



GOVERNORS' MEETING

Minutes of the meeting on 5 May 2022 in the College Meeting Room

Present: Mr Andy Clarke, Mr Peter Cooper, Mr James Miller (Chair), Mrs Nicola Taylor,
Mr Felix J Smithson, Mr Ian Archer, Miss Lois Knight, Mrs Danielle Thompson,

(8)

In attendance: Mr Robert Gorman (Clerk), Mrs Sallyanne Griffiths (Finance Director),

The Chair welcomed Ian Archer to the Board.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Andrew Roberts, David Langley, Rev Kina Robertshaw, Beth Rudolf, Catriona Ward,
Sarah Woodall (6)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS

None.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 MARCH 2022

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

Search Committee members had discussed the need for additional Board members. Governors were requested to bring the names of any interested persons to the attention of the Chair or Principal.

6. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk gave notice that the election of the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors for 2022-23 will take place at the next Board meeting on 16 June, and that any nominations or requests for further information should be communicated to the Clerk. The current Chair and Vice Chair are both eligible for re-election.

The Clerk went on to present the Summary of the Governors' Skills Audit which had already been circulated. The Audit used the NGA's skills audit questionnaire, which had been circulated to Governors in December 2021.

The Clerk remarked that individuals may not have all the skills, but the Governing Body is a team. The NGA audit forms used covered 29 questions on 7 areas. The overall summary of all responses indicated a better than average level of skills overall. The areas of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Strategic Leadership and Compliance scored well. The Accountability area contained the questions with the most 'little experience' responses, around financial planning and stakeholder engagement. Governors noted that all training is welcome, and training already provided on various issues is very good. It was understood that some induction training had been delayed due to Covid restrictions. Areas noted will be used to inform future training. The Clerk reminded Governors that, within Governors' Documents on the College website, the Policies and Documents folder holds various College policies and procedures and DfE guidance.

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal presented his report, already circulated to Governors, and noted that the Report is Trust and College focused. The Principal indicated that the latest schools White Paper *Opportunity for all: Strong schools with great teachers for your child* makes the direction of travel quite clear – all schools should join Trusts. HSFC

is a potential partner for a number of local schools, and dialogues are beginning to take place. Governors **NOTED** the White Paper and the College's developing plans.

HSFC students will be sitting examinations this year. Referring to the possible imminent Inspection, the Principal felt the College was getting weary of being in a state of readiness. Information will be passed out to Governors at the right time.

In relation to staffing changes, the Principal confirmed there had been a couple retirements, and recruiting is harder in the current climate, in line with the national picture of competing proving difficult. A Governor noted that this was the case for local companies as well.

Governors **NOTED** the report.

8. **FINANCE REPORT**

The Finance Director presented the report, commencing with the updated College Fees and Charges Policy. HSFC generates around £50k of premises-related income a year. There were no significant changes other than to current rates and schedule of letting fees. The Board, after a brief discussion, **AGREED** the updated Fees and Charges Policy and Procedures 2022/23.

The Finance Director went on to the Summary and College Financial Results for the 7 months to 31 March 2022, noting that the surplus to March remained well ahead of budget due to the front-loading of EFSA funding, Bursary and Free College meals and tight control of payroll costs. Earnings before Interest, Taxation, Depreciation and Amortisation (EBITDA) for HSFC of £737k, at this stage, were well in excess of the £327k budget.

A £200k Surplus is forecast for the year at this stage, with EBITDA at £572k against £550k budget.

The Finance Director was, overall, happy with the College's position and indicated that the Balance Sheet remained strong, with net current assets of £4.06m. Building work had started on the Thornbury project, incurring a £92k spend to March.

Governors **NOTED** the Summary and College Results for the period to March 2022.

The Finance Director went on to present the Financial Forecast for 2022/23 to 2024/25, confirming that the budget for 2022/23 was robust, and the second and third years of the forecast, at this stage, were only indicative of direction of travel. The next 3 years will present a significant challenge. The budgeted deficit for 2022/23 is £74k with an EBITDA of £295k.

