

Governors Present: Gill Slater (Chair) Alex Gwinn
 Matthew Adams Wendy Pickess
 Rubia Amin Ed Senior
 Emma Bridges Sheena Payne-Lunn
 Paul Cumming Sarah Turner
 Sean Devlin
 Phil Douce

In Attendance: Peter Cooper (Executive Principal)
 Ruth Scotson (Deputy Principal)
 Jo Payne (Clerk to the Local Governing Body)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cathy Scott-Burt and Abi Stephenson.

The Chair welcomed newly appointed parent governor, Wendy Pickess to the meeting and introductions were made.

2. Opening Standing Items

- (i) No declarations of interest relevant to the agenda were received.
- (ii) Those parts of the agenda, which referred to individual students or members of staff were identified as confidential to the Local Governing Body. The Student Governor reported that a number of College students had organised, in conjunction with the police, a Black Lives Matter protest on the weekend. Governors' noted they were pleased that College students were active and vocal but asked that they ensure their safety and adhere to physical distancing.
- (iii) The Chair advised that there was an item of late business which would be raised at the end of the meeting. The item was confidential and, therefore, staff and student governors would be asked to leave at this point.

3. Minutes

(i) Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday, 20th March 2020

The minutes were **confirmed** as a correct record and will be signed by the Chair. An update was received on the action points.

The Principal explained that the College stopped using BKSB as a baseline test for students as the information from this was not helpful due to the way in which it was administered and the lack of importance that students attached to this. The College moved to a system whereby subjects issued a form of diagnostic test and reported concerns to Learning Support. The Learning Support Manager has agreed to look again at BKSB and ALIS and also consider, in the meantime, if a more consistent approach across departments can be adopted.

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

4. MAT Update

The Executive Principal provided a MAT update both in relation to operational priorities and future developments. The following points were made:

- Preparations for reopening after closure was the most pressing issue for both colleges. This had been a frustrating process given the continually changing advice. Both colleges were well-prepared;
- Whilst both colleges had had successfully operated during closure, the ability to operate with a hybrid model was the next challenge with some students returning to College with others requiring remote support. Considerations for September and the possibility of operating a hybrid model of delivery with new students as well as those returning;
- The biggest concern was the recruitment of new students and the uncertainty surrounding this;
- The physical distancing restrictions in place come September would have an impact on the ability of students to participate in enrichment etc which was often the key selling point of coming to a sixth form college. There was concern that the student experience would be significantly diminished if they were unable to participate in such activities;
- The colleges had adapted well to remote delivery with Teams being the go-to platform. Staff had also used this as a means of training and sharing good practice without the need to travel;
- IT and MIS was an area where there was less progress than expected which was largely attributed to the absence of the IT Support Manager;
- The application of King Edward's VI College, Stourbridge, to academise and join the MAT had been approved by the Headteachers' Board with this likely to be completed by Easter 2021. There were different considerations in relation to Cirencester SFC which made their joining more problematic;
- There had been initial discussions with Stoke Sixth Form College who were already an academy and in a MAT with one school. This was likely to have a 2 to 3 year timescale if it were to happen and would move the MAT closer to the number of institutions required to receive the additional capital funding.

In response to questions it was noted that:

- Sampling across the colleges suggested that 75-80% of students were fully engaged with online learning with others partially engaged. Arrangements had been made to offer bespoke solutions to those who were excluded from online learning. The Deputy Principal reported that the College had purchased laptops which had been loaned to students. The College was also flexible in relation to exams as even if a student had access to a computer, it was not always the case that they were the sole user of this equipment.

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

5. Finance and Resources

(i) Finance & Resources Committee minutes: 20.05.20

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

- The pay award for both teaching and support staff was recommended to the MAT Board for approval and has been actioned;
- Both committees reviewed the current governance structure and recommended that it be retained;
- Proposed changes to the safeguarding policy were recommended for approval by both committees;
- Plans for reopening and the risk assessment were scrutinised by the committee and subsequently shared with all governors for comment;
- A budget for next academic year and three-year financial forecast were recommended for approval.

It was questioned whether a deficit budget could be approved given the net/surplus deficit forecast for 2021-22 and 2022-23. It was explained that the key indicator on which the College's financial position was determined was the EBITDA which and this was strong for next year with a modest surplus and positive in the following two years. The net/surplus figure was only negative after the deduction of the MAT charge and as this was income for the MAT would be consolidated in the MAT accounts.

The Principal provided an update in relation to imminent reopening and reported that:

- Eight members of staff were unable to return this academic year due to their own underlying health condition or that of someone in their household;
- Plans to reopen had been fully risk assessed with the focus being on staff and student wellbeing. Measures exceeded the government guidelines in many instances;
- Hybrid delivery placed a great demand on staff but opportunities to develop their IT skills further e.g. use of cameras;
- A webpage had been created aimed at giving returning students an opportunity to see what the College looks like with measures in place;
- Attention had turned to September and planning for three eventualities was ongoing including plans to revert to an emergency timetable in the event of restrictions being in place;
- It would not be compulsory for staff to deliver online lessons but they were required to do something to identify training to extend their skills or knowledge.

