

**Governors Present:** Sam Lifford (Vice-Chair), Matthew Adams, James Adnett, Paul Cumming, Phil Douce, Tom Gregory, Alex Gwinn, Beth Hallam, Kelvin Hard, Sam Moran, Sheena Payne-Lunn, Wendy Pickess and Ed Senior.

**In Attendance:**

Jane Jenkins	(Vice Principal Designate)
Jo Payne	(Clerk to the Local Governing Body)
Sheila Boniface	(Vice-Chair of the Heart of Mercia Trust as an observer – arrived at 5.48pm)
Marion Hawkins	(Trustee of the Heart of Mercia Trust as an observer)

## 1. Appointment and Apologies

Apologies were received from Sean Devlin, Rowan Boyle, Duncan Clark and Caroline Shaw.

The Clerk advised that the Curriculum and Quality Committee had recommended for approval the following appointments:

- Rowan Boyle as external Governor, Safeguarding named governor and member of the Finance and Resources Committee for a four year period;
- Sam Moran as external Governor, SEND link governor and member of the Finance and Resources Committee for a four year period.

The Local Governing Body **approved the appointments** as recommended and formally welcomed Sam to the meeting.

## 2. Opening Standing Items

- (i) Paul Cumming declared that he was a governor at The Chantry School who are mentioned in the Trust CEO's update.
- (ii) An item of confidential business would be raised at the end of the meeting with staff and student governors required to withdraw.
- (iii) No items of urgent business were identified.

## 3. Minutes

### (i) Minutes of the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023

The minutes were confirmed as an accurate record and an update provided on the action points. The following points were noted:

- In relation to raising concerns about cycle safety, the Principal advised that the City Council have been in contact with the College about a proposed bridleway which would require donation of some College land. The Principal advised that as the College land was a Trust asset, it was ultimately their decision, however he felt that any development of the College land needed to be considered in a co-ordinated way.

### (ii) Confidential minute of the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023

The confidential minute was confirmed as an accurate record by those eligible to view it.

## 4. Strategic

### (i) Heart of Mercia Update

The update report from the Trust CEO and data in relation to retention and attendance at Trust institutions was noted. In response to challenge

about the College data, the Principal advised that:

- There is a link between higher prior attainment and better outcomes in terms of completing and achieving on courses. The College's prior attainment is lower than that of KEDST;
- Retention was lower last year than has been the case in recent years hence a direct impact on funding for next academic year;
- The College attempts to find out why a student leaves in-year although this is soft data with many citing an apprenticeship when it is more likely they will obtain employment;
- Attendance continues to be a concern, however, this had improved in the last two half-terms which was attributed to the concerted efforts of tutors and Heads of Year.

The Local Governing Body requested clarity as to why retention data would be reported from September when the data is not valid until the 6 week point.

(ii) Accountability Agreement

The Clerk advised that sixth form colleges and FE colleges were required to produce an accountability agreement, endorsed by their corporation and shared with the ESFA. As a 16-19 academy, the College was not required to complete this, but it seemed could practice to produce this in anticipation that it will be required in future years. The College accountability agreement follows the template shared by the ESFA and contains much of the information previously considered by governors.

The Accountability Agreement was **approved**.

**5. Finance and Resources**

(i) Finance & Resources Committee meeting minutes: 24.05.23

The Chair of the Committee presented the minutes and noted a discussion around the, as yet unconfirmed, arrangements to repay the Trust investment in the Science Centre project and concern that interest might be charged on the 'internal loan'.

In relation to the challenge around higher staff turnover than has been typical and difficulties in recruiting staff who had attended Oxbridge or Russell Group universities, it was asked whether the College might consider developing links with such universities. It was noted that the College does have good links with the University of Worcester, the local Teaching Alliance and provides a good programme of support for new teachers.

The Local Governing Body **received** the Committee minutes.

(iii) GDPR Annual Report

The Principal presented the report noting the number of subject access and FOI requests in the year to date. The Local Governing Body noted the contents of the report.

**6. Quality Assurance**

(i) Curriculum & Quality Committee minutes: 17.05.23

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

- The concerns register was reviewed and there was discussion about whether it was the right thing for students to be banned from County Hall grounds and perhaps instead any poor behaviour should be challenged. Governors were supportive of the decision to make the Wildmore Park out of bounds given the reports of anti-social behaviour and the concerns raised.

