Xaverian College

Governing Body Meeting
Tuesday 10th December 2024 at 6.00pm

Minutes

Governors Present:-

John Egerton
Catherine Fitzwilliam-Pipe
Stephen Hall (Vice Chair)
David Harrison
Julie Hicklin
Anthony Knowles (Principal)
Monsignor Michael Kujacz
Katie McKnight
Sean O'Hanrahan
Stella Parkin
Chris Thomas
Ameerah Ullah
Louise Walmsley
Natasha Woodham

Also in attendance:-

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

Item		Action
	Vice Chair SH chaired the meeting, in the absence of TD. SH welcomed everyone to the meeting and AK opened the meeting with the prayer of Theodore Ryken. SH began by welcoming Natasha Woodham, new Student Governor. He also informed the Governing Body that Foundation Governor Kate Rafferty had stepped down from the Governing Body. Kate has served as a governor for seven years and will be greatly missed.	
1a	**Apologies** Apologies had been received from Teresa Dervin (Chair), Francess Davies-Tagoe, Jo Leach, Sheldon Logue, David Sharp, Ben Quiligotti and Simon Channell (Vice Principal – Student Support).	
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 8th October 2024 were approved by all present and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	

1e	Matters Arising SH said that following the last meeting KM had expressed an interest in becoming the link governor for DEI. This was approved by all present. SH said a volunteer was still required for the H&S link governor and invited governors to consider this and contact KPS. He said that expertise in the area was not essential, just an interest in linking in, to learn more about the college in this important area. SH said it was hoped that Associate Governor DS would become a Foundation Governor and KPS will be liaising with DS and the Diocese regarding this. KPS confirmed that the Standing Orders had been updated as discussed at the last meeting. SH highlighted the note which had been circulated from the Chair regarding Academisation. AK said that following the recent ACVIC conference he had sensed a mood change amongst colleges who feared that colleges may become more isolated. A meeting has been arranged with two other Catholic Principals and relevant Dioceses and Directors of Education, to discuss possible models. AK will report back at the next meeting. Following feedback from governors regarding the training day, KPS said that the preference seemed to be for a late afternoon/evening event. With this in mind it was proposed that the last meeting of the year (1st July 2025) be devoted to training as this date was already in the diary. A brief formal meeting would take care of any business matters, followed by food and training presentations. SH encouraged as many as possible to attend. He said that the staff had recently had DEI training which may be appropriate to include for governors.	Govs KPS AK
2a	**Principal's Update** AK presented his report which had been circulated. He began with a sector update. AK said that colleges had received a letter from the Minister for Skills, outlining the implications of the budget. This included additional funding for skills and capital funding for FE. SFCs will continue to be eligible for CIF funding but this is likely to be relatively small scale. There will be additional funding for SEND and it is likely that the government will help with costs of additional National Insurance. AK said that national pay negotiations are ongoing with a discrepancy between what the unions are asking and what the employers have offered. SFCs are not eligible for the government subsidy to cover any pay award and a number of teachers' strikes have been scheduled in protest (see also Item 2b below). AK said that the SFCA had responded to the recent government Curriculum Review and focused on a number of issues including the future of Advanced General Qualifications such as BTECs and alternative approaches to Maths and English GCSE resits. The full response had been circulated to governors. AK then provided an update on college matters. He said that the Assistant Principal for Quality (CGP) had built on the work done by TGJ, and had been working on a new College SAR. Curriculum audits had taken place, and divisional meetings fed into the Divisional SAR and QIP. Pastoral and RE SARs will also be completed. He said the whole process was based on cooperation. Chair of Q&S	

