

**CARDINAL NEWMAN COLLEGE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

A meeting of the Governing Body was held at **4.00 p.m.** on **Wednesday 21 September 2016** in the **Conference Room** at the College.

Members present:

Richard Ainscough
Len Hampson
Charu Ainscough
Nick Burnham
John Calvert
Penny Dineen
Bob Eastwood
Peter Halpin
James Keen
Adrian Metcalf
Bill Noblet
Sue Richmond
Andrew Wygladala

Officers in attendance:

Bob Deed, Clerk
Justine Barlow, Vice Principal
Katie O'Reilly, Director of Corporate Resources
Paul Vaughan, Deputy Principal

MINUTES

1 Opening prayer

The meeting commenced with a prayer.

2 Welcome, introductions and apologies

Apologies were received from Matt Ainge, Connor Dwyer, Father Luiz Ruscillo, Helen Seechurn and Peter Towers.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Friday 24 June and Wednesday 29 June 2016 were accepted as a correct record.

5 Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the previous meetings which were not covered by the agenda.

6 Governance: calendar, committees membership and terms of reference

The Clerk introduced the documents in the context of the Committee restructure. In response to a query about the workload of the new Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee, the Chair highlighted that the Committee would avoid duplication and recognise overlaps in cross-cutting themes. The Principal observed that the new Committee structure reflected the allocation of responsibilities in the Senior Management Team and matched the framework which worked well at Carmel College.

The Chair assured Governors that the governance structure would be kept under review. He also noted that a comprehensive review of Committee terms of reference was planned for this term.

The Governing Body asked about the linkages between finance and staffing. The Principal provided assurances on this and noted that the staff appointments were operational matters with the monitoring of the staffing budget being a governance role handled by the Governing Body and the Finance and Premises Committee.

The Deputy Chair asked for clarification of the membership of the Remuneration Committee. The Governing Body noted the importance of the Committee including the Deputy Chair given his role in the Principal's appraisal process.

The Governing Body agreed:

- **The proposed meeting calendar.**
- **The proposed committee composition subject to inclusion of Deputy Chair on the Remuneration Committee.**
- **The draft interim terms of reference for the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee and the Remuneration Committee.**

7 Principal's report including update on enrolment and Area Review

The Principal was delighted to report the latest excellent exam results. He noted the difficulty of analysing the results as a result of examinations reform. The College has raised these issues with the value added consultancy who produce the ALPS value added scores. While ALPS are now going to be annually "re-benched", it is recognised that comparability will be affected until the end of the decade.

The Principal outlined the work which had been undertaken investigating the A* performance. He noted that while the College was below the national average for A*, the College outperformed the expectation based on qualifications on entry.

The Principal noted that an increased proportion of the College's students were choosing only three AS Levels. The Governing Body asked whether this might affect students applying to university. The Principal noted that the College was monitoring the responses of universities. He noted that the College is encouraging students to take an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) in addition to three AS Levels. The Principal highlighted that students with higher GCSE grades could opt for four AS Levels if appropriate. The Student Governor outlined his initial experiences of the EPQ programme and noted how university often welcomed the qualification. The Principal noted the College's success in terms of EPQ grades.

The Principal explained that the College was pleased with the rise in passes in GCSE Maths and English. He noted that the College was disappointed with developments affecting Level 2 BTEC vocational qualifications. He explained that the changes in the qualifications were impacting on pass rates. He informed Governors that the College was both altering the delivery model and raising entry qualifications. The Teaching Staff Governor noted the challenges faced by many of the Level 2 qualifications but who benefited by the opportunity offered by taking the qualification at the College.

The Principal noted that the College was Outstanding/Excellent in terms of ALPS value added and was positioned as the fifth in terms of English colleges.

The Governing Body asked about destinations. The Principal confirmed that this would be reported at the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee.

The Principal noted that the College was expected to achieve its targeted growth in numbers. It was noted that this was against a demographic downturn. There was a discussion about social and study space in the context of growth. The Student Governor outlined the distribution of students in and around the College with the concentration of students in particular areas. The Principal explained the College's attempts to re-orientate the College with the closure of the main gates for much of the day.

