

## **DIRECTORS' MEETING**

### **Minutes of the meeting**

### **on 18 May 2017**

**Present:** Mr Vernon Amor, Ms Michelle Balcombe, Dr Jonathan Godfrey, Dr Marion Hawkins, Mr Clive Hodgeman, Dr Ken Hopkins (Chair), Mrs Heidi Macdougall, Mr James Miller, Mr Andrew Parsons, Mr Phil Tranter, Mrs Shirley Tully, Dr Helen Underhill, Ms Andrea Webb (13)

**In attendance:** Mr Robert Gorman (Clerk), Mr Peter Cooper (Deputy Principal)

#### **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

The Chair asked if there was any news of ex Governor, Chris Hodson. Andrew Parsons confirmed he had recently spoken to Chris and learned that his cancer had returned, and to a greater extent, and as Chris put it, he was 'hoping to get to Christmas'. The whole Board asked Andrew to pass on their very best.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Dr Amber Tahir. (1)  
Miss Ella Mapes, Mr Shubham Kulkarni (Student Governors)

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS**

None

#### **3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 MARCH 2017**

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising.

#### **5. CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk **notified the Board** that the election of the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors for 2017-18 will take place at the next Board meeting on 29 June, and that any nominations or requests for further information should be communicated to the Clerk. The Chair confirmed his intention, expressed previously, to retire in 2019.

The Clerk confirmed that the next meeting on 29 June would be followed by a leaving party for the retiring Principal at Charles' Bar at the Left Bank. Any Directors who could not attend were asked to let the Clerk know. The Chair confirmed that a gift, of the Principal's choosing, had already been obtained.

Later in the meeting, under the Search Committee report, Directors would be asked to consider an arrangement such that terms of office did all end at the same date. The Clerk read part of a note from form Clive Hodgeman confirming his intention to retire at 30 June. The Chair, on behalf of the Board, thanked Clive for his service on the Board.

The Clerk appraised the Board of an aspiring Chairs development event through ETF funding, to be run on 25 May, and again on 21 June, to include 'everything you need to know about being a Chair and stepping up to the role of Chair in the current sector climate'. The Clerk asked for any interested Directors to contact him.

#### **6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Principal presented his report including governance, staffing, students' successes, quality assurance and local and national issues.

Appointments made for September 2017 included a Teacher of Physics and a Teacher of Law, as well as Deputy Principal. Another 5 teaching vacancies were yet

to be filled. Some fields had not been as strong as others, which meant that a degree of internal reorganising would be necessary.

The Principal outlined various student successes, including 'Lean on Me' team for Herefordshire Vennture winning the National Crimebeat Award presented at a ceremony in London. Directors were encouraged to check the College website for details, and monitor for future events.

Attendance and Retention to end of Term 2 remained at a very high level, 92.4% and 96.6% respectively. Local issues included:

- update on NMITE – intention to recruit 'pioneer' cohort for 2018/19 and 2019/20 comprising gap year students, and admit undergraduates for 2020/21
- recent Herefordshire schools inspections - current Ofsted grades showing 6 schools and academies as Inadequate or Requiring Improvement

The Principal went to circulate and outline:

- SFCA Manifesto sent to all political parties – including uplift in funding to support SFC students and VAT refund scheme for SFCs
- Conservative Manifesto *Forward Together* – highlighting new free schools, specialist Maths schools in every major city, review of schools admission policy, EBacc combination of GCSEs and support for teachers
- Flyer for ESO Shirehall concert on 28 May – several HSFC students performing alongside the ESO
- HSFC Sports Awards Ceremony programme booklet – an impressive summary of the level of sporting activity at the College. Notably the Women's Hockey Team reaching the National Championships in each of the last 3 years, and increasing HSFC's national profile
- Review of *Cathedral Music* of CD of Sheppard's church music – sung by HSFC's Academia Musica choir, high standard complimented
- HSFC Press Release – HSFC Principal to make 2 appearances at Hay Festival in *Is Teaching Still a Valued Profession?* and *Reformations 15: Education*

The Chair congratulated the Principal on some very good PR for the College.

## 7. **REVIEW OF GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE ON 10/11 MARCH 2017**

All aspects of the conference and the Governors' Meeting included were felt in the most part to be 'very useful', particularly the Deputy Principal, reprising the 'Is the only way down' presentation, covering future strategy in a climate of funding reductions, which the Chair described as the highlight.

## 8. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### i. Finance & Premises Committee on 27 April

The Committee Chair outlined the business of the meeting, and the discussion of the Monthly Management Accounts for 7 months to February, the last accounts of the Corporation before academisation. The College's Balance Sheet remained strong with net current assets at £2.04m. Net surplus for the period, prior to external audit, was £30k against a budget of £12k.

The Committee had also discussed the Fees and Charges Policy and recommended no substantive changes. The Premises update from the Estates Manager confirmed that work planned for the area around the old meeting room and Principal's office, increasing student resource space and providing more computers, is estimated to cost £60k.

The Committee had congratulated the Finance Director and her team for dealing as a matter of urgency with some difficult situations relating to payroll changes on academisation.

After a brief discussion, the Board **AGREED TO APPROVE** the

- Monthly Management Accounts to February 2017
- Fees & Charges Policy and Procedures 2017-18 with no substantive changes

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

ii. Search Committee on 28 April

The Committee Chair confirmed that the main business of the Committee had been in relation to election/re-election of Trustees/Directors, and it had been a virtual meeting.

