

**Present:** Ms Michelle Balcombe, Mr Martin Churchward, Mrs Carol Clapham, Mr Charles Davies, Mr Rob Doran, Dr Jonathan Godfrey, Mr Clive Hodgeman, Dr Marion Hawkins, Mr Chris Hodson, Dr Ken Hopkins (Chair), Mr Shubham Kulkarni, Mrs Heidi Macdougall, Mr James Miller, Mr Rob Newton, Dr Amber Tahir, Mr Ravi Tandon, Mrs Shirley Tully (17)

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

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Mrs Diane Evans, Mr Phil Tranter (2)

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS**

None

**3. FINANCIAL ISSUES TRAINING**

The Finance Director presented a financial training session covering governors' financial responsibilities, the work of the College's Finance Department, the funding cycle and financial planning and monitoring and KPIs. Future changes to presentation and disclosure within the annual financial accounts were outlined. The Finance Director responded to members' questions on topics including VFM, payroll as percentage of income and capitalisation policy. Members thanked the Finance Director for a most informative and well-delivered presentation.

**4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2015**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record, and signed.

**5. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

**6. CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk reported that Board membership remained at 19, and that a Search Committee would be called in the near future to focus on recruiting to vacancies which may arise in October when 4 Governors reach the end of their term in office. The Clerk reminded Governors that any interested candidates could be referred to the Principal for further information.

The Clerk reported that attendance at the SFCA Clerks' conference on 26 January had proved most worthwhile. Of particular interest had been presentations on Area Based Reviews, Academisation, Data Protection and Ofsted's new Inspection process with greater importance given to Leadership and Management.

The Clerk outlined some examples of data security breaches resulting in colleges incurring significant fines, and indicated that a new EU Data Protection framework, likely to be adopted this year, effective in 2018, would include mandatory reporting of data security breaches.

**7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The Principal presented a comprehensive report, but it was agreed that those matters also

covered by Committees would be considered later in the meeting, during the Committee reports. The Principal, in relation to Staffing, drew Governors' attention to the retirement of Andy Gray after 13 years as College Network Manager.

The Principal went on to outline the data for leavers' destinations 2015, indicating that this year's Oxbridge applicants have achieved 13 offers of places, much the same as in the previous 3 years, but still well above the national average. The Principal thanked those Governors who had conducted mock interviews with students, and invited any other interested Governors to come forward.

Formula funding transitional protection, thought to be ending after 2015/16, now appears to be maintained but phased out over 6 years.

Nationally, the Teachers' Pay negotiations continue with no agreement yet on a pay award.

## **8. AREA BASED REVIEW UPDATE**

The Chair reported that he and the Principal had attended Briefing meetings in Telford, and the first Steering Group meeting on 18 January held at North Shropshire College's Oswestry campus. A site visit to HSFC had taken place on 28 January carried out by a small team including the Chair of Governors of Blackpool College and his Principal, both had been complimentary about the quality and solvency of HSFC.

There was much discussion and members asked several questions around the Review, possible outcomes and the different forms that Academisation could take for colleges.

## **9. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The Principal presented the College's 2016-19 Strategic Development Plan, outlining the College's Mission and Strategic Objectives and drawing the attention of Governors to the Key Challenges and the difficulty of planning in the current climate of austerity plans impacting the 16-19 sector.

The Principal detailed the key assumptions on which the Plan is based, risks and mitigating action, particularly:

- funding rate of £4000 per learner for next 2 years
- 1% staff pay increase each year
- number of students on roll will be 2100 in 2016/17

All had an effect on the operating budget and the College is always looking to find savings.

The Three Year Operating Plan lists 11 Strategic Issues with 17 action points for 2016-17, with further measures to be followed up for 2017-2019. The Principal outlined the Plan in some detail, highlighting planned developments under Curriculum, External Links and Quality, where quality assurance procedures had to conform to proposed changes in Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework.

The Three Year Financial Plan includes a financial forecast, a Sensitivity Analysis assessing the impact on the net surplus of varying student numbers and a schedule of KPIs.

