



Part 1 Minutes of the Meeting of the Governing Body Held on 11 October 2022 at 6.15pm via MS Teams/in Oak 116

Present

Sundeep Bhandari (Acting Chair) (SB)
 Annette Cast (Principal) (AC)
 Terry Butland (TB)
 Kate Parsley (KP)
 Carlton Downie (CD)
 Sweetsan Manijam (SM) Student
 Tianna Smith (TS) Student (arrived late)

In Attendance

Bob Pattni (DP Finance and Planning) (BP)
 Lois Vassell (VP C&Q) (LV)
 Robert Heal (Director of Governance) (RoH)

Observer

Peter Roberts DfE Project Manager

1. Chair's Opening Remarks and report of any Chairs Action taken since the last meeting:

The Acting Chair welcomed all to the meeting and noted that the papers are taken as read. The Director of Governance updated the Board that Simon Radford (SR) & Shameem Rahman (ShR) have both resigned for work commitment reasons, however, the Chair has accepted their appointments as co-opted Governors, ShR to the Audit Committee and SR as LGPS representative to Resources Committee.

The Chair noted that flowers have been sent from the Board to a member for personal reasons.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Gideon Schulman (Chair), Jean Lammiman, (Vice Chair), Rohit Bhatia, Viresh Paul, Ramin Hashemian and Ramya Vadivel due to work or other commitments.

3. Declaration of Interests

None

4. DfE Presentation on Capital Project, Peter Roberts

The Acting Chair invited Peter Roberts (PR), DfE Project manager to present an update on the Capital project proposal. PR introduced the team and overviewed the scheme. Key points were the suggestion of larger buildings and improved utilisation. PR explained, the transformation fund details block (buildings) approval requirements for changes. We have developed a block justification appraisal and developed 3 major options for ministerial consideration. The recommendation is to replace 70% of buildings to keep within affordability parameters and gain Ministerial sign off for a control option (baseline model). The proposed option has been developed for procurement purposes. Phasing has been

considered to maintain site usage during implementation. Gateway approvals have been achieved and capital funding has been agreed by Ministers. Next steps, procurement expression of interest to our framework, they respond with interest and attend a bidder's day on 4th Nov. We then issue a tender document requesting formal responses, they are then reduced to 2 contractors for competitive engagement. Design solutions are negotiated and agreed, which leads to contract development and a contract award in Aug 23. Target completion is by Aug 27. The main issue arising now is inflationary impact. This will be measured at mid-point and may impact the final design.

This means we have a risk to be wary of. Also planning may take longer and this may also lead to longer completion dates.

Questions were taken from governors

Governors asked is there a contract tender risk? Builders are struggling to deliver with a shortage of workers. PR, this is a market risk, but we use large framework contractors who have implications on their position on the framework for non-compliance. Labour problems are noted but do not currently affect these large builds; in addition the DfE has clout with framework contractors.

As this affects college day to day and students. We have a compact site, students could be hugely affected, what structures are put in place to support uninterrupted use of the College? PR, a key part is the college brief and this is clear in the tender documents that this is a live site. The control option tender is based on live site without offsite options. However, BP and the team are looking at offsite options. There is a fixed cost, but we can look at temporary costs (of decamping) versus program costs onsite i.e. we can build faster without students. TB was reassured.

Another question was on environmental inclusions. Are we using ground source heat pumps? PR, this is a net zero scheme planning. This includes solar & ground source heat pumps and urban greening factors.

The Principal added, there are concerns over the length of time impacting on learners. Also, on the financials. My goal is to complete the build as quickly as possible. I've met Director of Education for Harrow and others, we are getting people and the community behind this project. The Borough is keen to support it. We have sought options to decamp staff/ students to local schools and Borough facilities. Local communities are keen to support. There is a positive direction and feedback is we can decamp, which would enable a faster build. Also, Harrow is looking at 14-16 provision for non A level vocational students, if this was being developed here. SB noted it's our risk if we change things to future proof College.

Governors noted that large projects have a tendency to stop mid-way. Does this mean we have a review after each phase? PR, budget stoppages tend to come from delays. Stanmore is one of our top 3 schemes for contribution and unlikely to be cut. TB, can we offer a scheme where we can build in part and have options to stop? So we get something rather than nothing. PR, we could not do this, it is an all or nothing plan that cannot be stopped once started. It is not a done deal till the cash is in bank, but when approved it's going all the way to the end. PR added he noted policy changes in Government over time, but generally its continually moving forward.

