



Board of Governors

Minutes of the Board of Governors Meeting held on 23rd March 2016

THE MEETING OPENED WITH A PRAYER

Item 1- Members present:

Mike Sedgwick
Sr Bernadette Turtle IBVM
Denis Robson
Sr Anne McEvoy IBVM
Sr Patricia Goodstadt IBVM
John Gibbons
Ann Clynch
Angela Ralph
Tom McGee
Julian Skyrme
Niall Wright
Mary Heaney
Arthur Culshaw

Apologies were received from

John McNerney
Brian McNulty
John Gibbons [Parent Governor]
Sema Al-Attbi [Student Governor]
Reshma Amin [Student Governor]

Also in attendance:

Sean Gaughan [Finance Manager]
Celia Wallace [Clerk to the Governors]

Item 2- Declarations of Interest

Niall Wright declared an interest as a Director of AA Projects.
Sr Bernadette declared an interest in item 9 re: Institute Building

Item 3- Items of a confidential nature

It was agreed that any items of a confidential nature relating to staff, finances or the operation of the college would be taken in a confidential part of the meeting.

Item 4- Minutes of the Governing Body meeting of 10th December 2015.

- [i] The minutes were approved as a correct record
- [ii] The minutes were authorised for publication in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government.

Item 5 - Matters arising from the minutes of 10th December 2015.

There were no matters arising from the minutes of 10th December 2015.

Item 6 – Minutes of Committees and matters arising

- [a] (i) Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee of 30th November 2015 were noted.
 - (ii) Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee of 25th January 2016 were noted.
 - (iii) Minutes of the Audit Committee of 2nd December 2015 were noted.
 - (iv) Minutes of the Standards Committee of 9th December 2015 were noted.
- [b] The publication of the minutes was authorised in accordance with the College's Instrument and Articles of Government.

Item 6(iii) – in response to a previous query from Mary Heaney regarding the change in wording for the Regularity Audit from 'reasonable' to 'limited' assurance, it was confirmed by the Auditors that this was only a change in the technical wording and was not a negative judgement. The same level of assurance was given and the same level of audit had been carried out.

Item 7 – Principal's Report on Performance against Targets set in the Strategic Plan

The Principal took the meeting through the report highlighting the salient points:

- 2.4 - Celebrating students' achievements and success in a diverse range of areas
- 2.5 - Oxbridge Applications: 16 successful applicants
- 2.6 - Medicine Applications: 26 students holding offers to date
- 2.8 - Learning Walks: two learning walks had taken place with overwhelmingly positive feedback. Governors discussed the desirability of their involvement in the learning walks and it was agreed that this was an operational matter and that a better option to involve Governors could be via Enrichment activities and College Events involving staff and students. Governors do need to continue to know strengths and areas for development.
- 2.9 - Chaplaincy Update: Romero Trust
- 2.10 - Music Activities: Easter Concert
- 2.12 - Duke of Edinburgh: Invitation to Buckingham Palace
- 2.14 - Hall Activity
- 2.17 - Debate Club
- 2.18 - Ogden Trust
- 2.22 - CRY: large scale screening on student
- 2.24 - Visit by Professor Michael Wood: Three lectures to Classical Civilisation and History students.
- 2.25 - ARTiculation: student representation at this prestigious event
- 2.26 - Photography Competition Winner: ESRC
- 3.11 - Working with Manchester Grammar School: Mandarin Teaching Project
- 3.13 - Teaching School Activities: St Matthew's Maths Project

Inspection of Catholic Ethos and Protocol

The Principal reported back on an issue that had come to light at a recent ACVIC conference regarding the recent change in the inspection of Catholic Sixth Form Colleges in England. Since 2001 there has been a Protocol in place, sitting within the Common Inspection Framework which has accommodated the inclusion of a nominated inspector (trained by the

inspecting agency) in the Ofsted inspection team. It has been the responsibility of that nominated inspector to inspect religious education and collective worship. This has offered moderation and standardisation of inspection practices and judgements across the numerous dioceses in which the Sixth Form Colleges are located. It has meant that any parent or student looking at the Ofsted inspection of a Catholic college can see reflected within the Ofsted report, how the Catholic mission permeates across the work of leadership and management, teaching and learning and personal development and welfare.