	LW will be attending the SAR verification meeting following which the final College SAR will be presented to governors in the new year. ADP said that the admissions process was in full swing again. He referred to the marketing report in the Appendix which provides full details. Open Days and Taster Days had been very well attended. Research has been undertaken following last year's recruitment to ensure that places are offered in the most effective way. ADP said that over 1000 UCAS applications had been processed following the internal November deadline. Year 12 Student Council elections have taken place with over 2800 votes. AK said that the core RE programme has been updated. Sessions for Foundation Students focus on Social Justice and are combined with pastoral sessions to deliver statutory and PSHE topics. The RE department has received grants for revision resources and for the organisation of a joint conference with Loreto college in the spring. 10 students had joined the CAFOD Young Leaders' Programme and a NW conference of Catholic colleges met yesterday for a joint staff training event. SH asked if anything had prompted this. AK said that colleges wanted to share good practice and experience of the ethics elements of the course. AK outlined recent Chaplaincy events including the Harvest Festival, Remembrance Service, Macmillan Bake Sale and the annual Toy Appeal. He said that the Chapel is currently being redecorated. A Christmas Liturgy is focused on world peace and will be celebrated in St Edwards. The Chaplaincy Team and students also contributed to the recent ACVIC conference. Recent music activities included the Xaverian Young Musician of the Year, masterclasses and spectacular performances at the Royal Albert Hall in London, and the Christmas Concert at the RNCM. Drama students performed extracts from Hamlet for the MANCEP Shakespeare event. SH thanked AK for his detailed report and asked him to pass thanks to all involved.	
2b	**Update on Pay Award** AK said that negotiations on pay were still ongoing but 5.5% was looking likely. He said that the government is prepared to part fund this for academies and schools but not for SFCs. Strike days were coming up with more planned for the future. This along with access to capital funding was putting pressure on colleges to academise. AK said that 5.5% would be affordable this year but there was also the impact on future costs. MK asked if any reasons were given for the disparity. AK said not but the Treasury were holding fast to the decision. IL said that 5% had been budgeted, with an additional cost of around £45k for each extra half per cent.	
3a	**Annual Personnel Report** IL presented the Annual Personnel Report for 2023-24 which had been considered by the FP&R Committee. He said that vacancies advertised this year were up on last year with many advertised as permanent positions rather than fixed term contracts. The number of leavers was similar to the year before – some going to new jobs, some reaching the end of a fixed term contract. Agency cover was slightly down on last year.	

	IL said that the overall headcount was up on last year and there had been an increase in the number of male staff. He said that an annual disability audit showed 16 staff reporting a disability, although there could be more undeclared. There had been two disciplinary hearings during the year. Both related to attendance issues and resulted in one verbal and one written warning. There had been three redundancies following the restructure of the Facilities Team. IL said that the overall lost time percentage was higher than the previous year, mainly due to long-term absences. SH asked whether this was the same for Support Staff as well as Teaching Staff. IL confirmed that this was the case. He said that new benchmarks were awaited for better comparison. IL said that the HR team attend regular webinars to keep up to date with changes in employment law and the HR administrator has recently completed a Level 3 Foundation Certificate.	
3b	**Estates and Resources** IL provided an update on estates matters. He said that the new Sunbury building was progressing well. Steel and concrete were completed and the roof was watertight. IL said there is a fortnightly meeting with the contract team, who are very professional in their work, and the project is on track. IL said that plans for development of the Xavier building have been paused for now, but in the meantime temporary accommodation will be arriving in the Ward Hall area in February or March. IL said that LED lighting is being replaced by the in-house electrician. This is expected to start paying back in under 2 years. Railing work is expected to be completed by December and work to Maryland roof is expected to finish late January. The library has moved across to the former canteen area in the Pavilion, which was little used as a catering facility. This has created more study space in the Ryken building. IL said that emergency repairs to Ward Hall skylight and roof are taking longer than first anticipated but should be finished by early January. AK added that teachers and students have been very cooperative throughout the various repairs and building work. SH asked about car parking. AK said that it had not been too bad, but staff are encouraged to look for alternative methods of transport where possible. SH noted that a Section 48 inspection has an environmental aspect and that LED lighting and solar panels will be positive factors. Finally IL confirmed that the new Facilities Manager had started and would be checking compliance across college and ensuring that all paperwork is in place.	
3c	**Management Accounts** IL presented the management accounts as at the end of November 2024. He said that income was above budget, driven by increased University student numbers. This was offset by lower high needs funding due to lower numbers of high need students as well as lower level of need. IL said that unused tuition funding from last year had had to be repaid, resulting in reduced funding from the	