Another question was on termination payments. PR confirmed it would be a major embarrassment to step back from this scheme.

The deputy Principal thanked PR and commented about capital budget spending review period. PR confirmed, it spans two periods, but again once committed it becomes an irrelevance. A College contribution is requested of £800k and PR encourage Governors to ratify this later in this meeting.

5i. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2022

These were accepted as a true record. With one amendment. Approved.

5ii. Action points review

Action points were reviewed and noted as completed

6. Matters Arising not on the Agenda

There were no matters arising not noted on the agenda

7. Covid – 19 Planning Committee

SB explained that the Covid pandemic had come to an end and the Committee had had no need to meet for over 18 months. The Governance Committee had agreed that the Covid-19 planning Committee was no longer required.

SB opened an extraordinary meeting of the Covid -19 Planning Committee, which was noted as being quorate. The committee agreed to formally close. The extraordinary meeting was closed.

The Board approved the decision.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED

COVID -19 PLANNING COMMITTEE CLOSED

8i. Capital Working Party Terms of Reference

The Director of Governance noted that there was no change to the Terms of Reference. The Board Approved

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED

CAPITAL WORKING PARTY TERMS OF REFERENCE

8ii. College Seal

The Director of Governance noted that there were no reported uses of the College Seal

RECOMMENDATION

NOTED

COLLEGE SEAL USE

8iii. Letter from FE Commissioner

The Director of Governance overviewed the letter previously shared with Board and highlighted actions that would arise in Committees.

The Acting Chair noted revised FEC benchmarks and that the College is within all new guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION**NOTED****FE COMMISSIONERS LETTER****9. The Principals Report**

The Principal gave her first Principals Report. It has been a busy few week's. Achievement 21/22 still 81.6% with 174 outstanding results, but we are below national achievement rate. We are reviewing where changes occurred and why it dropped. GCSE has been a struggle and sub contract football academies are still exhibiting behaviours that mirror subcontract operation. Satellites are grade 4, with results of 3% and 17% . This has severely impacted achievement. Every dept is going through a health check, RAG rating and lessons learnt exercise. There are some great results of 100% and which exceeded national benchmark and are to be proud of. But the overall attainment is below average. We are undertaking self-assessment and planning changes for 23/24. The plan is to develop an improved Strategy for next year, whilst retaining learners through new programs to rebuild confidence and develop skills. Enrollment was busy but below target. This is the main discussion for strategy day. Making us clear about what our offer is. The FE Commissioner visited the College and recommended construction. The local council wants vocational courses e.g. construction; so this is about repositioning the college to drive applications.

We have had a positive induction, freshers week and parents welcome, its been packed and we have a new student union. All very positive and we have had a string of good parent communications. We do however need to understand the competition and why we are not converting students, what are the external impacts and wellbeing issues.

The report covers curriculum planning which has been overhauled. The process will start w/c 3 October and will be completed by Friday 16th December 2022. This will allow for appropriate planning of resources budget, staffing, curriculum design and marketing. We need to be ahead of game for 24/25 and get adverts out earlier. We are going to up the ante.

Staff are top led, but ownership begins at the bottom, so we are developing staff led management and looking to make them feel empowered through training in Team briefings and feedback systems.

Governors challenged the timing for curriculum planning. The Vice Principal responded reasoning regarding current timeline, which satisfied the Board.

Governors challenged achievement, especially around exam performance versus Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGS).The Vice Principal explained that nationally there has been a dip in achievement. Learners have had TAGS during Covid and not been in exam conditions. We have given support, mock exams etc but this didn't resolve. Satellite outcomes have compounded the problem. The Principal added, we are comparable to national. The stark bit is the Adult Education, we need to revisit this. This is being unpicked and analysed to understand why it changed.

Governors asked, do all students get one to one weekly tuition from personal tutors. The Vice Principal stated one is group session weekly, 1-2-1 are second week. The Principal asked students about their experience. Student Governors responded, we have tutorial 2 times a week, last week was 1-2-1 attendance, punctuality behaviour; today we did the rest. The other student added, I have Tuesday 1-2-1, but no tutor Thursday, this clashed, we had the same. The Principal agreed

to review this . The vice Principal added we are doing a class "MOT" monitoring of targets once a term, and monthly health checks.

Governors noted it is encouraging that we wish to be community college. Vocational education is very important in this area. A good report.

