



Confirmed Minutes of the Full Governing Body Meeting held on Tuesday 12 October 2021 at 6pm via Microsoft Teams

Present:	Mark Dawson	Parent Governor
	John Fogarty	Foundation Governor
	Mark Harvey	Foundation Governor
	Mike Hill	Principal
	Susan Jarvis	Co-opted Governor
	Andrew Jones	Co-opted Governor
	Oliver Maddock	Foundation Governor
	Michael Martin	Foundation Governor
	Tracy Mawson	Co-opted Governor
	Andrew Rannard	Foundation Governor
	Sarah Savage	Staff Governor
	Helen Stevenson (<i>Chair</i>)	Foundation Governor
	Katelyn Willock	Student Governor

In attendance:	Karl Smith (<i>Vice Principal, Curriculum & Quality</i>)
	Michelle Williams (<i>Vice Principal, Strategy & Resources</i>)
	Ruth Potter (<i>Clerk to Governors</i>)

PART 1

The meeting was opened in prayer by the Principal.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Governors were invited to declare whether they had any direct or indirect personal, prejudicial or pecuniary interest or conflict of interest in any matter which formed part of the agenda for this meeting or was likely to be discussed at the meeting. Mike Hill reported that he had recently been appointed as a Foundation Governor at St Gregory's Catholic High School in Warrington. No other new interests were declared in addition to those which were already recorded on the College's register of interests.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2.1 Apologies for absence had been received from:

- Thomas Mitchell (*Foundation Governor*)
- David Lawson (*Foundation Governor*)
- Michelle Dutton (*Associate Member*)

The meeting was declared quorate.

3. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following item was submitted by the Principal and **accepted** by the Board:

- National Joint Council (NJC) Teachers' Pay Agreement 2021-2

It was agreed to take this item of additional business after the Principal's Report under item 6 on the agenda.

4. GOVERNING BODY MINUTES *(previously circulated)*

- 4.1 The minutes of the Full Governing Body (FGB) meeting held on 29 June 2021 were (a) approved and would be signed in accordance with Article 12(3) of the Articles of Government and (b) publication was authorised in accordance with Article 13.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE GOVERNING BODY MINUTES

5.1 **To consider any matters arising from the minutes** *(previously circulated)*

The Board noted the items on the action log which had been completed or were on the agenda for further discussion during the meeting.

6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

6.1 **Principal's Termly Report** *(previously circulated)*

The Principal presented his report to the Board which provided a summary of all key areas of the College's operations and highlighted the following key aspects:

- Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) Results – these outstanding results had been considered in depth by the Quality and Standards Committee.
- TAG appeals – there had been 30 Stage 1 appeals and four Stage 2 appeals. None had been upheld.
- Contingency planning for summer 2022 examinations/assessments was underway.
- Other results – UAL Diploma, Art Foundation, GCSE and Foundation Learning results were positive.
- Significant progress had been made on departments under formal subject review and support and challenge.
- Strategic focus for 2021-22 would be placed on sustaining the progress of departments formerly under formal processes in 2019-20 and improving the value-added performance of high-volume priority subjects.
- College priorities for 2021-22 – ten emerging priorities had been outlined. These would form the basis for the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) and would also link through to staff performance management targets for the year ahead.
- Student recruitment 2021 – this data had been considered in depth by the Finance and Resources Committee. Enrolment numbers, conversion rate from application to enrolment and liaison strategy were noted.
- Open events 2021-22 – information on arrangements for these events was shared and governors were invited to attend.
- Covid-19 pandemic – current figures for Covid-positive students and staff were shared.
- Student attendance data – new metric added to the report at the request of the Quality and Standards Committee.
- Enrichment and chaplaincy activities had re-commenced.
- Association of Catholic Sixth Form Colleges (ACVIC) Conference October 2021 – attended by the Principal and Chair of Governors.

A discussion ensued. Governors sought clarification on several issues and these were responded to by the Principal. Questions included:

Q – Two departments subject to formal review also had the highest number of TAG appeals. Had any links between these two sources of evidence been identified?

