

Governors Present: Gill Slater (arrived at 5.55pm) Phil Douce
Matthew Adams (arrived at 5.55pm) Alex Gwinn
James Adnett Sam Lifford (arrived at 5.55pm)
Matthew Bennett Sheena Payne-Lunn
Emma Bridges Wendy Pickess
Paul Cumming (remote) Ed Senior
Sean Devlin
Joe Durnall

In Attendance: Jane Jenkins (Vice Principal)
Luke Moseley (Vice Principal)
Jo Payne (Clerk to the Local Governing Body) (arrived at 5.55pm)
Peter Cooper (Trust CEO)
Toby Hooper (Trust Vice-Chair)
Andrea Marshall (Trust Improvement Officer)
Julie Ferman (Senior Leader for Student Wellbeing & DSL)

1. **Appointments**

The Clerk presented her report and the Local Governing Body **approved** the re-appointment of Sam Lifford as External Governor and member of the Finance and Resources Committee for a further four year term.

Apologies: Lucy Wilson, Abi Stephenson, Cherry Yau.

2. **Opening Standing Items**

- (i) No items of interest were declared.
- (ii) Those parts of the agenda, which referred to individual students or members of staff were identified as confidential to the Local Governing Body.
- (iii) No urgent items were raised.

3. **Safeguarding Training**

The Senior Leader for Student Wellbeing/DSL delivered a presentation to governors as part of the annual training programme outlining the key changes to the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance. The actions the College were taking were outlined and governors were advised that there are forthcoming online information events for parents in relation to online safety and drugs awareness. The links to join this will be shared with governors.

In response to questions, the Senior Leader for Student Wellbeing noted that the safeguarding audit went well with no concerns raised at the exit meeting. There was work to be done in relation to managing allegations and reporting of low-level concerns but this was in hand with a policy drafted and training planned for staff.

The Local Governing Body **thanked** the Senior Leader for Student Wellbeing for her presentation.

(The Senior Leader for Student Wellbeing left at 6.12pm).

4. **Heart of Mercia**

(i) Trust Update

The Trust's CEO reminded governors of the MAT's vision for close co-operation between the colleges in the Trust whilst maintaining autonomy. A critical mass of three colleges would clearly bring about benefits, an example, being the senior leaders of the colleges collaborating as part of SFCA leadership training. The Trust needed to respond to an evolving environment e.g. the proposed free school planned for Worcester and being involved in discussions and the shift to encourage local authority schools and college to join a multi-academy trust.

In response to questions the CEO advised that the Trust would consider taking on an institution with a deficit (subject to due diligence) if the context was right.

The Trust's Improvement Officer outlined the collaborative work that was ongoing in relation to staff training days and work across departments to share good practice. It was agreed that local governors would be invited to attend the introductory sessions at the MAT Training Day on 17th December.

The Vice Principal (Progression) presented the Virtual College concept to governors and outlined the work that was being undertaken with a view to launching this in September 2022. The Virtual College would be made up of small modules to support study and development in the way that General Studies and PHSE previously provided for students. The modules would be accessible on mobile phones and were video based with quizzes to check understanding and record participation levels.

The current challenges being addressed included finding a company to host the Virtual College, content creation and getting staff and students to engage with the package. In response to questions, it was noted that students would be consulted on the content produced and completion of modules would be rewarded with credits etc. It was noted that external partners might be invited to create content for modules depending on the cost involved in this.

The Local Governing Body **thanked** the Trust Improvement Officer and Vice Principal (Progression) for their presentation and were enthusiastic about the Virtual College and what it would provide for students.

(ii) Response to Governors' Questions

The Trust CEO had prepared written responses to the questions raised by governors at the annual conference and these were **noted**. The Trust CEO explained the 'Manhattan model' referred to and explained that Trust surplus built up over time would be used to support capital bids across the colleges.

(The Trust CEO and Trust Improvement Officer left the meeting at 6.59pm).

5. Minutes

(i) Minutes of the meeting on 15th September 2021

The minutes of the meeting were **agreed** as an accurate record and the action points updated. The Vice Principal (Progression) advised that he was reviewing and developing the delivery of Equality and Diversity across the College and was confident that progress would be made over the course of the year in better promoting and engaging students in activities to celebrate equality and diversity.

6. Management & Strategic

(i) Principal's Update Report

The Principal presented his report and the following key points were noted:

- Whilst there was not a significant increase in the number of COVID cases at College, there were a small number of clusters in class groups suggesting that internal transmission was possibly happening;
- As thresholds were met in several classes (10% of the group), the local Health Protection Team suggested that staff consider wearing face coverings in communal areas such as work spaces and also that students in class groups with multiple cases be emailed with guidance about daily testing, getting a PCR test and wearing face coverings as possible close contacts;
- A mobile testing unit would be onsite on Tuesday 30th November prioritising affected class groups and encouraging other first year students to participate;
- Five incidents of sexual harassment or violence had been reported to College by students so far this academic year including a serious sexual assault. Incidents occurred as students travelled to or from College or in their paid employment. The Police were positive to the College's request for a more proactive rather than responsive approach and agreed to increase patrols in Nunnery Wood and on Spetchley Road. An external partnership meeting was taking place in December and the College was liaising with service providers to consider if buses can come onsite at different times;
- The College held a third Open Event in response to demand and the decision to have some safety measures in place. Feedback from guests was overwhelmingly positive.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the update.

