



# Board of Governors

## Minutes of the Meeting of Full Governing Body held on 15 December 2022

### Introduction and appointment of Chairperson

Peter McGhee welcomed everyone to the meeting. He reported that two people had declared an interest in becoming Chair to the Governors following John Lumb's retirement. Simon Dale had offered to take on the role on an interim basis and Pam Tate had expressed interest in the role on a longer-term basis. Peter noted that the forthcoming governance review and the likely arrival of new Governors with adjustments to Committee membership meant that it might be helpful for Simon to take the role on a short-term basis to give time for other changes to be formalised. Simon was appointed Chair by agreement.

### Item 1 - Members present and apologies

#### Members present

Peter McGhee – Principal  
Mark Higgins – Foundation Governor  
Catherine Morgan – Foundation Governor  
Phillip Collier – Foundation Governor  
Anne White – Co-opted Governor  
Simon Dale – Foundation Governor (Chair)  
Pamela Tate – Foundation Governor  
Chris Chandler – Staff Governor  
Peter Phillips – Foundation Governor  
Pamela Catherall – Foundation Governor (via zoom)  
Kate Watts – Staff Governor  
Madison Bryan – Student Governor

#### In attendance:

Jim Winstanley – Finance Manager  
Nicola Craven – Vice Principal  
Paula Nolan – Vice Principal  
Barbara Bartley – Interim Clerk to the Governors

#### Apologies:

Aaron McNestry – Student Governor  
John Lumb – Chair of Governors  
The meeting then opened with a prayer

Kate Watts was introduced to her first full Governor meeting.

### Item 2 Declaration of interest in any agenda item by Governors and staff present

None

### Item 3 Resolve that any items of a confidential nature relating to the staff, finances, or operation of the College be taken in a confidential part of the meeting.

The Chair reminded all present that any business of a confidential nature must remain confidential.

#### **Item 4 – Minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting of 13 October 2022**

The minutes of the meeting of the Full Governing Body held on 13 October 2022 were circulated.

Peter McGhee drew attention to item 12 related to academisation. He noted that the process has moved into a second stage, and that legislation guidance for 6<sup>th</sup> form Catholic Colleges undergoing academisation, will be published on 28 December. Peter McGhee informed the meeting that there is no action required from Governors at this stage but that there will be a further meeting taking place in February with a representative from each sixth form college.

A further discussion took place regarding open days which had been well attended and application numbers at this early stage, appear good.

AGREED: that the minutes of the Full Governing Body meeting held on 13 October 2022 be accepted.

#### **Item 5 –Finance and Resources committee minutes of 24th November 2022**

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on 24 November 2022 were circulated and Simon Dale commented thereon.

He reported that the workshop, held on 15 November had been a helpful session and as a result a robust five-year cashflow forecast had been produced to accompany the current budget control plans.

He also noted that a bid for fire safety works had been submitted and if successful would help improve the compartmentalisation of college areas.

It was noted that the Anti-fraud policy approved by this committee will be referred to Audit Committee for review.

AGREED: that the minutes of the Finance and Resources committee held on 24 November 2022 be accepted with Audit Committee taking responsibility for checking bursary procedures.

#### **Item 6 – Audit committee minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2022**

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 1 December 2022 were circulated and Pamela Tate commented thereon.

Pamela thanked Anne White and Simon Dale for attending the meeting and for their input regarding the Annual Financial Statements.

Pamela noted that the auditors had reported two low level and one medium level recommendations. The low-level recommendations related to declaration of interest forms and governor information on

the website. The medium level recommendation related to sign off procedures for bank reconciliations. College had already implemented changes. As a result, the Audit committee were happy to recommend the financial statements as approved.

Pamela noted that there were no changes to the full risk register. Pamela has requested more information on future copies, such as date of any new actions and committee responsible. Jim Winstanley is to work on these improvements.

Pamela informed the meeting that Beevers & Struthers had been asked for a quote on a payroll audit but had declined. A further quote for cyber security work is being sourced.

AGREED: that the minutes of the Audit committee meeting held 1 December 2022 be accepted.

### **Item 7 – Quality and Standards committee minutes of 8 December 2022**

The minutes of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee held on 8 December 2022 were circulated and Phillip Collier reported thereon.

