

Xaverian College

Governing Body Meeting

Tuesday 8th October 2024 at 6.00pm

Minutes

Governors Present:-

Teresa Dervin (Chair)	Monsignor Michael Kujacz (via Teams)	Ben Quiligotti
John Egerton		Kate Rafferty
Catherine Fitzwilliam-Pipe	Katie McKnight	David Sharp
Stephen Hall (Vice Chair)	Jo Leach	Chris Thomas
Julie Hicklin	Sheldon Logue	Ameerah Ullah
Anthony Knowles (Principal)	Sean O'Hanrahan	Louise Walmsley

Also in attendance:-

Karen Stanhope (Clerk)
Ivan Lewis (Director of Finance and Business)
Simon Channell (Vice Principal Student Support)
Antonio De Paola (Vice Principal Curriculum)

Item	Action
TD welcomed everyone to the meeting. AK opened the meeting with the prayer of Theodore Ryken.	
Presentation - Destinations Staff Governor JL (Careers lead for the college) presented headline statistics on 2024 Destinations, including 380 students going to Russell Group Universities, 8 to Oxbridge and 24 studying MDV (Medicine/Dentistry/Veterinary). She said that 1401 UCAS forms were processed and 1116 students secured their first choice of university. JL showed a breakdown of the number of students going to different universities, with Manchester being the most popular. 35% of students stayed within Greater Manchester with another 24.3% within one hour's travel of Manchester. She said that some students will stay in Manchester but not necessarily live at home. CT asked if 35% was fairly typical for Greater Manchester and JL confirmed that this had been similar over the last few years. JL also provided a breakdown showing the range of different destinations, including employment, apprenticeships and gap year. NEETs (not in education, employment or training) were up slightly from last year but were only 3% of the cohort. JL said the cycle is already underway for next year and described events which had taken place to date, including parent Q&A sessions, personal statement checking, guidance interviews and professional mentoring schemes. The next careers event will be attended by around 66 different providers. She said that the format of the	

	UCAS Personal Statement is changing and explained what would be expected in future statements, based on three key questions. SOH asked if an even split between questions was expected. JL said that in most cases the split would be roughly equal. She said it is important that universities can pull out the skills acquired from work experience. She added that 'virtual' work experience is also becoming popular with companies. DS asked whether it was usual that students would take on part-time jobs alongside their studies. JL confirmed that this was the case. She said that shop work was popular but can be very demanding on hours. Jobs at football grounds or similar were often a better fit. SH asked how Oxbridge entries compared with the number of applications. ADP said that almost all who received offers did get a place and the college was working towards a higher number of offers. SH asked about the proportion split within MDV. JL said that the majority are medicine, followed by dentistry with a small number of veterinary. JL said that social mobility is very important and the careers team continue to support students for up to two years after leaving, where needed. The team offer a combination of information, advice and guidance. SH asked whether ongoing support is given to those with indefinite leave to remain and JL confirmed this to be the case. TD thanked JL for the comprehensive presentation and governors congratulated the team on the very positive outcomes and the work done with such large numbers of students. All agreed that students were very well supported.	
1a	Apologies Apologies had been received from David Harrison and Stella Parkin. Frances Davies-Tagoe was not in attendance.	
1b	Notification of Urgent Business The Chair asked if there were any items of urgent business. None were raised.	
1c	Declaration of Interests The Chair reminded members that they should declare any interests they may have. No declarations were made.	
1d	Minutes of Previous Meeting The minutes of the previous meeting on 2nd July 2024 were approved by all present and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
1e	Matters Arising KPS had circulated a questionnaire to governors about preferred options for the training day and would be in touch shortly to confirm arrangements for this year. The Health & Safety Policy had been signed by AK and TD. SC confirmed that this would be amended and re-signed as agreed, once the new Facilities Manager started work, since he will oversee Health & Safety.	KPS SC/KPS

