



GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of Meeting on Tuesday 15 December 2015

Present:	Mr J Turner (<i>Chair</i>)	Chair of Governors
	Ms N Cuffy	Governor
	Ms S Gannon	Staff Governor
	Mr H Hadani	Governor
	Ms L Hammond	Governor
	Mr S Holderness	Governor
	Mr J Kirk	Vice-Chair of Governors
	Prof T Lawson	Governor
	Mr I Mattioli	Governor
	Ms G Mistry	Student Governor
	Ms M Moore	Governor
	Ms S Munden	Staff Governor
	Ms S Overton-Edwards	Principal
	Mr J Pain	Governor
	Mr N Unadkat	Student Governor
	In Attendance:	Mr J Bagley
	Mr H Ravat	Vice-Principal Resources
	Mr R Mansfield	Clerk
	Ms J Walsh	Marketing Officer (<i>films only</i>)

Ref.		Action
B/15/36	<p>Item 1 – Attendance and Membership Matters: <i>Prior to consideration of the items on the agenda it was agreed that Jade Walsh should present recently produced short promotional films. She then showed a film made by College students to promote Performing Arts, a film ‘behind the scenes’ depicting the involvement of College students in the making of the recent Gateway College film, and the Gateway College film itself, produced by Affixius. These films had been used to launch the hash-tag Gatewaytalent. The meeting complimented Jade Walsh on the excellence of the films. Jade Walsh then left the meeting.</i></p> <p><i>1.1 Apologies for Absence</i> Apologies for absence were received from Karl Brown, Harshad Solanki and Naz Leivas-Mistry. The meeting was declared quorate.</p>	

1.2 Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items

There were no declarations of interest in agenda items. (NB Shirley Munden later declared an interest in item 7.3.)

Search Committee Matters:

1.3 Board and Committee Vacancies

Robert Mansfield referred the meeting to the minutes of the Search Committee on 5 November 2015 (item 9.1 on the agenda). There were no current vacancies on the Board or any of its committees. On 1 January 2016 the Board would be at its planned strength of 16 governors.

The meeting received this oral report.

B/15/37

Item 2 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising:

2.1 Minutes of Meeting on 29 October 2015

The minutes of the meeting on 29 October 2015 were accepted as an accurate record and were duly signed by John Turner

2.2 Matters Arising

Matters arising as listed on the agenda and not appearing as agenda items in their own right were reviewed.

Suzanne Overton-Edwards said that the behaviour and discipline policy was now displayed on the College website.

Robert Mansfield said that he had, with the agreement of Suzanne Overton-Edwards, instituted two changes to the strategic targets for 2015/2016 in response to the Board's instructions.

Suzanne Overton-Edwards reported that the data required to enable the comparisons previously requested regarding high grades and College results versus benchmarks for 2014/2015 had not yet been published. She would report further when the data were available.

SOE

The College was still in discussion with BBC Radio Leicester about the suggested linking to the College website of a broadcast by a former College student on her experience of trying to gain admission to an American university.

SOE

Robert Mansfield said that a full set of governors' pen portraits had been provided to Suzanne Overton-Edwards, to be set alongside photographs in Reception.

Suzanne Overton-Edwards said that the idea of a 'listening champion' had been discussed by the Senior Leadership Team. It had been agreed to take this idea to the Staff Consultative Committee (SCC) and the Joint Consultative and Negotiating Committee (JCNC) during the first half of the Spring Term, seeking suggestions on who might be approached to undertake this role.

Robert Mansfield confirmed that the required change had been made to the College's Governing Instrument.

B/15/38

Item 3 – Curriculum and Quality Issues:

3.1 Nothing to Report

B/15/39 **Item 4 – Student Issues:**

4.1 Student Executive Team

Nishil Unadkat introduced himself as the second Student Governor and President of the Student Executive Team (SET). He and Gayatri Mistry then provided a brief overview of the areas on which the SET was currently focusing.

There had been a meeting with Suzanne Overton-Edwards to discuss ideas for improving what was being streamed on the television screens in the Street and the canteen.

