Minutes of Full Board

Date: 2nd July 2024 **Time:** 4.30 pm

Location: Itchen College, S10

Present:	Mr B Jones	Mr R Parke
	Mrs C Carpenter	Mr C Breckenridge
	Mrs D House	Mr D Batten
	Mr McCauley *[left 1710, item 6]*	Mr D Shephard
	Mr E Uniuibe	Mr T Grant
	Mr A Fitt (via Teams)	Mrs M Harris-Bridge
In attendance:	Mrs R Stratton	Mrs S Carter
	Miss F McIntyre	Mr M Jones
Apologies:	Mr Scott	Ms C Lowe

1. Apologies

1.1 Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies received as above.

1.2 Prior to the meeting the Governors had met socially in the College Centre.

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 None in addition to those previously declared.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

3.1 Minutes of the previous meeting were approved and a true record.

4. Chair's report

4.1 We welcomed three new governors to the governing body. Initially only had funding to secure two new governors but was able to appoint three.
David Shepherd has background in higher education
Claire Lowe is Chief Exec of primary school MAT, sent apologies
Andy Fitt knows College well and was previously assistant principal and then moved on to Ofsted.

4.2 Building has had some difficulties getting started but is now underway with the foundations underway. Thanks to SC who kept on top of the project and planners to ensure progress.

4.3 Reaching the end of current year and as College doing well and numbers for next year are starting to be known with a further increase. Due to staff in College and the right emphasis and also MJ and his team who are out in schools.

RS now needs to find space for the applicants.

4.4 EB not here but continues to work with adult education and the skill agenda.

4.5 Thanks to the student governors especially MM who has not missed the meeting. Thanks to committee chairs too.

5. Principal's Report

5.1 Report from AS circulated prior to the meeting and RS will cover highlights in his absence.

5.2 General election - met with three of the candidates and hosted Q&A sessions. They did take time to come meet students and staff and it was interesting to see them as people and engaging with the community.
Overview of main party manifesto relating to education. Skills development are important to all three parties but not protected area so may be some challenges

5.3 Review of local context and the first anniversary of the Southampton College group. There are some displaced learners with campus reorganisation with some coming to Itchen.

5.4 Applications - celebrating MJ success but concern where to put them with 1850 expected to start. Healthy number and 200 up on previous year and would qualify for in year funding. Planned and staffed for this number of students but some challenges. Fewer classrooms as building work is underway.

5.5 Budget prudent but supported by work of adult, community and international.

5.6 Capital works - building underway and estates team had a site visit.

5.7 Successful year with work experience with over 800 students out on placement this week and throughout the year.

5.8 274 university applications and anticipate that it will rise over summer with last minute applications. 46 students are holding Russel group offers with 31 from Southampton.

5.9 Questions invited.
Q: Have we slotted new staff to vacancies that have arisen or new roles?
A: The H&S officer replaces the nurse and some responsibilities are replaced. Teachers like for like.
Q: Has it been easy to recruit?
A: Maths recruitment has been positive. Computer science has been a struggle. Been looking for two years and secured an ECT. Biology teacher took two sets of adverts to ensure the post was filled. Calibre of the new staff is excellent.

5.10 The report summarises a very successful year and the external pressures. The enthusiasm from all staff and students.
Spoke to prospective parents who were very impressed with the lengths Itchen went to accommodate their son.

6. Approval for Budget

Budget for 2024/25 and majority of income agreed and allocated.

6.1 Year on year £1.4m increase in funding due to lag funding and the additional students this year. The Challenge is forecasting another growth of students and always behind.

6.2 Have had to increase staffing to support growth. £1m increase of staffing with 4% settlement. Current indications it may be between 3 and 4%. With 1% increase equaling £92000 on bottom line

6.3 There is some risk with income with some areas not identified yet as too early. But opportunities within budget and a prudent budget.

6.4 This year was able to receive in year funding. The funding is available once a hundred over allocation. There were 189 students over so funding for 89. Hope next year would still be in place but not guaranteed. Would find out Oct/Nov.

6.5 If the numbers do materialise then opportunity for the additional funding but not included in the budget as uncertain.

6.6 £240,000 College
£7000 Nursery
£62000 Company
Does include Taster activity.
Op £309,000 op surplus

6.7 Financial indicators: 180 health score good
FE benchmarks - all positive
Current ratio liquidity due to costs is not good. Have a good story to tell and a good position. Not going to be a positive position until student numbers reduce.