**RECOMMENDATION
NOTED
THE PRINCIPALS REPORT**

10i. Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

The Principal reviewed the KPI's. They have changed significantly based on achievement and comparing to TAG results were unachievable and unrealistic. These are currently national benchmark and above. Research shows that TAGS and CAGS impacted grades. Now we measure based on what scores learners arrive with and how they make progress, arrive versus leave. With Ofsted, its now about skills and jobs.

Governors asked the Executives thoughts on attendance and punctuality being poor. Can we improve these? The Principal responded; no London college has been able to solve this. They have often made inroads but never solved this is due to the complex lives of learners. eg multi occupancy housing and social impacts etc. We need to work in partnership with schools and have an engagement strategy to build relationship with 14-16 links; and deliver sessions in school to get them to know us and set attendance expectations early. We need to change relationships and seamlessly induct them into college life. It has been successful in other places. TB good to hear, but the worry is student % non-attendance, leads to poor performance. During Covid we had more online opportunity and gave them more opportunity for attendance. Can lessons be learnt about a blended mix? The Principal noted that the Director of Education had commented that our courses were over 2-3 days, which leads to poorer attendance. Where students attend classes 5 days elsewhere, they achieve better attendance. We are delivering blended learning and give students online digital study options. So they key is developing a 5 day timetable.

Governor's challenged the apprenticeship non levy fund zero. BP, apprenticeships are now resolved, but there is no new contract for funding. This means we can access employer funding only.

**RECOMMENDATION
NOTED
THE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

10ii. Risk Register

The Deputy Principal overviewed the changes for the period. Key change is an overall reset to amber to drive achievement improvement. Red items are establishing financial health and pension liabilities. This is with Resources. There is a recognised financial swing

with Pension liability which will be eliminated in the current valuation, but likely to change again at end of financial year. SB the pension liability is a fait accompli, but consistent against previous year.

**RECOMMENDATION
NOTED
THE RISK REGISTER**

10iii Business Continuity Plan (BCP) Lessons learnt

The deputy Principal noted that the Board requested a paper on the learnings identified during the pandemic BCP implementation. Key points were: Learner safety / staff safety were paramount, implementation of online learning to maintain operation continuation. There were curriculum advantages' for home working and student working which has led to subsequent blended curriculum. The e-learning offer and technology improvement has benefited students. There is more needed for specific learners, but every learner who needed a laptop got one. We saw that parent engagement improved through e-parent evenings. Many of these things will continue. In hindsight, we obtained a lot of good from the period.

**RECOMMENDATION
NOTED
BCP LESSONS LEARNT**

11i. Management Accounts Full Year

The Deputy Principal overviewed the end of year report, outcomes and all actions taken to finalise this academic year. Governors noted the report was comprehensive and useful and offered congratulations to BP and the team. Governors also endorsed results and metrics achieved.

The deputy Principal explained the GLA audit, we were £68k over target. They found reason for £89k clawback and this has eaten into funding. Net impact £21k. Audit started, but not seen as high risk.

**RECOMMENDATION
NOTED
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS**

11ii. Management Accounts YTD

The Deputy Principal highlighted that we are only 1 Month in, but are still reporting a small surplus. SB noted we are not reporting with such optimism as before. BP explained this was a pessimistic / thinking differently approach. We are pushing for 16-18 additional revenue and grants, looking for new opportunities and will adapt to new ways in the current financial climate. This is a cautious approach, but worst case will still improve. AC added, we have to be cautious. GLA was not as expected. It is early days and we are changing perceptions. This leads back to the change of strategy of where we are going.

The Principal explained, Adult Education of Harrow budget is £1.1M of which we only currently have a small amount. We need to change to facilitate their requirements and

enable their spend. This is a positive opportunity. GLA, we need to do more ESOL with add on's..

Governors asked with our worst case, the FE requirements and pension not in our control. How would FE look at this? BP, FE looks at EBITDAR and key ratios. They look at servicing pension liabilities, which we can. We have the ability to pay. BP there is an option to revalue land etc. But we will look at this later in year. Our strategy is good

RECOMMENDATION

NOTED

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS YTD

11iii Asset Management Report

The deputy Principal highlighted this was a Board requested report stemming from questions arising from proposed asset disposals, to understand how are these managed. BP explained process and gave a level of assurance. He highlighted the Asset Management Policy, Asset Register and regular Asset monitoring.

