



## GOVERNORS' MEETING Minutes of the meeting on 13 October 2016

**Present:** Mr Vernon Amor, Ms Michelle Balcombe, Dr Jonathan Godfrey, Dr Marion Hawkins, Dr Ken Hopkins (Chair), Mr Shubham Kulkarni, Mrs Heidi Macdougall, Mr James Miller, Mr Andrew Parsons. Dr Amber Tahir, Mrs Shirley Tully, Dr Helen Underhill, Andrea Webb. (13)

**In attendance:** Mr Robert Gorman (Clerk), Mr Peter Cooper (Deputy Principal), Mrs Sallyanne Griffiths (Finance Director), Miss Hannah Drury (Student).

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr Clive Hodgeman, Phil Tranter (2)

#### Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed Andrea Webb, Head of Law, as a new Staff Governor. The outcome of the selection process for first year Student Governor had resulted in two very able students coming out virtually equal. The Chair proposed that one be elected as Governor and the other a co-opted member to Staff and Students Committee. If the Student Governor is unable to attend a meeting, the Co-opted student could attend as an observer. The students had agreed in practice to split attendance at Governors' meeting between them on a six monthly basis. Members **AGREED** unanimously. Ella Mapes, as Student Governor, will attend for the first half year, but as Ella was not able to attend this meeting, the Chair welcomed Hannah Drury, as Co-opted Committee member, was standing in.

The Chair indicated that the Search Committee Report was to be taken early in the meeting as it dealt with the appointment of new members, and that the item relating to Appointment of Principal would be taken later, after Committee Reports.

### 9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### iv Search Committee of 9 October 2016

The Committee Chair confirmed that the Committee had considered the appointment of new Board members. Three current co-opted Committee members had each expressed an interest in becoming a full governor. The Committee had appraised their background details and interest in the College, and recommended that all three be appointed as full Governors.

Dr Helen Underhill – Medical Consultant - Staff & Students  
Mr Andrew Parsons – retired Operations Director, Investment Banking - Audit  
Mr Vernon Amor – Company Director, Wye Valley Brewery - Finance & Premises

All were in favour, and the **BOARD AGREED** to **APPROVE** the appointment. The Committee's Minutes were then considered and **APPROVED AS A CORRECT RECORD**.

*Helen Underhill, Vernon Amor and Andrew Parsons joined the meeting at this point.*

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS

None.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2016**

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed.

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

In response to a member's question about ID badges for Governors, the Principal confirmed that photographs for the badges just before the start of the next full Governors' meeting. There were no other matters arising.

**5. CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk gave a verbal report, confirming that, with the appointment of new Student and Staff Governors and the three new Independent Governors, the number of Board members now stood at 18.

**6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Principal presented his report and began by confirming that the Audit Committee are overseeing the production of the Governance section of the Self-Assessment report. New enrolments in September at 1079 are 6.7% down on the previous year, but recruitment from partner schools at 48.2% continued to be high.

Raw and Value Added results for the previous year although good, had dipped. Issues identified by College departments and other institutions as contributory factors to the dip in results had been discussed at Committee. The Curriculum Committee Chair Had suggested that a presentation to all Governors of the issues involved would be very useful, and this would be included later in the Committee Report.

Local issues reported included a progress report on the new Engineering University based in Hereford. At the national level, the SFCA has offered a 1% pay award to teaching unions, effective from 1 January 2017, upon which the unions are consulting. In response to a member's question, the Finance Director confirmed that the 1% is on salary, and on-costs of NIC and pensions would also increase. All were built into College forecasts.

Governors discussed and **NOTED** the report.

