



## ST MARY'S COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

### MINUTES OF PART ONE OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY HELD ON MONDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2018

- Present:** Mr N. McNeil (Chair)  
Ms J. Singleton (Interim Principal)  
Mrs S. Beecroft  
Mr A Kherakar  
Mr M. Conboy  
Mr S. Preugschat  
Fr N. Wynn  
Miss A. Siddique
- In attendance:** Mrs L. Farnhill (Clerk to the Board)  
(By invitation of Ms K Hollern (Business Manager)  
Chair) Mr M. Lenaghan (Director of Finance & Resources (CMC))  
Mr S. Jones (Head of Intervention (ESFA))  
Mrs E. Best (Vice Principal)  
Mr K. Rice (Assistant Principal)  
Mr P Holmes (IT Manager) (Training only)  
Mr L Walmsley (Director of Teaching and Learning) (Training only)  
Mrs T Ellet (Nursery Manager)
- Apologies:** Mr C Beesley  
Mr M Wright
- Absent:** None

**Prior to the meeting** – a training session was conducted in the lecture theatre covering ALPS Connect and the In Year Assessment Calendar. Separate documents covering the content and subsequent questions and challenge are in the Governor Training Files

#### Item 1 **WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER**

The Chair welcomed the members, apologising for calling the Special Meeting at short notice following the quoracy cancellation of the meeting scheduled for September 26<sup>th</sup>. He made a special welcome to student governor Ambar who had been appointed in the summer term but was today attending her first meeting. Father Wynn opened the meeting in prayer.

**Item 2            APOLOGIES**

The apologies as listed above were accepted.

**Item 3            DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There was no interest to be declared in relation to Part One of the Agenda. Interim Principal Jenny Singleton declared an interest in items to be discussed in Part 2. She also declared that should Principal's expenses be raised, an interest is also declared in this.

**Item 4            TRAINING**

**i) PearlTrees Launch**

Due to the cancellation of the meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> September, the Chair and Principal had approved the removal of this from the agenda with a separate date and time for training to reduce the length of the meeting. The training was therefore conducted at 5.30pm on October 1<sup>st</sup> in the lecture theatre. The Launch of PearlTrees has been deferred and training focused on ALPS Connect and the in Year Assessment Process/ Calendar

**Deferred  
Resolved**

**The launch of the governors' pearltrees portal be deferred.  
That the details of the training undertaken be noted.**

**Item 5            NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair asked that consideration be given to approving the absence of Foundation Governor Mike Wright. He is to undertake additional responsibilities at work for a period of 12 months and at the request of his school Board, he is to reduce additional external responsibilities in this time. The Chair highlighted the valuable contributions of Mike who fully intends to return to his SMC governance role in Sept 2018. The Board unanimously approved the absence until Sept 2018 under the provision that Mike is kept up to date with SMC information through the distribution of minutes.

**Resolved**

**That the absence is approved.**

**Item 6            BOARD MINUTES**

**MINUTES OF PART ONE OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2018**

The above minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting. Amendments were recommended to include 'National 6<sup>th</sup> Form College' data in item 8 a) (line 6) along with the correction of a misspelt word on page 8.

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of Part One of the Meeting of the Governing Body held on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018 be signed and approved subject to the relevant amendments.

**Item 7 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY BOARD MINUTES**

**Item 7 i) i) Staff pay rise**

A verbal update was given by ML confirming that the college will implement the pay rise as part of the new pay spine and this would be rolled in with the re-structure. **In response to a governor question** JS informed the Board that an update to staff would be given in the next staff forum meeting.

JS confirmed that the nationally agreed govt funded teacher pay rise which excludes SFC's penalises Catholic Colleges which cannot academise under Cannon Law - is being contested by ACVIC.

Steve Jones indicated that there had been no complaints locally.

