

Present: Matthew Adams, James Adnett, Paul Cumming, Phil Douce, Tom Gregory (arrived at 5.44pm), Sam Lifford, Ed Senior and Gill Slater.
(Paul Cumming gave notice that he needed to leave at 6.30pm).

In Attendance: Luke Moseley (Vice Principal Progression), Andrew Leyland (College/MAT Accountant) and Jo Payne (PA to the Principal/Clerk)

1. Appointment of Chair: Matthew Adams was unanimously appointed as Chair of the Committee for the academic year.

2. Apologies: None.

3. Standing Items

- (i) No declarations of interested were raised.
- (ii) No items were identified as confidential to the Committee.
- (iii) No urgent items were declared.

4. Minutes

(i) Minutes of the Finances & Resources Committee: 25th May 2022

The minutes of the meeting were **confirmed** as a correct record and signed by the Chair. An update on the action points was provided and the Clerk advised that a review of the governance structure was not included in the conference programme given the need to focus on addressing capacity issues. The Vice Principal (Progression) advised that the previous equality objectives were all met and that the new objectives responded to student feedback for a greater focus on LGBTQ+ representation.

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

5. Finance

(i) Financial Update

The College/MAT Accountant presented the end of year audited position and the October 2022 update providing the following commentary:

- There was a £217,000 increase to the distributable reserves to £331,000, however, it was noted that the planned Wi-Fi installation was not completed last year due to parts shortages and so will require £43,000 from this year's budget;
- LGPS liabilities have reduced from £14 million to £2.25 million due to actuarial changes, this was a national picture;
- The College had maintained the free meal allowance of £7.50 per day for eligible students, reduced to £3.50 in holiday periods. The number of eligible students has significantly increased with the effect that carried over bursary funding has reduced from £140,000 to £30,000. Given the in-year Cafeteria surplus of £79,000, it is hoped that the level of free meal support can be maintained this year, but will need to be closely monitored;
- Early forecasts for staff costs suggests these will be close to the budget given a built in contingency of £112,000.

The Principal advised that the College was still proceeding with the Science Centre project. The project has been revised so that work onsite will begin in December and materials bought in advance and stored to assist with the grant spend deadlines. The Trust Board remain satisfied with the level of

risk given that the project is seen to offer value for money with £2 million grant funding. Once the Trust has five institutions, it will receive devolved capital funding and the College will use its allocation over a number of years to pay back the £1.1 million investment in the project.

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

(ii) Student Union Accounts

The College/MAT Accountant noted the large surplus that had been brought forward. The Vice Principal (Progression) reported that the Student Union were more active this year. A proposal will be shared with the Student Union suggesting that they use some of their funds to invest in increasing student social space. When challenged about the note about £1,299.26 miscellaneous income received in earlier periods which went unrecorded and was subsequently recorded in 2020/21, the College Accountant advised that this was due to an accounting oversight a number of years ago rectified when posted to the new accounting system.

The Committee **noted** the information provided and recommended the Student Union accounts for approval.

6. Management and Strategic

(i) Principal's Update

The Principal presented his report highlighting the following:

- The October Open Event was a success and this success was replicated at the November event. Post-COVID, it was decided to maintain the staggered arrival times to allow an even flow of visitors over the evening making it a more enjoyable experience for all. Over 1,000 families were welcomed over the two events and feedback was very positive;
- Whilst not the final funded number, it was likely the student number was 1700 which represented an increase of over 100 compared with last year. This would suggest additional funding of £500,000 for next academic year;
- There were concerns about Level 2 attendance and behaviour and the disproportionate amount of pastoral time to respond and support these students;
- Public buses had struggled to respond to and accommodate the increasing number of students accessing services this year. Whilst the Council had promised increased capacity, they had not received the expected levelling up funding. Parents and students had various frustrations from the delay in issuing bus passes and buses, seemingly at capacity, not stopping to pick up students. The deadline for applying for bus passes was out of touch with the educational marketplace where young people are not making final decisions about where they will study until they receive GCSE results. The College has contacted local MPs and County Councillors with a view to addressing concerns and improving capacity both for this year and to respond to further growth in the cohort next academic year.

In response to questions it was agreed that details about the numbers of students using the Martley service will be shared with Paul Cumming so that he can raise this in his capacity as Parish Councillor. It was advised that whilst the College undertakes tracking of the number of students applying by school to those who enrol, it was more difficult to look at those who attend an Open Event who subsequently then enrol.

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

(ii) Personnel Update

The Principal presented the personnel update and the following points were highlighted:

- The teaching staff FTE had increased from 70 to 72.6. Given the 26% increase in student numbers over a four-year period, staffing numbers seemed about right and were back to what seemed a sustainable level after decreasing to a low of 50 FTE;
- Support staff FTE has also increased with investment in appointing one additional tutor, an additional Head of Year and a new Mental Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator. There had not been the same level of increase as seen in teaching staff numbers as support staff functions did not necessarily increase in line with student numbers, e.g. finance roles;
- Significant time continued to be invested in implementing the new HR system;
- Feedback from those attending interviews was extremely positive which reflects well on the efforts of the HR Officer and Assistant.

In response to questions, it was advised that the new HR system had self-service capability and would allow staff to book holiday, access payslips etc via the system replacing current paper-based processes.

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

(iii) Cyber Security Report

The committee received the report on cyber security and noted that a school in Hereford was recently the victim of a cyber attack. The fact that work to make the network more robust had been completed ahead of schedule was viewed as impressive by governors, they requested to see the findings of the recent penetration testing. The contents of the report were **noted**.