6.8 Cashflow - hug line close to £800,000 reserve. Purely because of the new build. There is funding but have to pay an invoice and then be reimbursed six weeks later. Until the new build is completed will be playing catch up. Few issues at beginning of 2025 but strengthen again.

6.9 Capital budget £200,000 in addition to preapproved match funding. New money for investments for next year. Will support IT rolling programs and some estates work with some for other areas.

6.10 *Q: Where is the marketing expenditure?*
A: Page 2. Majority is on prospective.
Q: What is the position with marketing manager?
A: They have left and decided not to replace and how different areas can feed into support. Also part of the rationale of changing EB's role. Increasing responsibilities of school liaison.

[MM- 1710 left]

Q: Teaching staff, increase in number or salary?
A: Brought in additional staff 4% settlement and incremental growth or pay scales. Same with support staff. They come in the pay range and after a successful year they increase.
Q: Governor costs line - what is this?
A: Reference table D. Page 3. Could be training or resources. Other staff costs there are apprenticeship levy and conferences.

6.11 Budget has been looked at in the finance committee and scrutinised fully and proposing for approval.
Vote: budget approved

7. Three year finance plans

Difficult to forecast next year but have statutory responsibility to provide a three year plan to EFSA.

7.1 For the majority of lines assume they will remain constant but some settlement increases on salaries and inflation increases of 2% annually. Looks healthy on paper but hard to predict and funding may change or what funding may be available.

7.2 *Q: Student numbers there is a 8% increase then 3% year after?*
A: Assuming student numbers cannot carry on the way growth has been. Cannot increase in the same way there is a limit.
Q: If the student numbers are constant then funding would not increase?
A: It is unknown. There has been some increase. With election and possible change of government may bring changes.

7.3 The EFSA does not monitor it and does not question it.

7.4 Looked at finance in detail. It is based on experience and what has happened previously.
Vote: approved.

8 KPI's update

8.1 Report sent to governors prior to meeting.
Some white areas with no updates as waiting for results and will be updated in September. Green areas recruitment. Amber challenges in finance and increase of students and lag funding

8.2 Attendance remains in red but has seen improvements in the last three years.

8.3 Student satisfaction is strong but declines slightly to previous year. Slight decline focused around two questions.
Q: Student satisfaction, long term cover of staff? Is that resolved?
A: Had one member of staff who had been off for most of the year and went off in October and had long term cover in place from January. Had other areas impacting students but staff in place for September.
Q: Has response rates improved?
A: Response rates have improved. 170 three years ago and 420 this year. Changes in how rolled out to students and encouraged to complete in tutor time and can be accessed via QR code. Been asking students more questions over last few years
Q: 85.8% is that a number of students not attending or spread across all students?
A: Core group of poor attenders but often due to genuine reasons and work with them to support to complete. Will take to the end of course where possible if giving something back.
Q: Could this be elaborated on and broken down?
A: Can do this and report to C&Q includes this with an update on QIP is broken down by level. But could look at this.
Discussed at G&E and taking out the 50 worst then crunch numbers. In G&E it came across as a whole college process to address.

ACTION: RS

8.4 Beneficial that we do not give up on students and be successful with some of them which may not manifest as good attendance but success.
Q: Could attendance be improved by having online options?
A: Not encouraged by DfE or by College. Not easy to facilitate as it has an impact on teaching and learning in classrooms. Students learning remotely miss out on social

skills. Do not encourage but can facilitate for short periods if needed and an example of broken leg given.

Q: Financial KPIs - meet most of the goals set. How set and how monitored? March date?
A: Update should be June 24. Financial performance indicators based on budget set this time last year. Were not aware at that point of student numbers so to achieve the budget with 189 extra students with 100 students completed unfunded which is £500,000.
If funded for the student numbers every year with the extra £500,000 then would have met the financial indicators.
Won't know student numbers till Ocotberwhich makes it difficult to meet targets.
When report to EFSA the narrative behind the reasons is strong and positive.

9 Reports from committee Chairs

9.1 Audit

9.1.1 Report from Internal auditors and external audit plan. Strategic plan aligned with risk and risk management policy completed. Transport is looking more positive with more providers. Discussed the increased student numbers and needs careful financial management and accommodation.

9.1.2 Risk review - four key areas highlighted. Loss with ass principal but post filled so risk reduced. Appropriate mitigation non delivery of building project. Managed well and professional support. IT issues - windows being reduced.

9.1.3 Following had presentation from external auditors Mazars who are now known are Forvis Mazars. Presented the audit strategy plan for the year. Limited number of years they can work with College as familiarity issue but being aware.

