

The Henley College Board

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Board held on Monday 11 October 2021 at 18.00 held in the Deanfield Meetings Room, The Henley College		
BOARD: Mike Ashton Emma Barklem Rebecca Chandler-Wilde Satwant Deol Brian Fennelly James Lingard Vince Maltese Andrew Unsworth Robyn Vitty Lizzie Watts Charles Wiggin	Independent Member/Chair Parent governor Independent Member Principal Independent Member Independent Member/Safeguarding Lead Independent Member Staff governor Staff governor Independent Member Independent Member	CLERK: Jacky Gearey SLT BY INVITATION: Tristan Arnison Assistant Principal (AP) and Designated Safeguarding Lead Eamonn Egan Vice Principal (VP) Ashok Patel Director of Finance (FD)
Item	Minutes	Action by
	Opening of Meeting and Welcome The new Chair opened the meeting at 18.07 and welcomed everyone to his first Board meeting, outlining how he would like meetings to be conducted.	
	Apologies for Absence Apologies had been received from: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr Tim Lincoln – holiday 2. Chris Murray – work <p>The Clerk advised that student governors had yet to be elected from the student body.</p>	
	Declaration of Interests There were no declarations of interests.	
1.1	Minutes of Previous Meeting <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Minutes of meeting of 28 June 2021 (ii) Confidential minutes of 28 June 2021 <p>The Board approved both the minutes and confidential minutes of 28 June 2021 as accurate records of the meeting held.</p> <p>Resolved that the Board agreed that the minutes and confidential minutes of 28 June 2021 were accurate records of the meeting held.</p>	
1.2	Matters Arising from the Minutes (unless covered by the agenda) Item 5.15 - Board self-assessment form returns - a number were still outstanding. The Chair said that completion was essential emphasising that it was important to assess how the Board is upholding commonly accepted standards of good governance, how individual collectively work together and to enable the Board members to have their own input. All other matters had been closed off and there were no further matters arising.	
1.3	Principal's Presentation The Principal first endorsed the Chair's previously made comments about governors visiting the campus now that it was fully open and said that the staff really appreciated their interaction. The Principal's overview covered student success stories from the College and provided an update on the following:	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New student recruitment had exceeded the target and there was a waiting list • The staff had worked through the holiday period to provide advice and guidance during the online enrolment process. The whole operation was well led, organised and managed • Estates, MIS, and IT have worked to very tight deadlines to deliver transformation in these areas including the introduction of the new REMS system • Work with external stakeholders including starting the first of three Employer Advisory Board, the first in Sports attended by key sports partners and Chairman. This work links with the government's skills plan • Over 1700 students have registered for the welcome evening Tuesday 19 October and this was an unprecedented number. <p>There were no questions, and the Chair thanked the Principal.</p> <p>Resolved that the Principal's presentation was received by the Board</p>	
1.4	<p>Strategic Risk Summary</p> <p>The FD advised that the risk register is presented in full at each of the Audit committee meetings.</p> <p>The key issues to note and which were 'red' rated risks are associated to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safeguarding 2. Capital Projects 3. Pandemic 4. Cyber Security/Attack <p>The College has various mitigation strategies which control/monitor these key risks, but they cannot eliminate them completely. The Board asked how the College's risks compared to other colleges, and the FD advised that there is no direct comparison to be made but the external auditors would highlight any concerns. The Chair suggested that going forward an area of risk identified on the register should be brought to each board meeting to promote better understanding of that risk and its mitigation thereby better enabling the Board to ask more informed questions. The Board agreed and the FD and Principal confirmed that this would be done for future meetings</p> <p>Resolved that the strategic risk summary was received and noted by the Board</p>	
1.5	<p>Finance update:</p> <p>(i) Management Accounts July 21</p> <p>The overall position is as projected during the final quarter of the financial year and is consistent with earlier reports to the Finance & Resources (F&R) committee. This is the third consecutive financial year in which an 'underlying' operating surplus has been delivered and with this, an improved solvency position. The outturn is after making the pay award of 1.5% for the 2020-21, significant investment in infrastructure, delivering additional learner numbers above the ESFA contract and a replacement student record system.</p> <p>The estimated deficit and valuation adjustments associated to the local government pension scheme will be net £400k, which will result in an overall deficit of circa £300k for Statutory Accounts disclosure. As a result of the strong recent financial performance, the College is in a good position to support the projected learner growth forecast over the next few years.</p> <p>The FD advised that there were no direct recommendations arising from this report with the Board being asked to note the draft financial outturn for the year, prior to external audit and FRS102 pension adjustments.</p>	

