

## **CARDINAL NEWMAN COLLEGE**

### **BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

A meeting of the Governing Body of the College was held at 4.00 p.m. on Wednesday 30 June 2021 on Microsoft Teams.

#### **Members present:**

Richard Ainscough (F), Chair  
Len Hampson (F), Vice Chair  
Amy Baines  
Nick Burnham  
Rory Brooks  
Bernadette Davies (F)  
Sue Davies  
Peter Halpin (F)  
Adrian Metcalf (F)  
Julia Oswianske  
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

#### **Other in attendance**

Emma Watts, teaching staff governor designate (from item 7)

## **MINUTES**

### **1. Opening prayer**

The meeting commenced with a prayer.

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

The Chair thanked the teaching staff governor for her contributions over the last four years. He noted that Emma Watts would be joining the meeting as an observer pending her appointment when Barbara Smith’s term ended.

The Chair welcomed Rory Brooks and Julia Oswianske to the meeting.

Apologies were noted by the Chair from Bill Noblett and Charu Ainscough.

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

There were no interests which required declaring.

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

The minutes of the meetings held on 24 March 2021 were approved as a true record.

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

There were no matters arising from the minutes not covered by agenda items.

## **6. Governance**

The Chair presented the draft calendar of meetings which had been considered by the Governance and Search Committee. He highlighted the governor training sessions on safeguarding and sector developments before the next planned Governing Body meeting. The Principal noted that this double session at 4pm on 6 October was intended to both address important issues and replace the summer conference which it had not been possible to hold.

A governor asked about when face-to-face meetings would resume. The Chair said that he hoped that these would resume for the Governing Body during the year.

**The Governing Body approved the draft calendar of Governing Body and Committee meetings.**

The Clerk noted that the Student Union had chosen Julia Oswianske and Rory Brooks as student governors. He also said that there had been one nomination for teaching staff governor, Emma Watts, who was a Maths teacher. It was usual practice for the Governing Body to confirm these appointments.

**The Governing Body confirmed:**

- **the appointment of Julia Oswianske and Rory Brooks as student governors for a term ending on 31 March 2022; and**
- **the appointment of Emma Watts as teaching staff governor for a four year term starting 1 July 2021.**

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

The Chair applauded the work of the Chaplaincy Team as set out in the RE and Chaplaincy Report.

The Principal said that the College was busy with Chaplaincy activities. He said that the Newman Day had been held that day online.

The Principal noted the sad loss of Anthony Finnerty as noted in the report. He noted that the College was arranging a fundraiser in College in his memory to support Global Link, an organisation working with and raising awareness about refugees and asylum seekers. This was an issue very close to Anthony's heart.

## **8. Principal's report**

The Principal said that he believed that the College made the right decision in returning to a blended timetable after lockdown in the spring. This safeguarded face-to-face learning and the CAP5 for Teacher Assessed Grades. The full return for Year 12 was on 13 May occurred on when Year 13 started Study Leave. This effectively managed the risks involved.

The Principal outlined the good relations with local partners including the Lamp Testing pilot with the NHS and UCLan. He also noted the ongoing lateral flow home testing by staff and students although he recognised that not all negative tests were registered on the NHS website.

The Principal noted that the College had won the SFCA Covid and Beyond Award for its work during the pandemic.

The Principal said that Covid cases appeared to reflect the local infection rates. There appeared to be no cases of transmission within the College.

The Principal said that the College was engaged with the Lancashire transition and recovery planning with incoming Year 12s identified and supported. He said that Curriculum Plus would be used to target those most affected and the Tuition Fund extended. He also outlined how support would be provided for progressing Year 13s.

The Principal said that the College would be seeking to provide more enrichment opportunities given the impact of the pandemic on student experience. He said the College would be listening to and working with the Student Union.

The Chair asked about plans for September 2021. The Principal said that the College was planning for normal operation. He noted the concerns around public transport but he said that this risk was being addressed and it appeared that capacity on buses was continuing to increase.

The Principal outlined the College's approach to Teacher Assessed Grades which were based around standardised and moderated work. He said that there had been significant work on briefing staff and ensuring effective moderation.

The Principal noted that samples for testing had been requested by the exam board: A level Business Studies, GCSE Maths and English, T level Digital and Education, BTEC Psychology and Level 2 Business.

The Principal said that the College was preparing for student appeals. He highlighted that the College was responsible for internal reviews in relation to administrative and procedural matters while the exam boards would review matters of academic judgement.

The Principal said that applications were up 14% overall. He noted that applications from Partner and other local schools remained healthy while much of the growth was from further afield with the closure of St Mary's College Blackburn, demography and other factors.

The Principal said that the St John Henry building was progressing although he noted some challenges with the programme.

The Chair asked about the plans for a formal opening. The Principal said that the priority was the effective opening for the autumn term. But he opened for a ceremony as soon as possible, ideally with the Bishop.

The Principal updated on the Lancaster University School of Mathematics including plans for the new build and ongoing work of the Outreach programme.

## **9. Performance dashboard**

The Principal presented that Performance dashboard. He said that retention was high, but the retention metric was being double checked.

The Chair noted that the financial metrics were very strong. He asked if borrowing as a percentage of income was the ESFA financial health metric on which the College did not expect to score full points this year. The Vice Principal confirmed this but noted both the costs of ending the fixed rate loan early and the College's excellent variable rate loan margin.

## **10. College Report**

The Chair pointed out that the report had been scrutinised by the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee, which had requested that the report be shared with the whole Governing Body.

The Chair of QCS thanked the Deputy Principal for the report which addressed the issues which the Committee had raised when the normal self-assessment panel process had been suspended due to the pandemic. The Chair agreed that the report was very helpful.