The SET would promote the importance of checking emails to the student body. As part of this promotion there would be a stand in the Street. The promotion would include publicizing the means by which students could access their emails by phone.

Nishil Unadkat said that he strongly objected to the smoking of 'weed' in the smoking shelters outside the front of the College. Ideas for tackling the problem had been discussed with Suzanne Overton-Edwards.

Gayatri Mistry said that a meeting had been arranged with the Manager of the Canteen to discuss menu choices. She also reported that the SET was researching various charities with a view to selecting the most appropriate for support.

The SET would also seek to engage more female students in sports, as their participation was currently very low. This item led to considerable discussion. There was one female only session in the gym on Friday afternoons, but this was very poorly supported. The Student Governors said that many female students felt intimidated by the presence of male students, many of whom had attained high levels of proficiency. Several governors expressed their surprise and concern, and various suggestions were made for tackling the issue. It was noted that some recently introduced activities, such as archery and zumba, had attracted more females and that the situation had improved slightly as compared with the previous year.

Nishil Unadkat said that other areas of attention included investigating schemes for relieving stress and mental health concerns, and a prom.

The meeting received this report.

B/15/40 **Item 5 – Finance & Estates Matters:**

5.1 Estates Issues

Hamid Ravat presented a brief oral report on estates matters. There was continuing slow progress with the sale of the Blackbird Road land. He advised John Turner that completion during 2016 was by no means assured, as clauses in the contract allowed the date to be extended in certain circumstances.

The meeting received the report on estates issues.

5.2 Health & Safety Statistics 2015/2016

Hamid Ravat presented the health & safety statistics to 3 December 2015. There had been 16 reported incidents of which four were classed as accidents. This represented a steady start to the year, but it was too early to make any assessment of trends.

The meeting received the health and safety statistics.

5.3 Learner Numbers and Funding 2015/2016

Hamid Ravat presented a report on learner numbers and funding for the current academic year. At the time of preparing the report the College was 57 students ahead of target, thereby representing the fifth consecutive year-on-year increase in the roll.

He advised the meeting that, although the College had recruited five students above its Skills Funding Agency (SFA) target, SFA funding was below target. This was explained by eight of the students being co-funded.

He was hopeful that funding would be increased slightly, after adjustments had been made in the new year to students' programmes. John Turner noted that funding was close to the assumptions made in the budget.

The meeting received the learner numbers and funding report.

5.4 Operating Results 2015/2016

Hamid Ravat presented an overview of the operating results to November 2015. The College had generated a surplus of £476K. Income was close to budget, but both pay and non-pay expenditure had been below budget. As regards pay expenditure he asked the meeting to note that no payments had yet been made in respect of national pay awards (although a national settlement had just been concluded for support staff) and the College would have to make higher Employers' National Insurance Contributions from April 2016. Expenditure on supply staff had been above budget mainly because the College had over-recruited. There had however been under-spends, most of which would disappear during the remainder of the year, on administration and in other areas.

John Turner noted that it was too early in the year to draw significant conclusions about the likely financial outturn.

The meeting received the operating results.

5.5 Loan Covenants Report

Hamid Ravat presented a short report, previously scrutinized by the Finance, Staffing & General Purposes Committee, on the College's performance against its bank loan covenants. The College remained fully compliant with all five covenants, and it was important that it should continue to do. Some other colleges that had recently breached their loan covenants had been obliged to renegotiate their loans on much more

expensive terms. He confirmed to Ian Mattioli that the bank loan was being paid down according to schedule.

The meeting received the report on loan covenants.

B/15/41 Item 6 – Marketing and Promotional Issues:

6.1 Marketing Update 2015/2016

James Bagley presented an update on the marketing plan for 2015/2016. There had been progress as planned in respect of updating course information on the website, brand guidelines, and media coverage – the *Leicester Mercury* would be in attendance at the forthcoming Fashion Show. College students were proud of their involvement in the promotional film for Performing Arts, and this was being distributed quite widely. The number of alumni continued to increase, as did followership on social media. The latest edition of *Word on the Street* had just been published, and copies had been provided to governors. The new prospectus and other promotional materials had been produced in time for the Open Day. The Day had been extremely successful, with attendance double that of the previous year.