There was a request to outline the strategies being employed to improve attendance. It was explained that currently this involved focusing on the worst attenders and, where appropriate, challenging their place at College. There is a push in relation to year 1 students particularly where attendance was not as expected and performance in the end of year exam was poor.

The Local Governing Body **received** the Committee minutes.

## 7. Stakeholder Voice

The link visit reports shared since the last meeting were considered and the following was noted:

- There had been further safeguarding link visits. In relation to the identified need to raise awareness of Prevent, it was noted that the intention was to focus on local safeguarding risks to make it more meaningful. It was noted that student awareness of Prevent and how to report increased in the SPOC surveys from 74% in the spring term to 88% this term.
- Sheena Payne-Lunn referred to her inaugural visit as the Mental Health and Wellbeing link governor. She noted that she had been impressed with the clear focus on student wellbeing and commitment to staff undertaking mental health first aid training etc. In relation to staff wellbeing, the Vice Principal outlined a number of small things the College was looking to introduce to attempt to improve wellbeing, e.g, making picnic blankets available so that staff could make use of the outdoor space.
- Tom Gregory provided a verbal update on a visit to review the College IT networks. He had found systems to be robust with a clear strategy and identified plans to implement this.

## 8. Policy Reviews

### (i) Emergency Response Plan

It was noted that the Emergency Response Plan is up to date and requires no current change. It was, however, noted that the Trust was looking to implement a Business Continuity Plan which includes what is featured in the Emergency Response Plan, but also the approach in the short term of responding to the loss of key personnel. It is the intention to create a College Business Continuity Plan which will be shared with governors in due course.

### (ii) Risk Management Policy

The policy was **approved** without change.

### (iii) Trust Policies Update

The Clerk updated the Local Governing Body on the latest policies to be approved by the Trust identifying which were umbrella policies and those that replace local policies.

## 9. Closing Standing Items

### (i) Chair's Action: None.

### (ii) Health and Safety: None.

(iv) Risk Management

The Principal presented the updated risk register noting the following:

- The CIF bid for fire resistance works was unsuccessful and the College would be unable to fund the work with the current financial situation, however, it might be something the Trust consider using devolved capital to support;
- The loss of one Vice Principal and appointment of a new senior leader was identified as something to be monitored and challenged by governors;
- The progression of students remains a focus to ensure this is aspirational;
- A new risk in relation to artificial intelligence has been added and an outline of the action the College has taken so far provided;
- Industrial action remains a threat with little sign of the matter being resolved;
- The risk of not being able to replace key staff has been increased in terms of residual risk given that the College has had to readvertise the MIS Manager role. Given that this links to funding returns etc, it is important to bring this to governors attention.

In response to challenge the following was noted:

- The College does promote the success of former students but will continue to identify and explore opportunities for alumni to visit College and speak to students;
- The support that the College provides for pre-admissions university tests will be shared more widely with students;
- Consideration will be given to issuing guidance to parents on AI and the associated benefits and issues with its use.

The updated risk register was noted with a request that changes from previous versions be clearly identified.

(iv) Impact:

(v) Any Urgent Business:

An item of confidential business was tabled with staff and student governors excused.

(vi) Date of Next Meeting: The Local Governing Body **approved** the meeting schedule for 2023-24.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm.

Signed: .....

Sam Lifford (Vice-Chair)

Date: .....

### LGB ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM MEETING ON 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2023

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
LGB/06.06.23/4i	Feedback to Trust on whether reporting on September retention has any validity.	JJP	June 2023	
LGB/06.06.23/9iv	Issue guidance to parents on the benefits and risks of AI.	EYS	September 2023	

### ACTION POINTS BROUGHT FORWARD

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
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### ACTION POINTS COMPLETED

Report Reference	Action Point	Person Responsible	Completion	Check
<b>LGB/01.03.23/5i</b>	Provide an update on the Trust's response to funding challenges.	PC	June 2023	✓
<b>LGB/01.03.23/8ii</b>	Raise concerns about cycle safety along routes to College with the Highways department of the County Council.	EYS	ASAP	✓

\* Denotes amended action point.