

CARDINAL NEWMAN COLLEGE

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

A meeting of the Board of Governors of the College was held at **4.00 p.m.** on **Wednesday 9th December 2015** in the **Conference Room** at the **College**.

Present:

Richard Ainscough (Chair)
Len Hampson (Vice-Chair)
Matthew Ainge
Charu Ainscough
Nick Burnham
Peter Halpin
Martha Horton
Adrian Metcalf
Bill Noblet
Sue Richmond
Father Luiz Ruscillo
Helen Seechurn
Father Tim Sullivan
Peter Towers
Andrew Wygladala
Joe McNamara (Clerk to the Governing Body)

Officers in attendance:

Justine Barlow
Paul Vaughan

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from:

Hannah Ashton
John Calvert
Zulekha Dala
Penny Dineen
Katie O'Reilly

The Chair opened the meeting with a prayer

Prior to the formal commencement of the Board meeting, members received a powerpoint presentation from the Careers Manager, Faye Mawdesley on Student Destinations.

Members considered the following slides and explanations from the Careers Manager:

- Level 2 Destinations
- Year 13 Destinations
- Progression to Higher Education (HE)
- Additional Higher Education data
- Russell Group acceptances
- Most popular university choices for CNC students 2015
- Students' most popular Higher Education course choices

- Apprenticeship/Employment destinations
- The year ahead – key dates

In answer to Governor queries, the following points were recorded:

- that for financial and related reasons there was a major trend towards students studying at Universities nearer to their homes;
- that students were taking courses of study at University that were clearly linked to future career prospects.

On behalf of members, the Chair warmly thanked Faye for her informative presentation.

MINUTES

Members were reminded that if any member of the Board of Governors has any personal or pecuniary or related interest, direct or indirect, in any contract, proposed contract, or other matter, that member must disclose the existence of that interest to the Board and shall withdraw from the meeting while the contract, proposed contract, or other matter is under consideration by the Board.

No such interests were disclosed.

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on Wednesday 23rd September 2015 were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair (file copy entered).

2. SECTION 'A' ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1/A/BG(12.15) COLLEGE EVENTS: INVITATIONS TO GOVERNORS

Received: DOCUMENT 1/A/BG(12.15) (file copy entered)

2/A/BG(12.15) R.E. AND CHAPLAINCY REPORT

Received: DOCUMENT 2/A/BG(12.15) (file copy entered)

3. SECTION 'B ITEMS

1/B/BG(12.15)

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(any such matters were included as main agenda items)

GOVERNANCE

2/B/BG(12.15)

AREA BASED REVIEWS: UPDATE REPORT

Received: DOCUMENT 2/B/BG(12.15) (file copy entered) and oral report from the Principal.

Members noted the following key points, inter alia

- that the Area Based Review process has begun in all of the First Wave Areas with those in Birmingham and Manchester receiving most attention;
- that issues emerging include the understanding, confirmed by the Catholic Education Service after discussion with the EFA, that Catholic Sixth Form Colleges can only merge with fellow Catholic institutions though this does not preclude other forms of collaboration;
- that there has been much discussion around the possibility of College Governing Bodies ignoring the recommendations of an Area Based Review. The prevailing view appears to be that this could be possible though only for Colleges that are proven to be financially sustainable and if the funding agencies do not withdraw funding. The Sixth Form Colleges Association are of the opinion that many Sixth Form Colleges may not be required to merge but that virtually all will have some change e.g. curriculum adjustments, becoming an Academy or entering into co-operative arrangements;
- that the results of the Comprehensive Spending Review announced on Wednesday 25th November were overall more positive for the FE sector than was expected. The national funding rate will remain fixed at £4000 per student though cuts will still be applied to discretionary funding above this level. In addition, Formula Protection Funding is to be withdrawn, probably on a phased basis. However, members should be clear that Government policy is still developing and the proposals still constitute significant real terms financial challenges for Colleges. In addition, of course, operating

costs will continue to increase and nationally available student numbers are expected to reduce until about 2020;