**Deferred The pay rise will be deferred and implemented with the college restructure**

**Item 7 ii) ii) Termly health and safety report**

KH advised the Board that a Premises Officer is yet to be appointed and therefore no report is available. In the absence of an estates manager, duties have been distributed to different members of staff and trained accordingly. Maintenance work has been carried out on pipes following recommendations and NeBosh training undertaken by staff with CMC staff due in November to review fire regulations

**Deferred Details of the updated to be noted with the full report deferred until November.**

**Item 7 iii) iii) Nursery safeguarding Policy**

The Nursery manager had given apologies for the meeting scheduled 26<sup>th</sup> September, therefore this item was deferred.

**Deferred The nursery safeguarding policy will be reviewed by the Resources committee and put to the Board for approval**

**Item 7 iv) iv) Implementation of nursery line management structure and inspection**

This item has been deferred until further clarity can be obtained on the Boards responsibilities in relation to non-maintained nurseries, with the Board being made aware that there is no need to govern non maintained nurseries, however it is uncertain what the legal position is relating to nurseries owned by a college that reports to a governing Board (whereby a condition of the Ofsted registration states the registered person must be a member of the governing

Board where there is one). The Board were informed that the line management of the Nursery Manager will now be within the remit of the College Financial Manager.

**Deferred**            **That the Board note the decision to implement a line manager to oversee the work of the nursery manager and defer the decision of initiating an independent inspection until the responsibilities of the governing board in relation to nurseries is established**

**Item 7 v)**            **v) KPI DashBoard**  
To improve the flow of the meeting, this item will be discussed within the finance and resources items under agenda Item 10.

**See Item 10a)**

**Item 8**                **MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEES OF THE GOVERNING BODY**

The Chair confirmed that no committee meetings had taken place since the last meeting of the full board, however, acknowledged that an item remained outstanding:

**8 i) Structure of the committees including number of Audit members – Reorganisation for approval**

Chair, NmN advised the Board that committee structures had been discussed at the BMAC and requested approval from the Board to move members between committees to ensure that committees had sufficient numbers. Fthr Wynn had agreed that if approved by the Board, he would also sit on the Audit committee, and it was asked that SP consider moving to the Audit committee from resources. To address the BMAC member shortfall, Trustee approval would be sought to approach the European Provincial Education Deputy to be a co-opted member of the committee in an independent advisory role. The Chair assured the Board that the committee membership structure would be continually reviewed in line with new appointments to the Board to ensure the correct skills balance is maintained within the committees.

There were no objections to the proposed changes.

**Resolved**            **That the committee restructure to include Ftr Wynn and SP as members of the Audit Committee is approved.**

**Item 8 ii)**            **ii) Verbal report on the BMAC meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> October at 4.30pm**

Chair of the Committee Ftr Wynn gave an overview of the

discussions which will be minuted and distributed at the next meeting of the Board. He highlighted the alteration in the voting process for the student governor, the nomination and approval of the committee Chair was himself and that NMN had been nominated and approved as the Vice Chair. He confirmed that the behind the resignations of Paul Reynolds and Jeff Brown had been discussed. The Board self-evaluation results were discussed and reviewed in the context of resignations and potential new appointments with a decision to repeat this process later in the year to reflect the current governor cohort. A review of Board and committee attendance had taken place, which highlighted patterns of poor attendance from student governors and governors who have since resigned, with current members having good levels of attendance. The reserve list was reviewed with two applications reviewed which will be presented for Board approval under AOB. Additional names were discussed with actions to review the interest of those remaining on the list. The Terms of reference were reviewed and will be presented to the November meeting of the Board for approval. No items were raised under AOB

**Resolved That the details of the verbal report be noted**

**Item 9 CURRICULUM, QUALITY, TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT**

**9 a) Pass Rates and Achievement Rates 17/18**

Principal, JS gave a comprehensive commentary on the report circulated (Govs.Sept18.4) highlighting good overall results with pass rates being above the National average, however high grades were below. Notable concerns were in Religious Studies and Computer Science. JS advised that concerns had been raised by the teacher of RS earlier in the year regarding the student cohort. JS detailed the comprehensive actions taken to tackle the issues raised in the CS department which had done insufficient work to prepare students for their exams and supported employee performance procedures were being undertaken.

