



GOVERNORS' MEETING

Minutes of the meeting on 20 October 2022 in College Meeting Room

Present: Mr Andy Clarke, Mr James Miller (Chair), Rev Kina Robertshaw, Beth Rudolf, Mrs Nicola Taylor, Mrs Danielle Thompson, Mrs Catriona Ward, Mrs Catherine Brearey (Acting Principal), Miss Inez Assirati. (9)

In attendance: Mr Robert Gorman (Clerk), Mrs Sallyanne Griffiths (Finance Director), Mr John Pratt (Director of Safeguarding, Inclusion & Development).

The Chair introduced new Student Governor, Inez Assirati, to the Board, and Governors welcomed her appointment. The Chair went on to say that a couple of agenda items would be taken in a different order.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Ian Archer, Dr David Langley. Lois Knight. Andy Roberts (leave of absence) (4)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2022

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

8. FINANCE REPORT

The Finance Director presented the summary results for year to 31 August 2022, which were subject to audit. Net Surplus for HSFC, after MAT charge, was £138k against a budgeted £269k deficit, mainly due to additional funding and savings from control over pay and non-pay expenditure. Earnings before Interest, Taxation, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA) for HSFC looks very positive with a surplus well in excess of the £561k budget. Pay as a percentage of income was 71%, against 73% budget. On the Balance Sheet, Net Current Assets were £3.4m.

The Finance Director went on to present the Summary Financial Results for the month to 30 September 2022, stating that, being the first month of the year, and year-end numbers had not been fully rolled over, there was little to be derived from the numbers at this stage. However, Net Surplus for HSFC at this stage at £175k was well in excess of the £50k deficit budget, helped by ESFA Bursary and Free Meals funding. The HSFC Balance Sheet remains strong with Net Current Assets of £3.8m.

Governors **NOTED** the Summary Results for the previous year and month to September 2022.

The Finance Director went on update Governors on various matters including:

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| External audit | - Commenced in October and process fairly straightforward. |
| College activity | - Return of trips and visits and other activities after lockdown meant Finance team was working full on. |
| Pay award | - SFCA remains in negotiation with unions, and has predicted that an average college award would be around 5.2%. HSFC has budgeted 5%. |
| Financial outlook | - FD indicated there was so much uncertainty within the sector. |

In response to a Governor's question about utility costs, the Finance Director

confirmed that the College's gas bill was relatively small, and gas and electricity were bought through West Mercia Consortium. On costs generally, the message was conscious consumption as the situation for the next couple of years was unpredictable, but the Finance Director noted that the removal of the Employers' NIC levy would save the College £60k in a full year.

Turning to the capital project, the Finance Director confirmed that the Thornbury new build was on schedule for opening for students next September. Spend to date was £1.3m. Inevitably decisions will have to be made about additional costs to original specification in the order of £300k. Governors will be kept informed.

Governors **NOTED** the report. The Chair thanked the Finance Director for her report and the Finance Team as a whole for all their hard work in this difficult time.

The Finance Director left the meeting at this point

5. **CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

The Chair reported that before the meeting the Acting Principal and Vice Chair had had an informal meeting with a prospective new governor whose CV he then outlined to Governors. The Chair had met with the candidate, Mr Robert Gore, previously and is known to him. The meetings had been very positive and with the support of the fourth member of the Search Committee, it was proposed that Mr Gore should be invited to join the LGB, subject to the standard regulatory requirements, and the Board **AGREED**. [Mr Gore has subsequently accepted the invitation.]

6. **CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk welcomed the new Student Governor, and confirmed Board strength now stands at 13, including the Principal, and two Student Governors.

The Clerk thanked Governors for returning their Declarations forms. Governors' assessment of governance, last completed in January 2021, was now due. Questionnaire forms were being reviewed and would be sent out by email.

9. **STUDENT HEALTH AND GENERAL WELFARE**

The Director of Safeguarding, Inclusion and Development and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) reported on Safeguarding and began with a Safeguarding Update presentation as refresher training on What Governors need to Know.

The Board should ensure a whole-college approach to safeguarding, which now includes mental and physical health in its definition. All Governors and staff must read Parts 1 and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 (KCSiE). Governors also need to read the updates to the College's Safeguarding Policy and are expected to complete online training, details of which will be emailed to them.

