

## CARDINAL NEWMAN COLLEGE

### BOARD OF GOVERNORS

A meeting of the Governing Body of the College was held at 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday 24 March 2021 on Microsoft Teams.

#### **Members present:**

Richard Ainscough (F), Chair  
Len Hampson (F), Vice Chair  
Charu Ainscough  
Amy Baines  
Nick Burnham  
Bernadette Davies (F)  
Evelyn Davies  
Bob Eastwood (F)  
James Gifford  
Peter Halpin (F)  
Adrian Metcalf (F)  
Bill Noblett (F)  
Helen Seechurn (F)  
Barbara Smith  
Peter Towers (F)  
Andrew Wygladala (F)

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

Vicky Bryant, VP – Teaching, Learning and Staffing  
Bob Deed, Clerk  
Katie O'Reilly, VP- Finance and Resources  
Paul Vaughan – Deputy Principal

### MINUTES

#### **1. Opening prayer**

The meeting commenced with a prayer.

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

The Chair thanked the student governors for their contributions and wished them well.

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

There were no interests which required declaring. The Clerk noted that the Principal, Vice Principal and Clerk would leave for the Remuneration Committee item.

#### **4. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meetings held on 9 December 2020 were approved as a true record.

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

The Chair noted that Foundation Governor vacancy would be considered by the next Governance and Search Committee meeting

The Chair asked about course reviews. The Principal said that he had been liaising with the Chair of the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee about a report on intervention and support for the next Committee meeting.

The Principal updated on the Governing Body on the possibility of an Ofsted inspection and preparations for a Section 48 inspection.

#### **6. Calendar of events**

The Principal noted the challenges of events during the pandemic. He said that the College was intending to organise an online Newman Day.

#### **7. RE and Chaplaincy Report**

The Chair noted the great work of the Chaplaincy Team. He also noted that the online RE classes were getting positive feedback.

The Chair asked the Clerk to record the Governing Body's thanks to the College Chaplain.

#### **8. Termly performance dashboard**

The Chair noted the very good and encouraging results shown on the performance dashboard including attendance and retention. The Principal said that there was good engagement. He also noted that as the economy recovered some students would probably leave for employment and apprenticeships.

A governor asked about the application figures. The Principal said that the increase appeared to be real rather than a timing issue. He noted the demographic factors as well as the closure of St Mary's Blackburn.

The Chair noted that staff absence was down despite the pandemic. The Principal said that some staff might be home working when in previous year's they might have to be off sick due to being unable to come into College.

## 9. Principal's report

The Principal reminded the governors of the College's pandemic response with the seamless switch to and from blended timetable. This meant that at most 500 students were self-isolating whereas substantially higher numbers would have been disrupted if the College had been trying to operate with all students on-site.

The Principal said that the data on effort grades from College Assessment Point 2 showed that the overwhelming majority of students were working well.

The Principal said that the College had concluded that mass testing with three tests was not practical or safe. He said that instead the College had a programme of testing with all students being asked to test before returning. There was only one positive result from 1,663 tests. There is now an ongoing programme of home testing.

The Chair asked about the results of home tests. The Principal said that one positive result from a home test had followed up with a confirmatory PCR test.

The Principal said that at 23 March 2021 there were only 27 students self-isolating.

The Principal said that it was vital that Year 13s were able to attend and undertake assessments for Teacher Assessed Grades. Therefore, the blended timetable would continue to 12 May with CAP5 between 12 May and 20 May. Subsequently Year 12s would be in College full-time.

The Principal updated the governors on the College's approach to Teacher Assessed Grades with Baskets of Evidence including the College Assessment Point 5. He noted the role of professional judgement and the mechanism for moderation.

The Principal said that the College had suffered a cyber-attack on 8 March 2020. A governor referred to the discussion at the Audit Committee about cyber-attack. The Clerk said that the IT and Network manager had suggested that the defences were sufficient and during the attack the defences had proven to be resilient. The Audit Committee Chair said that the defences had been sufficient even though the attack was more serious than previous attempts. A governor suggested that the College should liaise with the National Cyber Security Centre.

The Principal outlined developments with the Maths School planned for September 2022. The £8.4 million design and build project was underway. The statutory consultation was progressing well.

The Principal said that the College Principal had been appointed as Executive Principal of the Maths School and approved by the ESFA as Accounting Officer during pre-opening. Similarly, the Vice Principal Finance & Resources had been approved as Chief Financial Officer by the ESFA.

A governor asked about the time commitment for the Vice Principal in relation to the Maths School. The Principal noted the input required would be greater during pre-opening. He said that changes in the Finance Team meant that there would be capacity. He noted that post-opening the Maths School would be sharing services with the College with recharges at cost.

A governor asked about the transition to the College for school pupils who had been disrupted during the pandemic. The Principal outlined the plans for the summer including Newman Beginnings for Year 11s. He also highlighted the work with Lancaster University on transition to university for students.

#### **10. College Finance Report for February 2021**

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources highlighted the increase of £923k in the forecast surplus as a result of factors including:

- Confirmation of additional ESFA income for in year growth and Offer funding - £661k.
- An extra £75k of Teachers' Pension Grant during 2020/21 as the funding has been extended to July 2022.
- Staffing costs are £74k lower than budgeted as both the national pay agreements and updates to staffing.

