

Governors Present: Gill Slater (Chair)
Matthew Adams
Sheila Bratt
Paul Cumming
Angela Davis
Phil Douce
Toby Hooper
Michael Kitcatt

Sam Lifford
Sheena Payne-Lunn
Deborah Tiffany (Vice-Chair)
Alex Daw
Emily Furniss
Peter Whyte

In Attendance: Ed Senior (Deputy Principal)
Jo Payne (Interim Clerk to the Governing Body)
Barbara Clements (Finance Manager)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Sean Devlin and Richard Reece. Sheila Bratt gave notice that she had to leave the meeting at 6.45pm.

2. Opening Standing Items

- (i) Michael Kitcatt declared that he was a governor at a partner high school, Bishop Perowne. Gill Slater declared that she was employed by a stakeholder, the University of Worcester. Paul Cumming declared that he was a governor at partner high school The Chantry.
- (ii) Those parts of the agenda, which referred to individual students or members of staff, sensitive contracts or issues, were identified as confidential to the Governing Body. The Chair advised that there was an item to be discussed at the end of the meeting and that staff and student governors would be asked to withdraw.
- (iii) No urgent items were identified.

3. Minutes

(i) GB meeting held on 13th December 2017

The minutes of the meeting were **confirmed** as a correct record and signed by the Chair. An update was received on the action points arising from the minutes and those action points outstanding are shown below. The Governing Body **noted** the information provided.

(ii) GB meeting held on 3rd February 2018

The minutes of the meeting were **confirmed** as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The following points were noted:

- The Principal had submitted the requested information to the Regional Schools Commissioner on 28th February;
- An internal advert was placed for the role of Interim Principal for next academic year and an appointment made;

- The Chair had prepared a letter for parents about the early retirement of the Principal at the end of the academic year and the appointment of Ed Senior as Principal next year.

The Governing Body **noted** the information provided.

4. **Academisation**

(i) Minutes of the Academisation Working Group on 15th February 2018

The minutes of the Academisation Working Group on 15th February were received. The Interim Clerk circulated draft minutes of the Academisation Working Group meeting on 20th March for consideration and governors were advised that:

- Nunnery Wood High School would not proceed with a MAT arrangement with the College;
- The possibility of a MAT arrangement with Hereford Sixth Form College was being pursued;
- The Principal was invited to Hereford Sixth Form College's Directors dinner and was asked questions about the College;
- Further to the Directors meeting, a positive letter had been sent from the Chair of the HSFC Board to the Chair of the College's Governing Body.
- It had been the first opportunity for the HSFC Board to discuss the proposal and there was a feeling that they would want to move forward reasonably slowly and the College was time limited due to the loan. In principle, the bank advised that they would consider novating the loan if it was declined by the Transactions Unit, although it was unclear what the new terms and conditions might be.
- The Regional Schools Commissioner's office were in contact with HSFC to ascertain what their timescales would be.

The Governing Body **noted** the information provided and **endorsed** the recommendation of the Academisation Working Group to continue to explore a potential MAT arrangement with Hereford Sixth Form College. The Governing Body would be updated when a response was received from the Regional Schools Commissioner.

5. **Stakeholder Voice**

The Chair invited governors who had undertaken recent link visits to report back to the Governing Body and the following points were made:

- Angela Davis said that attending the Marketing and Reputation Group had been enlightening and positive and the number of staff keen to contribute innovative ideas had impressed her. The College app had subsequently been launched and the parent governor and student governors commented on how useful this was.
- Phil Douce reported on several meetings with the IT Support Manager about the introduction of GDPR and its implications. He also raised concern that should the IT Support Manager be absent or leave, this would pose a significant risk, particularly as the IT Senior Information Officer recently left.
- Phil Douce added that he met with Matt Hall, Head of Humanities, to discuss the possibility of Worcester Civic Society offering a prize to an outstanding Extended Project submission.
- Toby Hooper advised that the ILT Strategy meeting had been positive with a good discussion on the usefulness and accessibility of ILT resources. He noted the level of experience of those who attended.

The Governing Body **noted** the information provided and the Chair thanked those governors who had visited College this term.

6. Quality Assurance

(i) Quality Committee minutes: 03.02.18 and 14.02.18

The Chair of the Quality Committee, Deborah Tiffany, presented the Committee minutes highlighting the following:

- The summary assessment regime was bedding down although more consistency was needed in terms of the form of assessment used e.g. some staff were assessing whether students would pass the exam at this stage, whilst others were considering whether they were making appropriate progress to enable them to achieve their target grade.
- The four key judgements in the Self-Assessment report were judged as 'Good' and whilst areas for improvement had been identified e.g. female value added, the Quality Committee **recommended** that the Governing Body approve the SAR judgements for 2016-17.
- The Committee had considered four subject QIPs and were happy with the format.
- Teacher questionnaire responses had been very positive.
- The Committee had considered that the Governing Body only currently had one staff governor, but that given the current uncertainty over academisation and the requirement for a local governing body to only have one staff governor, it was agreed not to recruit another staff governor at the present time.
- The Interim Clerk had brought changes to automatic qualification rules to the attention of the Committee. Whilst the regulations apply to charity (and would apply to an academy), the Committee had considered that it was best practice to adopt these and **recommended** to the Governing Body that the Instruments and Articles be amended to reflect the wording proposed by the Interim Clerk.
- The new senior management team structure would affect existing quality assurance procedures and consideration would be given to the lesson observation programme.
- The Committee had considered the comprehensive Safeguarding annual report and extended their thanks to the Safeguarding team for continuing to do such an excellent job.

