

Governors Present: Gill Slater (Chair) Alex Gwinn
 Matthew Adams Wendy Pickess
 James Adnett Ed Senior
 Paul Cumming

In Attendance: Jane Jenkins (Vice Principal Designate)
 Jo Payne (Clerk to the Local Governing Body)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Sean Devlin, Phil Douce, Joe Durnall, Sam Lifford, Sheena Payne-Lunn and Cherry Yau.

2. Opening Standing Items

- (i) Paul Cumming declared that he was a governor at the Chantry High School.
- (ii) Those parts of the agenda, where applicable, which referred to individual students or members of staff were identified as confidential to the Local Governing Body.
- (iii) The Chair advised that there was an item of additional non-urgent business which would be raised at the end of the meeting.

3. Minutes

- (i) Minutes of the meeting on Wednesday, 8th June 2022

The minutes were **confirmed** as a correct record and signed by the Chair and an update was provided on the action points. The Principal advised that he had spoken with Alan New at WCC who is leading the Sports Facility bid. Whilst it seemed that there was scope for legal fees associated with any changes to the joint use agreement to be incorporated into the bid, land valuation costs etc would not. The bid was submitted with an outcome anticipated in October. The Principal advised that he would report back to Finance and Resources when more information was known particularly in relation to donation of land and subsequent ownership.

Confidential Minute

The confidential minute from the meeting on 8th June was confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Quality

- (i) Exam Results Overview

The Vice Principal (Curriculum) presented the headline data from summer 2022 exam results and highlighted the following:

- The context of results was that they would not be as high as last year, but would be higher than 2019. Other considerations were that different subjects had different mid-points for grades and the usefulness of advance information was also inconsistent so it was more difficult to compare one subject's results directly to another;
- The pass rate of 99.5% was excellent and significantly above the national rate (98.4%). Whilst high grades had improved, this was not to the degree that the College would have wanted although A*-C grades were in line with national results;
- Overall A Level value added in 2019 was -0.17 compared to -0.05 this year suggesting that students made expected progress;

- Subject areas who performed above national rates for high grades was noted. The success of subjects such as Geography and Computer Science which were previously part of Subject Improvement Support was noted;
- Biology results were disappointing given that all indications suggested that results would be much improved. Analysis of the results and discussions with the Head of Department were ongoing and the subject would continue to be supported as would Chemistry. German and Spanish would receive support this year;
- An update on the subjects where papers had been requested or where there had been re-moderation was shared;
- The performance of other Level 3 qualifications such as EPQ and Core Maths were particularly impressive;
- Applied Level 3 courses performed well in terms of high grades although there was evidence at Level 2 and 3 that students did not perform as well in examined units. Sport was the exception to this and there would be some sharing of good practice;
- The performance of English and Maths GCSEs when compared the national figure for resits was excellent;
- The impact of retention on overall achievement rates was still being analysed;
- Meetings with each HoD to discuss results and Quality Improvement Plans had taken place.

In response to questions, it was noted that:

- The value of advance information was mixed with some subjects reporting that the exam did not replicate the advance information;
- Subject Improvement Plans were monitored in-year through a mid-point review. Members of the SLT Quality group were also assigned departments to work with and this included a review of QIPs. Some work will also be undertaken on how accurate in-year marking was in terms of predicting final outcomes.

The Local Governing Body thanked the Vice Principal for her report and **noted** the contents provided. They also welcomed the further **scrutiny** of the results and improvement actions that the Curriculum and Quality Committee would undertake.

(ii) Quality Improvement Plan

The Vice Principal (Curriculum) presented the draft Quality Improvement Plan for 2022-23 and advised that the main areas of focus included improving value added and high grades, raising aspirations of students including increasing progression from level 2 to level 3, teaching and learning strategies to identify skills gaps including effective use of the 16-19 Tuition Fund and continuing to identify ways to mitigate staff workload.

In response to questions it was noted that the principles of the Worcester Working Week did not apply over the summer, although students were set work to complete. It was noted that the College already use alumni to inspire current students and had means of attempting to keep in touch with former students from the time they leave College throughout their further education and careers.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the contents of the Quality Improvement Plan.

