

The Henley College Board

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Board held on Monday 30 January 2023 at 18.00 at Learning Resources Centre, Deanfield Campus, Henley-on-Thames		
BOARD: Mike Ashton Rebecca Chandler-Wilde Brian Fennelly Lucy Fox Pip Goodman James Lingard Jo-anne Elliott Lizzie Firth Asma Jahan Vince Maltese Jackie Wilcocks	Chair Independent Member Independent Member/Vice Chair Student Governor Student Governor Independent Member/Vice Chair & Safeguarding Lead Parent Governor Independent Member Staff Governor Independent Member Parent Governor	CLERK: Jacky Gearey SLT BY INVITATION: Eamonn Egan - Vice Principal (VP) Mark Griggs – Finance & Resources Controller (FRC) Liz Guerin – Head of HR
Item	Minutes	Action by
	Opening of Meeting and Welcome The Chair opened the meeting at 18.03 and welcomed Liz Guerin the new Head of HR and Amada Rowe, who would be giving a presentation prior to the commencement of the meeting.	
	Presentation from Amanda Rowe Amada Rowe is the Curriculum Lead for Pathways and Foundation and gave a brief presentation covering the following: Pathways covers young people who have severe learning difficulties or disabilities. All have an Education & Health Care Plan (EHCP) needing a high level of support. There are currently 18 students. Foundation is designed to re-engage 16-18 in an FE environment to develop Wellbeing, Employability Skills alongside Functional Skills in Maths and English. Students attending Access to Further Education (ATFE) will have the opportunity to further develop skills across a range of units at Level 1. This is intended to help young persons make an informed choice regarding their progression and future opportunities. Additional Learning Support (ALS) – Cross College helps students throughout the College to attain potential and achieve their learning goals, regardless of ability or any additional needs they might have. There are currently 81 students, all of whom are doing mainstream courses and are receiving ALS support in 2023-23. Of these: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 have an existing EHCP (32% of the current ALS population) • 54 have presented with difficulties since starting in September (68% of the ALS population). The number will increase as issues become known, For example, becoming a victim of crime, mental problems, bereavement, accidents etc. ALS supported 150 students in this category last year so it is anticipated that this number will be reached by May. Overall those presenting with ALS needs within college mainstream will be a higher proportion of the student body next year as applications show an increase in demand to date of at least 8%. According to the UK Office for National Statistics, around 20% of adults over 16 have a learning difficulty, disability or personal circumstances that require additional support to meet their needs. The Board asked if this was a similar trend across all colleges which is the case. Previously this data was not captured properly, however the needs of students are being identified earlier both within college and with Local Authorities.	

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	<p>The following progression pathways were: Pathways - Another college day/residential, supported internship and day services Foundation - L2 Course Level 2 - L3 Course, apprenticeship and employment 'A' Level & Level 3 – University, apprenticeship and employment</p> <p>There were currently vacancies in the department for teachers and LSAs and discussion followed on the difficulty in recruitment in these areas with various suggestions offered to try to alleviate this situation including approaching companies to see if any staff would consider being released for a day a week (give back to the community) or local retired people.</p> <p>The Chair and Board members thanked Amanda Rowe for a very informative presentation.</p>	
	<p>Apologies for Absence Apologies had been received from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tim Lincoln – out of the country 2. Chris Murray – ill 3. Rena Rani - work 4. Charles Wiggin – work 5. Andrew Unsworth - sickness 	
	<p>Declaration of Interests</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lizzie Firth - Director of Accreditation and Standards at Pearsons <p>There were no other declarations of interest.</p>	
3.1	<p>Minutes of Previous Meeting</p> <p>(i) Minutes of meeting of 5 December 2022;</p> <p>The Board approved the minutes of 5 December 2022 as an accurate record of the meeting held,</p> <p>Resolved that the Board approved the minutes of 5 December 2022 as an accurate record of the meeting held.</p>	
3.2	<p>Matters Arising from the Minutes (unless covered by the agenda)</p> <p>Item 2.4 Student governor newsletter to be covered at the March board meeting Item 2.9 HR Update (pulse survey, strategy and strike action) to be covered at the March board meeting. All other matters had been closed off and there were no further matters arising.</p>	
3.3	<p>Strategic Plan Update</p> <p>Before addressing this item, the Chair re-iterated the importance of being prepared for Ofsted referencing not only the importance of accurate reporting of KPIs but also the strategic tracker.</p> <p>(i) KPIs</p> <p>The VP advised that the KPI's which were set in 2018 had been updated and reflected the current curriculum metrics so far, this current term with the financial metrics reflecting the performance as at the end of December 2022 based on the management accounts. Areas highlighted in the KPI's as amber, revolve around retention, attendance at 86%, (2% below target – although this has been affected by strike action) progression/value added and parent satisfaction. The RAG ratings are against the national average and not the targets.</p>	

