



# GOVERNORS' MEETING

## Minutes of the meeting on 21 January 2021 by video-conferencing

**Present:** Ms Michelle Balcombe, Mr Graham Biggs, Mr Andy Clarke, Mr Peter Cooper, Miss Caitlin Jenkins, Mr James Miller (Chair), Mrs Vicky Orsmond, Mr Andrew Roberts, Ms Beth Rudolf, Mrs Danielle Thompson, Mrs Catriona Ward, Sarah Woodall, Prof David Langley, Felix J Smithson, Mr Adrian Allan. (15)

**In attendance:** Mr Robert Gorman (Clerk), Mrs Sallyanne Griffiths (Finance Director), Mr Phil Tranter (Vice Principal), Mrs Catherine Brearey (Vice Principal), Rev Kina Robertshaw.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
None

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS**  
None.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2020**  
The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**  
There were no matters arising that were not on the agenda.

**5. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**  
The Chair reported that the Search Committee had met via tele-conferencing on 10 December to consider the appointment of a new governor. All Committee members had agreed to recommend that Rev Kina Robertshaw be appointed as an Independent Governor. The Chair went on to propose, and Governors **AGREED** that Rev Kina Robertshaw be appointed as an Independent Governor. The notes of the Committee meeting were also approved. The Chair then welcomed the new Governor to the Board.

The Chair raised the issue of a College policy on vaccination against Covid-19 by way of an initial discussion, adding that the ideal would be for all staff to be vaccinated, though it was unlikely that we could require it. The Principal thought that only a minority of staff would not want to be vaccinated, and for students, the 16-18 group were not on the programme yet. The Principal said a way of recording would be investigated, adding that that it might also be about managing anxieties and encouraging rather than pushing.

The Covid-19 arrangements addendum to safeguarding and child protection had been updated and agreed by the College SMT, and had been circulated to Governors. After a brief discussion Governors **AGREED** the January 2021 Addendum to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures in relation to Covid-19 arrangements.

**6. CLERK'S REPORT**  
Board strength now stands at 16, including two Student Governors. The Clerk reminded Governors of the statutory duty under KCSIE to complete Safeguarding training, including any refresher training. A link would be sent out shortly.

The Summary of the Governors' self-assessment of Governance, based on the 11 questionnaires completed, had been circulated. The Clerk highlighted several statements in the report, and there was a brief discussion of the additional comments made by Governors. 91% had given an overall assessment of the College's governance arrangements as outstanding and 9% good. Responses and comments from the self-assessment would also be used to inform future training and information sessions.

## **7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Principal's report, already circulated to Governors, outlined the College's Covid-19 readiness and the work involved. After being requested to introduce mass testing on 4 January, the requirement reverted on 4 January to teaching remotely. Vice Principal Phil Tranter and his team had worked incredibly hard to implement the College Covid-19 testing facility in the Sports Hall, and pictures had been circulated to Governors to give you an idea of what it looks like and how it works.

All lessons will be remote for students until at least February half term, and continue with the longer 3 hour lessons within the framework. The Principal acknowledged that one 3 hour lesson followed by another was hard for staff and students, but timetabling difficulties were the overriding factor, and sensible breaks were vital. Welfare and tutor support is still in place.

The Principal went on to say that, at this stage, summer examinations will not take place. The Vice Principal then outlined the Consultation suggestions.

All the courses run by the College will be assessed by tests, written by the examination board but marked by HSFC teachers, in May-June. These mini tests, with an element of choice, will be combined with mocks and coursework to make up the teacher grade assessment. Vocational qualifications, following the same arrangements, will also use all of the assessments to date and any controlled assessments and/or coursework between now and the summer. The Consultations also make clear that teachers will not be able to discuss grades with students before results day, but will be able to tell students what pieces of evidence will be used once the examination boards tell the College. The appeals process would be run by the College, which would probably be onerous. The Principal understood that higher tariff (formerly Russell Group) universities were worried that state sixth form institutions tend to understate grades, possibly leading to their gaining fewer places.

The College's response to the consultations is being collated. There are significant challenges posed by the suggestions not least the potential requirement for staff to be available for appeals from the start of the summer holidays. The Chair suggested that the Governing Body also write to the DfE in response, and Governors were in agreement.

Turning to accommodation, the Principal confirmed that an amended CIF bid had been submitted to replace the mobiles and improve facilities. For the next round, the College has started to prepare for a 3 rather than 2 storey build.

In relation to transport issues, the Principal confirmed that real progress had been made with the transport companies to achieve a manageable situation.

Vicky Osmond presented various data and charts about Leavers' destinations. 49.7% of HSFC second year level 3 leavers go on to higher education, 10.2% to FE and 5.8% to fulltime employment. 9.1% go for a gap year with intended HE application. Very few students (0.8%) are not providing high quality information.

The high degree of social mobility was very pleasing and more students were going to higher tariff universities. Oxbridge offers were exceptionally high with 29 acceptances, 10 of which were the first in family to go to university. Acceptances by provider indicated that Cardiff and Bristol remain the most popular with HSFC students followed by Swansea and Worcester.