JS highlighted how the level of study within SMC had changed, with now almost half taking BTEC subjects (235 on A-Levels and 196 on vocational courses). JS highlighted that the ALPS data within the report demonstrated that low and middle ability students do very well at SMC however, those with higher ability are not progressing. Areas of stretch, challenge and pace are being addressed and the strategies implemented to date have had significant impact in moving teaching, learning and assessment out of ALPS blue.

**In response to a request for clarity from a governor regarding the CS & RS results** JS confirmed that the data meant the student had failed to achieve their expected grade based on their GCSE grade profile on entry. **In response to a request for a more in depth analysis as to the cause in CS poor result** JS explained that the marking throughout the year had not been correct or consistent and the TL&A strategy would prevent reoccurrence. **In**

**response to further challenge regarding the implementation of the in-year assessment and TL&A strategy** having already put in place prior to these results, JS confirmed that it was introduced part way through the year in conjunction with a supported employee performance policy which was being followed to address performance in all subjects.

**A further governor confirmed that there was an inherent need for governors** to be assured that SMC was delivering high quality education and for that, governors need to understand what SMC provide. **The chair added that he wanted assurance** that the processes were audited at every stage to which **a further governor added** that there must be a clear process for identifying and addressing issues. JS stated that she was pleased that governors were challenging them on this to further drive improvement. The BTEC results were reviewed with attention being drawn to the HSC results and actions taken to address this to include the relinquishing of the HoD as quality nominee which is now undertaken by a member of CMC staff who have already initiated a number of changes which are having a positive impact. JS advised that there would be a final outcomes paper available ahead of the OFSTED support and monitoring visit and will be distributed ahead of the next meeting of the Board in November. The Chair thanked JS and her team for their work in improving results and presenting the information clearly and honestly.

**Resolved**      **That the report is approved as an interim with the final outcomes paper being presented in November.**

**Item 9b)      Provisional Enrolment Data**

EB gave a detailed and candid commentary to her report (Govs.Sept18.5) highlighting that despite increased marketing and bespoke activities tailored to each student group, SMC applications were down 14% attributed to the financial notice to improve, the OFSTED report and the low birth year. The conversion rate was up but it was noted that despite specific targeted intervention in partner schools, applications and take up were reduced, with non-partner applications having increased.

EB urged the governors to take note of the ethnic make up of the student cohort which had seen a further decline in Catholic students and those of White British origin. Despite specific marketing tailored to the catholic students and their parents, and those from the Ribble Valley, it had failed to generate additional applicants with one parent specifically emailing to withdraw an application due to the demographic of Blackburn and SMC.

Following enrolment staff took the opportunity to contact all applicants who had not enrolled at SMC to ascertain their destination, details of which are within the report. EB highlighted the increase to Blackburn college and consideration was given to whether this was due to Blackburn College's decision to open

enrolment prior to the release of GCSE results. **In response to a governor question regarding course allocation** where results are not yet available, Principal, JS added that it was not possible to make an informed professional decision in the best interest of the students and their abilities and likelihood to succeed without their results, nor could entry criteria be adhered to. She stated that upon discussion with the students, some had disclosed details of what would be considered inappropriate course offers based on their grades, giving examples of students with low GCSE profiles being placed on A-Level courses for science and mathematics, without the required entry grades. **In response to a governor question as to how they expected the competitor to manage results**, JS thought that it is likely that once students are settled into the institution, they will be encouraged to switch to a course at a more appropriate level to their ability. JS continued that this would not be a tactic adapted by SMC as this was not in the best interests of the students and this has been reported to John Boyle as the competitor was not recruiting with integrity or the students' best interests, it is assumed financial motivation is behind this recruitment tactic. **In response to a governor question** regarding whether those students would have chosen SMC had both institutions offered the same courses at the same level, JS stated that students had indicated that they would and had requested that SMC match the offer as they would prefer to study here, however SMC will not set a student up to fail and advise them upon an achievable program of study. EB added that as a larger FE college, Blackburn has a range of other options available at a lower level therefore once engaged, students will be dropped to a lower level of study. In response the curriculum offer at SMC has been reviewed, a L2 in Business has been added along with a GCSE re-sit package and Criminology. The level 3 vocational courses have been reviewed with packages adapted to suit individual learners. A further audit of the A-Level subject offer will be undertaken and further curriculum adaptations are expected to include increased number of level 2 courses next year to meet with local demand. This review to include a restructure and remodel of the staff identified £80,000 of savings.