7. Governance

(i) Clerk's Update Report

The Clerk presented her report and noted that:

- The current governor vacancies had been advertised and it was looking hopeful that a new parent and student governor would be appointed. The proposal for succession planning given the current LGB Chair would step down at the end of this term were outlined;
- Governors can access SFCA training specifically aimed at governors and the College had purchased online NSPCC safeguarding training which governors were required to complete.

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

8. Annual Reports

(i) Equality Annual Report 2021-22 and Equality Policy

The Vice Principal (Progression) presented the Equality annual report and the following was noted:

- Progress in raising the profile of equality matters and events with students was pleasing with half-termly activities planned, most recently in celebration of Black History Month;
- Two volunteer Chaplains visit College each week and the College continues to have an identified prayer and meditation room although it needed innovative timetabling this year given the pressure on rooms;
- The LGBTQ+ group this year was popular and students are enthusiastic and engaged;
- Students could now add their preferred pronouns on the Portal which has been a development this year;
- Former student Kat had returned to speak with students and will do some work on decolonising the curriculum with staff.

The Committee **noted** the contents of the annual report and **approved** the Equality Policy without change.

(ii) Exams Report

The Vice Principal (Progression) presented the Exams Report and the following was noted:

- The exams team had worked hard to prepare, not only for the main exam series, but also for November resits and mock exams which involve students having an exam timetable and requires invigilators;
- Feedback from JCQ Inspectors was positive and the response of the team in dealing with issues around late CTEC results in the summer was impressive;
- It is notable that all entries to exam boards were made on time given that the financial penalties for late entry are so punitive;
- 290 students required access arrangements in the summer, more than ever before. Exams have liaised with Learning Support to ensure that the College can support students as required and have had to make increased use of invigilators to meet demand.

The Committee **noted** the information provided.

(iii) Digital Strategy Policy

The Principal presented the report produced by the Senior Leader for ILT Strategy and the following was noted:

- There had been significant investment in IT including the roll out of laptops for teaching staff which would be extended to support staff this year. Feedback from teachers was positive in relation to improving work practice;
- Improving the Wi-Fi had been problematic and a parts delivery is awaited;
- Consideration was being given to bringing the College's ILT Strategy in line with local skills needs and finding opportunities for students to gain experience of using Office 365 to support students in entering the workplace and perhaps more so for students looking at apprenticeships. The Vice Principal (Progression) will report back on progress with this.

The Committee requested that the policy be shared in full but **approved** changes to the policy as outlined in the summary document.

9. Property

The Principal presented the updated Property Strategy and noted the following:

- In preparing to submit a Condition Improvement Fund bid, it has been recommended that the College rename the Property Strategy to an Estates Strategy. An Estates Vision is also needed and this will be presented to the LGB for consideration and approval;
- The CIF bid is in relation to upgrading the fire resistance of walls between classrooms and corridors and replacing fire screens with a fire rated wall. This is a two-year project given that a significant amount of the work would need to be completed in holiday periods;
- Quattro are also preparing a premises development plan so that any future bids for funding form part of an overall strategy.

The Committee **approved** the renaming of this to the Estates Strategy and **noted** the information provided.

10. Health & Safety

(i) Health & Safety Update and Accident Report

The Clerk presented the health and safety update and accident report and the following points were noted:

- The College had responded to the actions identified by H&W Fire Service and the action plan was included for consideration;

- The fire alarm was deliberately activated resulting in an unplanned evacuation. The building was evacuated in good time and, in response to a concern about the speed with which students can exit via the turnstile in the recreational area, the Cafeteria Manager has been issued with key to open the double gate;
- Two sporting accidents needed to be reported to RIDDOR given they involved fractures to parts of the body which were not fingers, thumbs or toes;
- There were no identifiable trends in the accident figures and these were in-line with pre-COVID numbers.

The contents of the report was noted.

(Phil Douce left the meeting at 6.53pm).

(ii) Educational Visits Co-ordinator Report

The EVC report was **noted**. In response to questions it was noted that students were more reluctant to engage with trips further to the pandemic. The committee requested details on the numbers participating in trips and visits and comparative data.

11. Closing Standing Items

- (i) Risk Management: No additional issues were identified that were not already including in the risk register.
- (ii) Impact: The committee’s consideration of concerns around transport and scrutiny of the College’s response to cyber security and improving digital skills were noted.
- (iii) Any Urgent Business: No additional urgent business was identified.
- (iv). Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, 15th February 2023

The meeting finished at 7.00pm

Signed:.....
Matthew Adams (Chair)

Date:.....

FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE: ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MEETING ON 9TH NOVEMBER 2022

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
FRC/09.11.22/6(i)	Share details of the 309 Martley service with Paul Cumming.	JJP	November 2022	
FRC/09.11.22/6(iii)	Request and share with governors the penetration testing report in relation to cyber security.	JJP	November 2022	
FRC/09.11.22/8(iii)	Share the Digital Strategy Policy with the committee in full.	JJP	November 2022	
FRC/09.11.22/10(ii)	Quantify the number of students participating in trips and visits against any comparative data.	CR	February 2023	

ACTION POINTS CARRIED FORWARD

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
FRC/25.05.22/7(iv)	Update progress against the current equality objectives.	SG/LIM	November 2023	
FRC/10.11.21/8(i)	Identify opportunity for link visit to focus on the College's equality and diversity provision.	JJP	February 2022	

ACTION POINTS COMPLETED

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
FRC/25.05.22/7(iv)	Feedback on whether previous equality objectives were achieved.	SG/LIM	November 2022	✓

* Denotes changes.