Student numbers are based on those in 2021 ILR, which form the basis for 2022/23 funding. Funding rate increases to £4542 from £4188 per student, but now including pay award funding. Pension contribution funding is due to end in two years. A 5% pay award is forecast across the forecast period.

Other Budget assumptions were outlined, and key risks were highlighted with a sensitivity analysis. The Budget includes a fully costed staffing structure. Budget reviews in the autumn and spring, using updated student numbers and payroll costing reviewed in the light of the pay awards and pension contribution funding, will give a more accurate position. Governors will be kept informed of developments. In response to a question from the Chair, the Finance Director indicated that no areas that had been 'squeezed', but assumed to stay the same.

The Board, after discussion, **AGREED** the Budget for 2022/23, and noted the indicative budgets to 2024/25.

9. CURRICULUM POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Principal presented the Curriculum Policy and Procedures, indicating that they were very similar to the previous version, with no significant changes. After a brief discussion, Governors **AGREED** the Curriculum Policy and Procedures for 2022/23.

10. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND ANNUAL REPORT

The Principal presented the Health & Safety Policy updated September 2021, indicating that there were only minor changes, in respect of names and dates. All staff receive a copy of the document and have to acknowledge receipt. After a brief discussion, the Board **AGREED** the updated Health and Safety Policy and Procedures for 2022-23.

The Health and Safety report as at April 2022, prepared by the Estates Manager, was presented, which included a breakdown of reported accidents during the year, compared with the previous 6 years. Safety Audits are carried out twice a year by each department and any issues investigated. Fire alarms are tested every week and records kept. The College has 73 first aid trained staff and 2 defibrillators. An H&S main concern continues to be around COVID-19.

In response to a Governor's question about College reaction to concussion in contact sports issue, the Principal confirmed that there has been a step change in the training involved and protocols have changed. In response to a question about the category of reported accidents described as Mental Health, **the Principal** confirmed that he would **report back** as to how this differed from Safeguarding reporting categories.

Governors **NOTED** the report.

11. ATTENDANCE, RETENTION, STUDENT AND PARENT QUESTIONNAIRES

The Principal presented the various reports. All schedules had already been circulated to Governors.

Attendance

The 6 year comparison of Attendance by term was reviewed. The Overall figure for 2021/22 to end of 1st half of Summer term was 90.1%, compared with full year 2020/21 overall at 93.9%.

Retention

The 6 year comparison of Retention by term was reviewed. Retention for September to April and November to May 2021/22 was down on the recent years' consistent data, at 91.4% and 95.0% respectively. 2020/21 was 94.6% and 97.4%.

The Principal felt that attendance and retention was the worst for a while due to the Covid effect, skewing of data and changes in behaviour patterns within families and society generally. This was a national problem and we are in a period of transition.

Enrolment

Application numbers stood at 1508 at 22 April, compared with 1469 at this point last year. The position is looking good for September if the College's anticipated conversion rate holds.

Course (SPOC) Cross-College and Subject questionnaires 2020/21.

It was noted, as in previous years, how remarkable it was that a similar pattern of responses amongst substantial numbers of students emerges year on year from the data.

Results showed small changes, but overall from both SPOC questionnaires were

very reassuring, given Covid restrictions had obviously had an impact.

The most favourable for Cross-College being that over 89% of students felt safe in College. Least favourable responses, as in previous years, included getting healthy food in College, but responses related to finding a computer to work on improved from 42% last year to 60%, which was very pleasing. Scoring on the question about the College dealing effectively with bullying was felt to be misleading as students answer neutrally as they have no experience of how the College would deal with bullying.

Subject questionnaire responses were very pleasing, with Teacher's knowledge and understanding of coursework being the most favourable at 91%, last year 95%.

The College continues to review support around work experience and interviews, and the Principal confirmed the appointment of a Work Experience Coordinator, with an increase in focus on apprenticeships available and the variety of experience available.

Parental Questionnaires

The results of the on-line Questionnaire to Parents 2021/22 were reassuring, but slightly down on prior years. The Principal commented that nothing has changed in College or how we do things. There were 390 responses received against 603 responses last year.

Governors **NOTED** the Reports.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 16 June 2022, at 6.00pm.