The Director went on to outline the themes and small number of changes to KCSiE in September 2022, highlighting Extra-familial harms, Witnessing harm to Others and information sharing. Changes within the structure of the College's Pastoral and Safeguarding support team and their responsibilities for support and intervention were outlined. Personal tutors will risk-assess concerns that don't require immediate attention. The system for referral of concerns was outlined. Governors asked several questions about:

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| Mental health | - Can take some time to be seen by other agencies. CAMHS can be quicker. |
| How seriously safeguarding taken | - Governors can be confident that the College has good people on the team with adequate resources. |
| Reporting if worried about someone else | - See it, report it. The culture of the College supports this. |

[CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) is the name for the NHS services that assess and treat young people with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties.]

The Director went on to present an updated draft of the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures, noting that it was intended to slim down the policy next year. Changes were highlighted in the draft that was circulated. The updates take into account changes in *Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022*. Danielle Thompson is the Designated Governor with special responsibility for safeguarding children and young people's issues.

After a brief discussion, Governors **APPROVED** the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures 2022/23.

The Chair praised the systems in place at College, with some exceptional staff involved, and thanked the Director and all the team for their important work.

7. **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Acting Principal presented the report, and was pleased that student numbers currently at 2201 were continuing to look really good. Enrichment and other Impact activities are off to a stronger start than last year, although trips and activities do bring extra work.

Learning walks across all College departments are being conducted. There are notably examples of good practice sharing across the College. In response to a Governor's question, the Acting Principal confirmed that the walks were conducted by herself or the Executive Principal or senior curriculum leads, alongside the head of department and sometimes an outside guest.

The College's Diploma in Sporting Excellence programme (DiSE) run in connection with Worcester Warriors is continuing despite their ceasing to trade.

Funding for the College's 19 Ukrainian refugee students has been received and a second Ukrainian Support Worker is being appointed. Difficulties of language and educational style have been experienced and it is planned to increase the number of English lessons each week. Initial feedback from teaching staff has been extremely positive. Extra PE classes and a dedicated Parents' evening are also planned.

One of the two Ukrainian support workers had been able to arrange for a criminal records check to be sent from Ukraine, the other had not been able to do so. Following discussion, Governors unanimously **agreed** that the immediate safeguarding and educational needs of the Ukrainian students were more important than pursuing a checking process that was likely to be lengthy and probably fruitless, that the safeguarding risks involved with the two support workers were very low, and were happy to rely on a full risk assessment and any procedures consequent from that.

Turning to the MAT, the Acting Principal confirmed that John Kyrle High School and St Mary's RC High School will be joining the MAT from September next year and quality assurance visits are being scheduled to colleges within the MAT.

Governors **NOTED** the report.

Inez Assirati left the meeting at this point

10. **REVIEW OF RISK REGISTER AND RISK MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN**

The Acting Principal presented a full Risk Analysis as at September 2022, which includes risks to the College scored by significance and probability together with a rag (red, amber, green) rating. The Risk Register and Action Plan 2022/23, collating the 'amber' and 'red' risks drawn from the full Analysis, is used to manage those risks identified as requiring significant focus or monitoring. The Register schedule had been compiled by reviewing and refreshing the previous version, latest review being 2 weeks ago and highlighted external economic pressures.

Effective site security ensures no unauthorised people can access the College at any time. The Principal had indicated in 2020 that moving to the very high level of

security, used by many inner-city colleges, changes the atmosphere of the college. It is important to minimise the risk, as at HSFC, with key pad and card swipe door security, CCTV and other forms of security.

Governors discussed site security risk in some detail, and were content to keep site security at its present level. Governors felt strongly that the College should continue to avoid overly prominent security fences and gates, as this would change the atmosphere, be out of step with relatively low risk Hereford and the character of the area and would probably put students and parents off the College.

The risk of transport arrangements affecting College accessibility was discussed and in particular proposed train timetable changes which was being pursued by the College, and strikes, where the College was prepared to enable remote access. There had been no news, and the Acting Principal indicated that students affected may have to work remotely.

The high level risks were reviewed by Governors.

Governors **NOTED** the report.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 17 November 2022, at 6.00pm.