

- Monthly Management Accounts for May 2011
- First draft Budget 2011-12
- Financial Forecast for the period to 2014-16

The Committee had also reviewed the Health & Safety Procedures and considered the annual Health & Safety report. There had also been a report on the minor works to be carried out over the summer. After a brief discussion, the Board of Governors then **AGREED TO APPROVE** the Health & Safety Policy and Procedures 2011-12

The Committee's Minutes were then considered and **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

iii. Remuneration Committee on 7 July

After a brief discussion of the Remuneration Committee's report, the Board of Governors **AGREED TO APPROVE** that

- no changes be made to the Committee's Terms of Reference
- the Principal, Deputy Principals and Clerk are all given a 0.75% cost of living pay increase
- these changes are backdated to 1 September 2010
- these Remuneration Committee Minutes are **NOT** confidential

The Committee's Minutes were then considered and **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** - None

14. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** – Thursday 6 October