



GOVERNORS' MEETING Minutes of the meeting on 5 December 2013

Present: Mr Neil Arlett, Miss Katie Baker, Ms Michelle Balcombe,
Mr Martin Churchward, Mrs Carol Clapham, Mr Charles Davies,
Mr Rob Doran, Mrs Diane Evans, Dr Jonathan Godfrey, Mr Joe Hamblin,
Mr Clive Hodgeman, Mr Chris Hodson, Dr Ken Hopkins (Chair), Mrs Heidi
Maddougall, Mr James Miller, Ms Blair Priday, Mr Phil Tranter
(17)

In attendance: Mr Peter Cooper (Deputy Principal),
Mr Robert Gorman (Clerk), Mrs Ruth Jones (Finance Director)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr Ravi Tandon, Miss Christine Wright (2)

2. APPOINTMENT OF STUDENT GOVERNOR

Joe Hamblin was nominated after winning a closely fought election by first year students. The Board **AGREED TO APPOINT** Joe Hamblin as a Student Governor

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS

None

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 OCTOBER 2013

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None. The Chair read from a card received from Keith Francis expressing his thanks for a most enjoyable time at the College's 40th Anniversary Dinner.

6. CLERK'S REPORT

The Clerk reminded Governors to return any outstanding signed Declarations of Eligibility and Interests, and, in relation to the update of the Governors' Handbook, circulated a review questionnaire and contact details form for completion.

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal presented his report and welcomed Joe Hamblin as a new Student Governor. Report led to considerable discussion of the UCAS offers made in 2013. The Principal paid tribute to H.E, Careers and support staff involved at the College. Quality Assurance was discussed relatively briefly since Self-Assessment and Finance featured elsewhere on the Governors' Agenda. Retention is at a very high level and attendance has improved, due in part to the College's online register. Results from a Staff Questionnaire, covering whole college issues, as issued by Ofsted inspectors during inspections, were outlined, and were generally extremely positive. The Principal thanked the Deputy Principal for his role in the production of the Self-Assessment Report 2012/13. The new Maths block is on schedule to open in January, and the College architect has held a very positive pre-planning meeting with local planning officers in relation to the proposed extension to front of College.

There was considerable discussion of local issues: Wigmore High School's proposal to develop a sixth form and offer International Baccalaureate, and the take-over of Ludlow College by HCT coinciding with a significant decrease in numbers enrolled from Ludlow schools. In relation to national issues, the Principal confirmed that he had been re-elected as Chair of the Sixth Form Colleges Association, and that

Governors needed to be aware of the pressure of continuing DFE budget cuts on the post-16 sector, as schools are protected.

8. **COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT ON THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2012-13**

The Deputy Principal introduced the report, explaining its purpose and the way it is constructed through an annual process stemming from the Mission Statement and 3-5 year targets. All departments contribute to what is considered to be a valuable and robust process for the whole College. Governors' discussion began on the cross-college aspects of the report. The College's overall effectiveness and Common Inspection Framework Criteria were all assessed as 'Outstanding', but there are still a number of Areas for Development, which the Board considered. Leadership and Management is a key area of focus for Governors.

Value Added performance continues to be exceptionally strong, and Success rates also remain high. The quality of new staff coming into College is also very high. Phil Tranter commented that the 'College MIS' systems put in place have made considerable difference in managing and targeting support to students. Curriculum area grades were examined and discussed.

There was then consideration of the SAR Development Plan for 2012-13 to address identified weaknesses, including performance at the top end of achievement, and increased teaching loads on staff. The Deputy Principal stated that the College's response to funding cuts, to ask staff to do more, has worked well due to the excellent response from staff.

The Board spent considerable time on this agenda item. It then **AGREED** that the Self-Assessment Report is a robust and realistic summary of the College's strengths and weaknesses. The Chair congratulated the Deputy Principal on the management of the self-assessment process and the Report.

The Board then **AGREED TO APPROVE** the Self-Assessment Report 2012-13 and the SAR Development Plan.

9. **PAY AWARD TO STAFF**

The Principal reported that national negotiations have been completed with SFCA and Teacher and Support Staff unions agreeing a 1% increase. The Finance Director confirmed that a 1% consolidated increase for staff had been built into the College's budget. The pay award was **APPROVED** by governors.

10. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

i. Finance & Premises Committee on 21 November

Heidi MacDougall reported that the Committee had looked in detail at the draft Financial Report and Accounts for 2012-13 and discussed Monthly Management Accounts (for August and September). It had recommended the Report and Accounts for approval, subject to the report from the Audit Committee. The performance against financial targets for the year was strong, and that the good operating surplus was helped by savings on Salary costs of £134k. The College returned a £231k Surplus on Continuing Operations after Depreciation and FRS17 adjustments. The Balance Sheet remained strong with Net Current Assets of £1.96m. The timescale for preparation and audit of the Report and Accounts has been very tight given the 5 December full Governors' meeting deadline.

The Board considered the Committee's report and also discussed the College's Monthly Management Accounts for September 2013. The Board then considered the Financial Report and Accounts carefully but resolved to defer approval until after the report from the Audit Committee (see Minute 10ii). In relation to the appointment of the new Finance Director, it was noted that 7 candidates were to attend the interview process in the next week.

Finally, the Board **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- the College's Monthly Management Accounts for August and September 2013
- that the 2014 full Governors' meeting be set one week later to allow more time for preparation

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

ii. Audit Committee on 26 November

Charles Davies reported that the Audit Committee had examined all aspects of the Annual Financial Report and Accounts, which had previously been examined by the Finance & Premises Committee (see previous Minute), and noted that both Audit opinions in the Statements are unqualified. It had also examined the Financial Statements Auditors' Findings Report, where no funding or regularity issues were noted. The College's accounting policies are appropriate and are consistently applied, and net unadjusted misstatements were considered immaterial. The draft Letters of Representation and Regularity Audit had also been scrutinised.

After discussion, the Board then **AGREED TO**

- adopt the Financial Statements, Report and Accounts for 2012-13
- approve the Letters of Representation within the Audit Findings Report
- authorise the Principal and Chair to sign off the above documents

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

11. REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

The Principal and Deputy Principal left the room for this agenda item.

Rob Doran gave a verbal report of the meeting of the Remuneration Committee which had preceded the Governors' meeting. The Committee had met mainly to consider the remuneration of the Senior Post Holders. The Committee had noted the 1% pay award to all College staff, and additionally recommended an increase to the Deputy Principal's salary to better reflect additional responsibilities resulting from his being the sole deputy following Ruth Brinton's retirement. The Committee had also reviewed its Terms of Reference and recommended no changes.

After a brief discussion, the Board of Governors **AGREED** to:

- adopt the Committee's proposals for the salaries of the Principal and Deputy Principal
- approve the proposal that no changes be made to the Remuneration Committee's Terms of Reference
- approve the proposal that the Committee's minutes remain confidential for a period of 12 months

The Principal and Deputy Principal returned for the remainder of the meeting.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Governors were reminded of the dates for the Festival of Christmas

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 30 January 2014, at 7.30pm