The Governing Body **received** the Committee minutes and **noted** the information provided. In response to the recommendations they were being asked to make, the Governing Body:

- **Approved** the judgements in the Self-Assessment as 'Good'.
- **Approved** that the Instruments and Articles be amended to reflect changes to rules for automatic disqualification.

(ii) Quality Assurance update

The Deputy Principal presented his report and reported that:

- The College's value added A Level score was marginally better in the recently published DfE performance tables.
- The College performed very strongly in the Maths and English GCSE measures and the resit results were some of the best in the country.
- Steps were being taken to prepare for GDPR and an Information Asset Register was in the process of being compiled. Teaching staff would be addressed at the forthcoming staff meeting. Governors asked for consideration to be given to the information that should be shared with them and what might constitute appropriate training so that governors were fulfilling their duties.

The Governing Body **received** the updated Quality and Development Plan and **noted** the information provided.

(iii) Audit Committee update

The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the Committee minutes and reported as follows:

- Concerns about quoracy had been raised as a concern and the need to recruit new governors to the Audit Committee. The Interim Clerk advised that the vacancies continued to be promoted through the SGOSS and that local accountancy firms in Worcester had been

contacted which had resulted in the appointment of Paul Cumming. The Governing Body were asked to share any suggestions for recruitment with the Interim Clerk.

- The Finance Manager had reported that investment in overnight funds was imminent and would generate a useful amount of interest over the course of the year.
- Kendall Wadley had found very little to report on in the spring term internal audit and had subsequently proposed reducing the number of annual audits to two instead of three.

The Governing Body **noted** the information provided and approved the **recommendation** to reduce the number of internal audit visits from three to two.

(iv) Complaint Appeal Panel

The Chair of the Complaint Appeal Panel advised that the decision of the Principal had been upheld and, whilst the case was unusual, some recommendations had been made for time limiting the period for which a student could be 'sent home' without attending a disciplinary hearing and for work to be sent home prior to suspension or exclusion.

The Deputy Principal confirmed that the Student Conduct Policy was revised to take into account the recommendations of the Panel. Where a student was subject to a police investigation, the policy now stated that after 2 months, a disciplinary meeting would be called with the student having the opportunity to state their case. If the College was unable to risk assess that it was safe for the student to be in College, then they would be excluded for the remainder of the academic year or until the police investigation had been satisfactorily concluded.

The Deputy Principal added that he had made an additional change to refer to taking photographs, video or audio recordings within the Code of Conduct. He also explained that whilst it was good practice for a different member of staff to investigate an incident and conduct the disciplinary hearing, with a reduced senior management team next year, this was not practical and they would be situations when the person investigating would need to conduct the disciplinary hearing. This would only be in cases where the outcome was unlikely to be exclusion.

The Governing Body **approved** to the additional changes suggested by the Deputy Principal and **noted** the information provided.

7. **Finance and Resources**

(i) Selection Panel: 19.02.18

The minutes of the Selection Panel were **received**. The Governing Body congratulated Ed Senior on his appointment as Interim Principal.

The Interim Clerk explained that use had been made of written resolutions from members of the Governing Body to approve the appointment before this meeting of the Governing Body.

(ii) Resources Committee minutes: 28.02.18

The Chair of the Resources Committee presented the Committee minutes and reported as follows:

- The Personnel Manager's report was comprehensive and referred to her resignation effective from the end of April. The tension between replacing this important role and the desire to make cost savings had been discussed.

- It was hoped that compulsory redundancies would be avoided through costs savings identified including a small number of voluntary redundancies which had been accepted. The next issue would be concern from teaching staff about the breadth of subjects they would be asked to teach or the point on their range that they would be placed on.
- The Finance Manager continued to budget based on the staff savings identified.
- The staffing budget had assumed a 1% pay increase for teaching staff, but the targeted 2% rise for those on points 1-6 would not significantly increase the staffing cost as there were only two full-time and three part-time staff to whom this applied. The Committee recommended that the pay increase be approved and backdated to September 2017.
- The Financial Support available to students next year had been adjusted to remove the education allowance as part of cost saving measures.
- Whilst the Finance Manager had requested an increase to her threshold, she reported to the meeting that the bank mandate would need to be changed so governors were not being asked to approve this change at the current time.
- After the Committee meeting and further to discussion with the Chair of the Governing Body and the Chair of Resources Committee, it was agreed to made a seconded appointment to the role of Interim Deputy Principal due to the job description containing the tasks of the current Assistant Principal and the need to make cost savings.
- The Investment Policy and Reserves Policy were recommended for approval.