JS continued that the Open Evening held last week had been busier than the previous 2 years and was preceded by a Catholic Feeder school reception following feedback from a previous governing body meeting. Whilst disappointed with the enrolment figures, JS in confident they have recruited with integrity. **In response to challenge from a governor to** revisit the marketing strategy as being critical in maintaining the solvency of the college, JS responded that they had advertised and interviewed prospective candidates for the role of marketing director however they had not appointed anyone to the role as the quality of the applicants had not been high enough. JS added that there would be a marketing strategy in place by December and that a Marketing Director would be incorporated into the restructure. **In response to a governor**

question regarding the population dip, it was confirmed that this was the tail end and anticipated learner numbers were set to increase. In response to a governor question regarding the timeframe for a full OFSTED inspection that would initiate a more positive grade for marketing, JS advised that it would be no later than March. A further comment from a governor was made that the FoH announcement coupled with a more favorable OFSTED grade would be powerful marketing tools. EB added that parental feedback had been that there was uncertainty within the community about the future of the college due to negative press around the finances. In response to a governor question regarding whether that had been specifically raised by parents, EB responded that parents had stated that and asked if SMC would be open next year to allow their child to complete their studies.

**Resolved**            **That the details of the report be noted and actions taken to complete the marketing strategy for review in December.**

**Student governor AS gave her apologies that she needed to leave after this item – at 7.30pm**

**Item 9 c)**            **HE Recruitment and Enrolment Report**  
JS gave an overview of the report created by the HE Co-ordinator, highlighting that student numbers were up 15 on this time last year and that recruitment was ongoing with several activities having taken place that week. JS added that consultations with UCLAN and LHu were underway to offer courses run at CMC that would be SMC students, educated at an alternate base.

**Resolved**            **That the details of the report be noted**

**Item 10**            **FINANCE AND RESOURCES**  
**Items 10 a)-d) were included in one report plus a verbal update with finance and resources discussed as one overarching item and integrated agenda item**

**10 a) KPI Dashboard**  
ML gave an overview of the information contained within report included within the first tab of Govs.Sept18.7. ML invited questions from the Board and none were received.

**Resolved**            **That the details of the report be noted**

**Items 10**            **b) Year-end financial position, c) updated monthly**  
**b)-d)**            **management accounts, d) management accounts up to 60/06/18 and 31/07/18**

KH reviewed the remaining information within the document under items 10 b) to d). KH highlighted that the financial position of the college was positive with 52866 surplus increased to over 77,000 which will be at break even after redundancy costs which is better than expected. KH advised the Board that the Auditors were due in

w/c 15<sup>th</sup> October. The bank balance was at £571,000 at year end. **In response to a governor question regarding** the balance at the end of August, KH advised that this was unknown, but high due to the student profile. **A further question** was received asking if they were planning to ask for re-phrasing from the ESFA, KH advised they were not. **A further question was asked regarding when** the reforecast needed to be re-submitted and clarification was given that this is not necessary however they would submit the revised figures. **A governor asked** SJ from the ESFA if this was correct, he stated that there is no requirement to resubmit, however, given the financial position of the college, the ESFA would advise a review, particularly in line with the low student enrollment. **A governor asked if the** financial notice to improve may be lifted at the re-forecast and SJ stated that this is a potential outcome. **The Chair invited further questions of which none were received.**

**Item 10 e) 3 YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN INC DRAFT BUDGET FOR 18/19**  
It was noted that this had been approved in July.

**Resolved items 10a-e)** **That the financial position of the college be noted**

**Item 11 CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION**

**11 a) Letters from Salford Diocese**

These outline key changes in staff and training available including for governors. **In response to a governor question** the chair stated that these had never previously been distributed to us however with the changes within the Diocese we were now within their circulation list and with the approval of changes to the I&A, the Bishop would approve Foundation Governors and therefore there would be increased contact between the Diocese and SMC and this would be a positive change for SMC.