2a	Principal's Update AK presented his report which had been circulated. <u>Sector News</u> AK began by providing an update on the Pay Award. He said that the DfE had announced a 5.5% increase for teachers. The government is part-funding this for schools and academised sixth form colleges, but not for other sixth form colleges, even though the additional spend would be relatively small. AK said that the SFCA are pursuing legal action but this will take time with no guarantee of a successful outcome. Industrial action in the form of strikes is also due to take place towards the end of November. TD said it was worrying that the government appeared to be levering colleges towards academisation. She said there would need to be ongoing review and discussion regarding the position on academisation. AK said that our Level 3 Applied courses look like being safe for one more year. Labour had said previously that they would support a one-year pause and review, although there has been no significant review so far. It is likely that T-levels will stay. Regarding capital funding, AK said that there may be future rounds of CIF funding but these may be targeted at early years providers. Following the Ofsted Big Listen, there is a move towards a report card without the one-word grading, however this will not apply to the FE and Skills framework for colleges. AK provided an update on academisation, saying that out of 73 SFCs, 32 had academised, 6 were in the pipeline and 20 were actively pursuing academisation. This will leave just 15, of which 14 are Catholic Colleges. AK said he had sensed a mood change at the ACVIC conference this year. He said that a meeting with the Diocese is planned in October, with Xaverian, Aquinas and Holy Cross. Favoured options may be a horizontal model or an empty MAT. TD said the governors will need a strong focus on this and there will be further discussion at the next meeting. SOH said it was not surprising that Catholic Colleges were the majority of those left, in view of the delays faced at the outset. He asked whether there was any merit in writing to MPs regarding funding. AK confirmed that this has been done. JH said that this all feeds into the consultation on curriculum review and asked if governors could respond to this. AK said he would forward the link to KPS for circulation. <u>College News</u> AK summarised the summer results, a copy of which had been circulated. He was pleased to report an increase in Level 3 high grades in the three biggest subject areas. At Level 2, Maths had a pass rate of 64% against a benchmark of 18% for post-16 resits, whilst English achieved 65% against a benchmark of 22%. ADP provided an update on this year's enrolment. He said that numbers hadn't quite reached target, but the college still recruited the second highest ever L6, which will convert to a good U6 next year. He said the college is currently analysing why the target wasn't met. He said that there was growth but not as	TD KPS
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	much as we would have liked, although growth has to be balanced with a level of caution not to over-recruit. SH asked whether the new structure of Assistant Divisional Leads could be used to support the marketing effort and ADP confirmed that this was already happening. He said he didn't feel there was a particular marketing issue, rather the issue was more about targeting offers to those schools with higher levels of conversion. SOH said that the number of schools recruited from gives an indication of the high level of marketing. He expressed thanks to everyone involved in the enrolment process. TD said that the current drill-down will support next year's efforts. She said that word of mouth continues to be the best advert if students are enjoying themselves here. KM asked whether schools share their destination data. ADP said unfortunately not. DS asked if there was much mobility between colleges after initial enrolment. ADP said this can happen in the first few weeks but soon settles. JL asked whether parent e-mail addresses are collected to help with engagement. ADP said that parents are kept in the loop once the application process starts. KM said that she had brought her daughter to the recent Open Day and had found it to be exceptional. She said that the level of teacher engagement was excellent and her daughter really 'got' the college. She asked whether there were any courses missing from the offer, particularly in the applied areas. ADP confirmed that the college is continually reviewing the curriculum offer. DS added that the ticketing system for open days really works and encourages students to attend. SC said that the pastoral programme had focused recently on Black History Month and the UCAS journey (for Year 13). Year 12s have been voting for the Student Council and a new Student Governor will be appointed shortly. AK confirmed that Chris Poke (CGP) has settled into his new role as Assistant Principal for Quality, taking over from TGJ. He said that Curriculum Audits of all subject areas are being undertaken at the moment, whilst staff development continues its focus on embedding the toolkit. AK said that regular Chaplaincy Newsletters provide an update on Masses, prayers and charity events. The music and drama departments have a number of events coming up, as detailed in the Principal's Report. KPS will circulate details regarding tickets for the Christmas Concert at the RNCM on 8th December. TD asked for any recent news about teacher wellbeing. AK said that AK was planning to survey staff to find out what they would want in terms of flexible working and hoped to have further news for the next academic year. He said that some models used elsewhere (e.g. dedicated marking days) may not work here due to lack of room capacity for teaching.	
2b	Update on Pay Award The current position had already been discussed during the Principal's report above. IL confirmed that 5% had been budgeted and that 5.5% could be manageable.	
3a	Management Accounts IL presented the management accounts as at the end of the financial year to 31st July 2024.	

	He said that income was above budget, driven by in year-funding and additional funding to support the pay increases. Pay expenditure was slightly under budget, but the underspend was impacted by confirmation of accrued redundancy costs following the restructure of the Estates team. The college recorded a surplus above budget at the year end, before pension adjustments are taken into account. In- year funding was a key factor in this. IL said the balance sheet showed that cash levels were up on last year, which was good considering the spend on building work. The position was helped by a one-off effect of changes to PAYE payment schedules. Fixed assets were also up year on year due to the Sunbury work. IL said the graphs showed a healthy position. IL reminded governors that there can be big fluctuations in the pension scheme valuations, particularly the LGPS (support staff) scheme. He said that the swing from asset to liability will mean that the end of year financial statements will show a deficit, but the ESFA don't take the pension position into account, therefore the college will still be recorded as having outstanding financial health. IL referred governors to the cash flow statement and the expenditure to date on the Sunbury Science Hub. He said that the DfE are making payments on a £ for £ basis, with a slight lag in payments. IL said that unused bursary funding had been carried forward into the year, however the rules have been tightened up and we have had to make some changes. Trips will no longer be funded for bursary students unless the trip is a requirement of the course. Also students can't receive bursary money for food as well as Free School Meal funding. JH asked if there was any other way of helping these students with trips, via a hardship fund. IL said that this had not yet been explored. TD asked if there were any risks associated with the move into the Public sector. IL said that the college is no longer able to access commercial loans and is not able to provide enhanced redundancy packages without treasury approval. IL said that expected changes to procurement had been delayed until the end of February. TD thanked IL for his clear presentation of the accounts.	
3b	Estates and Resources SC provided an update on the estate. He said the science hub build was going well with handover expected on 13/6/25. Costs were running as expected at £7.5m plus contingency. Steel work has been ongoing for a couple of weeks and is about half way through. The next stage would be the concrete base and floors. SC confirmed that the DfE continued to monitor progress but only at arms length, which led to an easier working relationship. The risk register has been reviewed with the contractors. SC said that preliminary considerations in respect of the Xavier building had been paused until after the government spending review. SIBCAS had been appointed, as agreed, to provide new temporary accommodation which should be in place early in the new year. This accommodation will house	