The Principal responded to advise that consideration was being given to potential for using external advice and support to fulfil aspects of the Personnel role e.g. to undertake staff investigations. This was still being evaluated and the Governing Body would be updated in due course.

The Governing Body **received** the Committee minutes and **noted** the information provided.

(Sheila Bratt left the meeting at 6.43pm).

In response to recommendations, the Governing Body:

- **Approved** the 1% pay increase for teaching staff and senior post-holders with 2% increase for those on points 1-6 of the scale backdated to September 2017.
- **Approved** the Investment Policy.
- **Approved** the Reserves Policy.

(iii) Finance update

The Finance Manager presented her financial update report for Period 7 and responded to questions raised:

- The forecast for overspend was less than previously reported at £74,000, but it was noted that the College cannot breach its covenants in two consecutive years.
- The cash position was lower than in previous years due to having paid off two of the loans and would be closely monitored.
- The ESFA allocation for 2018-19 was lower than anticipated due to an error in reporting GCSE Maths and English grades where the student did not achieve a grade C/4. The Principal explained how this had happened and that when the ESFA were notified they had stated that it would not impact the College's funding allocation. The Principal was preparing a business case to appeal the error which had to be submitted by 18th April. The worst case scenario was that the funding for next year would be £160,000 lower than expected. If this were to happen, the Governing Body would be asked to recommend a deficit budget if permitted by the covenants in the exceptional

circumstances. Governors indicated that they would be minded to approve this subject to confirmation that this was not prohibited by the Instruments and Articles.

The Governing Body **noted** the information provided. The Principal and Deputy Principal said that they wanted to be in a position to give staff certainty as soon as possible. The staff governors referred to the levels of staff uncertainty at present.

The Governing Body **approved** the Safeguarding Policy with minor amendments.

8. Closing Standing Items

(i) Chair's Action:

The use of Chair's Action to sign off the end of year accounts and to convene a Selection Panel for secondment to the role of Interim Deputy Principal were **noted**.

(ii) Health and Safety: No health and safety matters were identified.

(iii) Risk Management: The risk of the issue with the funding allocation for next year not being resolved satisfactorily was evidently significant. The staff governor's feedback on the impact of cuts on staff morale was also noted.

(iv) Impact: The measures taken to make cost savings next year whilst not reducing the curriculum offering would ensure quality of the student provision.

(v) Any Urgent Business: An urgent matter had been identified and staff and students would be asked to withdraw from the meeting.

(vi) Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, 11th July 2018.

(Staff and student governors withdrew from the meeting at 7.02pm).

The meeting closed at 7.07 p.m.

Signed:
Gill Slater (Chair)

Date:

GB ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MEETING ON 21ST MARCH 2018

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
GB/21.03.18/6(i)	Amend I&A to incorporate changes to rules for automatic disqualification. Amend annual eligibility form to reflect change.	JJP	ASAP	
GB/21.03.18/7(iii)	Subject business case to ESFA in respect of funding allocation error.	MWK	18/04/18	

ACTION POINTS BROUGHT FORWARD

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
GB/27.09.17/3(ii)	Programme for Learning Walks to be produced based on governor availability.	JJP	Ongoing*	
GB/5.4.17/3	Identify another MAT regarding roles and possibility of mentoring	MWK	Summer 2017	
GB/5.4.17/7(ii)	Cafeteria video on website	MWK	May 2017	

ACTION POINTS COMPLETED

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
GB/13.12.17/2	Provide clarification on the points raised by the GB.	CQ	ASAP	✓
GB/13.12.17/7(i)	Present SAR to QC meeting in Spring term.	EYS	14.02.18	✓
GB/13.12.17/8(i)a	Chair's action to be used to sign off statutory accounts.	BJC/GS	December 2017	✓
GB/13.12.17/8(i)d	Produce list of assurances under headings in ESFA Chief Executive letter for RC and AC.	MWK	28.02.18	✓
GB/3.2.18/5(ii)	Write to students and parents regarding the retirement of the current Principal and arrangements for an interim replacement.	GS	ASAP	✓
GB/3.2.18/4(i)	Prepare documentation for resubmission to the Academies Unit and RSC on the basis that there is potential for the College to become a 16-19 academy as part of a MAT with another institution.	MWK/EYS/ BJC	21/03/18	✓
GB/3.2.18/5	Advertise internally for the role of Interim Principal	MWK/AJH/ GS	ASAP	✓
GB/3.2.18/5(ii)	Convene a meeting of the Selection Panel to conduct interviews.	JJP	ASAP	✓

* Denotes amended dates.