

The Henley College Board

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Board held on Thursday 27 June 2019 at 18.00 in Deanfield meeting room		
BOARD PRESENT: Trevor Watkins Satwant Deol Brian Fennelly Stephen Forward Ruth Hubbard Mohammed Khaliel David Welch Jeni Wood STUDENT GOVERNORS Emily Foster Bethany Hayes	Independent /Chair Principal Independent Independent Parent governor Independent / Vice Chair Independent Independent SU President SU Vice President	STAFF: Robyn Vitty Support Staff CLERK: Jacky Gearey SLT BY INVITATION: Tristan Arnison Head of Faculty Julian Brinsford Head of Faculty & Quality Manager Kathryn Caulfield Head of Student Services (HSS) Jen Jackson Head of HR Ashok Patel Director of Finance (DoF) PROSPECTIVE GOVERNORS James Lingard Vince Maltese Charles Wiggin
Agenda Item	Minutes	Action by
6.1	Opening of Meeting and Welcome The Chair opened the meeting at 18.01 and welcomed the two new Student governors to their first meeting and the prospective new governors.	
6.2	Apologies for Absence Apologies had been received from: 1. Dr Tim Lincoln - holiday	
6.3	Declaration of Interests The Clerk declared an interest in item 6.18 otherwise there were no other declarations.	
6.4	Minutes of Previous Meeting (i) Board meeting of 14 March 2019 The minutes had been circulated as approved by the Chair but an omission had been made under 5.12 wherein there should have been an additional point 5 stating "the Board challenged the SLT as to why information regarding students with problems had not been shared between teachers and moreover why the ProMonitor had not also been properly utilised to action this. The Principal confirmed that this and other issues were now being addressed by the Head of Quality". Resolved: the Board agreed with the inclusion of the above that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting of 14 March 2019 the minutes were signed by the Chair. (i) Minute of the Request for a Remote Decision issued 11 June 2019 Some members of the Board were concerned at the use of a remote decision regarding authorisation for the immediate recruitment of a Vice Principal. The Chair explained that it was due to the urgency of initiating the recruitment process because of the time of year. Resolved: the Board agreed that the minute was an accurate record of the Request for a Remote Decision issued 11 June 2019 and the minute was signed by the Chair.	
6.5	Matters Arising from the Minutes There were no matters arising.	
6.6	Notification and ratification of: The Chair had the following notifications following the recent Governance & Search committee meeting:	

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	<p>(i) Recommendation for Appointment to the Corporation of the following: James Lingard, Dr Tim Lincoln, Vince Maltese and Charles Wiggin - the Board unanimously approved these governors and James Lingard, Dr Tim Lincoln, Vince Maltese and Charles Wiggin were duly elected as Board members.</p> <p>(ii) Additional notifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mohammed Khaliel was the new SEN specialist governor - James Lingard to join the Finance & Resources (F&R) committee - Charles Wiggin to remain as Chair of F&R plus go onto the Remuneration committee - Dr Tim Lincoln join the Quality and Standards and Audit committees - Vince Maltese join the Governance & Search committee. <p>Mentors for each of these governors and including the two student governors had been advised and confirmed.</p>	
6.7	<p>Approval of the following:</p> <p>The Chair explained that each of these policies and documents had been through their respective committees and were recommended for approval. As these papers had gone out in advance of the meeting and there had been no questions raised the Board was asked to approve each one as presented.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Policy for Substance and Alcohol Misuse – new policy (ii) Job Description of Corporation Member – revised (iii) (a) Instrument & Articles – to re-constitute the size of the Board from 22 to 19 members (b) Standing Orders – to re-constitute the size of the Board from 22 to 19 members (iv) Senior Post Holders personnel policies (4) – review cycle now every three years (v) SPH – Director of Finance – this role to revert back to being a SPH as in today's financial climate it was absolutely imperative that the Director of Finance be directly accountable to the governing Board and therefore in essence this means that the role of Director of Finance irrespective of the span of control. (vi) Statement of Educational Character – approved by QS committee with only changes to vision and mission statements. (vii) Committee Standing Agenda (SA) items & Terms of Reference (ToRs): annual review of each <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Audit – minor changes to SA and changes to ToRs (b) Finance & Resources – minor changes to SA and ToRs (c) Governance & Search – minor changes to ToRs (d) Remuneration – minor change to ToRs (e) Quality and Standards Standing agenda was to be reviewed in the first meeting in September. There were no changes to the Terms of Reference. (viii) Overall budget forecasts for 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 - The College is required to submit a detailed financial forecast and commentary to the ESFA by 31st July 2019. The F&R Committee approved the outline plan and the report provides the basis for preparing the detailed submission. The report also includes as appendices, the Income & Expenditure and Balance Sheet forecast for the period 2019-20 to 2021-22 – the DoF did say that in recognising the urgent need to secure an interim/permanent post of Vice Principal, the Board should recognise that this cost, plus any other costs associated in delivering the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), could result in a small operating deficit in 2019-20, the Board approved the overall forecasts to show this additional expenditure. (ix) Whistleblowing Policy - review cycle now every three years (x) Fees & Fee Remission 2019-20 – annual submission (xi) Lockdown Policy – new policy – the Board asked what classified as a drone attack and for it to be better described. HSS said she would do. The Board then asked when would this policy be tested which was advised as September for just staff and then with students in the January. Subject to the clarification of a drone attack the policy was approved. HSS to make amendment. (xii) Link Governors for 2019-20 – new links governors have been agreed. 	

