



GOVERNORS' MEETING **Minutes of the meeting** **on 17 November 2022** **in College Meeting room**

Present: Mr Ian Archer, Miss Inez Assirati, Mrs Catherine Brearey (Acting Principal),
Mr Andy Clarke, Mr Rob Gorle, Mr James Miller (Chair), Rev KIna Robertshaw,
Ms Beth Rudolf, Mrs Danielle Thompson, Mrs Catriona Ward (10)

In attendance: Mr Robert Gorman (Clerk), Mrs Sallyanne Griffiths (Finance Director),
Mr Phil Tranter (Vice Principal), Mr Paul Rogers (Estates Manager),
Mrs Jenna Dunsford (Impact Coordinator), Mr Lee McEvans

The Chair welcomed Rob Gorle as a new Governor. Rob introduced himself to Governors. The Chair went on to indicate that the agenda items would be taken in a revised order.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Miss Lois Knight, Mrs Nicola Taylor, (3)
Andrew Roberts (leave of absence)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS

None.

5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair announced the resignation on 15 November of Dr David Langley due to business reasons. His new business enterprise is flourishing and the Chair had thanked him and wished him well. The Chair went on to report that the Search Committee had met twice in the last 5 days to consider the appointment of a new governors resulting in 2 recommendations:

- Martin Jones (Head of Estates at H&W Health and Care NHS Trust)
- Dr Chandra Rao, Orthopaedic consultant at Hereford hospital

The Chair outlined brief CVs of the both candidates and Governors felt that both would be excellent additions to the Board. After a brief discussion the Board **AGREED** that Martin Jones and Dr Rao be appointed as independent governors.

The minutes of the two Committee meetings were also approved.

The Chair indicated that Agenda item 9 would be taken next.

9. REVIEW OF EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITIES INCLUDING NATURE AND EFFECT OF THE IMPACT PROGRAMME

Jenna Dunsford, Impact Coordinator, gave a presentation to the Board outlining the College's Impact Programme aimed at improving a student's personal development. The programme is branded around a way of thinking as well as a student's academic studies, and is about Impact sessions on Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE), Enrichment, the Virtual College and Extra-Curricular Activities. The Virtual College via the College portal delivers modules including Careers, which can all be accessed via an App.

Governors watched the online video outlining the Programme. Students log into all activities via the College portal using QR codes. Each entry is logged and goes towards an Award. Several Governors asked questions and offered their assistance.

The Chair thanked Jenna for a most informative presentation.

Jenna Dunsford left the meeting at this point

Chair's Business continued in relation to utility costs raised at the October meeting. College Estates Manager, Paul Rogers, outlined further details of College energy usage and provision of gas and electricity through West Mercia Energy, a public purchasing organisation. The College's Salix project aimed at lighting and heating efficiencies was also producing savings. The Estates Manager also confirmed that the Thornbury new build project was on schedule. Mr Lee McEvans from the project management agency engaged for the project was also in attendance and Governors were apprised of additional costs of about £180k due to current building cost inflation running at 20%. In College provision meetings a suggestion to reduce the energy efficiency of the new building was discussed. This would have led to the building achieving a Good, not Very Good BREEAM compliancy. This was finally rejected by the College as projected overspend became lower. Governors were apprised that this compliancy was a requirement of the DfE funding and a failure to meet this requirement could put the funding at risk. Governors agreed with the decision to go for the Very Good rating.

[Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) is a sustainability assessment method that is used to masterplan projects, infrastructure and buildings. Launched in 1990, by the Building Research Establishment, it sets standards for the environmental performance of buildings through the design, specification, construction and operation phases. BREEAM assessment evaluates the procurement, design, construction and operation of a development against a range of targets based on performance benchmarks in a range of categories, including energy, water, pollution and health and wellbeing.]

In response to Governors questions about sufficient lighting, heating and ventilation it was confirmed that all were built into the design and that funding was reliant on meeting the assessment. Governors understood the reasoning for the additional costs and felt the increase was acceptable.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 OCTOBER 2022

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Dealt with under Chair's business above. There were no other matters arising.

6. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk welcomed new Governor Rob Gorle, and confirmed that Board strength now stood at 13, including the Principal and 2 Student Governors.

The Clerk indicated that, as last year, the Governors' Skills audit would use the National Governance Association's template with 29 questions in 3 sections, including self-evaluation. It was intended to email out to Governors after Christmas, for emailing back to the Clerk once completed. Governors were in agreement.