Phillip reported in detail on the curriculum updates, upon which Nicola Craven had reported at the Quality and Standards meeting. He commented that the SAR's meetings had been a good, positive experience for all involved. He noted that staff have been allowed to take ownership and drive their own development. He also noted that he was looking forward to the latest results of SPOC's, (student perception of college). Currently they are good to positive.

It was noted that some people had experienced issues in accessing the Online Safeguarding training. Paula Nolan to check and rectify.

There was a helpful discussion around the role and function of Link Governors and in particular a new Link Governor for Skills. The current Ofsted inspection framework has a clear emphasis on engagement with external stakeholders in order to help develop the skills of our students.

AGREED: that the minutes of the Quality and Standards committee held on 8 December be accepted and that a Link Governor for Skills be sought.

### **Item 8 – Annual report of the Audit committee to the Governing Body**

A copy of the annual report had been circulated and Pamela Tate reported thereon.

AGREED: that the report be accepted.

### **Item 9 – Audit committee terms of reference for approval**

A copy of the terms of reference had been circulated and Pamela Tate reported thereon.

AGREED: that the terms of reference be approved.

#### **Item 10 – College SAR**

A copy of the self-assessment report 2021-22 had been circulated and Peter McGhee commented thereon. He highlighted key elements such as the changing demographics of students and in particular the high proportion enrolling from areas of high social and economic need. Peter McGhee invited members to read the report in detail and feedback any comments they would like to raise going forward.

AGREED: that the report be accepted.

#### **Item 11 – College Development Plan**

A copy of the College Development Plan had been circulated and Peter McGhee commented thereon.

Peter McGhee highlighted the movement in student numbers with significant growth from 2017-19 alongside the latest decline in recruitment. He also noted some of the key performance indicators such as retention rates – which had been recalibrated to reflect a different baseline position from last year. A discussion took place regarding the impact of reduced recruitment on staffing capacity – alongside the need to be able to respond to future changes in recruitment.

AGREED: that the report be accepted.

#### **Item 12 – Annual financial statements**

A copy of the annual financial statements had been circulated and Jim Winstanley reported thereon - highlighting two specific items.

The GMPS pension scheme had originally been reported as an asset in the balance sheet but given that this valuation seems to fluctuate the auditors had advised that it should not be reported in this way. The Financial Statement now report the pension asset as Nil.

There had been uncertainty about the treatment of the T-level building grant by the ESFA following the termination of the project. Jim noted that the ESFA have now determined that the small element of Capital grant will not be clawed back and that indeed a further allocation of £36.000 would be paid to the College by ESFA. The treatment of the T Level Equipment grant was still not resolved but the auditors were not unduly concerned by this amount.

Based on discussions to date the auditors were now content to sign off the accounts without qualification. The College and the auditors both recognise that ongoing robust financial control by the College is important to demonstrate that “Going Concern” requirements are adequately met.

AGREED: that the statements be accepted.

Action: Chair and Principal to sign accounts

### **Item 13 – Link Governor updates**

A discussion took place regarding Link Governors. It was agreed that it was important to clarify and update the role and expectations for Link Governors if College is going to benefit fully from the skills and experience on offer. Pamela Catherall, who was attending via zoom suggested that it might be helpful for a meeting of all link Governors to be convened in the New Year.

Nicola Craven invited all Governors to attend staff inset day on 3 January 2023 between 11-12 for an update on the Ofsted inspection framework.

Action: Peter McGhee to consult with College managers and set up meeting for all LINK governors.

### **Item 14 – Governor update**

Pam reported that a subgroup had met with an external advisor regarding the forthcoming Governance review Self-assessment. She asked all Governors to return the circulated questionnaire in order for a summary and discussion paper to be produced in time for the Strategic meeting in March.

Simon reported that a Search Committee meeting had taken place with a potential Foundation Governor who had substantial finance sector and governance experience. It was agreed that he should be accepted as Governor.

It was agreed that anyone with ideas or suggestions for new Governors should pass names to Peter or Simon for follow up.

### **Item 15 – Any Other Business**

An Ofsted preparations handout was circulated by Nicola Craven. After discussion there were two offers to take on the role of a “Skills” Link Governor.

The meeting closed at 7.35

Signed.....

Date.....