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	<p>(xiii) Student Disciplinary Policy – It was explained that this policy had not been before the QS meeting but due to the requirement to put on the website before the beginning of the academic year it had been presented now for review and approval. The Board asked if there was any external redress for a student after the Principal's decision to exclude as this had been removed from the existing policy? After much discussion and reference to the fact that many FE Colleges' student disciplinary policies vary considerably it was decided that Stages 1-3 were approved but that there had to be an additional process added to allow for a student to redress the Principal's decision based on lack of adherence to procedure/protocol. In light of the comments made the HoF said in light of general comments made that this would be addressed and that a revised policy would be put before the QS committee in September after contacting the Sixth Form Colleges Association for guidance.</p> <p>(xiv) Insolvency Policy – The Insolvency Act now applies to FE Institutions with effect from January 2019 and it is essential that the governing bodies consider the impact, especially in setting future financial strategies. The aim of this policy will be to secure and/or improve the College's overall solvency position.</p> <p>(xv) Reserves' Policy – a new policy the purpose of which is for the College to safeguard or improve its current reserve values and allow the College to draw on these reserve in emergencies and to take advantage of unexpected opportunities.</p> <p>(xvi) Job description of Chair – revised.</p> <p>Resolved that each of the above policies and documents were approved as presented with the exception of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Lockdown Policy to be amended for clarification of a drone attack; and (ii) Student Disciplinary Policy to be reviewed and amended in accordance with the comments made above 	
6.8	<p>Principal's Report The Principal's report covered the following: Organisational change – on track with the F&R committee fully involved with the process HR Update - A week of development is planned for all colleagues w/c 8th July. This is based on feedback from staff and managers on what development opportunities they feel would be helpful. Performance management update where a half day development session had taken place with all managers on the importance of performance management and a new performance management/appraisal scheme (approved by SLT) to managers had been presented.</p> <p>The Principal spoke about the teaching, learning and assessment report where there are some areas for improvement across a significant minority of lessons e.g. systematic use of progress check points for the whole class; whole class coverage in questioning student however there were many more strengths identified. Developmental actions were discussed regarding the areas for improvement with a list or priority actions to undertake in light of the proposed new timetable and to fully utilise the teaching time. to</p> <p>MIS – systems upgrade fully completed. The project to implement the new electronic register system within Unit-e is now underway and on track for completion by 2nd week of July. In addition the new DashBoard software within the Pro products suite has now been installed and fully configured. The team is now in the process of creating several sets of reports to track and monitor Student numbers.</p> <p>Acceptances – exceeding last years and should be on target by the end of August.</p> <p>Student Services – this covered the new style Freshers' Fair, enrichment, the tutorial strategy which will improve the effectiveness of the provision and work experience which student services will support.</p> <p>Marketing – current focus is on preparing for offer holders event 2nd July together with working on the new prospectus and BTEC material. Social media continues to do well focusing on producing good quality stories and refining the output based on user engagement. The apprenticeship event went well and was co-hosted with John Howell MP for Henley with speakers from Volvo and Goldfinch Studios.</p> <p>Sport – Wasps are terminating their partnership with us from 2020 as they moved to Coventry and developed a new relationship with another College which is closer to them but will continue with their commitment to coach the first year students. An alternative offer is being pursued.</p>	