**7. UPDATE ON ACADEMISATION**

The Principal presented a schedule detailing the activity and status to date of the College's application. The DfE have confirmed that the Headteacher Advisory Board and the Regional Schools Commissioner have approved the Colleges proposal, and with no issues anticipated, the College could receive formal notification (Academy Order) in a few weeks. Other points included:

- Consultation with staff, parents and local stakeholders ends at the end of November
- The College's legal advisors will present a progress report to Governors later in the month
- Target date of 1 January 2017 is still realistic
- Governors, as Trustees, need to complete forms A and B as appropriate, and the Principal requested any outstanding forms to be returned
- Governors, at the December meeting, could agree to dissolve the Corporation and approve the formation of the SAT
- Members of the new Academy Trust pass a motion on or before the transfer date to approve the transfer.

In response to members' questions, the Principal confirmed:

- Trustees have to be over 18 years of age, and clarification of the issue of Student Governors is being sought

- Current College contracts will all have to be novated, but remain the same in other respects

## 9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### i Curriculum Committee on 22 September 2016

The Committee Chair confirmed that the Committee had considered the enrolments of new students, the College's A Level and AS Level results and Curriculum for 2016/17. The Chair highlighted that the level of enrolments was down on the previous year, reflecting a similar decline in the year 11 cohort in the College's catchment area. The year had been challenging. Examination results had been very good but disappointing by HSFC standards, yet still better than average for the sector. Members had remarked that GCSE results overall were excellent, and noted the outstanding English and Maths performance.

The Committee had discussed value-added analyses of AS and A2 results in considerable detail, and the performance by students in all subjects was examined. The Chair again praised the way College staff analyse results and take action for improvement. Analysis by E&D category were to be considered at the Committee's next meeting.

The Chair highlighted that in value added terms, the Alps Data tables demonstrated that both AS Level and A Level results are entering a period of turbulence and comparisons will be difficult.

The Deputy Principal gave a presentation to the meeting outlining the issues identified by College departments and other institutions as contributory factors to the dip in results, and went on to outline possible solutions, and things to work on. The College is pursuing these issues rigorously, and addressing the immediate funding challenges. Members asked questions about the results and especially the comparison with other institutions.

The Deputy Principal outlined reasons for the movements in the value added data, and indicated that other SFCs were experiencing similar downturns in these measures, but this would be staggered due to different stages of curriculum reform implementation. Alis value added data reports were not yet available, due to problems being experienced at national level.

Governors **NOTED** the report.

The Committee recommended no changes to the Curriculum 2016/17 and Course Masterfile. After discussion the Board **AGREED** the Curriculum 2016/17 and Course Masterfile with no changes.

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

### ii. Staff and Students Committee on 27 September 2016

A Committee member presented the report in the absence of the Chair. The Committee had discussed:

- staff changes – effectively no changes from position at end June
- staff absence – below national averages for sector, no concerns
- staff questionnaire – extremely positive results
- appraisal of Senior Post holders procedure – recommended same

- procedure as last year
- Safeguarding and Child Protection, and Adults at Risk policies and procedures – both recommended with minor changes
- Annual Safeguarding Report – all reports of safeguarding issues are logged and followed through. No student's names are mentioned in the annual report at any stage.

HSFC is part of a group of more than 50 other colleges agreeing to share and benchmark data from an electronic Staff Survey, and, once again, HSFC results were very positive overall, especially given the increase in workload and pressure staff were under. In each section of the Questionnaire HSFC responses were in the top 9% or better. A member suggested that the survey results could be a tool in staff recruitment.

After a brief discussion the Board **AGREED** that the same procedures as last year will be used for appraising Senior Post Holders in 2016-17.

The Board discussed the Safeguarding report in some detail. Members asked questions about how instances were identified, logged and followed up, the trends in lead issues and access to adolescent mental health services.

The Board received copies the Safeguarding policies and *Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1: Information for all School and College Staff*, DfE September 2016, after discussion, **APPROVED**:

- the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- the Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures

all with no substantive changes.

Members also received a copy of the College's Prevent Strategy 2016-17, for completeness. In response to a member's question in relation to the Prevent Strategy, the Deputy Principal stated that, to date, no issues or concerns had been reported.