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	<p>Resolved that the Management Accounts July 21 were received and noted by the Board</p> <p>(ii) Revised budget position for 21/22.</p> <p>The FD advised that the College has had a very successful enrolment period and exceeded its ESFA contract number and also its own target. The census date for determining the funding for the year is 17 October 20 and should be for 1840 students but maybe slightly more. Principal reassured the Board that if there was a further increase the College had planned for this. However to deliver the potential 1840 learners successfully the following was recommended:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. a further teaching pay cost investment of £100k is estimated. ii. a student 'catch-up' on English & Maths etc. required for essential recovery from the lockdown at £140k. The recent Quality & Standards committee endorsed the rationale for spending this iii. legal costs associated to an employment issue <p>The College will be able to bid for in year funding but there is nothing concrete at the moment. The original budgeted deficit (£153k) will be exceeded, the growth in learner numbers is extremely positive for the future positioning of college funding and the allocation for 22/23 should increase significantly to compensate for this temporary position. The other items are exceptional, resulting from the pandemic situation and on-going legal cost associated to safeguarding. There will be no material negative impact on the financial health and solvency position of the College arising from the above. However, there would be a negative impact and risk if the additional expenditure identified was not implemented, especially in terms of servicing the additional learner volume and providing the additional 'catch-up' investment, to ensure student success. The Chair asked the Chair of F&R for his opinion, and he concurred with the rationale for the additional spend.</p> <p>The Board further asked about what the optimum number of students that could be accommodated at the College and whether this would affect the quality of the provision. The FD said that the infrastructure could comfortably take around 2000 learners but that 1900-2000 would be the optimal number. For reassurance the AP advised that some modelling had been conducted on this, but it was difficult to surmise the exact number.</p> <p>Resolved that the revised budget position for 21/22 was received and approved by the Board</p>	
1.6	<p>FEC update</p> <p>The final report from the FEC was received in July with the outcome that there were no further recommendations. All actions are within the college's quality, estates, communication and performance management plans for 2020-21 with the FEC acknowledging that quality, estates, communication and performance management will always need improving as in line with all other colleges. The Board were re-assured but said that this had to be monitored.</p> <p>Resolved that the FEC update was received and noted by the Board</p>	
1.7	<p>Strategic Plan</p> <p>As an introduction and referencing the new strategic plan that had now been published for 2021-24, the Chair explained that the strategic plan would be reviewed at each board meeting and wanted to ensure that the Board was updated with a clear route map for the future on what progress had been made against the strategic aims. This was essential to enable robust analytical decision making regarding the provision of the best education for the learners and essential for the journey to outstanding.</p>	

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The Principal then covered the following:

- transforming lives with examples of four students' progression one of whom was at the college and the other three who had since left
- Performance and investments which were very positive, targets had been met and financial health maintained
- Building partnerships with external stakeholders citing the Advisory Boards
- Timelines for launching the strategic plan campaign from June to October 2021
- Priorities for 2021-22 which included amongst others the achievement of the enrolment target of 1770 (currently surpassed), shift student attendance from 88% to 90%, increase student enrichment, development of T-Levels with the first one offered in health in September 2022 and introduce a middle management program.

The VP advised on the steps taken this year for providing an outstanding curriculum which was a broad offer and wider than other institutions in the three neighboring counties. This covered:

- The enrichment program to be offered to all students
- An articulated approach to a new student skills builder programme (a universal framework for skills).
- A rebranded tutorial programme called "Bridge" with the incorporation of the Aspire programme
- Aspire program generated to challenge high achievers and to encourage all students to look above their subject horizon.
- Looking at a coordinated approach to align curriculum design with employer needs through the Industry Advisory Boards, the first of which had already taken place for sport. The Chair endorsed this having been present at this advisory board
- Manage quality assurance in teaching learning & assessment, curriculum areas and student outcomes which were referred to as deep dives

The Board asked about using self-assessment in teaching learning & assessment extolling the merits of this practice and the VP said that this needed to be weaved into the QA process. The FD advised that for resource opportunities & implications, it was essential to maintain outstanding financial health and to do so the plan must be adhered to.

The report against KPIs would be presented at the next meeting as the college term had only just commenced but going forward this would be addressed at each meeting, ensuring that the KPIs were clear, measurable and deliverable. The Board said that they wanted to see the KPIs under each strategic ambition allowing for a clear demarcation over the three years i.e. year by year and section by section. Principal said this would be done and circulated by the next meeting.

The Board discussed whether the learner numbers included adults and also the use of alumni back stories. The VP addressed the question of adult courses and that currently these were not being offered albeit the FEC had advised that this should happen. The issue was the building capacity. However going forward adult courses will be offered to L2/3 bookkeeping and accountancy with approximately 100 learners for the year. It is hoped to increase this number over time and was good to show this to employers. The Board felt that this information should be a separate reporting line and the VP agreed. Regarding the alumni, the Head of Marketing said that alumni students are on the website, they often come back to talk to students and additionally some are featured on a "Wall of Fame" at the College.