9.1.4 Internal auditor tender process. Only company that came to present was Tiaa. Issue in the market as availability. Other company pulled out at the last minute.
The presentation was impressive but pointed out the level of service had not been this level.
Committee decided to offer them a further year contract to see how performance improves. But then also consider external providers for individualised areas.
Q: How much do we pay them?
A: In the region of £10,000. Have considered whether speciality companies to do fewer audits but at much greater depth could be utilised.
Q: Have we had a debrief with the company who pulled out?
A: They could only offer finance not IT or HR but it was capacity issues.
Q: Are we actively looking at approaching companies for IT or HR?
A: Have an IT company could use, and it would be developing a database of specialists and it would be looked at in Autumn term. But it could also be colleagues in other Colleges for areas for HR.
Q: Is there a government requirement for internal audit?
A: No. It is going back to the drawing board and considering what governors require and what areas do we want. And what would provide assurance. Currently they are reviewing policies remotely, not checking if they are being put in practice. JISK is the IT provider previously used and would physically test systems rather than check policies.

Good paper on risk register and how it links through to other documents. A collection of key documents would be useful for all governors to have visibility.

ACTION: FM

9.2 Finance

9.2.1 End of year expect to achieve surplus reduced from forecast but main areas increase in enrollment, unfunded students, increase in transport and smaller number of taster impacts and other pressure which has higher energy costs.

9.2.2 Surplus £17,000. Been a difficult year but positive to have a surplus.

9.2.3 College has been successful but still could have a financial score that requires improvements. There is no incentive with lag funding for College to push forward. Nursery and Company supported the College.

9.3 Estates

9.3.1 Work commenced and is currently on program. Some issues on the ground but overcome. Revised plan to reduce costs has been approved by planners. Project managers' performance has been lacking but back to what expect to ensure the project is run correctly.

9.4 G&E

9.4.1 In the January meeting an action was taken to write to the local MP on the funding that is provided for education and is needed to be spent on health support. It was noted in the May meeting there was no response.

9.4.2 Meeting covered a lot of topics over student affairs, adult and community and also staffing.

9.4.3 Received report from Debbie Finch regarding student support. Usually report can be negative with the level of support college has to provide. Challenges not gone away but good cover in place to meet needs. Good news with College employing a nurse.

9.4.4 Aidy Waters reported on the tutorial program. Tutorial program dovetails the support that students receive. Student governors voiced support. Has been getting better over two years and involves students. Also reacts to needs.
Framework can take new relevant topics and can be added to.

9.4.5 Safeguarding - suggestion to ask the newly appointed police and crime commissioner to visit and hear about College and talk about the police and crime commissioner role. Networking and making contacts.

9.4.6 Adult & community matters - changes in work picked up and boot camps being offered. Itchen has engaged. This is an area that will grow. Is around skills development.

9.4.7 Staff training, development and CPD. Discussion on support for staff with IT.

9.5 C&Q - No SH

9.5.1 Meeting covered:

- QIP
- Staff development plan
- Student and parent surveys

9.6 S&G
9.6.1 Discussed the successful recruitment with appointment of three new governors.
9.6.2 Succession planning and committee membership was discussed. Position of strength for governing body to demonstrate movement and adaptability
Succession planning to ensure people waiting to take over roles with governors indicating they may be moving on so want to ensure knowledge not loss.
MHB- vice chair finance
CC - vice chair G&E
This will allow the vice chair role to be utilised to maximise knowledge transfer. Will consider other committees but would not want to make too many changes at once.
9.6.3 Some governors want to move committees and this will be considered.
9.6.4 Governor visits - discussions. Linked to committees and under impact and action

9.7 RSS
9.7.1 4% in budget for staff increases.

10 Governance Matters:
10.1 Terms of Reference - approved
10.2 Calendars of business
G&E - standing item arrangements for increased student numbers
C&Q - Sept meeting QIP headline item
There is a headline results report but can change to Headline results and action.
Approved with above amendments.
10.3 Meeting schedule for 2024/25 -noted
10.4 Governor review
AoC completed governor review and a report circulated to governors prior to the meeting.
Successful as all work together
Actions to be addressed and will form governor SAR for next academic year.
10.5 Chair will complete the end of year report.

11 Impact and Action Review
Item 8 - More data on attendance - BS
Key documents - FM

12 AOB
12.1 None

Meeting concluded at 1832 and was quorate at all times