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	<p>Resolved: that the Principal's report was received by the Board.</p>	
<p>6.9</p>	<p>Quality Improvement Plan update with presentation</p> <p>The Principal first gave a presentation covering: comparison of student numbers; retention rates and how they are measured; the extent of the challenge for the next academic year; the value added cycle for 19-20 wherein staff are to produce up to 3 predicted grades per year, which will then be sent to ALPS for an interim report. Staff will then need to analyse the data to either get to an ALPS grade 4 or maintain a 4 or higher. This information will then form part of curriculum review meetings. As a conclusion to the presentation the Principal detailed the key actions for better student outcomes.</p> <p>Whilst the Board thanked her for her report they did in the main find that this was a complex subject to digest and challenged why the retention rates were set at a lower level than the 89% previously presented. The Principal and HoFs explained that the Further Education (FE) data were very complicated. The Board said that they found it difficult to rationalise the numbers in the presentation and therefore hard to sort out where the targets are. Moreover caution needed to be taken when setting targets as they should of course be challenging but also achievable and in the right direction, especially on an annual cycle. The Board wanted to know why there was disparity between what Ofsted and the Further Education commissioners (FEC set as targets. The Principal said that their data was a year behind plus they did not each use the same timelines which complicated this issue. The Board referred to the FEC report which had identified a decrease in retention and achievement rates, minimum levels of performance issues in the apprenticeship provision and a decrease in curriculum performance in most areas in 2017/18 and that this could not all be blamed on linear A levels. Internal modelling uses 80% retention from year one to year two which is at least 10% below an acceptable figure. The Board said that ultimately they had to trust the Principal and SLT who had both said that data for FE Colleges is not always the same as for sixth form Colleges.</p> <p>The Principal then went through the quality improvement plan (QIP) which was detailed and identified many actions and strategies put into place in 2019/20 but first put this plan into context of what had already been achieved. The College had been facing three core challenges: (i) financial, (ii) MIS/data and (iii) Quality/Declining achievement rates.</p> <p>Financial - this had taken priority because without sound finance, nothing else was possible. Recent reports from the DoF demonstrated that this major challenge has been addressed successfully and the College would soon be returned to outstanding financial health. However the Board was reminded that one of the biggest pressures facing the College, is the ability to recruit high calibre staff in key areas (e.g. MIS, HR, Finance) within its overall budget and to ensure that there is sufficient cover in these and other areas.</p> <p>MIS/Data - this has now been resolved through the work of Head of MIS and further real time information would be available from September 2019.</p> <p>Quality - the interim Head of Quality had been brought in to support the College in understanding where it was in quality terms. Using the data now available because of the Head of MIS's work, managers and Governors will now have an accurate point in time update on where the College is in quality terms. A curriculum strategy had been developed to address the quality challenge and steps taken to significantly improve the essential data to support the improvement plan. In addition the Principal directed the Board to note that whilst the report presented focused on the quality improvement there were other long term developments such as the impact on the College of a likely decline in A levels and the introduction of T levels which will need to be considered by the Board in due course.</p> <p>The Board went through the QIP as presented – although there was little data, few KPIs or milestones, the Board did feel that the actions were much closer to being what was required, however the Board still wanted to know if all the actions were actionable within the timescales given. The Principal said that they were and agreed that the QIP was short on KPIs and this would be addressed the following day. The increased use of data and key performance indicators would ensure progress would be objectively measured at agreed milestones. The Board also thought the new QIP brought together the various strands into a workable policy document and would expect that reports will be presented at the next QS committee meeting in September and thence to the Board in the October.</p>	