The Clerk had written to (the then) Governors whose term of office was due to come to an end in early 2017. Michelle Balcombe and James Miller had both indicated their willingness to continue for a further term. Also, a co-opted committee member to the Curriculum Committee, Sally Dunkley, had now attended two HSFC Committee meetings.

After a brief discussion, the Board **NOTED** both Michelle's and James' willingness to continue for the further term, and **AGREED** that Sally Dunkley be **appointed as a co-opted member** of the Curriculum Committee.

All eligible HSFC Governors became Trustees/Directors of the Academy Trust Company (ATC) on 1 March 2017. The term of office for any Trustee/Director under the Articles of Association is 4 years.

Looking at the current Directors' end of term expectations (pre academisation), a large block of end dates falls in October 2020, other end dates are spread fairly evenly. The present procedure, asking Directors whether or not they are prepared to carry on or retire as their respective date comes around, would still be followed, and individual circumstances may give rise to resignations and retirements in the interim. The Board through the Search Committee would continue to hold a watching brief over Board strength, and look to recruit new Directors, as and when necessary, having due regard to skills and background, as before.

On the future re-appointment of Directors, the Committee proposed that rather than having all Directors/Trustees ending their new 4 year term at the same time (ie 4 years from 1 March 2017), re-election be phased within 2 groups - one half whose term ends March 2019, and the other whose term ends March 2021.

The Board, after a brief discussion, **AGREED** the Committee's proposal that, subject to individual circumstances, resignations and retirements in the interim, one half of Directors retire (or seek re-election) after 2 years i.e. by 2019 and the other half after 4 years i.e. by 2021, in this transitional period. The **Clerk was requested** to email individual Directors with information concerning their end of term/retirement dates.

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

iii. Staff & Students Committee on 2 May

The Committee had received the annual Report on Safeguarding from the Designated Senior Safeguarding Lead, Helen Osborne. No student's names are mentioned in the annual report at any stage. All reports of safeguarding issues are 'logged' and followed through. Copies of the summary schedule of Logs were circulated to the Board.

Extreme Anxiety accounts for the largest category, comprising over 37% of the vulnerable students. The schedule also included reports on Looked After students, Vulnerable Learning Support students and Bullying/harassment, which includes cyber bullying. The increases seen in the Extreme Anxiety lead issue code are in line with national trends with figures increasing over the last 5 years.

In response to a Director's question, the Committee Chair confirmed that 'Bullying' included students starting at College with instances from their previous school, and that bullying can be through an outside agency and not necessarily between students at College. The Committee, praising the staff involved, had been impressed by their level of activity, depth of knowledge and sensitivity.

The action plan for 2017/18 was also outlined, including the introduction of student ID lanyards from September 2017 to aid site security.

*Vernon Amor left the meeting at this point*

The Committee had also received an excellent report on the activities of the Student Representative Council (SRC) for 2016/17. These included fundraising events for Children in Need and Comic Relief, which had raised £1150 through various activities. SRC members had met several times with the Principal and had been involved in the interview selection process for both the new Principal and Deputy Principal. The SRC had recorded their thanks to the Principal, for all he has done for the College, and wished him a happy retirement.

The Committee had reviewed:

- the Pay Policy and Procedures, with no changes
- the Appraisal and Performance Review Policy and Procedures, with no changes

The Committee had also received an update report on the College's Equality Objectives.

The Board discussed the Committee's Report and then **AGREED TO APPROVE:**

- the Appraisal and Performance Review Policy and Procedures, with no changes
- the Pay Policy and Procedures, with no changes

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

iv. Curriculum Committee on 4 May

The Committee had reviewed Alis Value-Added 2016 for the College indicating that the overall result was slightly positive. An Equality and Diversity analysis of value-added data, for vulnerable students by protected characteristics, had also been reviewed. In response to a Director's question, the Deputy Principal briefly summarised the differences between the Alis and Alps methodologies.

The Committee had discussed the results of the 2016/17 Student Perception of Course (SPOC) Cross College and Subject Questionnaires, noting that, as last year, how a similar pattern of responses amongst substantial numbers of students emerges year on year from the data. Results overall from both SPOC questionnaires were very favourable.

Schedules showing a six year comparison to 2016/17 for Attendance and Retention indicated that the figures were in line with previous performance. Overall Attendance at 92.4% was up on last year (91.7%). Retention from the start of the academic year up to April was 95.4% (95.9%) with Retention from November to April 96.6% (96.7%). The Chair commented that the figures were still excellent.

The Committee had reviewed its Terms of Reference and recommended no changes. The College's Curriculum Policy & Procedures had also been reviewed with only minor changes recommended.

Total applications to 28 April were very encouraging for this point in the year. In response to a member's question, a Staff Director, as Director of Studies, confirmed that applications were currently 52 down on same point last year.

The Board discussed the Committee's Report and then **AGREED TO APPROVE**

- the Curriculum Committee's Terms of Reference, with no changes
- the College's Curriculum Policy & Procedures, with minor changes

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

**10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair, together with the Principal and Deputy Principal, will be attending the SFCA Annual General Meeting in Nottingham on 15 June, and proposed that the start of the Finance and Premises Committee meeting on that evening be moved to 7.00pm. Committee members present were all in agreement.

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 29 June 2017, at 6.00pm