The Principal reported that overall attendance over term 1 of 2020/21 at 93.8% for the first half, and 93.5% for the second half, is still very strong. Retention for November and December also remained high.

In pay negotiations, support staff agreed a two year of 2.5% from 1 January 2021. Negotiations through SFCA continue in relation to teachers. In relation to the MAT, King Edward should be joining in February. The first MAT online event had taken place on 4 January, and a video made to demonstrate collaboration between staff within the MAT was played to Governors from YouTube. The Principal commented that many improvements were being seen through working with other MAT colleagues.

Governors **NOTED** the report.

*Adrian Allan joined the meeting at this point, and Beth Rudolf left the meeting.*

## 8. **FINANCE REPORT**

The Finance Director presented the Summary and College Financial Results for the 4 months to 31 December 2020, adding that the surplus to December was well ahead of budget due to the front-loading of EFSA funding. Earnings before Interest, Taxation, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA) for HSFC of £778k, at this stage, were well in excess of the £246k budget.

The forecast has been restated producing a deficit for HSFC of £86k, at this stage, with EBITDA at £725k against £697k budget. ESFA grant re Covid-19 had been received, but further Covid-19 expenditure is still being incurred.

There was no further news on Teachers' pay award. SFCA will negotiate on the College's behalf. ESFA Pension funding 1st instalment had been received in November, with second due in May. The College is awaiting the autumn term transportation invoice from Herefordshire Council.

The Finance Director indicated that she felt comfortable about HSFC finances. The Balance Sheet remaining strong, with net current assets of £3.07m.

Governors **NOTED** the Summary and College Results for the period to December 2020.

## 9. **COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT**

Catherine Brearey, Vice Principal, presented a summary report of the College's SAR, commenting that it was an unusual SAR this year with the absence of much customary data and evidence in the summer used to inform the SAR. The 2020 data is not suitable for comparison with national benchmarks as based on College Assessed Grades (CAG). The Vice Principal felt that it would be a long time, maybe up to 4 years, before colleges were back to the usual quality level of data.

The Vice Principal gave brief highlights from the report. Overall effectiveness grades proposed, based on Ofsted's EIF, were all grade 1 Outstanding. Many targets from last year's SAR Development Plan, in an exceptional arrangement, were rolled over to next year as mitigating the effects of Covid-19 became the College's overriding priority. The biggest change, and biggest achievement, this year has been the introduction of the tutorial model phased in throughout 2019/20.

The full SAR Development Plan 2020/21 was also presented to Governors. Areas for improvement discussed included:

- Work related learning
- Curriculum to be developed in line with Gatsby recommendations, and improve consistency of advice for learners in academic department settings

Collaboration on training of College departments across the MAT

- Cross departmental events/exchanges run across colleges in the MAT. Evaluate, and develop MAT structures to facilitate communication and sharing of good practice.

Governors asked questions in relation to various issues including:

HSFC success in remote working as marketing tool

- The Vice Principal agreed, giving the Principal's radio interviews, and College social media items as examples.

Level of learning of new student intake over next couple of years

- The Principal agreed that it is a concern, adding that HSFC remote teaching and learning had been successful.

Purpose of SAR Development plan

- The Principal saw two main purposes: to provide a narrative for Ofsted inspection and to provide a focus for us to improve ourselves.

Students changing A Level subjects during their programme

- The Vice Principal confirmed that the College is flexible on this, and allows students to change path if they feel it is not right. It has to be for the right reasons and what is best for the student.

Apprenticeships and work based learning

- A Governor suggested a working group of Governors to help. Other Governors also offered their services. The Principal confirmed that the College was working to develop the curriculum and pathways in line with the Gatsby recommendations. The MAT was working closely with university of Worcester on this. Vicky Orsmond added that HSFC apprenticeships increased last year.

[The eight Gatsby benchmarks from the Good Career Guidance Report, adopted as part of the Government's careers strategy for schools and colleges, are:

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each learner
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal guidance]

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal and her team for the excellent work that goes into preparing and monitoring the SAR, and Development Plan. Governors **NOTED** the report.

## 10. DEPARTMENTAL TARGETS

The Vice Principal presented the Departmental Targets for 2020/21, including Retention, Attendance and Achievement, and Equality and Diversity. The targets were in line of those of the previous year. The Ofsted criteria of Whole College Targets has been removed.

Governors **AGREED** the targets for 2020/21.

## 11 REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT

The Principal presented the Risk Management report and outlined the format of the register to Governors. The College SMT consider all aspects of Risk Management, and review the RAG rated risks identified as requiring significant focus within the RM

Action Plan. The LGB monitors the significant risks and the Action Plan. The Principal added that the SMT were on top of the Red risks constantly.

No Governors felt that any risks on the report should be increased to Red.

In response to a Governor's question, the Principal confirmed that the College's Disaster Recovery Plan is tested.

There was a brief discussion of the Action Plan, and Governors **NOTED** the Report.

**12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A schedule of HSFC Application totals for the last three years had been circulated to Governors. The working target was 1319 by half term. A Governor commented that the College's first virtual Parents' Evening went very well.

**13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 11 March 2021, at 6.00pm.