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	<p>The Board asked how would the College ensure that accurate data was recorded? The Principal said that MIS had now been updated, with Pro Achieve now in use to support real time information. The Board also wanted to know what the timeline was for the introduction of the new performance management system for staff and whether the staff understood the new strategies and priorities? The Principal reassured the Board that this would all be in place by September. From the presentation, reference to the QIP and the paper on improving quality, the Principal reassured the Board that overall the plan would benefit significantly from increased use of data and key performance indicators to objectively measure progress at agreed milestones. The proposed key targets in the Improving Quality paper as presented were discussed but it was felt that the change in target rates could not be substantiated as discussed above and therefore the Board could not approve them for 2019-20.</p> <p>Finally, the Principal raised a key issue regarding a Vice Principal for Curriculum & Quality. This role was needed to drive the changes required and whilst the recruitment process had commenced, because of the immediate challenges facing the College, it will not be easy to make a suitable appointment before Christmas and so an interim would need to be sought. The Board said that they would discuss this under the confidential agenda.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Principal for her presentation, paper and the revised QIP and noted that the QIP was a working document and therefore the recommendations for approval in her associated Improving Quality paper could not be sanctioned at this moment in time as there were so many queries raised. In addition the Board also felt that if the College was staying with the estimated figures produced in May and taking into account the statement to the FEC regarding the improvements in the current year it would be advisable for the College to advise the FEC of the reality now and not wait until nearer their visit in October. The Principal agreed and said that she would write to the FEC at the end of July. The Principal explained that this was an 18 month programme and everything could not be done overnight. Governors need to take stock of progress against the recovery plan early in autumn 2019 and review the prospects for the College in light of September enrolment data. The Board also asked for a simplified glossary of the KPIs and emphasised the need for strategic oversight of this and also the provision of a dashboard which had been previously promised. The Principal agreed to provide both.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) The report on the QIP was received by the Board (ii) The Principal to write to the FEC at the end of July with an update on the College's position. (iii) Simplified glossary of the KPIs to be provided to the Board at the next Corporation meeting in October (iv) Principal to provide dashboard for the Board at the next Corporation meeting in October <p>Brian Fennelly left meeting at 20.30 for another commitment.</p>	
6.10	<p>Student Governors' Report</p> <p>Since taking over these roles the two student governors had begun to:</p> <p>Move into the new Student Union office - in preparation for September.</p> <p>Help with the preparations for Fresher's Day and Offer Holders Day, providing a student perspective on what new students would want from the days.</p> <p>Work with staff to revise the tutorial system, to optimise its efficiency, from a student perspective.</p> <p>This year the main focus will be on - Sustainability and student welfare:</p> <p>Sustainability and the Environment - wildlife preservation areas based within the Rotherfield campus and have already started scouting potential locations. A student group to be set up to tackle the environmental issues and make The Henley College more sustainable - within this, the first two things the students union would like to reform are: the College's recycling policy and what happens to waste food from the canteen (unsold products are weighed and then thrown out at the end of the day).</p> <p>Mental Health and Wellbeing – when looking at global current affairs, it is clear to see that the mental health and wellbeing of teenagers is a massively important issue. Much of the Student Union will be participating in welfare training so that they can assist Student Services in helping those who need it. A</p>	

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	<p>dedicated Welfare Officer has been recruited who will be working to improve the support given to students.</p> <p>Alongside the main points above the students union is working towards some smaller goals such as: Organising a 'Fresher's Mixer' for the new students in September. This will be taking place at an external venue and the SU EDI and Events officer is taking the lead on the organisation of this event. The creation of a Student Union Instagram account in order to increase the SU presence within the student body and provide better communication access for fellow students. We believe that this will enable us to better connect with students and allow them to see what we do as a union.</p> <p>The Board thanked the students for a very comprehensive report and for sight of their exciting new plan. Resolved: the report from Student Governors was received by the Board</p>	
6.11	<p>Safeguarding, Prevent and PDBW (i) Report</p> <p>The Head of Student Services advised the Board that there were now two operational members of her team at the Deanfield Campus and also up at Rotherfield to ensure all areas are covered.</p> <p>Safeguarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 142 students with 26 with the SG/AR badge. The Board asked if some of these 26 were being seen by external agencies as this was a lot of additional responsibility for staff and it was confirmed that they were. • The majority of safeguarding referrals / walk-ins have been around anxiety <p>There were now 3 other members of staff who are designated safeguarding leads.</p> <p>PDBW</p> <p>Behaviour issues were much better however there were three suspensions with ongoing investigations. Lock down procedure and policy has been written and would be trialled next September. The tutorial strategy has been completed. As in previous reports the HSS said that there have been no staff safeguarding or prevent incidents during this reporting period.</p> <p>Resolved that the Safeguarding, Prevent and PDBW Report was received by the Board.</p> <p>Student governors left the meeting at 19.16.</p>	
6.12	<p>Finances Update on LEP Project</p> <p>The DoF said that the LEP partnership project was progressing well and today, following a tendering exercise, the College interviewed two contractors, Fasset and Gilbert Ash and it was agreed by the panel to appoint Fasset, following a better scoring performance. It must be stressed that both organisations were appointable. The LEP contract agreement is still in the process of going through legal assessment and may not be completed for a couple of weeks, but in order to secure timely delivery of both projects for September 2019 opening, the College needs to formally appoint Fasset to commence immediate work. The recommendation is that the College issues a Letter of Intent to Fasset, which would ensure initial mobilising and planning could take place, whilst formal contract work is being finalised with the LEP. This would create a small risk, especially if the College and LEP could not agree terms, but this risk would be limited to approx. 10% of the contract value, which would be approx. £30,000. After careful consideration, the Corporation approved this recommendation.</p> <p>Resolved that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the verbal update report on the LEP project was received by the Board (ii) the College to issue a Letter of Intent to Fasset was approved by the Board 	
6.13	<p>Committee Reports/Minutes:</p> <p>The following reports and minutes were presented to the Board and each of the Chairs were invited to give a very brief update on any issues of concern therein.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Management Accounts - April and May 2019 – no comments – lagged funding line 	