John Turner said that Jade Walsh deserved congratulation for the way that she had developed the College's marketing.

The meeting received the marketing update.

B/15/42 Item 7 – Staffing Issues:

7.1 Staffing Report

In the absence of Naz Leivas-Mistry, Hamid Ravat presented the main points of the staffing report for November 2015. FTE headcount was nearly five (mainly teaching staff) above budget. This was partly the result of 'double-counting' in respect of maternity leave.

Staff absence in aggregate was still running at well below national rates. There had however been some minor concern about the absence rate of corporate staff.

The meeting received the staffing report.

7.2 Staff Survey Action Plan

Suzanne Overton-Edwards presented a report of progress against the staff survey action plan. Photographs and pen portraits of governors and members of the SLT would shortly be displayed in Reception. The Staff Bulletin was being published regularly and there had been regular updates for staff on Area Based Reviews and the Comprehensive Spending Review. It had been agreed that all policies would be considered by the JCNC. In order to improve visibility members of the SLT had taken part in 27 walkabouts to date. Four sessions of *SLT Question Time* had been arranged, but no staff members had attended.

The meeting received the update on progress against the staff survey action plan.

7.3 Corporate Staff Pay Settlement

Hamid Ravat presented a short paper setting out the relevant context and informing the meeting that a national pay settlement of 0.9% had just been concluded for support staff. This was within the 1% increase assumed in the budget and he recommended that the College should implement the settlement.

The meeting voted unanimously, with staff and student governors abstaining, to implement the national pay award of 0.9% for corporate staff.

HR

B/15/43

Item 8 – Governance Issues:

8.1 Prevent Update

Suzanne Overton-Edwards presented an update on Prevent prepared for the Board by Liz Ward. Detailed scrutiny of this matter had been placed in the remit of the Standards & Quality Committee. The College was working in 2015/2016 towards full implementation, within its strategy and action plan. A Prevent risk assessment had been undertaken. The presentation included an overview of actions including training and preparations for a themed inspection visit by OfSTED on 12 January 2016. Sam Slack, Prevent Coordinator, was visiting the College on 5 January 2016 and would review the College's efforts to counter potential cyber-bullying. There would be a display of faith boards on 12 January 2016. The College was well-connected, through Liz Ward, to other agencies: the police, Prevent Coordinators, Channel and Community Gold. Leicester was considered to be among the ten cities most at risk of radicalization.

Suzanne Overton-Edwards concluded by reminding governors that their responsibilities in respect of Prevent were to:

- Scrutinise the practice in the institution including a Preventing Extremism risk assessment. Ensure policies and procedures were in place and were followed to prevent people being drawn into terrorism and extremism
- Ensure that the institution's strategy complied with the Prevent Duty as set out in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Ensure that their behaviour, that of managers, the curriculum and policies exemplified British values
- Ensure that the institution provided sufficient training for staff and governors to be able to recognise and refer anyone vulnerable to radicalisation
- Ensure that there was sufficient pastoral care and support for all students.

There was a brief discussion of the contribution required of governors on 12 January. Robert Mansfield said that two governors had still to receive Prevent training and he would try to arrange that they attended on 6 January 2016.

The meeting received the Prevent update.

RM

8.2 Area Reviews

Suzanne Overton-Edwards presented an update on Area Based Reviews. The Reviews were essentially intended to save money by creating fewer, larger, more resilient providers of further education. Local meetings about the local Area Review had not to date generated openly shared ideas about ways forward, though it was rumoured that some institutions had begun exploratory discussions. An earlier announcement that colleges in Leicester and Leicestershire would be reviewed under Wave 4 (commencing in September 2016) had been called into question by recent publication of a letter from Leicester and Leicestershire Councils asking that local Colleges should be reviewed in Wave 3 (commencing in April 2016) as a submission was to be made for a combined local authority. The timetable was currently unclear. The Strategy Working Group had met once to consider the College's approach and there had been a very recent meeting between the SLT, the Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors and the Clerk to explore possible options.