	ESFA. IL said that pay expenditure was under budget. This was partly due to later recruitment of some of the Facilities team. IL said that a pay increase of 5.5% would cost around £45k more than the 5% budgeted for, and appropriate accruals were being made pending national settlement. IL said that non-pay expenditure was below budget. Electricity bills had been lower, probably due to the milder weather as it was a bit soon to see savings because of the solar panels. IL said that forecasts would be more accurate once the pay deal is finalised. He reminded governors that the slight drop in student numbers this year would impact next year's funding. IL said that cash days remained high and the graphs showed a positive picture. He reminded governors that the bank balance would drop with completion of the new building. On the balance sheet the debtors figure was high due to timing of the University invoice. IL outlined current spend and income in respect of the capital project. He said that the project was on track to hit the required spend by the end of March. SOH asked about the increased staff costs as a percentage of income, saying this was not necessarily a bad thing. IL said that this was partly to do with pay increases but also an increase in the number of staff and some staff moving up the pay scale. He said the increased number of staff in the Facilities team also contributed. SOH asked if agency staff were included in the figure and IL confirmed that this was the case. SH asked if the additional staff recruitment was due to growth. AK said that this was the case and also that some capacity has been built in for next year.	
4a	**Introduction to New Student Governor** SH invited new Student Governor NW to introduce herself. NW said she was in Y12 studying Classical Civilisation, Ancient History and English Literature. She didn't know anyone when she first came to college but feels that she made a good choice. SH asked what made her choose Xaverian. NW said she had a good look round when she visited and the way the college made her feel was important. She loved the campus and the feel of the college and felt she would be happy to spend two years here, despite the travel distance. NW was asked why she opted to join the Student Council. She said she had been Head Student at school which had given her the opportunity to create events and make changes, so she wanted to continue making a difference at college. SH asked whether the Student Council had a focus on any particular issues at present. NW said it was early days as she had only had one meeting so far, but DEI was an important area. SH said that the DEI coordinators were keen to work with the Student Council. KM said it was important for the Student Governors to always say what was needed from the Governing Body. SH echoed that and said everyone was pleased to have the Student Governors on board.	

5a	**Financial Statements, Audit Completion Report and Letter** IL presented the Financial Statements, Management Letter and Audit Completion Report. He said there had been a clean audit with no changes to the figures previously presented. He said the audit had included the usual checks on standard risks such as recognition of income, management override of controls and whether the college is a going concern. The pension valuation changes from year to year but is no longer included. IL said that page 9 sets out the financial highlights including cash flow and the end of year surplus. IL said there were a small number of misstatements as identified on page 14, but none of these were considered material by the auditors and there was no change to the figures. The audit also looked at regulatory matters including compliance with Managing Public Money. There were no issues to report. The Governing Body were happy to approve the documents.	
5b	**Annual Report of the Audit Committee** KPS presented the Draft Annual Report on behalf of the committee. She said that the report summarises the activities of the Audit Committee during 2023/24, and provides assurance to the Governing Body in respect of risk management matters overseen by the audit committee. She drew attention to the conclusion of the report which states: - *"Having reviewed its activities in 2023/24 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 wbg and Murray Smith and is satisfied that management have accepted the recommendations made, and have taken appropriate steps to address these."* The Governing Body was happy with the report and agreed to approve it. SH said that the number of recommendations recorded during internal audits was below the average for similar colleges and said that the auditors had given credit to the finance team for their cooperation and prompt provision of information.	
5c	**Risk Management Policy and Annual Report** IL presented the Risk Management Policy and Annual Report. The Risk Management Report outlines the approach to risk management during the year and sets out the Risk Appetite statement. IL said the risk appetite had been updated slightly in that each risk is now assigned a score indicating the level of risk appetite for that risk. The Risk Management group continues to assess each risk in detail over a rolling period, one third each term. There were no other changes to report and the Governing Body agreed to approve the Policy and Annual Report.	
6a	**Committee Minutes** SH said that Committee Minutes were available on the hub, with recent ones to follow. He encouraged governors to read the Committee Minutes and bring any queries back to KPS or the Committee Chairs.	
7a	**Urgent Business**	

	There were no items of urgent business to discuss.	
7b	**Date of Next Meeting** The next meeting will take place at 6.00pm on Tuesday 11th February 2025	
8a	**Confidential Item - Review of Senior Postholders and Clerk** Staff and students left the meeting for this item which is minuted separately for reasons of confidentiality.	
	The meeting closed at 8.05pm.	

Signed…………………………………………………….

Date…………………………………………………………