A – No direct links had been identified. One of the subjects was high volume and hence appeal numbers were proportionate with this. The other subject had a lot of

high achieving, aspirational students who had pushed for higher grades but upon review it had not been appropriate to make any change to the grades awarded.

Q – Student attendance data for 10:10 programme – what strategies were in place to increase this?

A – Lower Sixth attendance was good. Upper Sixth attendance was lower and efforts were being made to improve the programme and make it more appealing to students. Students who had persistently failed to attend the programme were being contacted. Future attendance reports to governors would include a breakdown by Lower/Upper Sixth on any areas that were flagged as red or amber.

ACTION – Student attendance section of Principal’s Report to include breakdown by Lower/Upper Sixth on any red or amber flagged areas.

The Board **noted** the contents of the Principal’s Termly Report.

6.2 **National Joint Council (NJC) Teachers’ Pay Agreement 2021-22** (*previously circulated*)

This item of additional business was considered following the Principal’s Report as agreed by the Board.

The Principal referred governors to the email circulated earlier that day by the Clerk which contained confirmation from Graham Bird, Director of HR Services at the Sixth Form College Association (SFCA), of the NJC Teachers’ Pay Agreement for 2021-22. The agreement reached between the Employers’ Side and the Staff Side – due to take effect from 1 September 2021 – was as follows:

- 1% increase on all pay points and relevant allowances
- an additional 0.5% increase on NJC pay points 6, 7 and 8.

SFCA would issue revised teacher pay scales to colleges the following week.

Negotiations in relation to the Support Staff pay claim for 2021-22 were still ongoing.

The Principal confirmed that pay award was within the budget.

It was noted that the Board had previously agreed to adhere to the SFCA Pay Framework, therefore approval was sought to adopt the teachers’ pay award in time for November salaries.

The Board **approved** the teachers’ pay award for 2021-22.

7. **STUDENT VOICE**

7.1 **Student Governor Update** (*previously circulated*)

The Student Governor presented her report on the objectives and activities of the Student Council for the academic year. She highlighted the following points:

- Student Council had met once so far this year.
- Main focus currently for Student Council was to introduce themselves to the student body, raise awareness of the Council and visibility of its members, and gauge student opinion on priority areas.
- It had been decided to encourage students to access Covid-19 testing and vaccination services.

Q – Does the Student Council require any support from the College to achieve its aim of encouraging Covid-19 testing and vaccination?

A – The Student Governor indicated that getting the vaccination bus back on site would be useful. The Principal confirmed that the College would make this request to support those students who wished to be vaccinated.

Q – How did the Student Council intend to raise its profile and get its members known by the student body?

A – The Student Governor responded that social media accounts had been set up and would be a useful tool. In addition, Carmel Radio was functioning again and students would be invited to drop in for a chat during break and lunchtime. Information had also been placed on the Student Council information board in the Refectory.

The Board thanked the Student Governor for her informative report and wished the Student Council every success for the coming year.

7.2 **Student Council Constitution** (*previously circulated*)

The Clerk presented her report on the Student Council Constitution and confirmed that collaboration had taken place between the Student Council Tutor, Student Governor, Principal and Vice Chair of Quality and Standards Committee in relation to determining the agreed version to present to the Board for approval.

The Board **approved** the Student Council Constitution.

8. **STRATEGIC PLAN**

8.1 **Strategic Plan 2022-25** (*previously circulated*)

The Principal presented the draft Strategic Plan which had been updated since the discussion at the last Board meeting. The next step was to arrange a working group meeting for governors to discuss any final amendments with a view to bringing the final version back to the Board for approval at its next meeting in December. Suggested date for this working group meeting was 23 November 2021 at 6pm.