	the University programme. SC said that perimeter wall repairs were nearing completion and the final railings would be installed in the next few weeks. SC confirmed that power is now being generated by the solar panels and three displays around college indicate how this is working. Repair work has been undertaken to the canteen floor, and the library has moved across into the Pavilion, replacing the former food area. SC said that the new canteen and the coffee shop are providing adequate catering space at present and the Pavilion was less popular. SC said that the new Facilities Manager would be overseeing compliance across the campus and ensuring that all the required paperwork is in place. Finally SC said that 4 classrooms were temporarily out of action due to issues with water ingress to Ward Hall roof. Remedial work is presently being undertaken. SOH asked whether the temporary accommodation would go ahead if Xavier exploration had been paused. SC said that designs have only been paused temporarily and that the additional accommodation will still be required.	
4a	AoC Code of Good Governance TD referred governors to the AoC Code of Good Governance and asked KPS to explain the background. KPS said that this Code was first devised several years ago, but the Catholic Education Service (CES) had recommended Catholic Colleges not to sign up to the Code as they were unhappy with some of the provisions. This meant that the college still officially signed up to the UK Corporate Code, but it was recognised that many elements of this were geared towards companies, and had little or no relevance to colleges. However the CES has been in negotiation with the AoC regarding the latest revision of the Code and has recently confirmed that Catholic Colleges may adopt the Code if they wish. It was therefore proposed that the college adopts the AoC Code, as this is a more appropriate Code than the UK Corporate Code. The Governing Body approved the decision to adopt the AoC Code. KPS confirmed that our individual code of conduct will run alongside this, and she will review the individual code to ensure it aligns well.	KPS
4b	Amendments to Standing Orders KPS presented amendments to the Standing Orders, which had arisen following recommendations made in the External Review of Governance: - <u>Independence of Clerk</u> KPS said that since she has a second role in college (one day per week working in Student Services) it was recommended that it be documented that she retains independence when it comes to her governance role. The updated Standing Order 15 sets out the need for the Clerk to retain independence, and the steps to be taken should anyone feel that independence was being compromised. Governors were happy to approve this update.	

	<u>Maximum Term of Office</u> It had been recommended that there should be an expectation that governors would serve only two consecutive terms of office (i.e. 8 years) unless there were exceptional circumstances. This had been discussed during the review and it was acknowledged that this was difficult for Catholic colleges in view of the shortage of potential Foundation Governors. It was agreed that the position would be documented and KPS had expanded Standing Order 11.6 accordingly. She had not referred explicitly to a maximum two terms, however following the adoption of the AoC Code (see Item 4a above) she proposed that this should be more explicitly stated. Governors were happy to approve the amendments suggested and were happy for KPS to further amend the paragraph as discussed.	KPS
5a	Membership Update TD said that recent leavers included Cath Baggaley (Foundation Governor) who has stepped down due to personal circumstances, and Louis Kidger (Student Governor) who has left college and gone to University. It is hoped that Associate Governor David Sharp may be approved as a Foundation Governor and KPS will liaise with the Diocese accordingly. TD said that Associate Governor JH's term of office was due for renewal and it was proposed that this be renewed as JH brings a great deal of expertise to the Governing Body. This was approved by everyone present.	KPS
5b	Governors' Performance Indicators TD presented the Clerk's summary of performance of the Governing Body over the previous year. She said this provided a good overview of a successful year. Key highlights included: - • Nine curriculum visits • An external review of governance • Good attendance at meetings • Involvement with college events and activities TD thanked everyone for their commitment during the year.	
5c	Link Governors TD invited governors to consider becoming a link governor. She asked KPS to explain a bit about this. KPS said that the Governing Body normally has link governors in the areas of Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Safeguarding (Louise Walmsley) and Prevent (John Egerton). We are currently looking for governors to link with the areas of Health & Safety and Equality & Diversity. KPS said it was not necessary to be an expert in these areas to be a link governor. Link governors would simply link in with the relevant staff in college, so for example might visit these departments alongside the curriculum visit scheme, or may wish to attend relevant meetings in college. TD asked governors to consider taking on a link role and asked them to contact KPS if they were interested.	Govs

4d	Committee Minutes TD drew governors' attention to the FP&R minutes which had been circulated. SOH said a number of the matters discussed at the FP&R meeting had already been considered earlier in this meeting but he was happy to take any questions. There were no questions at present.	
5a	Urgent Business There were no items of urgent business to discuss.	
5b	Date of Next Meeting The next meeting will take place at 6.00pm on Tuesday 10 th December 2024	
	The meeting closed at 7.40pm.	

Signed.....

Date.....