5. Strategic & Governance

(i) Heart of Mercia Chief Executive Officer's Update

The Local Governing Body noted the contents of the Chief Executive Officer's update.

(ii) Principal's Update Report

The Principal presented his update report and noted the following:

- A number of new staff were appointed to join the safeguarding and pastoral teams with all appearing to have settled well and made a good start. Two new Heads of Year (both internal promotions) were now in post in addition to the College's investment in appointing a Mental Health and Wellbeing Mentor;
- The College's new timetable with 25 minutes additional contact time per subject was now operational. Whilst the timetable meets the new funding guidelines, the baseline used by the ESFA included students on Industry Placements whose hours were already significantly above full-time. The implication was that the College would be unable to demonstrate the impact of the additional hours, however, it was understood that a written explanation would be adequate to explain the College's response;
- The Post-16 Capacity team were currently considering whether any flexibility in relation to grant funding might be applied given that work onsite would not commence until February 2023. A decision is pending and its grant funding was withdrawn, an application to the new round of capacity funding would be submitted;
- The Fire Service conducted an inspection and identified a number of things the College needed to address to ensure compliance prior to a return visit in October. The College was confident it had addressed these recommendations. A subsequent fire audit was conducted on the advice of Quattro Architects, the findings of which would be presented to the Finance & Resources Committee;
- Although not at the six week point for funding purposes, it seemed likely that the College would have an additional 100 students which was clearly positive for funding purposes next academic year. The increased student number did, however, mean that the College was faced with capacity issues and the risk it would reach capacity next year if similar levels of recruitment were experienced.

The Local Governing Body thanked the Principal for his report and **noted** the contents.

(iii) Clerk's Update Report

The Clerk presented the update report and highlighted the following points:

- The Clerk and Principal met with potential new external governor Tom Gregory in the summer. An outline of Tom's background and interest in governance was noted and his appointment recommended for approval;
- Caroline Shaw, teacher of Maths, had expressed an interest in the staff governor vacancy and her appointment was recommended;
- The Parent Governor vacancy will be shared with all parents;
- There was now an immediate vacancy for a SEND link governor and Governors' were reminded of the designated Safeguarding Governor vacancy that needed to be filled by January 2023. A reminder of the role descriptions was shared;
- The new Academy Trust Handbook was shared for information;
- A training programme based on Governors' feedback was proposed in addition to a continuation of the SFCA Webinars which Governors could access;
- A conference programme focused on a strategic response to capacity issues and the role of governors and the College in meeting local skills need will be prepared, approved by the Chair and shared with Governors.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the contents of the report and **approved**:

- The appointment of Tom Gregory as external governor and member of the Finance & Resources Committee for a four-year term;
- The appointment of Caroline Shaw as staff governor and member of the Curriculum & Quality Committee for a four-year term;
- The appointment of a Parent Governor further to nominations and an election as required;
- The training programme for 2022-23.

(iv) Marketing Annual Report

The Marketing Co-ordinator presented the annual Marketing report and noted the following:

- The Open Events, although held with restrictions on numbers in response to COVID concerns, had enabled more families to attend than had been the case in the previous 5 years although required five rather than four events to be scheduled;
- Applications monitoring throughout the year indicated a strong performance from local schools with sixth forms. The College took a cautious approach in relation to these applications, but enrolment has been very strong;
- Communication with applicants and their parents continued to be a priority and was seen as a real strength with a significant focus on customer service;
- The work of the high school liaison team and other marketing activities was summarised, as were some new initiatives around raising aspirations of Foundation year students;
- An internal audit of website compliance was undertaken and the College website was now felt to be in a strong position in terms of what it was required to have.

The Local Governing Body **noted** the contents of the report and congratulated the Marketing Co-ordinator and her team for all their efforts and contribution to the further increase in recruitment this year.