The meeting noted this update on Area Reviews.

8.3 Code of Good Governance Action Plan

Robert Mansfield reported that the Search Committee had considered and slightly amended an assessment of the College's compliance with the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and had identified priorities for attention during 2015/2016. He then presented the actions planned. John Turner said that the action plan should move the College from an estimated 80% - 85% level of compliance to 90 - 95% within a year.

The meeting received the action plan.

8.4 Public Access and Confidentiality Policy

Robert Mansfield presented the public access and confidentiality policy. He had reviewed the policy and believed that no change was currently needed.

The meeting endorsed the public access and confidentiality policy without amendment.

8.5 Annual Complaints Report 2014/ 2015

Suzanne Overton-Edwards presented the Annual Complaints Report for 2014/2015. Of 14 complaints three had come from Hanover Close, and a further three or four related to the behaviour of students in the locality; the remainder were diverse. The report recorded the dates and substance of the complaints and the actions taken to resolve them. Complaints about student behaviour were often difficult to resolve, as individuals were rarely identified – indeed it was not always clear that the offenders were from the College. Often the College could do no more than issue general reminders to students about behaviour. Such complaints were however

always taken seriously because of the ever-present risk of reputational damage.

In answer to questions she said that she believed the number of complaints received was similar to that for the 2013/2014.

The meeting received the complaints report 2014/2015.

8.6 Annual Report and Accounts 2014/2015

Hamid Ravat presented the highlights of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2014/2015. These had already received detailed scrutiny at a joint meeting of the Audit and Finance, Staffing & General Purposes Committees. The accounts had received an unqualified opinion from the auditors. The College had generated a surplus of £149K, as previously reported in the management accounts, to which the auditors had made no adjustments. The balance sheet was also as shown in the management accounts. John Turner congratulated Hamid Ravat and the Finance team on another excellent set of accounts. Harnish Hadani then proposed and Nelista Cuffy seconded the approval of the report and accounts.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the Annual Report and Accounts 2014/2015.

8.7 Management Representation Letters: RSM UK Audit

Hamid Ravat presented the draft Audit Findings Report from RSM Audit UK (the name recently adopted by Baker Tilly). This too had received detailed scrutiny at a joint meeting of the Audit and Finance, Staffing & General Purposes Committee. The report confirmed that the auditors had found no misstatements, improprieties, irregularities or control deficiencies. The Board was asked to approve the signing of the customary letters of representation. Harnish Hadani then proposed and Nelista Cuffy seconded the approval of the signing of the management letters of representation.

The meeting voted unanimously to approve the signing of the management letters of representation.

B/15/44 Item 9 – Consent Agenda:

John Turner introduced the following items in turn, inviting major comments or questions.

9.1 Minutes of the Search Committee 5 November 2015

9.2 Minutes of the Finance, Staffing and General Purposes Committee 17 November 2015

9.3 Minutes of the Student Affairs Committee 23 November 2015

9.4 Minutes of the Audit Committee 3 December 2015

9.5 Minutes of the Finance, Staffing and General Purposes Committee 3 December 2015

The meeting received in turn the minutes of committees as listed above.

B/15/45 Item 10 – Dates and Times of Next Meetings:

The dates and times of the next meetings were confirmed as follows.

Training Event: 6 February 2016 at 09.00 (ending with lunch)

Board Meeting: Thursday 24 March 2016 at 5.30 p.m. at the College.

B/15/46 Item 11 – Any Other Business:

11.1 Retirement of Tony Lawson

John Turner said that the impending retirement of Tony Lawson was a milestone in the history of the College. The Board owed him profound thanks for his help and advice over many years and he would be missed. Tony Lawson said that it had been a pleasure to work with members past and present. He had joined the staff of the College in 1974 and since that time had had been involved with the College in various capacities. The only aspect that he had not enjoyed had been his participation in OfSTED inspections. Suzanne Overton-Edwards added her thanks on behalf of the SLT and the College, especially for the guidance provided by Tony Lawson during difficult times.

The meeting next considered confidential items. The proceedings, which concerned the strategic plan, are recorded separately under confidential minute B/15/47.