7. Finance and Resources

(i) Finance and Resources Committee meeting minutes: 10.11.21

The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee presented the minutes and noted the following:

- The Student Union accounts were recommended for approval;
- The Strategic Development Plan was recommended for approval;
- The Committee identified the lack of Trust policies, particularly in relation to personnel and safeguarding, as a significant risk.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the minutes and **approved** the Student Union accounts and Strategic Development Plan. The Vice-Chair of the Trust agreed to raise the concern about policies at the Trust's audit committee meeting.

(ii) Property Strategy

The Property Strategy and the inclusion of the site security action plan as an appendix was **noted**. The Principal advised that the action plan was developed in response to recommendations from a site security audit in January 2021.

(iii) Network Update

The Principal advised that, given the significant investment on the IT network in recent years and planned spend this year and next, it was an area for governors to provide support and challenge. It was noted that the Principal, MAT Accountant, Senior Leader for ILT Strategy and Assistant Network Manager met to discuss forthcoming projects and it appeared that this would come in below budget.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the contents of the report.

8. Quality Assurance

(i) Curriculum & Quality Committee minutes: 03.11.21

The Chair of the Curriculum and Quality Committee presented the minutes and noted the following:

- The Committee had reviewed governors' performance against the agreed targets for 2020-21;
- The targets for 2021-22 were considered and the Committee agreed to recommend the same targets including attendance 84% given the ability to join meetings remotely and that this figure was the sector benchmark;
- The Strategic Development Plan was recommended for approval.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the minutes. The Strategic Development Plan and the targets for governor performance for 2021-22 were **approved**.

(ii) College Self-Assessment Report

The Vice Principal (Curriculum) presented the key strengths and areas for improvement from all sections of the Self-Assessment and the Leadership and Management section in its entirety. It was noted that value added outcomes were a focus of improvement and prevented the College from grading itself as outstanding.

The Local Governing Body **approved** the contents and proposed grades in the Self-Assessment Report.

(iii) Quality Improvement Plan

The Quality Improvement Plan was scrutinised at the Curriculum and Quality Committee meeting and the contents **noted** by the Local Governing Body.

9. Stakeholder Voice

The reports from the designated safeguarding governor and the link governor for SEND were noted.

10. Closing Standing Items

(i) Chair's Action

The Clerk reported that the Chair was asked to approve appointments to the SEND and CEIAG link governor roles as identified as a need by the Local Governing Body.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the use of the Chair's action.

(ii) Health and Safety
The ongoing scrutiny by governors of the College's response to COVID was clearly aimed at promoting the health and safety of staff and students.

(iii) Risk Management
The Principal presented the updated risk analysis document focussing on the risk which remained red or amber after mitigations and controls. The following risks were outlined as priorities for the College where governors should continue to scrutinise and challenge:

- Whilst the College had a 'Run, Hide, Tell' policy, a means of alerting staff and students to the nature of any incident was still being explored and staff training was also required;
- The College's physical capacity was clearly a significant issue and a further increase next year in student number would mean the College was at capacity. This might consequently result in reducing the curriculum and other measures if capacity issues were not addressed. The College's capital bid was unsuccessful as, whilst the RSC acknowledged the need for growth, the proposals were not 'shovel-ready';
- Ofsted preparedness clearly remained a focus with an impending inspection;
- Although defunding had been delayed, the potential withdrawal of Applied General qualification remained a significant risk;
- IT network investment remained a focus and similarly, although significant work was going into preparing for the introduction of a new HR system, the risk of having an outdated system remained until its implementation.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the contents of the updated Risk document. The Clerk advised that the Local Governing Body should review the document in full annually and conduct a termly review of the risks which remained red and amber post-mitigation and controls.

(iv) Impact
The Local Governing Body believed that the safeguarding training was important to ensure that governors were clear on their roles and responsibilities. Consideration of the additional enrichment was also important.

(v) Any Urgent Business: No additional items were raised.

(vi) Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, 2nd March 2022 at 5.30pm.

The meeting closed at 7.32pm.

Signed:
Gill Slater (Chair)

Date:

LGB ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MEETING ON 24TH NOVEMBER 2021

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
LGB/24.11.21/7(i)	Raise concern at lack of MAT personnel and safeguarding policies with MAT Audit Committee.	Trust Vice-Chair	December 2021	

ACTION POINTS BROUGHT FORWARD

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check

ACTION POINTS COMPLETED

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
LGB/15.09.21/4(i)	Invite the Chief Executive Officer to the November meeting of the LGB.	JJP	ASAP	✓
LGB/15.09.21/4(ii)	Report to Curriculum & Quality Committee on specific support for economically disadvantaged students.	JLJ	November 2021	✓
LGB/15.09.21/5(ii)	Provide update on plans to promote/celebrate Black Lives Matter.	JLJ/LIM	November 2021	✓
LGB/15.09.21/6(i)	Advise governors on the outcome of review of MAT charge.	EYS	November 2021	✓
LGB/15.09.21/6(i)	Report back on costs of food in the Cafeteria.	EYS	November 2021	✓
LGB/15.09.21/8(vii)	Check whether shortlisted candidates sign a self-declaration around criminal records.	EYS	ASAP	✓
LGB/15.09.21/9(ii)	Report to Finance & Resources Committee on actions taken in relation to cyber-security.	EYS	November 2021	✓

* Denotes amended action point.