## **11. College finance report**

The Vice Principal highlighted that the May College finance report forecast a £0.5 million surplus. This reflected Sport England funding and the release of the Little Extra capital funding being pushed into the next year.

The Vice Principal Finance & Resources said that wherever possible expenditure was being brought forward into 2020/21, for example IT equipment renewal. This meant that the outturn was likely to be lower than the current forecast. The Chair agreed that this was a sensible approach given the financial tightness likely in future years.

## **12. Budget 2021/2 and financial forecast**

The Chair thanked the Finance Team for the work on the budget and forecast. He also noted the scrutiny of the draft budget at the Finance & Resources Committee.

The Vice Principal Finance & Resources noted that the ESFA required that the College submit a cashflow based College Financial Forecasting Return (CFFR). She said that the proposed budget and forecast values would be used in the CFFR and the commentary attached.

The Vice Principal Finance & Resources noted the impact of the end of Formula Protection funding and the need to staff up for anticipated growth. She highlighted the cash balances over £4 million after allowing for the Wave 1, 2 and 3 T Level capital funding.

The Chair asked about the prudence of the budget. The Vice Principal noted that the recently announced Tuition Funding 2021/22 was not included and that there were potential upsides on T Level early adopter funding and other lines.

**The Governing Body approved the Budget 2021/22 and financial forecast 2022/23.**

### **13. Property strategy**

The Vice Principal Finance & Resources updated on progress with the St John Henry project. She highlighted the work of Annette Pettman in working with local residents.

The Chair asked about relations with local stakeholders. The Vice Principal said that the College was aware of the views of residents and understood their concerns. The Principal noted the good relationships with local councillors and other stakeholders.

The Vice Principal noted the progress on other projects. She also informed governors that the College had been unsuccessful with the Condition Improvement Funding application.

### **14. Decision paper: St Cecilia's extension**

The Vice Principal Finance & Resources explained the benefit of getting the project shovel-ready in case of Wave 3 funding being awarded.

**The Governing Body resolved to agree, on the recommendation of the Finance & Resources Committee:**

- **Approval for developing the project to submit and achieve full planning consent, including a financial commitment of around £47k.**
- **Delegation of authority to the Chair required to continue liaising with funders and progress with grant funding agreements in line with the submitted funding application.**

### **15. Decision paper: Post 16 Capacity Fund application**

The Vice Principal Finance & Resources noted that the project was essentially the same as earlier proposals approved by the Governing Body. She said that the College stood a much better chance with the Post 16 Capacity Fund than with the Condition Improvement Fund round. She outlined the level of College contribution to the project and the associated works.

The Vice Principal clarified that the scheme was not assumed in the budget but was affordable given the outlay of around £800k and the forecast level of cash balances.

**The Governing Body resolved to approve, on the recommendation of the Finance & Resources Committee:**

- **A £1,934,257 new build application including a £300k College contribution involving the use of cash reserves as part of the application**
- **Additional investment of £501k for some external works, loose FFE/ICT for the extension and project contingency**

**The Governing Body resolved to approve the Chair's use of delegated authority for the application.**

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

The Chair noted that the report register only showed the higher scored net risks in the light of John Boyles' assurance report.

The Clerk as Vice Principal Finance & Resources noted that he was planning to meet the Audit Committee Chair to discuss the form and content of the risk register.

#### **17. Appointment panel for the Director of Catholic Life**

The Principal said that the appointment process was more complicated than anticipated. It was to be treated as confidential as a Reserved item.

A governor asked if candidates were being kept informed. The Principal conformed this.

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

The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the Committee's minutes. He noted the update on cyber-risks including assurances on the College's response. He said that there was no lasting impact on the College. The Committee was reassured about how these risks were being handled.

The Committee Chair noted the external audit strategy including the proposed fees.

The Committee Chair highlighted the two areas in the assurance plan: firstly, progression to the Cyber Essential Plus exercise, including external validation and testing, and, secondly, the triennial safeguarding assurance review. He said that the assurance plan would be flexible and respond to the Committee's review of risks.

**The Governing Body resolved to accept the Audit Committee minutes and approve the external audit strategy and assurance plans.**

The Chair asked about any further cyber-attacks. The Principal confirmed that there had been no similar attacks.

#### **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 but highlighted the recommendations relating to the Fee Framework and Financial Regulations.

**The Governing Body resolved to accept the Finance and Resources Committee minutes and approve the Committee's recommendations, including those relating to the Fee Framework and Financial Regulations.**

#### **20. Governance & Search Committee minutes**

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

The Clerk noted that not all three Foundation Governors whose terms were ending had yet been asked whether they wished to be re-appointed as Foundation Governors.

**The Governing Body resolved to accept the Governance and Search Committee minutes, approve the Committee's recommendations and endorse the request that the Diocese reappoint Bill Noblett, Helen Seechurn and Cannon Tanner, subject to their consent being confirmed.**

A governor asked about the relationship with the Preston Muslim Girls' School. The Principal outlined the College's good relations with this successful local school. He noted that most of the school's Year 11s came to the College.

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

The Deputy Chair of the Quality, Curriculum and Staffing Committee presented the Committee's minutes and referred to the policies reviewed by the Committee.

The Safeguarding Lead Governor presented his paper on safeguarding and outlined the College's approach to this key area. He noted that he visited the College and met the Assistant Principals Students regularly. He highlighted national themes being addressed by the College. He encouraged the governors to read the report by OFSTED on its rapid review of sexual abuse in schools.

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

## **22. Determination of any items to be treated as Confidential**

There were no items deemed confidential.

## **23. Date and time of the next meeting**

The next date of the next Governing Body was noted as Wednesday 6 October when the meeting will be preceded by the governor training starting at 2pm.