SB asked for this to be tabled at the audit committee – Action

RECOMMENDATION

NOTED

ASSET MANAGEMENT REPORT

12. DfE capital match funding request

The principal referred to the DfE capital presentation item 4 and explained the discussion and negotiation that went ahead of this request. This was not match funding, as the value was too significant. The Board were asked to consider match funding and this was recorded in the confidential minutes.

The Board discussed this item in detail, Governors noted that we had analysed savings and loans and suggested an amount was achievable and whilst he felt the DfE should be funding this without dragging money out of College reserves, that we should proceed. Governors challenged the land / building ownership now and after build. BP explained liability and asset depreciation. Governors agreed, that this was our best option to get this done.

The Chair of Audit noted that we would take up this loan discussion in Audit.

The Board voted unanimously to approve.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED

12ii GLA SDF Green Skills Capital Approval

The Deputy Principal explained that through the West London Alliance and Sub Groups, where funding is drawn down from the GLA. We have obtained green skills grant funding of £230k, which we plan to use to refurbish Larch / Hawthorn buildings, not included in

the capital rebuild. This creates 3 new classrooms and laboratories for 16-19. We have also set aside funding of £268k for the new principal to use and are proposing using £100k for a Green Skills Hub. BP explained this would start in Feb 23 – Apr 23 all before build.

Governors noted this was capitalised and not against the P&L. it was good project and value for money. No objections were made

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED

£100,000 GREEN SKILLS HUB FUNDING

13. Verbal summary of the Governance Committee meeting on 4 Oct 2022

KP on behalf of the Chair of Governance reported: The Chair was agreed as GS and Vice Chair as JL , unfortunately both were not present and sent apologies. KP Chaired in their absence. Committee was quorate. The Committee reviewed the FE commissioners' letter with emphasis on Governor recruitment. The Scheme of Delegation was reviewed and is presented for approval. There is one recommendation to add, **The Chair has subsequently asked that it states that the Director of Governance reports to the Chair.** Reviewed Governor attendance and agreed that the chair would speak with any member who had less than 75% attendance record. The record was noted for the financial statement and is presented to the Board for approval. (Note that minutes were adjusted to show TB attended 100%). **The Board asked for length of service to be shown in financial statement- Action**

Membership vacancies were reviewed, and the Chair confirmed resignations of ShR & SR and movement to co-opted committee members without Board voting rights. RV has asked for a maternity leave of absence to May 23. Student governor positions are within guidelines and suggested as 2. Revised committees were suggested with KP to C&Q Chair and VP invited to Chair Resources. It was recommended that new Governors start as co-opted members to show commitment. Private recruitment costs were deemed too expensive and all Governors are asked to seek additional governors from their networks. The Outstanding Governance plan was reviewed previously and shared with the Board. It is recommended that committees review their actions this term. Link visit Governors are needed and are invited to visit and meet with staff. Governors to volunteer for positions.

Governors challenged on FE Commissioners guideline to serve to a maximum of 9 years. Especially where there was a depth of knowledge gained over time, view is that if people step down, they can still be a co-opted adviser to the chairman or a committee It was noted that one Governor had served 25 years as a Stanmore Governor.

The Board was asked to approve the Scheme of delegation with amendment –
Approved

The Board was asked to approve:

SR as co-opted governor to LGPS Committee
ShR as a co-opted governor to the Audit Committee
Maternity request
The number of student governor positions as two.

To consider and approve revised committee memberships.

All Approved

The Board considered future appointments initially as co-opted members but decided to keep flexibility to appoint members as required.

RECOMMENDATION

APPROVED

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

14. Policies

IT Asset Management Policy

Governors challenged retrieval of assets around unforeseen circumstances. The Principal explained they would be dealt with sensitivity and merits of each case. **Approved**

Safeguarding Policy

Approved

The Vice Principal noted a KICSIE Quiz is to be sent out to all Governors

Sickness Policy

Governors challenged referrals under section 3.3. The policy was deferred for further review and HR explanation.

15. Any other Business

No other business

16. Meeting Review and Evaluation

TB useful and more detail on estates, well chaired

All, good meeting

BP, noted robust challenge

17. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 13 December 2022

Meeting ended at 8:20 pm

Signed

Chair

Date

Action Points arising

Item	Action	Responsible	Deadline
11iii	Asset Reporting Paper to Audit Committee	DoG	Nov 22
13	Adjustments required to Financial Statement Attendance	DoG	Nov 22