6. Finance & Resources

(i) Budgetary Update

The Principal referred Governors to the narrative explaining changes to the previous budget with a net effective of £15,000 additional expenditure. It was noted that the end of year position indicated that staff costs as a percentage of income had reduced to 70% and the EBITDA would be 8.71% which indicates outstanding performance. Robust and cautious financial planning was cited as the reason for such a strong performance.

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

(ii) Property Strategy

The Principal presented the updated Property action plan and the contents were **noted**.

(iii) Energy Usage

The Principal presented his report noting that the College was currently on a fixed term tariff until April 2023. A broker recommended that the College move to a five-year fixed tariff, however, costs were three times what was currently being paid. On the basis that the College's current provider was the provider of choice of 90% of schools and colleges, no action should be taken as yet with the situation continuing to be monitored.

7. Stakeholder Voice

No reports were presented to the meeting. The Clerk encouraged Governors' to get in touch with a view to arranging a link visit.

8. Policy Reviews

(i) Student Union Constitution and Code of Practice

The Policy was approved without change.

(ii) Governors Handbook 2022-23

The Clerk confirmed that the updated handbook would be emailed to governors in full. The changes to the handbook, as outlined, were **approved**.

(iii) Management of the College Policy

The Local Governing Body **approved** the proposed changes to the Management of the College policy to reflect changes to the Pastoral and Safeguarding teams.

(iv) Quality Assurance Policy

The Local Governing Body **approved** the changes as outline to the Quality Assurance policy to reflect the updated Education Inspection Framework and quality assurance processes for the current academic year.

(v) Freedom of Speech Policy

The Local Governing Body **approved** the Freedom of Speech policy without change.

(vi) Early Career Framework Policy

The Local Governing Body **approved** updates to the Early Career Framework policy to include a change to the approving body and working in liaison with the Chantry High School to deliver training to Early Career teachers.

(vii) Safeguarding Policy

The Local Governing Body approved updates to the Safeguarding Policy to reflect changes in personnel and the revised Keeping Children Safe in Education legislation.

9. Closing Standing Items

(i) Chair's Action

Further to feedback on the consultation around departmental and subject leadership, the Chair, in conjunction with the Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee, approved the policy to ensure that subject leadership payments would be effective for the start of the academic year. The Local Governing Body noted use of Chair's action.

(ii) Health and Safety: Governors noted their consideration of the Herefordshire & Worcestershire Fire Service and actions of the College to respond to any areas of non-compliance.

(iii) Risk Management: The Principal presented the updated risk analysis, drawing Governor attention to those rated as red post-mitigation. Risks associated with lack of physical resources, potential hacking of College systems, ineffective ILR returns resulting in potential clawback of funding were all highlighted as current issues causing concern.

(iv) Impact: Governors consideration of exam results, quality assurance procedures and reports in relation to College finances were to ensure the best education and value for money for students.

(v) Any Urgent Business: No items were identified. A draft policy schedule for 2022-23 of Trust policies to be drafted and approved was circulated. The Local Governing Body noted the schedule and their appreciation that significant process had already been made with three policies going to the October Trust Board for approval. Governors requested that any approved Trust policies be shared with them for information.

(vi) Date of Next Meeting: 23rd November 2022. The Governors' Conference will be held on Saturday 8th October 2022 at the College.

The meeting closed at 7.06pm.

Signed:

Gill Slater (Chair)

Date:

LGB ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MEETING ON 14TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
LGB/14.09.22/6iii	Confirm conference programme with Chair and circulate.	JJP	ASAP	

ACTION POINTS BROUGHT FORWARD

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
LGB/08.06.22/9	Expressions of interest in relation to Vice-Chair and Safeguarding Link role to be shared with the Clerk.	Governors	September 2022	

ACTION POINTS COMPLETED

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
LGB/08.06.22/6(iii)	Raise concerns in relation to College land should the joint use agreement come to an end and also the query about legal fees as the opportunity arises.	EYS	September 2022	✓
LGB/08.06.22/9	External governor vacancy to be advertised.	JJP	ASAP	✓

* Denotes amended action point.