

CARDINAL NEWMAN COLLEGE

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

A meeting of the Board of Governors of the College was at 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday 20 March 2019 in the Conference Room at the College.

Members present:

Richard Ainscough (F)
Len Hampson, Vice Chair (F)
Charu Ainscough
Nick Burnham
Amy Baines
John Calvert (F)
Peter Halpin (F)
Adrian Metcalf (F)
Bill Noblet
Helen Seechurn
Ben Stewart
Peter Towers (F)
Canon Scott Tanner (F)

Officers in attendance:

Vicky Bryant, Vice Principal Teaching and Learning
Bob Deed, Clerk
Katie O'Reilly, Vice Principal Finance & Resources
Paul Vaughan, Deputy Principal

MINUTES

1 Opening prayer

The meeting commenced with a prayer.

2 Welcome, introductions and apologies

There were apologies from Bob Eastwood, Nigel James and Barbara Smith.

3 Declarations of interest

No interests were declared.

4 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6 December 2018 were accepted as a correct record.

5 Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising not covered by the agenda.

6 Presentation on the SAR

The Deputy Principal explained the role and format of the Self Assessment Report which is due to be submitted to OFSTED.

The Deputy Principal noted that the College had self-assessed as outstanding in all areas including impact of the Catholic mission and ethos.

The Chair asked whether the self-assessment had been validated by the College's critical friend. The Principal explained that the College's critical friend had validated all subject self-assessments and the governance self-assessment. The report is the summation of this process although the critical friend does not separately validate the whole-College report.

The Chair asked about the process for monitoring targets. The Chair of the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee highlighted the role of the SAR validation process with governor involvement and input from the College's critical friend. The Principal also pointed to the increased emphasis on support and challenge and noted the two areas which were being addressed. He also noted the OFSTED dashboard as an independent source of assurance for governors.

The Deputy Principal noted that there was an area for improvement in terms of attendance on BTEC students. He explained that this was being investigated but appeared to be related to an increasing number of students coming from further afield. A governor asked about the demographic involved. The Principal noted that Blackburn students tended to be more likely to be disadvantaged and/or from BME backgrounds. The Deputy Principal said that staff were addressing this issue.

The Chair requested more information on the contribution of non-partner schools to recruitment.

A governor raised the issue of Oxbridge success. The Principal noted that last year two Oxbridge candidates were affected by exam board issues and one declined a place. He also suggested that the Oxford entrance exam was disadvantaging state school and college candidates. He explained that the College was adopting a new approach and focusing additional resources on supporting Oxbridge candidates.

The Chair asked about the lower score for "change" in the staff survey. The Deputy Principal noted that the new timetable, which was otherwise working well, may have affected the score.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Principal for the report which governors found very useful.

7 RE and Chaplaincy Report

The Principal outlined the key events in the RE and Chaplaincy Report. He particularly highlighted the Newman Day, which had good feedback and attendance, and the events during Advent.

The Chair said that the College show was an amazing experience. The Principal said that the College had received a number of unsolicited emails praising the show.

8 Governing body and committee membership

The Clerk updated the Governing Body on the Student Union election of student governors. He said that Ashley Gomes and Osama Harhor had been elected.

The Governing Body confirmed the appointment of Ashley Gomes and Osama Harhor as student governors.

The Chair thanked the outgoing student governors for their contribution during the year.

9 Principal's report

The Principal introduced the OFSTED dashboard which had been circulated in the meeting pack. The Principal then explained that OFSTED's dashboard was used by inspectors to risk-assess schools and colleges as well as inform visits.

The Principal explained that SLT was reviewing key areas in the light of the new inspection framework.

The Principal outlined the student characteristics, including the relatively high prior attainment which limited the scope to achieve high value added.

The high levels of value added across the College, including disadvantaged students were highlighted together with the above-average Level 3 Value Added in a large number of subjects.

A governor asked about other sixth form colleges with high value added. The Principal explained that SLT were looking at what these colleges were doing. The Vice Principal was planning to visit Brighton Hove Sussex VI College.

The Principal explained how the College's focus on keeping students and getting them to succeed was reflected in the overall student and course retention measures.

