

Xaverian College

Governing Body Meeting

Tuesday 8th December 2020 at 6.00pm

Via Microsoft Teams due to Covid-19

Minutes

Governors Present:-

Mr B O'Shea (Chair)	Mr A Gornall	Mrs S Parkin
Mrs T Dervin (Vice Chair)	Mr P Hartley	Mr P Quinn
Ms M Bjedov	Mrs J Hicklin	Mrs C Rafferty
Ms L Buckley	Mr A Knowles (Principal)	Ms A Rodriguez-Uruchurtu
Mr J Egerton	Mgr M Kujacz	Mr G Walker
Mrs C Fitzwilliam-Pipe	Mr S O'Hanrahan	Mrs L Walmsley

Also in attendance:-

Mrs K Stanhope (Clerk)
Mr I Lewis (Director of Finance and Business)
Mr S Channell (Vice Principal Student Support)
Mr A De Paola (Vice Principal Curriculum)

Item		Action
	BOS welcomed everyone to the meeting and AK opened the meeting with the prayer of Theodore Ryken.	
1	Apologies Apologies had been received from Sr E Donoghue, Mr L Ormsby and Mrs M Tilley. Mr A Stiles was not in attendance.	
1a	Notification of Urgent Business The Chair asked if there were any items of urgent business. None were raised.	
1b	Declaration of Interests The Chair reminded members that they should declare any interests they may have. No declarations were made.	
1c	Minutes of Previous Meeting The minutes of the previous meeting on 13 th October 2020 were approved by all present as a true and accurate record. BOS will sign the minutes next time he is able to visit the college in person.	KPS/BOS
1d	Matters Arising There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.	

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Principal's Report

AK reminded governors that last year's L6 had been able to return to college for a week in June. He said that this had been valuable for students and staff, and that the students had appreciated the opportunity to come into college. A full return to college had taken place after half term which the college felt was best for student welfare. Some colleges have continued with remote learning on a 50/50 basis but the ESFA wanted to see a full return. BOS asked if there was any learner voice feedback. AK said that the Divisional Leads had sought student views in their areas and had found it a common theme that students wanted to be in college. Student Governor MB said that she prefers being back in college to blended learning. She said it is much more difficult to concentrate when learning at home.

AK stressed the importance of preparing students for exams next summer. The government are still saying that these will take place, but they are being pressed by the sector to have an additional Plan B in place. AK said that mock exams will need careful thought as these could potentially count towards a final grade.

AK said that Ofsted had planned to resume normal activities in January but had recently confirmed that they would continue with ungraded monitoring visits for the time being, with a view to graded inspections resuming after Easter. AK said that outstanding colleges which had not been inspected for 10 years were likely to be targeted this year and that Xaverian falls into this category.

AK said that students were very compliant with wearing masks in class. Students who were exempt from wearing a mask were offered visors. He said there had been pressure in the sector to close colleges earlier to allow staff to isolate themselves before Christmas and to avoid staff having to track and trace over the holiday period. The current recommendation for FE was 17th December. AK confirmed that Xaverian students would be finishing on this date, with a final day in college on 18th for staff.

AK outlined the announcements in the recent government Spending Review, in particular that there would be no further increase to the basic funding rate per student.

AK said that internal self-assessment has been taking place this term. There had been a particular focus on identifying any gaps in learning as a result of the pandemic. The overall College SAR will be presented to the Q&S Committee and Governing Body after Christmas.

AK provided an update on open days and taster days. The college has not been able to sell itself in the usual way through roadshows and campus visits but virtual open days have taken place. TD said she had visited four of the open day sessions and that these had been very natural and engaging. She particularly noted the work of the careers department. AK said that students had assisted in Q&A sessions for parents and had really helped to sell the college. It was planned that high quality taster video presentations would be released after Christmas. SOH congratulated everyone involved. He said the genuineness of staff and students is what really sells the college and maintains the Xaverian tradition whatever the circumstances.

ADP said that the Manchester Giants basketball team had approached the college regarding support for their academy project. He extended thanks to teacher Martin Kilroy and the marketing/admissions team for helping to bring this about.