A discussion ensued specifically in relation to the Coronavirus Recovery strategic aim and how to encourage students to come into College to access not just their subject classes, but all the other study resources and support that are on offer. Issues in relation to commercial bus services to the College were highlighted by the Student Governor who suggested that this would deter some students from coming into College when they had no lessons. Discussion took place on how best to address these issues given the importance of reliable transport services to the student body.

Governor comments and questions were invited.

Q – Plan follows calendar year rather than academic year, why is this?

A – This has been custom and practice in the College mainly due to the Board's strategic planning day usually taking place in January. However, moving forwards it may be appropriate to look again at the strategic planning cycle as part of the Governance Self-Assessment Report (SAR).

Q – Does the operational plan follow the calendar year also?

A – It follows a different timeframe because of the need to submit the College SAR to Ofsted in December; more aligned to the academic year.

Q – Local context and community of the College in St Helens does not come across fully in the draft plan, although some of the issues that St Helens faces are reflected in the strategic aims. Would suggest that some introductory sentences be added to the plan to set out this local context by reference to the strategic aims within the plan.
A – Agreed: amendments would be made to the plan to introduce this contextual element.

Governors **noted** the report and **agreed** to confirm their availability for the proposed governor strategic working group meeting.

ACTION – Clerk to contact Board members regarding availability for strategic working group meeting on 23 November at 6pm.

9. ANNUAL REPORTS

9.1 Audit Committee Annual Report 2020-21 *(previously circulated)*

The Chair of the Audit Committee presented this annual report which Audit Committee members had considered in detail and recommended to the Board for approval. He highlighted the following points:

- New member of the Audit Committee had been appointed during the year in order to strengthen the membership base.
- 100% attendance by Committee members at meetings throughout the year had been achieved.
- In line with the audit plan, areas subject to internal audit during the year had included: estates management, corporate governance, student experience and review of the website. Substantial assurance had been secured in most areas, with strong assurance secured in relation to student experience.
- Other issues highlighted in the report included the change in clerking arrangements and the external review of governance.
- The Audit Committee was of the opinion that the College's assurance arrangements, framework of governance, risk management and control processes for the use of resources, solvency of the College and the safeguarding of assets were adequate and effective.

Governors questions on the report were invited.

Q – What contingency arrangements were in place should clerking services get disrupted again in future?

A – No specific arrangements had been put in place in terms of who might step into the role in the event of an unexpected absence, however the Clerk explained the steps she had been taking to create a suite of governance documentation that had transparency and business continuity at its core. For example, the cycles of business for each Committee that gave a good oversight of what business needed to be conducted and when in the cycle of meetings.

The Board thanked the Chair of the Audit Committee and **approved** the Audit Committee Annual Report 2020-21.

10. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

10.1 Financial Update: Year End Account 2020-21 *(previously circulated)*

The Vice Principal (Strategy and Resources) provided an overview of the financial performance of the College for the year ended 31 July 2021. It was reported that the accounts had been considered by the Finance and Resources Committee at its meeting on 23 September 2021. The accounts were unaudited and as such were

subject to change. The Vice Principal advised that the College had no direct control over the pension data relating to the FRS 17 reporting requirements and its subsequent adverse impact on the deficit. The Financial Statements were to be presented for approval at the next Full Governing Body meeting scheduled to take place on 7 December 2021.

The Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee reported that the Committee had monitored the outturn throughout the 2020-21 financial year and it was evident from the year-end interim account that the Management Accounts and forecasting had proved to be consistent.

The Board **noted** the contents of the year-end financial update as at 31 July 2021 and **approved** the contents of the July 21 report.

10.2 **Correspondence from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)** *(previously circulated)*

The letter sent to all Accounting Officers of college corporations and copied to Chairs of governing bodies from John Edwards (Interim Chief Executive, ESFA) dated 22 September 2021 was considered by the Board. The correspondence related to the ESFA's expectations in relation to financial management and governance. The letter was duly considered by the Board and a discussion ensued on the extent to which these were strategic issues for the Board or operational issues for the College Management Team.