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

*Shubham Kulkarni left the meeting at this point*

iii. Finance and Premises Committee on 29 September 2016

The Committee Chair confirmed that the Committee had received and considered an update on the Budget for 2016/17, and the Monthly Management Accounts for July 2016.

The Budget for 2016/17 remains as outlined and agreed in June, with lagged student numbers giving total funding income of £8,986k, and is based on HSFC continuing as a stand-alone Corporation. An alternative budget and forecast will be brought forward should the College become an Academy.

The Monthly Management accounts to July 2016, which included year-end adjustments, indicated a surplus of £119k for the year, against a budgeted deficit of £36k. The Balance Sheet remains strong at 31 July with Net Current Assets at £1.7m and an Adjusted Current Ratio of 3.60%, all producing a Financial Health score of Outstanding. The audit of accounts to 31 July 2016 was completed by the external auditors, Thorne Widgery, in the previous week. In response to a member's question about students completing a third year at

College, the Deputy Principal explained that approximately 10% of students are now doing this, but due to lagged funding, the effect will not be fully felt until 2018/19. Comparisons year on year are becoming difficult.

The Committee had noted that biggest issue on the Balance Sheet is the increased provision for the Local Government pension scheme. All colleges are in a similar position and have little control over the situation. Full statutory accounts would be presented in December.

The Board expressed congratulations to the Finance Director for achieving preparation and satisfactory audit of the accounts for the year at such an early stage.

The Committee had also received an update on minor works that had taken place over the Summer, notably the classroom improvements for IT, in rooms next to Library, including the Principal's former office, forming silent study areas with 30+ workstations.

The Board discussed the Committee's report and then **AGREED TO APPROVE** the Monthly Management Accounts for July 2016.

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

iv. Audit Committee of 4 October 2016

The acting Committee Chair presented the report, indicating that the Committee had considered:

- the internal audit follow up review 2015/16 – covering reviews in 2014/15 of the previous internal auditors - Agreed
- the Internal Audit Annual Report 2015/16 – on work carried out against the approved plan
- the Annual Report of the Audit Committee – Agreed - to be presented to the Board
- Governors' attendance – attendance % still above sector benchmark
- External Audit Plan for July 2016 Accounts – audit work already completed
- Self-Assessment Report – questionnaire required under JACOP for external auditors and subsequently sent to Funding Council
- Risk Management – risk management action plan 2016/17 updated

The Committee's own Annual Report gives assurance to the Board that the College has adequate and effective Risk Management, Governance and Internal Control systems which the Board can rely on in its statutory duties. The Committee recommended the amended Annual Reports to the Board.

The average attendance at HSFC full governors' meetings was 83%. By way of benchmarking, the attendance statistics gleaned from the Clerks' network, based on returns from roughly one third of colleges, gave an average attendance at governors' meeting of 80.2%, within a range of 64% to 94%.

The Risk Management Action Plan 2016/17, updated June 2016, used to manage risks identified as requiring significant focus or monitoring had been reviewed. Risks to the College are scored by significance and probability together with a rag (red, amber, green) rating. The document was virtually the

same as that presented at the last meeting in June. Significant risks included site security and falling rolls.

The Board considered the various aspects of the Committee's report and then **AGREED TO APPROVE:**

- the Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2015-16
- the updated Risk Management Action Plan 2016/17

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

*Staff Governors, Student Governors and Staff attendees left the meeting at this point.*

**8. APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL**

The Principal circulated a programme, covering two days 7 and 8 November, for the appointment of the new Principal, and outlined the activities, discussion groups and interviews involved. An external advisor will assist, and several Governors are involved in the selection process. The selection panel of Governors will ultimately determine the choice. All Governors will have the opportunity to meet the candidates informally, and can attend the candidates' presentations on the second day. The Chair expressed his gratitude to the Principal for his help in the process.

**10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 15 December 2016, at 6.00pm