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The Board felt that commentary was essential to further clarify the RAG rating with a comparison to the same period in previous years. Furthermore as there had been several strike action days affecting the College and the students, this information should be provided as an additional set of data with narrative so that a true comparison to previous years key data could be made. Albeit that this was being covered by the work indicated in the Strategic Tracker, it was felt that this would reinforce the data presented. There was still a focus on recruitment to enhance delivery to strengthen staff numbers and the hope to increase the pay cost ratio closer to 70%. There followed a lively discussion on the Level 3 Value Added data which was below the national average of ALPs 4 with the VP providing an explanation for this however the Board Chair asked that two of the Board Members who were FE specialist to speak to the VP offline about the ALPs scoring and integrity of the numbers for the current year and for this to be further discussed at the next QS committee meeting.

(ii) Strategy tracker

The report tracks the College's progress in terms of delivering the Strategic Plan 2021-2024 over a three-year period, measuring actions proposed to deliver. As agreed at the last meeting an annual Strategic Tracker has been created split into termly benchmarks used by SLT to measure progression and is RAG rated. For this term, the focus is on Strategic Aim One looking at progression, embedding skills, attendance and value added. The Board asked for explanations on the aims RAG'd amber, in particular the quantification of completion of each year of the planned activity for 2021-22. It was explained that only approximately 50% had been achieved leading to both apprenticeship provision and adult learning being put on hold to ensure that the 16-19 provision is completed leading to a discussion about whether the College was on track for the current year. The Chair re-iterated that the commentary needed to be revised to explain all of this.

(iii) Structures Review

The Principal advised the Board that although in the past the Corporation had reviewed and considered options in terms of structures i.e. academisation, mergers, stand-alone etc. on a regular basis, with the recent ONS reclassification it is now appropriate to revisit this and conduct a review. The review will consider:

- Historical context
- Various options available to the College
- Local environment i.e. what other education institutions are doing, especially in the locality and any stakeholder views
- Government steer/policy as appropriate

Most of the work will be undertaken by the SLT and Marketing Team, but some external consultancy will be used to test options and consider ideas. The plan is to have an interim report ready for the next Board meeting.

(iv) LSIPS

The VP provided the position statement on LSIPS covering the College's defined local enrolment and skills area of approximately 40 square miles. The eight industry sectors the College offers provision to align closely to local and regional priorities. The Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce (TVCC) is due to publish the first LSIP in June 2023. In the meantime, the College has taken part in a local Skills Advisory Panel consisting of representatives from the TVCC and other colleges and carried out its own analysis of business demand, in lieu of the publication of the LSIP, and drew on the outcomes of the analysis to submit a successful bid to the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) to offer solutions to local businesses up to March

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	<p>2023. The College is also delivering a teacher development programme, to attract and retain new people into the post-16 teaching profession as part of the SDF project.</p> <p>(v) Communication – the Head of HR who was recently in post explained what would be happening going forward with more details to be provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>(i) The Strategic plan update was received and noted by the board</p> <p>(ii) Lizzie Watts and Rena Rani to speak to VP about the ALPs scoring and integrity of the numbers for the current year</p> <p>(iii) VP to ensure that commentary on both KPIs and Strategic Tracker to be more detailed</p>	
3.4	<p>Principal's Report</p> <p>The Chair asked that the detailed paper be taken as read and the Principal briefly outlined what had been happening in the College since the last meeting in December covering: the staff conference, exams, impact of strike action of teachers and the railways (affecting many students travelling to the College), student enrolment for 23-24; and some issues around the Performing Arts course which have now been resolved. Of note four of the rugby girls have been selected to play for under 18 England team which the Board all agreed was a great credit to the College.</p> <p>Resolved that the Principal's Report was received and noted by the Board</p>	
3.5	<p>Student Governors Report/Presentation</p> <p>The student governors gave an update on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the student union numbers were still increasing. Student elections will take place in April for new positions. Current student governors will be at their last meeting in March as their replacements will be elected after this meeting. 2. A new students newsletter run by the students with relevant articles is in progress with a separate team to produce this. This has had to be put on hold although a new logo has been designed to complement the Henley College logo. <p>The Chair asked the student governors to provide at their last meeting an insight as to what it is like to be student governors and how the Board can ensure that their experience is fulfilling.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p>(i) the Student Governors' Report was received and noted by the Board</p> <p>(ii) Student governors to provide an insight as to what it is like to be student governors for next Board meeting</p>	
3.6	<p>Safeguarding & Prevent</p> <p>The safeguarding report was present for information and covered the following:</p> <p>Safeguarding Governor visit which included meeting with Student Leadership. He also met remotely with the ESAT auditor. Student classed as vulnerable at assessment are now being tracked via CPOMS. 407 incidents logged so far this year but a proportion of these are historic (c. 15%). November was a peak period. ESAT / LADO have conducted a review which provides a good comparison point with last year's external audit. Initial feedback highlighted a strong and well-embedded safeguarding culture. There have been no Prevent referrals but working on staff training with Co-Ordinator for Violence Against Women and Girls in the wake of Andrew Tate. The Single Central Record is up to date and the initial ESAT auditor feedback recommended adding three further criteria, e.g. identifying staff who</p>	