The Principal updated governors on applications. He noted that the College was expecting an increase in enrolments.

The Principal explained the current situation with pay negotiations. He noted that the offer to support staff was within the parameters of the approved budget.

10 Termly dashboard

The Principal introduced the termly Governors' dashboard. He noted small dips on student retention and, as discussed earlier in the meeting, attendance.

11 Risk management: update report

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources introduced the risk management termly update which included no major changes.

12 College finance update: February 2019 management accounts

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources explained that the February 2019 management accounts were being presented. These reflected the proposed summer works. (The Finance and Premises Committee had reviewed the January 2019 finance report.) The net effect of the summer works, the changed accounting for the capital grants and other changes lowered the forecast surplus by £225k from the January figure.

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources noted that the summer works were time-sensitive. These were intended to be completed within the current financial year. A governor asked about the possibility of slippage. The Vice Principal Finance and Resources agreed that there was a risk of some expenditure falling into 2019/20 but work was set to be started promptly.

A governor asked about treating IT spend as revenue. The Vice Principal Finance and Resources noted that the capitalisation threshold was high.

13 Budget 2017/18 – update report

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources explained that the Budget Update was a preliminary report. She highlighted that the full report would be brought to the Finance & Premises Committee and the Governing Body in June.

A governor asked about the significant savings in non-pay. The Principal believed that this was practical to deliver after past work on investing to save.

14 Property strategy update

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented the property strategy including the submission of the Condition Improvement Funding application. She noted that the College was realistic about its prospects.

The Vice Principal asked the Governing Body for approval for the outlined works necessary for accommodating next year's student numbers and curriculum.

The Governing Body resolved to agree the proposed summer works with the associated budgetary approvals.

The Vice Principal noted that the College was planning to apply for T Level Capital funding. Therefore, it was obliged to prepare an estates strategy. The Principal elaborated on these requirements.

The Principal explained the policy context of T Levels.

On the basis of the recommendation of the Finance & Premises Committee, the Governing Body resolved to approve the draft Estates Strategy.

15 Financial Regulations

The Clerk as the Vice Principal Finance and Resources noted that the Financial Regulations were reviewed each year so only minor amendments were being proposed. These had been considered by the Finance and Premises Committee.

On the recommendation of the Finance and Premises Committee, the Governing Body resolved to approve these changes to the Financial Regulations.

16 Safeguarding policy

The Principal noted the national and local press coverage about crime and gangs. He noted the recent major incident training and the work on the business disaster policy including a "lockdown" procedure.

A governor asked if the College had practiced lockdown. The Principal confirmed that lockdown messaging had been tested but the College did not want to undertake a simulation exercise. The Deputy Chair noted that the College had a recent situation in the local area where a building had been evacuated. The staff governor said that staff were keen to be trained on lockdown.

The Chair noted that the Policy was comprehensive addressing a range of safeguarding risks. It had been reviewed by the Assistant Principals Students and scrutinised by the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee

On the recommendation of the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee, the Governing Body resolved to approve these changes to the Safeguarding Policy.

17 Finance and Premises Committee minutes

The Chair as Chair of the Finance and Premises Committee introduced the minutes. The Clerk drew the Governing Body's attention to the recommendations in the minutes including the investment decisions and the minor amendments to Health & Safety Policy.

The Governing Body resolved to accept the Finance and Premises Committee minutes and agree the recommendations contained including the proposed investments, the revised Treasury Management Policy and Health & Safety Policy.

18 Governance & Search Committee minutes

The Chair as Chair of the Governance and Search Committee noted key issues at the meeting including governor training and board mix.

The Governing Body resolved to accept the Governance and Search Committee minutes and agree the recommendations contained.

19 Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee minutes

The Chair of the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee presented the minutes.

The Governing Body resolved to accept the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee minutes and agree the recommendations contained including the Equality & Diversity Aims.

20 Determination of any items to be treated as Confidential

The only item deemed to be confidential was part of the Principal's update.

21 Date and time of the next meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the Board of Governors will take place as part of the SLT/Governors Conference on 21 June 2019.