- that the Chancellor also announced that Sixth Form Colleges would now be able to apply for Academy status and, if successful would become VAT exempt. Members were advised of the likelihood that there will not be an automatic right to become an Academy as there must be wider educational benefit to the local area such as collaboration with local schools. A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) with local schools would demonstrate this and Horizontal Mats, a group of Colleges, would also be a possibility.
- that the Area Based Review steering group would have to approve an application to become an Academy. Very significantly for a College like Cardinal Newman, it is believed that successful applicants might have their debt cleared as part of the conversion process;
- that for Area Review purposes, Lancashire will be split into two areas, Lancashire (Pennines) will be in Wave 3 which is scheduled to start in April 2016 and Lancashire (Coastal) in Wave 4 to start in September 2016. Clarification as to which group Cardinal Newman College will fall into is awaited.

With regard to Cardinal Newman's preparatory work for the Areas Based Review process, staff and governor representatives have been attending all external meetings and conferences as appropriate. In addition, the Governing Body Area Based Reviews Working Party has already met on three occasions and the joint SMT/Union Standing Committee has met once. The clear view of the unions is that their preferred outcome would be for the College's status to remain as it is. The unions would also like a joint meeting with the Board's Working Party to be set up early in the New Year. A meeting with a representative of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership has been arranged for 15th December 2015.

Members were also advised that as there is only one other Catholic Sixth Form College which is likely to be in Cardinal Newman's review group, St. Mary's Blackburn, College representatives have met with representatives of St. Mary's to share data and explore co-operation opportunities.

Members were further advised that the Chair of the Board of Governors and the College Principal attended an informal meeting of all Chairs and Principals of Lancashire Colleges which was organised at the request of

the Chair of Governors of Blackpool in the Fylde College as a means of introduction.

In conclusion, members were informed that the Lancashire Colleges Group, of which Cardinal Newman is a member, has proposed that a 'Shadow' Area Review process should be established. This would include the appointment of a consultant and the collection and sharing of data in line with the demands of an Area Review. The College is considering its position with regard to its involvement in this proposal in the light of the outcome of the Comprehensive Spending Review and developing Government Further Education policies.

Members noted the proposed next preparatory steps for Cardinal Newman College:

- detailed analysis of the financial implications upon the College of the Comprehensive Spending Review, consideration of future College strategy and detailed preparation for the upcoming Area Review;
- clarification of Cardinal Newman's view on the potential for any form of collaboration with St. Mary's College, Blackburn;
- to embark on a detailed analysis of the impact and process of becoming an Academy, including an exploration of different models;
- utilisation of information and data from the first Area Based Reviews to inform the College's approach.

In answer to Governor queries, the following points were recorded:

- that Colleges could form part of a Multi Academy Trust with local schools;
- that Cardinal Newman would prefer to retain its BTEC provision which is an integral part of its ethos;
- that the College Trade Union view was that there should, if at all possible, be no change to the College's present status.

In conclusion, members were advised that at the Senior Management 'Away Day' on Friday 11th December 2015 matters for discussion would include future financial models, future student numbers and the impact upon space utilisation.

3/B/BG(12.15)

**COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE
COLLEGE AND OF COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD**

Received: DOCUMENT 3/B/BG(12.15) (file copy entered) and oral report from the Clerk to the Governing Body.

New Foundation Governor

Members supported the proposal from the Search Committee and would recommend to the Diocese the appointment of Mr. R Eastwood as a new Foundation Governor.

Action: Clerk to the Governing Body

Committee membership

Members confirmed the following recommendations from the Search Committee:

- The appointment of Father Luiz Ruscillo as Vice-Chair of the Staffing and Remuneration Committee.
- The appointment of Adrian Metcalf as Chair of the Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee.
- The transfer of Len Hampson from membership of the Audit Committee to membership of the Finance and Premises Committee.

