

## **CARDINAL NEWMAN COLLEGE**

### **BOARD OF GOVERNORS – GOVERNANCE AND SEARCH COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the above Committee was held at 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday 9 May 2018 in the Principal's Office at the College.

#### **Members present:**

Richard Ainscough, Chair (F)  
Nick Burnham, Principal  
Peter Halpin (F)  
Len Hampson (F)  
Adrian Metcalf (F)  
Father Luiz Ruscillo (F)  
Helen Seechurn (F)

#### **Officers in attendance:**

Bob Deed, Clerk

### **MINUTES**

#### **1 Opening prayer**

The meeting commenced with a prayer.

#### **2 Welcome, introductions and apologies**

There were no apologies.

#### **3 Declarations of interest**

There were no interests to declare.

#### **4 Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Wednesday 24 January 2018 were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chair (file copy entered).

#### **5 Matters arising from the minutes**

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the meeting on Wednesday 24 January 2018 not addressed elsewhere on the agenda.

#### **6 Principal's update**

The Principal updated the Committee on the latest developments for sixth form college pay and funding. The Chair asked about news relating to pensions. Clerk noted that employer contributions for the Local Government Pension Scheme are fixed until March 2020 while the contributions for the Teachers' Pension Scheme are likely to rise in September 2019 with the College assuming a worst case scenario of a 2.5% rise.

The Principal outlined the process for the appointment of a Vice Principal, Vicky Bryant. He thanked the Vice Chair for his role in the process. The Principal noted that the post attracted a wide and strong field.

The Principal explained that the new Vice Principal would have a designation of Staffing, Teaching and Learning while the Deputy Principal would focus on quality and timetabling.

The Principal updated governors that planning permission had been awarded for the improved Larkhill entrance and that funding was being found by the local authority for the Queens' Street layby costed design. He also outlined discussions with stakeholders and landlords about local regeneration.

## **7 Risk register: termly update**

The Committee noted that there had been no significant changes in the governance-related risks.

## **8 Governance assurance review: action plan and progress report**

The Clerk introduced the governance assurance review: action plan and progress report. He explained that the colour-coding was intended to highlight changes in implementation timescales. He assured the Committee that the majority of the remaining actions would be implemented by the autumn.

## **9 Governing Body and Committee membership**

The Chair informed the Committee that Penny Dineen has resigned from the Governing Body for personal reasons. The Chair proposed holding the vacancy until the completion of the skills audit.

The Clerk outlined the other recent developments.

- Amy Baines, an achievement tutor and counsellor had been the sole nomination for Support Staff Governor. The Chair suggested that he should have an exit interview with the outgoing Staff Governor. The Clerk said that he had already mentioned this to Matthew Ainge.
- Nigel James, a Tribal consultant and former college senior manager, had been elected 48-44 in the online Parent Governor election. The Committee noted that both candidates were suitable as demonstrated by their personal statements. The Committee discussed the options for involving the unsuccessful candidate, Lee Nelson, in the College's governance.
- As noted in the report, Abigail Brooks and Ben Stewart had been chosen to be Student Governors in the Student Union's delayed election.

**The Committee resolved that the Amy Baines, Nigel James, Abigail Brooks and Ben Stewart should be formally confirmed as Governors at the June meeting of the Governing Body.**

The Committee noted the disappointing turnout in the Parent Governor election despite the use of online voting with an emails, texts and social media to generate interest in the election. The Committee recognised the risks posed by low turnout. The Clerk and the Principal suggested that the College should explore alternative methods of appointing Parent governors.

**The Committee resolved that:**

- **Nigel James should join the Finance & Premises Committee which was his stated preference.**
- **Amy Baines should be asked by the Clerk what preference she might have on committees.**
- **The Student Governors should not be asked to join a committee given the demands on the time of committed students. The importance of Student Governors in being able to prepare for and attend the Governing Body meetings was noted.**

## **10 Calendar of meetings**

The Clerk introduced the draft calendar of meetings for 2018/19 and explained that it broadly followed the calendar for 2017/18.

**The Committee resolved to recommend the draft calendar of meetings for 2018/19 to the next meeting of the Governing Body.**

## **11 Policy review**

The Clerk explained that the changes to the Standing Orders were minor housekeeping items and almost all arose from recommendations of the governance assurance review.

The Chair suggested that the Standing Orders' section on the timing of the election of the Chair and Vice Chair should state time of appointment.

The Committee queried the provision stating that a student member who is under eighteen years should not be able to vote on any decision involving commitment of expenditure or incurring an actual or contingent liability. The Clerk confirmed that this was the position in charity law.

**The Committee resolved to recommend the draft revised standing orders to the Governing Body subject to the minor amendment suggested by the Chair.**

The Clerk introduced the new procedure for Governors' Expenses which was recommended by the governance assurance review. Committee members asked how often expenses were claimed. The Clerk confirmed that it was very unusual.

The Committee noted that the payment of expenses for childcare was intended to promote equality and diversity by eliminating one potential barrier to participation in the College's governance. The Committee recognised that there remained an issue with gender balance on the Governing Body.

**The Committee noted and agreed the payment of Governors' Expenses procedure.**

## **12 Agenda for the SLT/Governors' Conference**

The Clerk outlined the agenda for the SLT/Governors' Conference in June.

## **13 Governors Skills Audit**

The Clerk explained how the Skills Audit would be undertaken as an online survey using Google Forms before the SLT/Governors' Conference in June.

The Committee discussed the wording, particularly the questions about how the Governing Body evaluated its effectiveness. The Clerk noted that wording was based on the Catholic Education Service's self-evaluation checklist for schools. He was asked to re-frame the questions so that each Governor was asked to answer these firstly as an individual Governor and then in terms of the Governing Body as a whole.

## **14 Committee self-assessment including review of terms of reference**

The Committee reflected on the role of the Committee including its current terms of reference. The consensus was that the Committee worked well in terms of governance and search as well as acting as a sounding board for the Principal when he was considering strategic issues. The Committee considered whether there were any potential risks to this broader role. The Committee noted that as it did not have delegated authorities relating to this wider role, the risks were limited although care needed to be taken with perceptions of the Committee's role.

## **15 Governance SAR**

The Clerk outlined the proposed process for the Governance SAR with the Skills Audit in May and June, the preparation of a Self-Assessment Report for the September Committee and then a validation panel would be arranged involving the College's "critical friend" consultant later in the autumn. The Clerk noted that he was meeting with Chaplain to work through the Catholic Education Service's self-evaluation checklist for schools with the intention that this should feed into the Governance SAR, particularly on mission and ethos. The Committee raised no concerns with this approach.

## **16 Determination of any items to be treated as Confidential**

There were no items requiring treatment as Confidential.

## **17 Date and time of the next meeting**

According to the draft Calendar of Meetings, the next ordinary meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held at 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday 19 September 2018.