Following a discussion, the Board:

- **noted** the contents of the letter
- **agreed** that, in future, correspondence from the ESFA would be considered by the Chair of Governors and Principal in the first place and a decision taken on whether wider circulation and discussion with the Board was required or whether delegation to the College Management Team was appropriate
- **agreed** that the requirement in relation to Governance Professionals would be put on the agenda for the next Search Committee meeting.

ACTION – Search Committee agenda item.

11. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

11.1 **Risk Management Policy** *(previously circulated)*

The Vice Principal (Strategy and Resources) presented the updated Risk Management Policy. The Policy had been considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 28 September 2021 and was recommended for approval by the Board.

The Board **approved** the Risk Management Policy.

11.2 **Risk Management Action Plan** *(previously circulated)*

The Vice Principal (Strategy and Resources) presented the updated Risk Management Action Plan. The Action Plan had been considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 28 September 2021 and was recommended for approval by the Board. In addition, the annual review of risk management was presented, detailing how risks had been managed during 2020-21.

The Board:

- **approved** the Risk Management Action Plan, and
- **noted** the review of risk management for 2020-21

12. GOVERNANCE UPDATE

12.1 Education and Training Foundation (ETF) Board Review Action Plan (*previously circulated*)

The Clerk presented her report on the ETF Board Review Report and Action Plan. The ETF Board Review concluded in July 2021 and the final report and associated action plan had been circulated to the Board via email. The report made a number of recommendations designed to strengthen and support good governance within the College. In her report, Sandra Prail – the independent board reviewer – requested that governors:

- adopt and deliver the action plan
- ensure that the Governing Body owns the action plan and monitors progress against it, taking remedial actions in the event of slippage.

In order to facilitate this monitoring role, the Clerk referred the Board to the Action Plan log she had produced which included Autumn Term 1 narrative updates on each action point and also introduced a RAG rating system designed to highlight any areas that were not on track for completion in line with the suggested timeframe.

Governor comments and questions were invited on the report, action log and reported progress.

A discussion ensued and the introduction of 1-2-1 board member appraisals with the Chair was welcomed.

The Board **noted** and **accepted** the ETF Board Review Final Report and Action Plan and thanked the Clerk for her work on this.

12.2 Governance SAR (*previously circulated*)

The Principal presented his report on the Governance SAR and the proposal to adopt a new method of governance annual assessment that followed the structure and timeframe of the College SAR process. A template document for the Governance SAR had been shared that was based on the Leadership and Governance elements of the new Ofsted Inspection Framework. In order to align the Governance SAR process with that of the whole College, the Principal set out the following suggested schedule:

- Draft Governance SAR – document to be populated with actions from ETF Board Review, analysis of performance against Committee KPIs and other relevant sources of evidence.
- Search Committee – complete draft Governance SAR and share with other Committees for consideration in November/December.
- Final Governance SAR – for approval at the next Board meeting in December as part of the whole College SAR.

In terms of the future business cycle for this annual governance assessment process, the following timeline was proposed:

- Summer Term FGB Meeting – Governance SAR agenda item – update Board on Quality Improvement Plan progress, discuss emerging strengths and areas for improvement, follow up with governor survey to seek feedback on the year's performance. Also feeding into this will be 1-2-1 board member appraisals and 360 feedback exercise for Chair of Governors.
- Autumn Term 1 Committee Meetings – analysis of performance against previous year's KPIs.

- Autumn Term 1 FGB Meeting – Governance SAR agenda item – emerging strengths and areas for development.
- November – between formal meetings – Governance SAR Working Group to complete draft SAR.
- Autumn Term 2 Search Committee Meeting – complete final draft of Governance SAR.
- Autumn Term 2 FGB Meeting – Governance SAR agenda item – final draft approval.

A discussion ensued. The Chair of Search Committee emphasised the importance of this being a governor-led process with involvement and contribution from all members of the Board.

The Board:

- **noted** the report, and
- **approved** the schedule for the 2021-22 Governance SAR and the cycle for future Governance SARs.

