



GOVERNORS' MEETING Minutes of the meeting on 4 October 2012

Present: Mr Neil Arlett, Ms Michelle Balcombe, Mrs Carol Clapham,
Mr Charles Davies, Mr Rob Doran, Mrs Pat Gaze, Dr Jonathan Godfrey,
Dr Ken Hopkins (Chair), Mrs Heidi Macdougall, Mr Andrew McDonagh,
Mrs Helen Powers, Mr John Pratt, Ms Blair Priday, Mr Ravi Tandon,
Miss Christine Wright (15)

In attendance: Dr Ruth Brinton (Deputy Principal),
Mr Philip Eyles (Clerk), Mrs Ruth Jones (Finance Director)
Diane Evans and Phil Tranter (Governors Designate)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs Katarina Blair, Mr Martin Churchward, Mr James Miller (3)
Peter Cooper (Deputy Principal) was unable to be in attendance

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND GIFTS

None

3. APPOINTMENT OF NEW GOVERNORS AND FAREWELL TO RETIRING GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors **AGREED TO APPOINT** Diane Evans and Phil Tranter as Staff Governors. They had previously been nominated by the College's staff. Their terms of office begin on 9 October, following the expiry of their predecessors' terms of office. The Chair welcomed them to the Board and thanked the retiring Staff Governors for their service. An especially warm farewell and grateful thanks was given to Andrew McDonagh, who was about to retire from the Board after twenty years' service

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 2012

The Minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute 10ii: Chris Hodson's Curriculum Vitae was **NOTED**

6. CLERK'S REPORT

The Board of Governors is two members short of its complement because there are now no Student Governors. Ellie-Mae Morris-Davies left the College in the Summer and Alice McNair resigned from her Governorship on 3 October. Elections will be held for two replacements before the next Board Meeting.

All Governors' Committees have enough members, except the Curriculum Committee which now only has four members and needs another

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Principal began with a tribute to the College's staff, who have maintained overall standards despite a considerable increase in workload. A record enrolment of new students has further increased the pressure on them.

The report also covered the Paralympic golden success of a former student, raw and added-value A and AS level results, league tables, finances, curriculum changes and the threat of industrial action following national disputes. Two important local issues were discussed at length: Hereford College of Technology's takeover of Ludlow College and the recently approved Robert Owen 14-19 Vocational Free School.

8. GOVERNORS' HANDBOOK

The Handbook was distributed and its contents explained

9. COLLEGE SELF-ASSESSMENT

It was **AGREED** that the College self-assessment for 2011-12 will again be based on the Ofsted inspection process. Governance will not be graded separately but assessed within the Leadership and Management section.

There was a brief discussion of what is emerging from recent Ofsted inspections of colleges. The main message was that Governors need to continue to monitor the Students' and the College's performance data very thoroughly

10. APPOINTMENT OF CLERK FOLLOWING PHILIP EYLES' RETIREMENT IN MARCH 2013

The post will be advertised in November with the aim of appointing before Christmas.

11. THE COLLEGE'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

The Principal outlined possible celebratory events and activities which will now be considered by a group of staff and governors

12. COMMITTEE REPORTS

i. Staff and Students Committee on 24 September

The Committee had discussed staff changes, staff absence, possible industrial action following national disputes, the appraisal of Senior Post holders and the College's Equality & Diversity Policy.

After a brief discussion the Board **AGREED** that the same procedures as last year will be used for appraising Senior Post Holders. It also **AGREED TO APPROVE** the College's Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedures 2012-13.

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

ii. Curriculum Committee on 25 September

The Committee considered the cause of the surprisingly high enrolment of new students and had a detailed discussion of the College's rising retention and success rates and the A Level and AS Level results. Particular emphasis was given to value-added analyses of results and the performance by students in all subjects was examined. The Committee also considered and recommended one curriculum change (see next paragraph) that was necessitated by staff illness.

After a brief discussion of the report, the Board **AGREED TO APPROVE** the replacement of GCSE Geography by GCSE Humanities in the College's Course Masterfile.

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

iii. Finance and Premises Committee on 27 September

The Committee began by considering the Monthly Management Accounts and noted that the College concluded the financial year strongly. Funds were boosted by an unexpected £200 000 from the funding agency, but this payment will have to be scrutinised to ensure that it was made intentionally. The updated 2012-13 Budget and Financial Forecast were reviewed and the Committee agreed that the Staffing Budget to be considered by the Board should include an extra £75 000.

The Committee also discussed the successful re-tendering for insurance and progress on the possible capital project. The latter has yet to be considered by the Board.

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

- The Monthly Management Accounts for June and July 2012
- The updated Budget 2012-13 and Financial Forecast 2012-17

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

iv. Audit Committee on 2 October

The Committee began by considering two reports to the Governing Body on the audits of 2011-12, one from the College's Internal Audit Service and the other the Committee's own annual report to the Board. With the internal auditors' judgement of *adequate and effective arrangements* and no unfavourable opinions, the Committee recommended these reports to the Board without reservation.

The Committee had also examined Governors' Attendance 2011-12, scrutinised the proposed External Audit Plan and considered national guidance on the rationalisation of audit arrangements. Given the Board's resolution (see Minute 10 iii of the 11 July Board Meeting) to continue with an Internal Audit Service that is separate both from the College and the Financial Statements Auditors, much of this guidance does not apply. However, the situation will be kept under review.

Given the changing environment for auditing, the Committee had recommended that the College *does not retender* at this point for audit services 2013-16 but instead continues with the present firms for 2013-14. Annual review of auditors, and annual appointment subject to this review, would continue during this and any subsequent years of rolling the existing contract forwards.

The Committee had noted the fact that the firm providing the College's internal audit service, RSM Tenon, is currently being investigated at a national level by the Financial Reporting Council's Accountancy and Actuarial Discipline Board. Whilst the investigation continues, neither the Committee nor the Board will comment on this investigation.

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

- The Final Internal Audit Service Report for the year to July 2012
- The Annual Report of the Audit Committee for 2011-12
- The External Audit Plan and Strategy for the Annual Accounts to July 2012
- That the College's existing audit firms continue to audit for 2013-14, subject to the usual review and annual re-appointment process

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

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Retiring Governor John Pratt thanked the Board for the valuable experience he had gained during his time as a member

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 6 December, at 7.30pm, preceded by Governor Training on Personnel Issues at **7pm**