Higher Education, Link Governor

It was agreed that the Chair should contact Dr. Penny Dineen to see if she would be prepared to act as Link Governor for Higher Education developments.

Action: Chair of the Governing Body

4/B/BG(12.15)

**COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN (2013-2016): UPDATE REPORT
ON PROGRESS RELATED TO KEY OBJECTIVES/INDICATORS**

Received: DOCUMENT 4/B/BG(12.15) (file copy entered) and oral report from the Principal.

Members received details related to four (4) Strategic Plan Priorities and noted, inter alia:

- that the College has held three very well attended Open Evenings with early initial application indications for 2016/17 looking promising. The College has currently received 771 applications compared with 349 on the same date for this year's applicants. Members were also pleased to note that the College has welcomed 29 Trainee Teachers to its first School Direct PGCE in partnership with Edge Hill University. The course has started very well with initial feedback from trainees and Edge Hill University being very positive;
- that ALPS have informed the College that it has been placed joint top of a national league table for value added over the last three years. Using the T score, ALPS preferred measure, the College is top with, we believe, Carmel College and Loreto College, all three being North Western Catholic Sixth Form Colleges;
- that staff morale as measured by the Annual Staff Survey placed the College in the top 10% of similar institutions in the sample;
- that the College has recently completed its annual Self-Assessment process. The reports cover all aspects of the student experience and the College's critical friend has provided a report in which he praises a rigorous process and comments on the outstanding provision he saw evidence of over the two-week SAR period;
- that the Comprehensive Spending Review has provided relatively positive news for College funding. The National Funding Rate is to remain at £4000 per student until 2020 though discretionary funding provided above this rate will be subject to cuts. Members were aware that this is still a significant real terms cut and that the College continues to focus on its long term financial sustainability.

5/B/BG(12.15)

**GOVERNANCE SELF- ASSESSMENT (SAR) 2015/16:
UPDATE REPORT**

Received: DOCUMENT 5/B/BG(12.15) (file copy entered) and oral report from the Clerk to the Governing Body.

Members were aware that the objectives and actions contained in the Report would be monitored at each meeting of the Search Committee and of the Board of Governors throughout the academic year.

6/B/BG(12.15)

RISK MANAGEMENT: UPDATE REPORT

Received: **DOCUMENT 6/B/BG(12.15)** (file copy entered).

Members noted that the only new risk that had been added since the summer related to additional funding and that this risk likelihood had been scaled back following the Autumn Statement announcement. Members considered the key risks and the actions being taken to address those risks.

Members were reminded that in future Committees of the Board of Governors would be receiving risk presentations from risk owners and SMT members with responsibility for the particular risks. The first such presentation was received by the Finance and Premises Committee at its meeting on 18th November 2015.

In answer to Governor queries, the following points were recorded:

- that Area Reviews would, in future, need to be added to the Risk Register;
- that with regard to the security of students and staff, particularly those moving between College sites, it had been decided to retain the services of College Wardens who would continue their security checks in any areas of concern;

7/B/BG(12.15)

BOARD ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK: ANNUAL UPDATE REPORT

Received: **DOCUMENT 7/B/BG(12.15)** (file copy entered) and oral report from the Chair of the Audit Committee.

Members were aware that in 2014/15 the College commissioned independent external reviews of areas where the Audit Committee had identified the value of additional assurance.

It is proposed that a similar approach be continued in 2015/16. In that connection, members considered the draft Assurance Plan, proposed reviews and potential changes in the year.

Agreed:

- that the areas of Safeguarding and Finance should have Assurance Reviews. The services of an external consultant would be sought to give further advice and assurance on Safeguarding issues.
- that the Assurance Plan be revisited mid-year in the light of the Area Review process and other emerging risks.