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	<p>(ii) Finance & Resources – for information and no additional comments from the Chair of Finance & Resources (a) 18 March 2019 (b) 25 April 2019 (c) 17 June 2019</p> <p>(iii) Audit - 10 June 19 – the Chair of Audit confirmed that the minutes covered everything and that the governors' strategic risk register was to be covered under a later item.</p> <p>(iv) Governance & Search - nothing more to report (a) 3 April 2019 (b) 19 June 2019</p> <p>(v) Quality & Standards - 16 May 2019 – the Chair said that there were now to be two additional meetings next year making four in total and therefore as a consequence the standing agenda items were to be reviewed because of the of the timings of available reports.</p> <p>Resolved that: The above reports and minutes were received by the Board</p>	
6.14	<p>Governors Strategic Risk Register The Board reviewed the inherent risk ratings and residual risk ratings as presented. The Chair of Audit advised the Board that risk register had been reformatted with some fairly significant adjustments to the risk ratings namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accommodation Plan Fails - been removed following the audit committee meeting 10 June 2019 as investment has been put on hold. 2. Organisation & Business Development Fails - Increased People impact from 1 to 2. Further rationalisation/reorganisation is bound to have an impact on people's roles, morale and effectiveness. Continued dependency of a few key individuals exacerbates this. Function Risk increased from 2 to 3 for similar reasons. 3. Financial Viability Compromised - reduced financial impact and likelihood from 3 to 2. The latest plans under the new DoF give a greater degree of confidence in financial stability and viability 4. Staff Relations/Development Breakdown - left unchanged. It could be argued that likelihood could have increased from 2 to 3 on the basis of further change but indications are that staff are still on-Board to a reasonable extent and unions are being engaged and informed 5. Addition of Quality Provision with currently a high risk rating as this had been asked for by the Board at the previous meeting due to the student achievement rate going down and that this would also include the risk of an Ofsted inspection which had been removed after the last inspection in May 2016. <p>It was suggested that risks could be included in the SLT's Operational Risk Register and/or the Governors' Strategic Risk Register relating to IT/MIS failures and Key Person Dependencies. These will be considered in the SLT's risk management meetings and the next Audit Committee meeting respectively.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the Governors Strategic Risk Register was received by the Board (ii) Chair of Audit to raise issue of adding two more risks to Governors Strategic Risk Register relating to IT/MIS failures and Key Person Dependencies at the next Audit Committee meeting. 	
6.15	<p>Corporation Self-assessment 2018-19 The Clerk reminded all those members who had not completed their Corporation self-assessment to do so as soon as possible and at the latest by 7 July 2019</p> <p>Resolved that all Board members are to complete and send the Corporation self-assessment questionnaire for 2018-2019 to the Clerk by 7 July 2019.</p>	

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6.16	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Board first wanted thank you to be recorded for all the hard work and time that the recently deceased Deputy principal, Simon Cuthbert had given to the College, his presence would be sorely missed. The Principal advised the Board that it was the intention to call the new student Hub the "Cuthbert Centre" which the Board thought was great.</p> <p>The Chair wanted a vote of thanks to be recorded for the following governors who had or were leaving the Board: Martin Unsworth, a staff governor of long standing whose impartial and in depth knowledge of the College had proved so invaluable over the past 4 years; and</p> <p>Steve Forward, a parent and then independent governors who was leaving the Board after the meeting as he was retiring and leaving the area. The Chair thanked him for all his hard work and diligence in carrying out his duties both as a governor and Chairs of Audit and the now dissolved Stakeholder Engagement committees. His expertise in risk analysis would be sorely missed.</p> <p>Ashok Patel , Kathryn Caulfield left at 20.46</p>	
	<p>Confidential Agenda items</p> <p>The meeting moved to the confidential agenda at 20.47</p>	
6.20	<p>Items to be taken forward to next Board meeting:</p> <p>There were no items to be taken forward.</p>	
6.21	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting:</p> <p>i. 14 October 2019 at 18.00</p>	
	<p>Close of Meeting</p> <p>The meeting closed at 21.55</p>	
	<p>MINUTES of the meeting held on 27 June 2019 were agreed and accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair</p> <p>..... on</p>	