**Resolved That the content of the letters be noted**

**11b) SFCA update re teacher pay**

This has been discussed earlier under item 7i). No further questions or comments were received.

**Resolved That the details of the announcement be noted**

**11c) SFCA September update**

This item was for information only. No questions or comments were raised regarding the content

**Resolved That the details of the update be noted**

**11 d) – St Mary’s College Prospectus**

The Principal drew the attention of the governors to the modern updated look of the prospectus which was balanced in terms of student representation. EB distributed copies in addition to the electronic copy distributed prior to the meeting.

Governors agreed that it was improved and had more appeal than the previous prospectus.

**Resolved That the style and content of the new prospectus be noted**

**11e) KSIE – Updated Part One**

The clerk advised that whilst this was looked at as part of the Safeguarding policy update in July, there had been a further update with some amendments as highlighted in the document cover sheet. All governors present were asked if they had read and understood the document. All agreed, the Clerk advised that the signing in sheet for the meeting would be used to evidence that their Safeguarding requirements had been met and that those not present would be asked to email to confirm that they too had read and understood the document and their role in relation to Safeguarding.

**Resolved The details of the document were noted with governors confirming their understanding in relation to their statutory responsibilities in relation to safeguarding**

**Item 12 POLICIES FOR REVIEW**

**12 i) Governors Code Of Conduct**

Governors were asked to consider the fully revised code of conduct based on examples provided by Clerks across the SFCA network. ML confirmed that he had been asked to proof read the document and felt it was comprehensive. JS agreed that she too felt it reflected a more professional approach and would ask CMC to consider a similar format.

**Resolved The updated code of conduct was approved for immediate implementation**

**Item 13 AOB**

**13a) Additional Training Date**

The Agenda had been distributed ahead of the meeting which was to take place on 26<sup>th</sup> September which could not be held due to being non-quorate, therefore item this has now been covered with training undertaken today. Governors have been asked to be on standby and available wherever possible for both the support and monitoring visit on 15<sup>th</sup> October and the full inspection (notice for which will be minimal). JS advised that there has not yet been any contact from Suzanne regarding the focus of the visit, yet it is

expected to be in areas covered by the earlier training and that copies of the information covered would be given to the clerk for distribution to all governors. Further training for governors will take place throughout the year

**Resolved**      **That the details of the earlier training be noted**

**13b) Availability of Catering for Meetings**

The clerk asked if there were any objections to the reduction in catering which had now moved to a buffet style as opposed to a hot meal. None were received. JS added that at CMC no catering was provided at meetings other than tea, coffee, water and biscuits. KH added that the facilities within the conference room used for meetings were now repaired therefore drinks could be made rather than having to buy in catering services. The clerk asked if there would be any objections to providing the facilities for governors to make themselves a drink. **A governor requested that** biscuits were made available for those who had been unable to eat prior to the meeting.

**Resolved**

**The removal of outside catering for meetings was approved. Facilities would be available for governors to make themselves drinks.**

**THE CHAIR THEN REQUESTED THE APPROVAL OF TWO FOUNDATION GOVERNORS PROPOSED BY THE BMAC UNDER AOB**

**AOB 11 c) – Foundation Governor Approval**

The clerk presented the applications received for two foundation governors, Mike Vizzard and Greg Miller that had been received and reviewed by the BMAC. As they were received after papers for this Board meeting had been distributed, paper applications were made available for Governors to review and the clerk agreed to distribute electronically along with the draft minutes from this evening for governor's information. An overview of each applicant including their skills and experience was given. The Chair added that both were strong applications from practicing Catholics and highly recommended that consideration for appointment is given to both. The Chair asked if there were any objections to these being approved for nomination to the Trustees for approval. None were received.

**Resolved**

**That the two governor applications for Mike Vizzard and Greg Miller are approved for formal Trustee approval and appointment**

Part one of the meeting closed at 8.05pm with a reminder for all

present that the next meeting of the Board is Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at 6.00 pm. Staff were thanked for their time and contributions and asked to leave so that confidential items under Part B could be reviewed.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_