	<p>A contract was being finalised and it was hoped that students would be enrolled in September.</p> <p>AK reported on other college events including the Xaverian Young Musician of the Year, the Annual Service of Remembrance and the forthcoming Advent Service. The Christmas Concert will be virtual and KPS will share the link with governors when it becomes available. TD said that she had really enjoyed the Young Musician competition although the sound quality had been an issue. AK said that this had been recognised and that the concert would be a higher quality recording.</p> <p>AK said that the annual student Toy Appeal had been done differently this year due to the pandemic. Normally the students arrange fundraising activities in order to buy Christmas presents for children in need. This year the college has funded the purchase of presents, whilst students have been asked to contribute to a local food bank. In addition the staff have donated to Christmas hampers which the RE team will deliver to the senior citizens who would normally have attended the Xaverian Christmas Party.</p> <p>AK said that the work of students and staff throughout the Covid period had made him incredibly proud and he thanked governors for their support during this time.</p> <p>BOS asked about staff morale. AK said that delivering blended learning was hard and that teachers were tired, but everyone had pulled together and gone the extra mile. The final day of college would be a chance to relax with lunch provided and a virtual quiz. Staff Governor AKG said that blended learning had meant relearning how to teach and had been hard, but he said that a number of acquired skills and innovations would serve us well in the future beyond the pandemic.</p> <p>SOH acknowledged the way that students had been cared for with all the relevant precautions in place. BOS thanked the college on behalf of the governors for all the work which was going on during the pandemic.</p>	KPS
2a	<p>Health & Safety Update</p> <p>SC provided a verbal update on Health & Safety matters. He said that every classroom has been assessed for safe working, each with a numbered seating plan so that isolation can be effected quickly if necessary. Layout allows teachers to maintain a safe distance from students.</p> <p>He said students have complied well with wearing masks and the security officers are working well with students to aid compliance with the safety measures in place. SC was pleased to report that one of the security officers had now obtained a permanent position with the college as Deputy Site Manager.</p> <p>SC said that ventilation remains important. Other measures include staggering of breaks and an earlier finish for L6 to reduce crowding at bus stops</p> <p>SC said the numbers isolating remained low. He referred to the graph which had been circulated which shows that absence rates in the college are closely mirroring the wider pandemic situation.</p>	
2b	<p>Update on Pay Award</p> <p>AK said that national negotiations were still ongoing. He said that the unions had asked for 7%, whilst the employers have offered a 2% increase from September with a further 1% from March, equating to 2.5% overall.</p>	

	<p>He said there may be some further movement on this, but it was unlikely to reach 7% since this would be untenable for many colleges.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of FP&R Committee</p> <p>BOS summarised the FP&R Committee meeting on 19th October, the minutes of which had been circulated. He said the college remains in a healthy financial situation which has helped it to deal with the pandemic, whilst also allowing scope for future development.</p>	
3a	<p>Estates and Accommodation Update</p> <p>SC gave an update on estates and accommodation. He said that the Teresa Quinn Building was now complete with handover expected this week. Furnishings were now being installed and it was hoped to trial some classes in the building next week.</p> <p>SC confirmed that the architects were working on plans for the redevelopment of Firwood ground floor, to provide more dining and social space. He said plans would be firmed up for submission in the spring. The development will involve the relocation of some staff to the Ryken building. BOS said that development of social space was important to support the growth of the college.</p> <p>SC said that further consideration was being given to perimeter railings. He said these were needed in the vicinity of Thurloe Street and Maryland, but not around the entire campus.</p> <p>AK said the college was also looking into the possibility of erecting covered areas to provide temporary outdoor shelter for students. He said it was likely that planning permission would be required .</p>	
3b	<p>Management Accounts as at 30th October 2020</p> <p>IL presented the management accounts as at the end of October.</p> <p>He said that income was above plan, driven mainly by Free Meals money being released to income. He said that eligible students had been paid this directly during the summer and whilst they were on remote learning or isolating. BOS asked whether this was paid into bank accounts on a weekly basis. IL confirmed that this was done fortnightly.</p> <p>IL said that pay expenditure was below budget. He said that additional tuition funding would provide for new posts which may result in an overspend on pay, but this would be balanced by the income received.</p> <p>IL said that maintenance was currently overspent. Overall non-pay expenditure was below budget due to underspending in most departments, which balanced the additional expenditure required during the pandemic.</p> <p>IL confirmed that the current surplus was above plan. He said that University numbers were slightly higher than budgeted with the possibility of international students returning in January.</p> <p>IL referred to the balance sheet, saying that cash reserves remained strong due partly to the phasing of ESFA funding at this time of year. He said the cash-flow statement takes account of the likely expenditure on railings and social space, resulting in a drop compared to the previous year but he reminded Governors that the college has also self-funded the new building.</p>	