The Chair of the Audit Committee reminded Governors that if they had any specific concerns about risks, or risk assurance, they should contact him so that the matter could be considered further through the Audit Committee and the appropriate Lead Committee.

8/B/BG(12.15)

AUDIT COMMITTEE: ANNUAL REPORT TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Received: **DOCUMENT 8/B/BG(12.15)** (file copy entered) and oral report from the Chair of the Committee.

Agreed: to accept, with thanks, the Annual Report of the Audit Committee.

9/B/BG(12.15)

**SMT/GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE: 5/6 FEBRUARY 2016:
DRAFT CONFERENCE AGENDA**

Received: **DOCUMENT 9/B/BG(12.15)** (file copy entered).

Members considered the proposed Conference dates and agreed that this was too early bearing in mind likely developments relating to the Area Review process.

Agreed: that the proposed February 2016 Conference should be cancelled. Consideration of appropriate dates for the Conference would take place at the Board of Governors meeting scheduled to be held on Wednesday 16th March 2016.

FINANCE AND PREMISES

10/B/BG(12.15)

2014/15 FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

- (i) **Draft Year-End Accounts: 2014/15**
- (ii) **Group Draft Report and Financial Statements**
- (iii) **Newman Business: Draft Report and Financial Statements**

(iv) **External Auditor Completion Report**

Received: **DOCUMENTS 10/B(i)-(iv)/BG(12.15)** (file copies entered) and oral reports from the Chair of the Board and the College Principal.

Members were aware that the year-end accounts and accompanying documentation had been considered in detail at earlier meetings of the Audit and Finance and Premises Committees. The minutes of the meetings of those Committees would be received later at this meeting under agenda items 15/B (iii) and (v).

Members considered the accounts, the financial year statements, the audit summary, the Management Letter and Letters of Representation.

In answer to a Governor query on the increase in staffing costs, members were advised that this related in the main to the growth in student numbers and related curriculum demands.

Agreed: to support the recommendation from the Finance and Premises Committee and accept the 2014/15 Financial Year Statements, Audit Summary, the Management Letter and Letters of Representation and to ask the Chair of the Board and the College Principal to sign off the accounts on behalf of the Board of Governors at the end of this meeting.

11/B/BG(12.15)

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 31 OCTOBER 2015

Received: **DOCUMENT 11/B/BG(12.15)** (file copy entered).

Members were aware that these accounts had been considered in detail at the meeting of the Finance and Premises Committee held on 18th November 2015.

Comments and recommendations from that Committee were contained in the minutes of that meeting which would be received later at this meeting under agenda item 15/B(v).

Members considered the summary Income and Expenditure Account, the Current Ratio, the Cash Balance and the Balance Sheet.

In conclusion, members considered the appendices to the document viz:

- Capital Expenditure
- Cash Flow Forecast
- Treasury Management

12/B/BG(12.15)

PROPERTY STRATEGY: UPDATE REPORT

Received: **DOCUMENT 12/B/BG(12.15)** (file copy entered) and oral report from the Director of Corporate Resources.

Members were aware that the Property Strategy had been considered at the meeting of the Finance and Premises Committee held on 18th November 2015. Comments from that meeting are contained in the minutes of that meeting to be received later at this meeting of the Board under agenda item 15(v).

In answer to a Governor query, members were advised that the facilities in the new Fitness Suite would be available to members of the local community.

Members considered the documentation in detail and:

Agreed: **to support the recommendation of the Finance and Premises Committee and approve expenditure of the order of £250,00 in order to progress the Fitness Suite Project at St. Augustine's.**

MANAGEMENT

13/B/BG(12.15)

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Received: **DOCUMENT 13/B/BG(12.15)** (file copy entered) and oral report from the Principal.