Resolved that:

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	<p>(i) the strategic plan updated was received and noted by the Board</p> <p>(ii) Principal to provide KPIs under each strategic ambition for the Board at each meeting going forward</p>	
1.8	<p>Safeguarding & Prevent Safeguarding Policy</p> <p>The Assistant Principal (AP) advised the Board that the new version of Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance came into force on 1 September 2021. All governors had been asked to read the document and confirm to that effect. A new safeguarding policy based on the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board template for safeguarding and child protection had been written to be compliant with the new framework and would take account of all statutory updates and replaced the old policy. The revised policy that had just been sent to the Board was a result of the work undertaken by the AP and the lead Safeguarding Governor and these changes were highlighted to the Board. The Chair thanked them both for all their work in particular the Safeguarding governor and asked all Board members to read and pass comment before requesting approval of the policy via a remote decision w/c 1 November 2021.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>(i) the Safeguarding and Prevent Report was received by the Board</p> <p>(ii) the Clerk to send a remote decision request for approval of the safeguarding policy w/c 1 November 2021</p>	
1.9	<p>Board and committee membership</p> <p>Notification of Link governors:</p> <p>The Chair explained the new Senior Independent Governor (SIG) role had been discussed and agreed by the Governance & Search (GS) committee, briefly describing the role to the Board. The Chair said that ultimately should the Board members have any concerns they may feel more comfortable with raising this with the SIG. Dr Tim Lincoln has been asked to fulfil this role and had accepted. As a consequence Dr Lincoln had stood down as Chair of the QS committee and Lizzie Firth was recommended for appointment as the new Chair to the committee and also the Careers link governor. The Board so approved. Additionally Chris Murray was to transfer from Finance & Resources to the Audit committee.</p> <p>Election of Vice Chairs of the Board</p> <p>Further to the GS meeting held 20 September 2021 an email was sent out asking for any expressions of interests from the Board members (the Principal, staff and student governors were exempt from this process). There were three expressions of interest. The interested members were asked to leave the meeting and for the Board to take a vote on their preferred candidates. Brian Fennelly and James Lingard were voted in as the new Vice Chairs of the Board.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>(i) the Board and committee membership update was received and noted by the Board</p> <p>(ii) that Brian Fennelly and James Lingard were voted as Vice Chairs of the Corporation Board</p>	
1.10	<p>Policy documents for approval</p> <p>The following clauses in the Standing Orders have been updated following the revised practices of information provision and the remote work practices for Board and committee meetings.</p>	

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	<p>Clause 3.6 – inclusion of papers/documents in electronic format Clause 4.1 - it is now no longer mandatory for the Chair of the Board or committees to sign the minutes.</p> <p>Resolved that the Standing Orders were received and approved by the Board</p>	
1.11	<p>Committee feedback The Chair asked for the Chairs of the following committees for feedback from their respective committee meetings.</p> <p>GS - 20 September 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feedback on board membership provided under item 1.10 • the link governor roles discussed, and the skills set required • discussion on the provision of training before board meetings as opposed to online • Board self- evaluation covered under item 1.2 • composition of the Board. The Chair said that there were currently three vacancies on the Board for Independent members and currently the aim was to recruit educational specialists (preferably FE and possibly HE), strengthen the BAME diversity and build strategic alliances. The Chair strongly encouraged the use of networking as the best way forward to achieve this aim. <p>QS - 27 September 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • safeguarding discussed at length and further presented under item 1.8 expressed thanks to the TA and JL for doing this • costs associated with student 'catch-up' covered under item 1.5 especially after the pandemic and loss of face-to-face teaching. The QS committee endorsed this spend • Discussion around Math & English GCSE attendance and to try to engage in parental buy-in • Student enrolment figures which were very positive • Update on the Quality Improvement Plan which would be further discussed in more detail at the next meeting in November • Spotlight on curriculum – this was covered under item 1.7 <p>Remuneration - 20 September 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be discussed under item 1.13. there were no other issues raised. <p>Resolved that the verbal committee feedback was received by the Board for noting</p>	
1.12	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>From the floor the Board thanked the Chair for a very well structured and positive meeting.</p>	
1.14	<p>Board Impact</p> <p>The Chair asked for the governors to consider the following going forward especially as the College was now open and the principal welcomed governor interaction with students and staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor activity – what have the governors been doing, calls, visits, time spent on campus and with whom to obtain a sense of level of engagement. The Clerk to send out a request for this information before each meeting 	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor impact – completion of the Board assessment 	
1.15	<p>Board Conduct of Meeting</p> <p>The Chair asked the views of the Board members regarding the meeting. The following points were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More time to discuss the strategy. The Chair said that this was just the overview and that going forward strategy would be one of the main parts of any board agenda. • Key objectives for each meeting to be attached to the agenda • Schedule the meetings for 2.30 hours to allow for overrun • Staff satisfaction survey to be discussed at the next meeting • The meeting was felt to be well structured and tight • Better shared understanding of what the meeting is trying to achieve. • If there are a substantial number of approvals for these to be done remotely allowing the face to face meetings for debate and discussion <p>The Principal, staff governor and members of the SLT left the meeting at 19.57</p>	
1.16	<p>Items to be taken forward to next board meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board self-assessment report 	
	<p>Date and Time of Next Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 06 December 2021 • 31 January 2022 (Training - Ofsted at 17.00) • 28 March 2022 • 11 July 2022 	
	<p>Close of Meeting</p> <p>The meeting closed at 20.40</p>	
	<p>MINUTES of the meeting held on 11 October 2021 were agreed and accepted as a true and accurate record held</p> <p>..... on</p>	