	<p>IL said that it was not yet clear whether additional funding for teachers' pensions would continue. He said this may be the case, but at this stage he had assumed not.</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of Search Committee</p> <p>TD presented the minutes of the Search Committee meeting on 13th October 2020 which had been circulated. She said that the committee had reviewed skills and diversity as well as succession planning and training. TD said that the Committee had met again earlier this evening and had met the new Student Governor (see Item 4a below).</p>	
4a	<p>Introduction to New Student Governor</p> <p>TD was pleased to introduce Aoife Rodriguez-Uruchurtu who had recently been selected as the second student governor. She said that the Search Committee had met AR earlier in the evening and felt that she would make a very positive contribution to the Governing Body. She invited AR to introduce herself.</p> <p>AR said that she was a L6 student studying English, Philosophy, Politics and History. She said she was very excited to join the Governing Body and particularly looked forward to being able to attend physical meetings in the future.</p> <p>TD thanked AR for putting herself forward and her appointment to the Governing Body was approved.</p>	
4b	<p>Review of Search Committee Terms of Reference</p> <p>TD said that the Search Committee had considered its Terms of Reference and did not recommend any changes. It was therefore agreed that the TOR would remain as before.</p>	
5	<p>Minutes of Audit Committee</p> <p>PH presented the minutes of the Audit Committee which had been circulated. He said that the minutes provided a good summary of the meeting and a number of items were recommended for approval (see Items 5a, 5b and 5c below).</p>	
5a	<p>Internal Audit Annual Report</p> <p>PH presented the Internal Audit Annual Report prepared by BDO which shows the outcomes of the internal audits which had taken place in 2019-20. Page 8 provides the annual statement of assurance of the design and effectiveness of risk management and governance. These were found to be suitably designed and operating with sufficient effectiveness and the Audit Committee recommended approval.</p> <p>The report was approved by all present.</p>	
5b	<p>Financial Statements and Audit Completion Report</p> <p>PH presented the Financial Statements and Audit Completion Report prepared by Mazars. These had been considered by the Audit Committee who recommended approval. The FP&R Committee had also considered the Financial Statements and recommended approval.</p> <p>The Financial Statements and Audit Completion Report were approved by all present.</p>	

	IL will arrange for BOS to sign and return the necessary documentation.	IL/BOS
5c	<p>Draft Annual Report of the Audit Committee</p> <p>PH presented the Draft Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2019-20 which the Clerk had prepared on behalf of the Audit Committee. The report outlines the activities of the Audit Committee during the year and confirms the Audit Committee's conclusion on risk management as follows:-</p> <p><i>“Having reviewed its activities in 2019/20, the Audit Committee wishes to assure the Governing Body that governance, risk management and control arrangements at Xaverian College remain effective. The Committee has noted the recommendations made by BDO and Mazars, and is satisfied that management have accepted the recommendations made and have taken appropriate steps to address these.”</i></p> <p>The report was approved by all present.</p> <p>SOH asked whether the Risk Management Group feeds back to the audit committee. IL confirmed that this was the case but that the group had not yet met at the time of the first Audit Committee meeting. However the Audit Committee had reviewed the risk register and plan, which has been updated to include risks pertinent to Covid-19. He said that risks relating to completion of the Teresa Quinn building could shortly be removed from the register, as the building has been completed.</p>	
6	<p>Minutes of Q&S Meeting</p> <p>LW reported on the Q&S meeting which had taken place on 17th November. She said the meeting had been very comprehensive and the Committee had scrutinised a range of matters including Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity, Health and Safety, strategic planning and college performance. The Committee had also received feedback from the student induction questionnaire and an update on the University programmes.</p> <p>She said the Committee had felt very reassured that the college was being well cared for during these difficult times. She said that governor GW had summed this up well in a post-meeting email which concluded that <i>‘concern for the wellbeing of its students is in the DNA of the college and it’s heartening to hear how diligently this team works in realising that concern.’</i></p>	
7	<p>Review of Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference</p> <p>This item was not considered as the Remuneration Committee had not yet met.</p>	
8	<p>Confidential Item – Review of Senior Post-holders and Clerk</p> <p>BOS said that the Remuneration Committee meeting due to take place earlier today had been deferred to next week, Tuesday 15th December, along with the Chairs’ Meeting.</p> <p>He asked if Governors would be happy to convene a short additional Governing Body Meeting (not students or staff) next Wednesday 16th December at 5.00pm to consider the recommendations of the Remuneration Committee. This was agreed. KPS will circulate the necessary link.</p>	KPS
9	Urgent Business	

	There were no items of urgent business to discuss but BOS reminded everyone to complete the Educare training.	
9a	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>As agreed above there will be a short meeting on 16th December at 5.00pm to consider the recommendations of the Remuneration Committee and the next scheduled meeting will take place on 9th February at 6.00pm.</p> <p>BOS wished everyone a happy, holy and safe Christmas.</p>	
	The meeting closed at 7.40pm.	