Members noted the following points, inter alia:

- that the College has now completed its annual round of Self-Assessment Panels with the College's 'critical friend' praising the process and making some recommendations for improvement that will be shared with the Curriculum, Quality and Standards Committee. Members received details of the grades awarded to the various subjects. Members were pleased to note that no subject in 2015 had been judged at Grade 3 requiring improvement. All three subjects graded as such in 2014 have made considerable progress providing evidence of robust quality assurance and effective planning by the Directorate, Heads of Department and teachers.
- that the Department of Education have released this year's Level 3 value added details which will be part of January's performance tables. Members were pleased to note that over

the two headline measures the College is adding value above the average for all providers with the results being statistically significant. Members considered the appendix to the Principal's Report which indicates the score for Academic Qualifications and Vocational Qualifications and then breaks these down to their component parts. The College is statistically significantly above average in all areas except 'AS' levels that are not taken forward into 'A2' levels.

This measure is used in the January 'A' level Progress league tables. The College was placed 4th of all FE Colleges nationally in 2015 and while this year's score is slightly lower at 0.23 compared to last year's 0.25 it is expected that the College will be in a similar position in the league tables to last year.

- that the 13 reformed 'A' levels are now underway in the College with 12 of the 13 offering an 'AS' level. The College Management Group was asked to consult with Heads of Subjects on how co-teachable ('AS' students taught alongside 'A' level students) each new specification was. Only 'A' level Computing felt that it would not be in students interests to work towards an 'AS' examination. Therefore, Computing students are informed that they are enrolling on a two year linear 'A' level at the start of their course of studies. Year 12 students will sit 'AS' examinations as usual in summer 2016. However, as more 'A' levels are reformed, the College will have a decision to make about the future of 'AS' levels. As they are now decoupled from 'A' levels, the assessment at the end of two years covers the whole course and it is then expected that the 'A' level examination bill for the College will be

broadly similar to the bill as it now is. If the majority of students sit 'AS' levels, then this will be an additional cost to the College of approximately £200,000. 'AS' levels are seen by many as motivational for students providing an incentive in their first year of study, they are included on UCAS application forms allowing Universities to use them when considering offers. They also allow the College to analyse them and use them as part of quality assurance. It could, however, be argued that teaching and learning focused on 'AS' assessment is detrimental to 'A' level performance. Currently the College wishes to continue to provide 'AS' levels though the cost of this policy needs to be closely monitored.

Members were advised that this reform process has threatened the continued existence of a minority of subjects. This term has

seen the removal of 'A' level and 'BTEC' ICT and others may follow. The College is seeking to compensate by offering appropriate new 'BTEC' courses of study.

In answer to a Governor query about the issues related to the external marking of student examination papers, members were disappointed to learn that 150 grades had been raised due to Subject Heads challenging Examination Board standards in this year's summer examinations season. Four subject areas listed as pending in the SAR grading list relate to this problem and it is felt that the change in grading of Religious Studies this year possibly relates to this marking anomaly.

The Human Resources Manager joined the meeting at this point.

14/B/BG(12.15)

STAFF PAY AWARDS 1st SEPTEMBER 2015

Received: **DOCUMENT 14/B/BG(12.15)** (file copy entered) and oral report from the Human Resources Manager.

Support Staff

1. Members were advised that the National Joint Council for Staff in Sixth Form Colleges' Pay Settlement effective on September 2015 has been agreed comprising:
 - 0.9% increase on all Support Staff Pay Points at 1.9.2015
 - Additional increases to the lowest points (10, 11 and 12)
 - A commitment from the employers to agree terms of reference to undertake joint work on the NJC support staff pay spine, with particular focus on lower pay points

Agreed: that members approve the Support Staff Pay Award recommendation from the National Joint Council in order that this can be implemented.

Members were reminded that the College will increase the living wage top up to pay points at 1.11.2015 to ensure that staff on relevant points are paid £8.25 per hour.

Teaching Staff

Members were advised that on 20th November 2015 at the National Joint Council (NJC) meeting, the Employers' side made a 1% offer to take effect from 1st January 2016. The Trade Union side could not accept the offer but the individual Unions (ATL, NASUWT and NUT) have agreed to

have further discussions and agree a joint trade union response to be shared with the Employers' side shortly.