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	<p>have worked abroad. Card-only access Phase One trial has been successful for premises and Phase Two is ready to start.</p> <p>There were no further comments.</p> <p>The Section 157 Annual Safeguarding Report was presented to the Board for approval. There were no issues raised and the Board approved the report.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(i) the Safeguarding and Prevent Report was received and noted by the Board</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(ii) Section 157 Annual Safeguarding Report was received and approved by the Board</p>	
3.7	<p>Financial Update</p> <p>The FRC explained that the operating surplus was £274k against a budget of £120k explaining that pay costs were originally budgeted to include teachers at the top of their pay grades. However, due to recruitment issues, i.e. appointments not starting at the beginning of the year and teachers' level of experience (resulting in lower pay grades), but there was an increase in interim staff to cover the ongoing vacancies. The Board asked about any possible additional pay award which the FRC and Principal said would be brought to the F&R committee before going to the board at the end of March. The College was now planning for the next three T-Levels project. For note there were non-pay cost increases due to the economic climate since the budget was set and the added cost of accommodation and transport associated with the sports students. Finally the impact of the reclassification of the College into the public sector is still not fully known. There were no further questions. The management accounts for December 2022 were received and noted.</p> <p>Resolved that the Management Accounts for December 2022 were received and noted by the Board.</p>	
3.8	<p>Link Governors</p> <p>The Chair provided a brief background to the role of link governors saying that it was universally agreed that Link Governors have the potential to make a very significant contribution to effective governance within the College citing that of the Link Governor for Safeguarding and Prevent However, there were concerns with some aspects of the existing operation e.g. time devoted to the role, clarity of purpose, how the role supports effective governance and feeds into committee and board level. It was felt that Link Governors would add significant value when aligned with key areas of the College operation and strategic priorities and where there is clarity about the purpose and expectations among all parties involved. It was therefore proposed that the overarching purpose of the role is to be a cornerstone of effective governance to enable Governors to gain reassurance that key operations are effectively managed in accordance with agreed strategy and policies, to the required quality standards, and in line with agreed performance objectives and complement the work of the sub-committees. It was suggested that 3 Link Governors be appointed to cover Curriculum & Quality and that a Lead Link Governor and a Support Governor be appointed to cover other areas. This will help achieve continuity & cover and to spread workload. The Board agreed with the proposal and the Chair said that he would be speaking offline with one of the Vice Chairs regarding this and its implementation.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(i) the Report on Link governors was received and noted by the Board</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(ii) the Board Chair to speak to one of the Vice Chairs about how this is to be set up.</p>	
3.9	Any Other Business	

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	There was no other business.	
3.10	<p>Board Impact Board Engagement</p> <p>The new Governor Engagement Programme trialled in November 2022 had been arranged by the Principal, Vice Principal and Chair and deemed a success. The aim had been for governors to find out what it was like to be a student or a member of staff at the College. The next such engagement day would be 14 March 2023. The Principal's PA would provide details of the programme for that day once agreed. The Chair asked that the Board Members advise him of their intended attendance.</p> <p>Resolved that:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(i) the Board Engagement Programme to be on 14 March 2023. (ii) Board Members to advise the Board Chair of their attendance</p>	
3.11	<p>Board Conduct of Meeting</p> <p>Pace good and papers taken as read which allowed for more discussion.</p>	
	<p>Items to be taken forward to next board meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on estates 	
	<p>Date and Time of Next Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 March 2023 • 3 July 2023 	
	<p>Close of Meeting</p> <p>The meeting closed at 20.12</p>	
	MINUTES of the meeting held on 30 January 2023 were agreed and accepted as a true and accurate record held	