The Clerk had received 4 HOM policies approved by the MAT Board to be shared with LGBs:

- Data Protection policy
- Communications & Engagement Strategy
- Data retention policy
- Complaints policy

The policies will be uploaded to a Documents folder within Governors' Documents and Governors were asked to review them before the January 2023 LGB meeting. The Clerk presented the updated HSFC Governance Procedures, and confirmed that the procedures ran to 12 pages, the remainder of the document comprising appendices. Apart from changes to dates, the only update was to the Appendix 1 list of Governors.

After a brief discussion, Governors **APPROVED** the HSFC Governance Procedures 2022-23.

8. **FINANCE REPORT**

The Finance Director presented the Summary Financial Results for the 2 months to 31 October 2022, indicating a Surplus of £227k against the £101k budgeted deficit. Earnings before Interest, Taxation, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA) of £293k at this stage, well in excess of the £51k budget. Both were helped by Bursary & Free School Meals funding and Curriculum & Other income relating to Trips and Enrichment activities now back as a feature after the lockdown period.

The Support Staff pay award, recently confirmed as 5%, would be paid in December, and although budgeted for, was not reflected in the Actuals at this point. Forecast EBITDA for the year, at this stage, was in line with budget. Thornbury project spend to date was £1.3m with £1.1m received in funding.

The Finance Director indicated that she felt comfortable about HSFC finances. The Balance Sheet remaining strong, with net current assets of £4.0m. However, there was still uncertainty about future funding levels and further communication was awaited.

Governors **NOTED** the Summary Results for the period to October 2022.

The Finance Director left the meeting at this point.

7. **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Acting Principal presented the report which had been circulated to Governors, and commenced by drawing Governors' attention to the changes for this year's summer exams compared with the usual programme. We are not going to get back to 2019 levels now until a 'much softer landing' in 2024.

In relation to transport issues, the Acting Principal was pleased to announce that a previously reported issue relating to train timetabling from Church Stretton and Craven Arms had been resolved and train times will no longer be changed, enabling students to catch suitable trains.

A good attendance was reported for the Ukrainian Parents' Information evening earlier in the week. New assemblies have been initiated for Level 2 learners and Level 3 First Year students. These will be the first face to face assemblies for a few years and another way to encourage community within the College.

The Acting Principal indicated that the Teachers' pay award may not be settled for some time and the College will pay an advance on the probable award to members of staff in need until the award is agreed. Governors were in support of this. The NUT nationally were to take strike action. The first on 30 November was the day before mock exams at the College and students effected will work from home.

The Deputy Principal advised Governors that a student had been excluded from College in 2nd week of term. This was a very unusual step and was the first instance at the College for at least 20 years. The Appeal had been to the Principal and the student had still not attended College. Governors expressed their support to the Acting Principal. A Governor who followed the College on Instagram said there were many good news stories about the College on social networking.

Governors **NOTED** the report.

10. **IT, HARDWARE AND NETWORK UPDATE**

An update report from the IT and MIS Director had been circulated outlining developments since the previous report in November last year. Device replacement programme is progressing well, College firewall is being upgraded and IT infrastructure of new Thornbury new build has been identified and hardware will be procured.

The report went on to the Digital Technology Strategy 2021-24, including expected capital projects, teaching and learning and compliance objectives over the strategy period.

The update in relation to IT Recovery included improvements in cyber security and comprehensive testing.

Governors **NOTED** the report.

11. ATTENDANCE AND RETENTION

The Acting Principal presented charts showing HSFC attendance over the last 5 years and confirmed the fall over the last 24 months in overall College attendance has been experienced by other SFCs in the MAT. 2021/22 overall full College attendance was 90.0%, from 94.6% in previous year. 2022/23 autumn term first half was 92.3% but it will be a long battle to get back.

The Acting Principal went on to present a table showing HSFC restated retention figures over the last 5 years, and confirmed Retention to November 2022 was in line with previous years at 96.5% (2021, 96.1%). The backdated actual data was now even more meaningful.

The College is working to improve retention and re-establish the culture.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Acting Principal drew Governors' attention to a recent series of Insight events for students including Personal Statements, What is Oxbridge Like and Interviews. The Retired Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales had addressed interested students.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 19 January 2023, at 6.00pm.