Agreed: that in the interim, the Chair of the Board of Governors should approve, on behalf of the Board, the forthcoming recommendation from the NJC in respect of the pay award for teaching staff on or after 1.9.2015 for implementation.

Senior Staff

Agreed: that as there is no national recommendation on this award, this should be in line with the Support Staff Pay Award as outlined at 1. above for the relevant staff.

15/B/BG(12.15)

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PLAN AND POLICY

Received: **DOCUMENTS 15/B/(i)-(iii)BG (12.15)** (file copies entered).

Agreed: to adopt the proposed Equality and Diversity Plan and Policy.

16/B/BG(12.15)

REVIEW OF COLLEGE POLICIES

- (i) **Admissions Policy**
- (ii) **Annual Review of Child Protection Policy**
- (iii) **Dignity at Work Policy**
- (iv) **Recruitment and Selection Policy**
- (v) **Redundancy Policy**
- (vi) **Work Placement Policy**
- (vii) **First Aid Review**

Received: **DOCUMENTS 16/B(i)-(vii)/BG(12.15)** (file copies entered).

Members noted that a number of the Policies had been received at the last meeting of the Staffing and Remuneration Committee but were being re-issued following a number of amendments suggested at that meeting.

Members also noted the new Appeal to the Board of Governors provision in the revised Admissions Policy.

With regard to the Child Protection Policy, it was agreed that an External Consultant should be asked to advise the College on possible additions/amendments to the Policy before the next annual review.

Agreed: the adoption of the submitted Policies.

17/B/BG(12.15)

TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

- (i) **Search – meeting 7.10.15**
- (ii) **Staffing and Remuneration – meeting 7.10.14**
- (iii) **Audit – meeting 21.10.15**
- (iv) **Curriculum, Quality and Standards – meeting 4.11.2015**
- (v) **Finance and Premises – meeting 18.11.15**

Members considered the minutes of the above Committee meetings and, as appropriate, received oral reports from Committee Chairs.

Committee recommendations not already included as agenda items in the agenda for this meeting of the Board of Governors included:

- **Finance and Premises Committee**

Treasury Management Policy

Agreed: to formally accept the minutes of Committees of the Board including the recommendations contained therein.

STUDENT MATTERS

18/B/BG(12.15)

REPORT FROM STUDENT GOVERNORS ON CURRENT ISSUES AFFECTING STUDENTS

Members received an oral update report from the Student Governor relating to the continuing work of the College Students' Union.

Members were advised that at a recent meeting members of the Union had given supportive feedback on College atmosphere, Library

resources, Staff help and support and Careers advice though it was suggested that some students applying to Universities other than Oxbridge would appreciate similar levels of support.

Members of the Union felt that additional seating was needed particularly at meal times. It was also felt that more water fountains would be a good addition to the current excellent facilities.

College Management would take necessary action related to the points that had been made by the students.

Action: College Management

CHAIR'S MATTERS

17/B/BG(12.15)

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

(i) Clerk to the Governing Body

The current Clerk left the meeting at this point

Members considered the draft letter to applicants, the Job Description and the proposed Contract of Employment for post of Clerk which would become vacant on the retirement of the current Clerk at the end of this calendar year.

The draft documentation was amended and agreed, the selection panel was appointed and the timetable for advertising and interviewing were agreed by members of the Board.

The current Clerk, Joe McNamara, then returned to the meeting when the Chair, on behalf of members, warmly thanked him for the excellent work he had undertaken on behalf of the Board of Governors over the last 20 years. The Chair, and members of the Board, offered their very best wishes to Joe in his retirement.

4. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next ordinary meeting of the Board of Governors is scheduled to be held at **4.00 p.m.** on **Wednesday 16th March 2016** in the **Conference Room** at the **College**.