**ACTION – (a) Search Committee to complete draft Governance SAR
(b) FGB agenda item at next meeting for final approval**

12.3 **Membership Review** *(previously circulated)*

The Clerk presented the updated Governing Body Membership 2021-22 document which was available on the College's website. She also referred governors to the Governance Structure 2021-22 document which set out the Committee structure and membership.

The Board was carrying a Foundation Governor vacancy and a further two Foundation Governors were due to complete their term of office during the academic year. The Clerk reported that the Governor Recruitment Policy was due to be reviewed in line with the ETF Board Review Report recommendations and this would feed into Search Committee in the first place. In addition, she confirmed that a full report on membership and succession planning was due to be considered by the Search Committee at its meeting on 18 October 2021.

Governor questions and comments were invited.

Q – Would consideration be given to the diversity of the Board when considering recruitment of new members?

A – Yes, this would be an important factor. An annual report on governing body equality and diversity data (as collated via the standard E&D form) was scheduled for discussion at next week's Search Committee meeting and strategies to attract under-represented groups would be considered as part of the recruitment procedure. The aim was for the Board's membership to reflect the community served by the College.

The Board **noted** the updated membership documentation.

12.4 **Annual Review of Governance Documentation and Checks** *(previously circulated)*

The Clerk presented her report and highlighted the following points:

- All board members were asked to submit key documentation on an annual basis as follows:
 - Declaration of interests

- Declaration of eligibility
- Code of conduct
- Skills audit
- Equality and diversity form.
- Submission statistics for the current academic year were reported – all outstanding responses had been chased.
- Importance of timely submission was stressed as this information was required to finalise key documents such as the Register of Interests and governing body skills analysis.
- DBS checks were conducted for board members on appointment and/or re-appointment – all checks were up-to-date.

The Board **noted** the annual review of governance documentation and checks and **agreed** to submit any outstanding documentation.

ACTION – Board members to submit any outstanding documentation.

12.5 **Calendar of Meetings for 2021-22** *(previously circulated)*

The Clerk presented the draft calendar of board and committee meetings and explained that this had been drafted in line with the academic year (rather than the calendar year).

The Board:

- **approved** the Calendar of Meetings for 2021-22, and
- **agreed** that approval of the Calendar would in future fall into the Autumn Term 2 cycle of business.

13. **POLICIES**

13.1 **Complaints made against the Governing Body, Board Members and Clerk** *(previously circulated)*

The Chair of Audit Committee presented the updated policy which was based on an Eversheds template document and amended to reflect the advice contained within the ETF Board Review Report.

The Board **approved** the updated policy document.

13.2 **Value for Money Policy** *(previously enclosed)*

The Board accepted the recommendation of the Finance and Resources Committee and **approved** the Value for Money Policy.

14. **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

To receive the following unconfirmed minutes:

14.1 **Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on 21 September 2021** *(previously circulated)*

The Board **received** the draft minutes from the Quality and Standards Committee meeting held on 21 September 2021.

14.2 **Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 23 September 2021** *(previously circulated)*

The Board **received** the draft minutes from Finance and Resources Committee Meeting held on 23 September 2021.

14.3 **Audit Committee meeting held on 28 September 2021** *(previously circulated)*

The Board **received** the draft minutes from Audit Committee meeting held on 28 September 2021.

To receive the following confirmed minutes:

14.4 **Audit Committee meeting held on 15 June 2021**

The Board **received** the confirmed minutes from Audit Committee meeting held on 15 June 2021.

14.5 **Finance and Resources Committee held on 24 June 2021**

The Board **received** the confirmed minutes from Finance and Resources Committee meeting held on 24 June 2021.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

As discussed under item 6.2.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16.1 Full Governing Body Meeting – Tuesday 7 December 2021 at 6pm.

There being no further Part 1 business to discuss the meeting concluded at 7.20pm.

Signed by the Chair: _____



On this day: _____ 7 December 2021 _____