Following something of a “straw poll” across the dioceses, extracts of the feedback shared with us by the CES would suggest that some diocesan representatives are broadly in favour of rolling out a Section 48 model (as adopted in schools) to the Catholic Sixth Form Colleges. Salford Diocese (home diocese of five of the fourteen RC Sixth Form Colleges in Greater Manchester) supports the retention of the current Protocol which includes a Catholic nominated inspector within the Ofsted inspection team.

It is the considered view of the Catholic Principals of the English Sixth Form Colleges that the system of deploying a nominated inspector within the Ofsted team is a fair and rigorous way in which to moderate judgments about the teaching of RE and the provision of collective worship in the Catholic Colleges, albeit with a revision of the standing Protocol. Imposing a schools based system on Colleges is fraught with anomalies. It would also offer little or no opportunity to have spiritual development included in any inspection judgements because of the anomalies between the Schools’ and the FE and Skills’ Handbooks.

Letters from all the catholic sixth form principals have been sent out to the Diocesan Directors of Education, Paul Barber (CES) and Paul Joyce (Deputy Director, FE & Skills, Ofsted) expressing concerns and ACVIC have taken legal advice.

Item 8 - Finance

(a) Management accounts for the period up to February 2016.

The Finance Manager took the meeting through the management accounts highlighting the salient points. These had been scrutinised by the F&GP committee at the meeting of the 21st March 2016

- There was a surplus against a budgeted deficit.
- Payroll costs remain below budget.
- Retention figures are very slightly below the figure for last year
- The financial situation remains healthy despite the funding cutbacks.

These management accounts had been recommended to the Governing Body for approval by the F&GP. The accounts were approved.

(b) Mid-Year Financial Report – Performance against Financial Objectives for the year.

The Finance Manager took the meeting through the report highlighting the salient points. He reported that all objectives were being achieved.

(c) Update on Funding for 2016/17

The Finance Manager reported the following funding allocation for 2016/17 excluding the funding for bursaries and school meals.

- Lagged funding for the extra 104 students on roll amounting to £309K
- Reduction in funding of £284K due to the reduced formula funding
- High needs student allocation reduced from 90 to 60.

This has resulted in an overall reduction in funding despite the additional students.

Item 9 – Institute Building

The Finance Manager reported that a purchase price has been agreed. The solicitors were dealing with the various leases which need to be sorted out with the Land Registry. It was hoped that, if approved, the building might be available in May to prepare it for use for the next academic year.

The Governing Body considered that this would be a valuable addition to the College estate, providing extra facilities and gave formal approval to proceed with the purchase

Item 10 – Area Review/Academisation

The Principal reported that after the meeting of the 23rd March, the College adopted the option to express an interest, without prejudice, to become an academy as had been required at that time. At the same time the Catholic SFCs presented a paper proposing the collaboration that would continue and be built on. It was agreed that any proposed Academy would be a Single Academy Trust under the umbrella of LEEN and not a MAT. It was acknowledged that there could be VAT issues regarding buildings but, at this stage, this is only an option to consider. Ann Clynch will keep Governors informed after further Area Review meetings and it was agreed to meet again on the 11th May at 6pm.

Item 11 – Review of Risk Register

This had been an agenda item at the last meeting of the F&GP. The increased levels of risk & new risks have all been updated and highlighted. The Governors were satisfied that appropriate actions were being taken to mitigate the risks.

Item 12- Key Performance Indicators – Dashboard Update

The latest version of the dashboard was presented to the governors.

Item 13 - Strategic Objectives 2016/17

There was a lengthy and detailed discussion on the proposed strategic objectives. It was proposed that there should be no change. This was agreed.

Item 14 – The Ofsted Framework and the Role of Governors

It was agreed to defer this item for the next meeting

Item 15 - LEEN – this year’s value – TRUTH

Sr Bernadette gave a very insightful presentation on truth as understood by Mary Ward and through the eyes of Ignatian spirituality and the Gospel.

Item 16 – College Trips

[a] Sociology Trip to Paris – this trip had now been changed to Berlin in view of the increased safety concerns. Governors expressed the view that it would be a shame to curtail trips. Appropriate risk assessments would need to be carried out and Foreign Office advice heeded before a visit is approved by Governors. Bulk insurance for the cancellation of trips should be investigated and taken out if appropriate.

Item 17 – Student Update

Due to the absence of the Student Governors this item was deferred.

Item 17 – AOB

There was no other business.

The meeting closed with a prayer.