Governors' **noted** the information provided. Both staff governors thanked the Principal for his regular and informative communication which were greatly appreciated.

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

- **Approved** the budget for 2020-21 and the three-year forecast;
- **Approved** the terms of reference for the Finance and Resources Committee;
- **Approved** that the sub-committee structure be retained for next academic year. It was noted that to reduce repetition at Local Governing Body meeting papers would be taken as read to enable time for more strategic discussion;
- **Approved** the changes to the Safeguarding policy and adoption of the resolution allowing the Senior Leadership Team to make changes in-year without governor approval.

(Peter Cooper left the meeting at 6.26pm)

6. **Quality Assurance**

(i) Curriculum & Quality Committee minutes: 13.05.20

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

- It was proposed that the College no longer enrol students under the age of 16 and the Committee supported this proposal;
- Changes to the admissions policy and mission statement reflected that the College would not enrol adult students or those under the age of 16 subject to approval by the Local Governing Body;
- The target student number was 1400;
- The Quality and Development Plan had been reviewed.

The Principal reported that two bus services from Bewdley and Kidderminster had been withdrawn, but a campaign of lobbying local MPs and councillors was successful and both services had been reinstated with additional services at the beginning and end of the day.

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

- **Approved** the target student number of 1400 for the 2020-21 academic year;
- **Approved** the proposal that the College no longer enrol students under the age of 16;
- **Approved** the Mission Statement and Strategic Aims without change
- **Approved** the terms of reference for the Curriculum and Quality Committee;

7. Stakeholder Voice

The Chair invited the Vice-Chair to report back to the Local Governing Body on his numerous link visits and the following points were made:

- Visits to Economics and Politics were both interesting;
- The Extended Project Qualification had been very successful and marking rigorous with no marks changed by exam boards last year;
- It was pleasing that additional counselling support had been agreed and the new arrangements would allow a wider range of support to become available;
- Support for students during the pandemic had been excellent.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the information provided and the Chair thanked the Vice-Chair for his frequent visits. Governors were encouraged to make arrangements to undertake a link visit where they had not already done so. The Principal echoed this sentiment and advised that a governor would be welcome to review the measures put in place in relation to infection control.

8. Governance

(i) Cycles of Business and Terms of Reference

The Clerk referred to the terms of reference for each committee which had been duly approved. The cycles of business were unchanged and governors' were asked to approve these.

The Local Governing Body noted the information provided and agreed to:

- **Approve** the cycles of business;
- **Approve** the training programme as outlined.

(ii) Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Clerk advised that as an academy the Chair and Vice-Chair were to be appointed at the end of the academic year in preparation for the following year. Both Gill Slater and Sean Devlin had expressed a willingness to continue in their roles.

The Local Governing Body **approved the appointment** of:

- Gill Slater as Chair of the Local Governing Body for 2020-21; and
- Sean Devlin as Vice-Chair of the Local Governing Body for 2020-21.

9. Policy Reviews

- (i) Emergency Response Plan
The proposed changes to the policy were considered and **approved**.
- (ii) Risk Management Policy
The policy was **approved** without change.

10. Closing Standing Items

- (i) Chair's Action: None.
- (ii) Health and Safety: Health and safety matters had been considered in relation to reopening.
- (iii) Risk Management: No additional risk management items were raised.
- (iv) Impact: Governors considered their role of challenging and supporting Senior Leaders in relation to reopening as having an impact in terms of the safety and wellbeing of staff and students.
- (v) Any Urgent Business:

Staff and student governors left the meeting at 6.44pm.

The Clerk withdrew from the meeting at 6.44pm returning at 6.55pm.

An item of confidential late business was raised. See 'Confidential Minute'

Date of Next Meeting: The Local Governing Body **approved** the schedule meeting for 20-21 noting the inclusion of the Governors' conference on Saturday, 30th January 2021. It was, therefore, confirmed that the next meeting of the Local Governing Body would be held on Wednesday, 16th September 2020.

Governors' requested some top hints and tips in the use of Teams.

The meeting closed at 6.58p.m.

Signed:
Gill Slater (Chair)

Date:

LGB ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MEETING ON 10TH JUNE 2020

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
LGB/10.06.20/10	Share hints and tips for use of Teams with governors.	JJP	July 2020	

ACTION POINTS BROUGHT FORWARD

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check

ACTION POINTS COMPLETED

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
LGB/04.03.20/6	Learning Support Manager to advise on current arrangements for identifying students' learning needs and whether baseline testing such as ALIS is preferable.	EYS	10.06.20	✓
LGB/04.03.20/7(ii)	Provide Governors with context in relation to subjects involved in Quality Improvement Reviews and provide an update on current student progress.	RJS	March 2020	✓
LGB/04.03.20/8(ii)	Consider arrangements for reporting to Governors where the Finance Director is unable to be in attendance.	EYS/SAGR	May 2020	✓

* Denotes amended action point.