The successful enrolment arrangements, including advice and guidance, were outlined by a Governor who was present at the College during one of the enrolment days. She commended the staff involved.

The Chair asked about the ability of the College to absorb further growth. The Principal outlined discussions with local stakeholders in terms of potential sites. He observed that the ALPS consultancy found that larger sixth form colleges were often the most successful in terms of outcomes.

The Principal noted the growth in admissions from partner schools even while some of the cohorts have reduced.

With the Area Review, the Principal noted that the documentation had been submitted to the Area Review team. He also outlined developments in the local post-16 landscape. In response to a question about the implications of proposals around grammar schools nationally, the Principal noted that in Lancashire there did not appear to be an environment conducive to grammar schools with sixth forms.

8 Update on Skills Funding Agency allocation and adult education provision

The Principal outlined that discussions with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) seeking to transfer the College's adult education allocation to Preston's College. He noted that there had been delays at the SFA in considering this.

9 Draft Strategic Plan 2016-19

The Principal introduced the Strategic Plan. He stressed that the Plan was aimed to be a concise working document aimed at shaping the College's growth. He noted that the Plan was intended to replicate the success of the previous three-year plan.

The Governing Body asked at how the Strategic Plan meshed with the financial forecast. The Director of Corporate Resources confirmed that the Plan was consistent with and supported by the Financial Plan.

The Deputy Chair asked about smart and measurable targets on quality. The Principal highlighted the core targets in the document and agreed with the Deputy Chair's suggestion that the document be shared with the College's critical friend who as an experienced inspector might usefully comment.

The Governing Body resolved to approve the draft Strategic Plan 2016-19 subject to consultation with the College's critical friend.

10 College finance update

The Director of Corporate Resources noted that the expected outturn was close to the budget. She noted that the College had not received any in-year funding unlike the previous year. She also outlined the various pressure on pay costs but noted that the College still had a healthy pay:income ratio.

The Principal noted that the main reason why the College was “good” rather than “outstanding” due to the College’s heavy investment in buildings over the last two years.

11 Property strategy update

The Director of Corporate Resources introduced the Property strategy update. She confirmed that the agenda should note that the item was for “discussion” rather than “decision”.

The Principal explained the costs and complications of buying and converting the Presbytery for use by the College including offices and teaching space. The building was currently being leased from the Diocese.

12 Health & Safety Annual Report

The Director of Corporate Resources introduced the Health & Safety Annual Report. The Governing Body noted the report.

13 Safeguarding Annual Report

The Principal explained how the Directors of Students were planning to develop the reporting of safeguarding. He noted that the College now used the CEDAR system to track pastoral issues and proactively used achievement tutors to support students. The Principal noted that there might be issues of comparability with previous year’s statistics with improvements in capturing medical issues and tracking counselling support.

The Principal noted that the pastoral system was working well with the team of achievement tutors. He did observe that colleges were facing the rising incidence of mental health. The College has invested in staff training on these issues.

The Governing Body asked about e-safety, bullying and drugs. The Principal outlined how the College was responding including induction sessions with new students and appropriate disciplinary measures. The Director of Corporate Resources explained how the College was working with the other agencies including the police.

[Penny Dineen and Andrew Wygladala left the meeting.]

14 Higher Education Complaints Procedures

The Clerk noted that an updated version of the covering paper had been uploaded to the Governors’ website. A paper copy was available for Governors at the meeting.

The Vice Principal noted that the Quality Assurance Agency initial review pointed to the need for the College to have a full suite of Higher Education Complaints documents considered by the Senior Management Team, approved by Governors and consistent with Middlesex University procedures. She outlined the draft documents and the processes involved.

The Chair asked whether the documents needed to be approved by Middlesex University. The Vice Principal noted that this was not required but the documents met with Middlesex University requirements.

The Governing Body resolved to approve the Higher Education Complaints Procedures.

15 Determination of any items to be treated as Confidential

There were no items deemed to be Confidential.

16 Date and time of the next meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the Board of Governors is scheduled to be held at 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday 7 December 2016.