



GOVERNORS' MEETING DRAFT Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2011

Present: Mr Neil Arlett, Ms Michelle Balcombe (except for Items 9 iv &10)
Mrs Katarina Blair, Mr Martin Churchward (except for Item 3),
Mrs Carol Clapham, Mr Charles Davies (except for Items 9 iv &10),
Mr Rob Doran, Mrs Pat Gaze, Dr Jonathan Godfrey, Dr Ken Hopkins (Chair),
Mrs Heidi Macdougall, Mr James Miller, Mrs Helen Powers, Mr John Pratt,
Ms Blair Priday, Miss Christine Wright

(16)

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

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Andrew McDonagh and Ravi Tandon

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS**

None

3. **APPOINTMENT OF NEW GOVERNOR**

The Search Committee had nominated Mr Martin Churchward as an Independent Governor to replace Tony Leach who had resigned at the end of July

After a brief discussion, the Board of Governors **AGREED TO APPOINT** Mr Martin Churchward as an Independent Governor

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 JULY 2011**

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

5. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Minute 5: Concern was expressed that Bill Wiggin MP appears not to have replied to the College's letter complaining about the Government's drastic cut in Enrichment Funding. A further check will now be made to see whether or not he did reply

6. **CLERK'S REPORT**

After Tony Leach's resignation and Martin Churchward's appointment (See also Minute 3), the Board has nineteen members and one vacancy for a Student Governor. Students are expected to hold an election in the week following this Governors' Meeting, thus allowing the Board to make an appointment in December. All Governors' Committees have at least five members, except for the Remuneration Committee which has four

Notice was given that seven named Governors' terms of office will expire in October 2012. All were asked to consider whether they seek another term of office by December, so that the Search Committee might then meet to consider whether to re-appoint and/or how to look for replacement Governors

A Governors' Skills Audit and Training Needs questionnaire will be sent to Governors for return at the December Board Meeting

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7. **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

Discussion concentrated on items that were not covered in Committee reports. Fundraising was discussed in some detail, with ex-parents to be targeted initially, to raise funds through The Friends of Hereford Sixth Form College. This is a registered charity. Also, the College is now a lead partner with the English Symphony Orchestra and the Hereford Music Service to establish a new charity to be called the Herefordshire Music Fund. Its purpose is to help students afford instrumental and vocal lessons. The calendar of the College's cultural events for Governors to attend was also promoted

A large number of national issues was discussed: school funding reform, changes to Performance Tables for 14-16 year-olds, changes to Ofsted and various other national consultations. National pay negotiations have now ended because sixth form colleges cannot afford to give any pay rise for 2011-12

There was considerable discussion of two national reviews that are likely to affect the College. The first is a review of the funding methodology for colleges and school sixth forms from 2012-13 onwards. This is likely to favour urban catchment areas, so the College will probably fare less well. The other review (the James Review) covers the way that school and college buildings are likely to be funded and constructed in future

8. **GOVERNORS' HANDBOOK**

The handbook was distributed and Governors' attention was drawn to various sections within it

9. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

i. Staff & Students Committee on 22 September

The Committee had discussed staffing, staff absence and the Student Representative Council budget. The ways in which the College supports the Council were of interest to the Committee, especially after such a good year for the Council, and it was agreed that a member of staff would address either the Committee or the whole Board on this issue at some stage

The updating of policies on Equality & Diversity and Safeguarding, which had been held up for over a year by factors outside the College's control, is now moving forward. Most of the policies have now been approved by the Herefordshire Safeguarding of Children Board, with remaining issues likely to be resolved by January

The Committee's minutes on the annual verbal report on students at risk and those living independently were discussed by the Board with the Deputy Principal (who had been unable to attend the Committee Meeting) adding several points of detail

The Committee had also discussed several policy documents, which it then recommended to the Board. After a brief discussion, the Board of Governors then **AGREED TO APPROVE** Policies and Procedures for 2011-12 covering:

- Appraisal & Performance Review of Staff and Senior Post Holders
- Pay & Conditions of Staff and Senior Post Holders

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

ii. Search Committee on 29 September

Besides reviewing the skills needed for new governors during its consideration of how Tony Leach should be replaced and then nominating Martin Churchward (see also Minute 3), the Committee had reviewed its Terms of Reference and resolved to focus actively on Governor recruitment at its next meeting in February. To the latter end, **ALL BOARD MEMBERS** were asked to suggest possible new Governors or Governors' Committee members to the Clerk or to the Committee's Chair

After a brief discussion, the Board of Governors **AGREED** that no changes should be made to the Committee's Terms of Reference

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

iii. Curriculum Committee on 27 September

The Committee had discussed retention (equal to the best ever) and then the very good summer examination results. The Board discussed the proportion of A* grades obtained; this is similar to the proportion at other colleges but not as high as the College had hoped for. The November enrolment target of 1817 students is likely to be met comfortably. There was a discussion of the College's range of GCSE subjects and the most popular A/AS level subjects, and it was agreed that the Head of Careers will talk to the Committee about progression from the College to the country's leading universities. The Board discussed additions to the Course Masterfile

The Board of Governors then **AGREED TO AMEND** the College's Course Masterfile by adding GCSE Film Studies and AS level Applied Science

The Committee's Minutes were then considered and **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**, subject to changing 'HE and Russell group universities...' in Item 9 to 'leading universities'

iv. Finance & Premises Committee on 29 September

The Committee had considered a straightforward set of Monthly Management accounts for June and July, with the College ending the year in the 'outstanding' financial category. The revised Budget and Financial Forecast were considered and it was noted that there may be a further small budgetary review of employee costs in November. The Committee had also considered proposals for extending the College's current contract for insurance beyond 2012 and the Board supported the Committee's approach, subject to further investigation

After a brief discussion, the Board then **AGREED TO APPROVE** the

- Monthly Management Accounts for June and July 2011
- Budget 2011-12 (revised) and the updated Financial Forecast for the period to 2016

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

v. Audit Committee on 4 October 2011

The Committee Chair reported the Committee's Minutes to the Board in detail. The first item of business was the adoption (with immediate effect) of an addition to the College's Anti-Fraud Policy to incorporate the requirements of the Bribery Act 2010. The Committee had then discussed the three annual reports, as listed below, and these were then considered by the Board. The Board of Governors noted that all the audit reports were 'clean' and then **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- the College's Annual Risk Management Report to the Board for 2010-11
- the Audit Committee's Annual Report to the Board for 2010-11
- the Internal Audit Service's Annual Report for 2010-11

The Committee had then approved a questionnaire for Board Members to assess the Board's and its Committees' effectiveness, and had considered the External Audit Plan and the proposed procedure for the Self-Assessment of Governance. The Board discussed these issues and then **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- the External Audit Plan for the accounts to 31 July 2011
- that the Governance Self-Assessment Report is prepared in the same way as it was in 2010

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

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Clerk agreed to check that the College has Governors' current email addresses

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.30pm on Thursday 15 December