The Principal highlighted the one-off nature of the in-year growth funding although this was only funding for students who were already at the College.

#### **11. Budget and forecast update**

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources said that the update was highly indicative. She said that work was continuing with the surplus now looking higher. She was confident that the final budget would be in surplus.

The Vice Principal reported that support managers during budget meetings were identifying savings in non-pay budgets.

The Chair thanks the Vice Principal for her work and that of the Finance Team.

#### **12. Property strategy update**

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources said that the Carr Street project was progressing well. The predicted completion date was 4 June 2021.

The Vice Principal said that the Wave 2 T Levels funding application to the DfE was successful. The St Mary's building would be decanted at May half term with the project to progress over the summer.

The Vice Principal referred to the Governing Body's approval for the College to engage limited professional and technical support to develop the detailed design to enable a full planning application to be secured. A full planning application was submitted on December 2020. This was successful with planning consent awarded in February 2021.

### **13. Decision paper: Estates Strategy**

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources outlined the purpose of the Estates Strategy which updated the 2019 document.

The Chair asked about the growth forecasts and the growth forecast. The Vice Principal noted the growth from a range of areas this year. She said that the Estates Strategy was assuming that the College grew with the demographics in its main recruitment areas.

A governor asked about the possibility that national successes in blended learning meant that the capital funding for growth might be reduced. The Principal suggested that nationally there would be resistance to any attempt to permanently shift away from face-to-face learning. He did see a potential change in how the College delivered Curriculum Plus and support for students.

**The Governing Body resolved to adopt the Estates Strategy.**

### **14. Decision paper: Wave 3 T Levels Capital application**

The Vice Principal outlined the proposed Wave 3 T Levels Capital application and noted that it had been discussed at Finance & Resource Committee. She said that Cost Plan had been returned with slightly lower costs than previously estimated.

The Chair asked about the timescales. The Vice Principal said that the project would start in April 2022. It would be completed in September 2022.

Governors said that it was an exciting project which would be of clear benefit to the students taking the Wave 3 T Levels.

**On the basis of the recommendation of the Finance & Resources Committee, the Governing Body resolved to:**

- **Approve the submission of the Wave 3 T-Levels application.**
- **Approve in principle a £999k new build and refurbishment project with a College contribution of £500k plus a College-financed contingency of £150k.**
- **Approve the proposed expenditure of £132k on Specialist Equipment in Wave 3 including a College contribution of £66k.**

### **15. Decision paper: additional capital expenditure**

The Vice Principal conformed that the proposed expenditure was modelled in the cashflow.

**On the basis of the Finance & Resources Committee recommendation, the Governing Body is asked to:**

- **Approval of the additional capital expenditure of £843k (including £441k funded by the ESFA Specialist Equipment Allocation).**
- **Acceptance of the Wave 2 T-Level Specialist Equipment Allocation grant.**

#### **16. Teachers and Support pay settlement**

The Chair noted that the item was now moved to the Reserved agenda.

#### **17. Risk management: update report**

The Clerk noted that following the risk register assurance review the risk register item had been moved to the later part of the agenda to allow governors to suggest additions and changes in the light of previous discussions. He also noted that the update only showed high and medium net risks rather than the full list in order to allow governors to focus on the strategic and key operational risks.

A governor asked about the risk that the Teachers' Pension Grant funding would end. The Principal said that he believed that the risk was now diminishing

The Chair asked whether there was any prospect of an increase in the National Funding Rate. The Principal said that the chances of a significant rise were low.

The Chair asked about the risk of cyber-attacks. The Clerk said that the risks would need to be reviewed in the light of the recent events. He noted that the scores had already been increased.

A governor asked about the Maths School, in particular the risks inherent in a new and collaborative initiative. She was primarily concerned around reputational risks. The Audit Committee Chair highlighted the reputational risk on the risk register.

The Principal agreed that the governance and risk management at the Maths School was important. He noted that the risk would evolve and may rise over time.

#### **18. Audit Committee minutes**

The Chair of the Audit Committee noted that the discussion of cyber risks at the Committee had been raised earlier in the meeting. The Committee Chair also highlighted the discussion about the risk register assurance review recommendations including the importance of linking risks to strategic objectives.

**The Governing Body resolved to accept the Audit Committee minutes.**

**19. Finance and Resources Committee minutes**

The Chair as Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee noted that key business had already been covered on the main agenda.

**The Governing Body resolved to accept the Finance and Resources Committee minutes and approve the Committee's recommendations, including those relating to the loan agreement.**

**20. Governance and Search Committee minutes**

The Chair as Chair of the Governance and Search Committee presented that Committee's minutes.

**The Governing Body resolved to accept the Governance and Search Committee minutes and approve the Committee's recommendations.**

**21. Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee minutes**

The Chair of the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee presented the Committee's minutes. He noted the presentation on counselling at the College and the positive feedback from the RE and Careers Link Governor.

**The Governing Body resolved to accept the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee minutes and approve the Committee's recommendations.**

**22. Remuneration Committee minutes**

The Clerk noted that this was now to be treated as a Reserved agenda item.

**23. Determination of any items to be treated as Confidential**

There were no items deemed confidential.

**24. Date and time of the next meeting**

The next date of the next Governing Body will be confirmed.