Governors discussed the challenges, key assumptions and risks and the Three Year Operating Plan. Governors asked questions about:

- College's financial health grade – forecast as Good for 2015/16
- E4L, Education for Life – includes careers, drug awareness
- Mission – preparation of students for business and industry as well as HE
- Careers – students are made aware of all avenues

The Chair suggested, and the Board **AGREED** that the Strategic Development Plan 2016-2019

be endorsed after the Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives were approved at the Governors' Conference meeting.

The Principal went on to outline the College's Accommodation Strategy, January 2016, which summarises the key principles on which the development of the College's buildings and sites are based. The evaluation of the existing site and accommodation needs were discussed. Governors recognised that additional general teaching space and student social and study space were the main needs. There were no formal proposals at this stage, but the two options set out in the Strategy were noted:

- Build over Sports Hall – planning permission already received
- Relocate Fitness Centre – moves gym from Sports Hall to new location to provide 2 large changing rooms

In response to member's questions, the Principal confirmed that:

- the 'old' Principal's office was being used by the Library, and the minor works budget would cover required alterations
- the College's preferred option is to relocate the Fitness Centre
- the top capital expenditure priority was for I.T.

The Board discussed the Strategy and then **AGREED TO APPROVE** the Accommodation Strategy, January 2016.

## 10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### i. Curriculum Committee on 7 January

The Committee Chair confirmed that the Committee had considered students' attendance and retention and students' destinations after leaving the College. Attendance and Retention statistics were excellent. Referring to destinations the Committee Chair indicated that the overall success rate in getting offers was very high at 85%.

The Committee had also reviewed departmental targets for Retention and Achievement, with no changes from the previous year. All courses were targeting 95% attendance, and targeting to exceed the SFC benchmark figure, for the subject, for retention. The target for Achievement is to improve or maintain value added performance at A Level and BTEC National. After a brief discussion, the Board of Governors **AGREED TO APPROVE** the Departmental Targets for 2016-17.

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

### ii. Staff & Students Committee on 19 January

In the absence of the Committee Chair, a Committee member reported. The Committee had considered the Committee's Terms of Reference, with no changes. The Board then **AGREED TO APPROVE** the Terms of Reference with no changes. The Committee had also considered:

- staffing projections - recruitment of additional staff not anticipated in 2016
- pay negotiations - Teachers' pay award still to be resolved between SFCA and the Unions
- Equality and Diversity – new performance monitoring for students with selected protected characteristics
- Staff Questionnaire – very positive results from 2015 questionnaire
- Governors' skills audit and training needs - the questionnaire from October 2015 demonstrated that there continued to be a good balance of experience on the Governing Body

It was felt that training needs could continue to be met by in-house training sessions before Governors' meetings, with a session on Area Based Reviews and possible options covered at the Governors' Conference in March.

The Principal outlined the programme for the Governors' Conference, with Governors' meeting and review of mission and strategic objectives, followed by sessions on Area Based Reviews and possible options, Academisation and updates from Heads of English and Maths departments. A visiting speaker for the Friday evening session is planned. It was agreed the Principal should approach David Igoe, Chief Executive of the SFCA and past Principal of Cadbury SFC. Governors considered and agreed the revised programme, noting that the event is to be held at College.

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

iii. Finance & Premises Committee on 21 January

The Committee Chair reported that the Committee had discussed the Monthly Management Accounts for December which indicated that College finances remained in a good financial position with Net Current Assets of £2.4m. The Finance Director had circulated useful benchmarking data to the Committee, indicating that HSFC compared very favourably with sector college averages.

After a brief discussion, the Board then **AGREED TO APPROVE** the Monthly Management Accounts for December 2015.

The Committee Chair outlined the amendments to the Financial Regulations, covering on-line payment by BACs, Parent Pay, Regulatory Audit and JACOP. The Committee had discussed the amendments in some detail, and it was confirmed that none was contentious or of major significance. The Board then **AGREED TO APPROVE** the amended Financial Regulations 2016-17.

The Committee had received and discussed the draft Accommodation Strategy, January 2016, and received an update on minor works and planned preventative maintenance work.

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

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Principal circulated a flyer for the English Symphony Orchestra's concert on 7 February at Hereford's Shire Hall and encouraged Governors to attend. Three HSFC students were involved in 'shadowing' members of the Orchestra.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

9.30 am on Saturday 12 March, Governors' Conference