



**St Brendan's Catholic Sixth Form College  
Board of Governors**

**OPEN – MINUTES**

**In Person and Virtual Meeting** Held On: Tuesday, 9 July 2024

**D-Building Room D2/D3 at 16:00– 19:45 hrs**

**Governors Present:** Svetlana Bajic-Raymond [Chair of Governors], Roger Bridgeman, James Creamer, Marian Curran [Principal], Sr Margaret Harlock MBE, Mark O'Sullivan [R], Deborah Redwood [R], Paul Ryan, Peter Turner [R]\*, Iain Turri, Antonia Corrigan, Michelle Hazelwood [15]

**Apologies:** Maragret Abazie-Humprey, [1]

**Absent without Apology:** None [0]

**Attending:** Leanne Sowersby [Governance Professional], Alexandra Moruzzi [Vice Principal [Student Experience Progression], Shane Blackshaw [Executive Finance Director],

**Quorum Present:** 15/16 [includes required minimum of 4 Foundation Governors]

Note – [R]\* – remote attendance in MS Office Teams

**Circulation:** All Governors, Governance Professional, Principalship, & [College Website after signature if declared OPEN].

ITEM	ISSUES RAISED IN DISCUSSION	AGREED ACTION
1. Welcome	<p><b>1.1 Welcome: Svetlana Bajic-Raymond</b> [Chair of Governors] opened the meeting with prayer.</p> <p><b>1.4 Quorate:</b> The meeting was declared quorate.</p> <p>MC thanked the governing body for their support this year, on behalf of the senior leadership team.</p>	
2. Declarations of Interest	<p><b>2.1 Declaration 2023/2024 Access/Equality/Safeguarding Declaration:</b> There were additional no oral declarations.</p>	Next Agenda
3. Minutes Previous Meetings	<p><b>3.1 Previous Minutes</b> – 27 March 2024</p> <p>The Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting with the corrections noted, to be signed by the Chair of Governors electronically. The open Minutes to be made available on the College website by the Governance Professional.</p>	
4. Minutes Actions Review	<p><b>4.1 Actions Report</b> – see actions report for details</p>	
5. Matters Arising	<p><b>5.1 None</b></p>	
6. Governors' Committee Reports [circulated reports and/or minutes]	<p><b>6.1 Audit</b> – IT gave an update. The external audit scoping letter and fees were approved. Internal audit are completing an audit on IT security and the College Financial Handbook was introduced.</p> <p>Agreed to give a briefing on the Financial handbook and the implications of being in the public sector.</p> <p><b>6.2 Ethos</b> – AC gave an update – discussed preparation for the S48 inspection, recruitment of student governors and SU accounts, safeguarding briefing, admissions policy, attendance policy, careers policy, fitness to study policy and SEND policy. The committee will need a presentation on the RPE curriculum as this is a strategic priority and needs to be approved.</p> <p><b>6.3 Resources</b> – JC gave an update, reviewed staffing policies (Disciplinary, Grievance and supporting attendance and wellbeing) and the transport provision.</p> <p><b>6.4 Strategy</b> – Looked at the strategic plan for three years, and the yearly plan for the first year. Also discussed the performance review for the Principal in August.</p> <p><b>6.5 TCQ</b> – MC gave an update, looked at where we are in terms of curriculum reform, progress towards Q</p>	

	IP. Also discussed the link between careers and skills.	
<b>7. Diocesan Education Strategy</b>	<p><b>7.1 Aquinas Partnership Report / 7.2 Diocesan Partnership Report</b> – MC gave an overview of the partnership and how it has been evolving in relation to the discussion around MATs etc.</p> <p>MAT discussions are taking place at primary level and less so at secondary level.</p> <p>There is a diocesan meeting this evening at the college to discuss MATs. St Brendan’s has been placed in a MAT with 18 primaries and 2 secondaries.</p> <p>MC has discussed this with the regional team. The final decision sits with the Governing Body. There is currently no central requirement for FE /sixth form colleges to join MATs, this applies to primary and secondary schools. There are high risks for Sixth Form Colleges to join an existing MAT and advice from professional associations would be to join with other sixth form colleges or to be a standalone MAT</p> <p>Clarified that the regional team report to the DfE and manage the Southwest.</p> <p>Noted that all governors have signed a code of conduct which states that they will carry out the wishes of the Bishop.</p> <p><b>7.3 Cabot Learning Federation Post-16 Free School</b> – MC gave an overview of the history and an update. MC has discussed this with the regional team. We are still working with different stakeholders on the evidence of need. Within the City there is no current evidence of need especially when other FE colleges are included within a capacity analysis.</p>	
<b>8. Principal’s Report</b>	<p><b>8.1 Student enrolment/attendance/retention 2023/2024</b> – MC gave an overview of the reporting and the reasons for this for the new governors and discussed some of the reasons for the increase in acceptances. MC thanked AMu for her work on streamlining the admissions process which has had a significant impact on this. Also talked about the new transport arrangements which has also improved acceptances.</p> <p>The funded retention is year-to-date. Noted that the retention from Year 12 to Year 13 is now over 900.</p> <p>In summary, recruitment and retention are looking good.</p> <p>Noted that Year 13 attendance has been impacted by earlier exams and students not attending around exams.</p> <p>Will also look at attendance broken down by groups to identify any issues within certain groups.</p> <p>Request to be provide with a breakdown of where students come from. <b>MC will bring a breakdown of recruitment to the next meeting by area, and possibly by feeder school.</b></p> <p><b>8.2 Staff Recruitment / Appointments</b> - we still require a teacher of law, health and social care, a premises officer and a Head of RE and Catholic life. We will be interviewing for an inclusive learning cover supervisor. This will support with covering staff</p>	<b>MC</b>

	<p>absence and should avoid cancelling classes. MC talked through the new appointments.</p> <p><b>8.3 Teaching and Learning update</b> – MC talked through the key points of the report. Highlighted the careers integration into the curriculum, which is a direct response to the last Ofsted inspection.</p> <p><b>Q – Is that 12 or 13 teachers arriving in September? Is induction planned?</b> Yes, MC has discussed this with HR to ensure that induction will be well planned out. It is reasonable normal to have a number of teachers start in one go at this time. This relates both to growth and replacing teachers who have left. Have been looking to recruit teachers who are able to teach more than one subject – e.g. RE as well as Sociology / Psychology etc.</p> <p>Discussion around managing the Health and Social Care vacancy. We have advertised on the website. Interview questions and seeing candidates teaching can identify whether they are suitable for the college and our students. We will also look at recruiting via agency and temporary cover via agency.</p> <p><b>Q – How much are we looking at incorporating AI developments?</b> This is part of the strategic priorities. There is an element of using this to identify students turning in work that is not their own. We will be looking at it in terms of reducing workload, but also to ensure that it does not replace thinking. Exam boards give very strict instructions around coursework, and we have had some issues this year. There is a need to discuss how it can be used to support students, but to avoid it being used inappropriately.</p>	
	<p><b>Comfort Break</b></p>	
<p><b>10. College Financial Matters</b></p>	<p><b>10.1 – Current College Cash Flow Update and Management Accounts</b> – SB gave an update. We are still giving weekly updates to the ESFA the current forecast £369k, which is 12 cash days. This will reduce to £239k by 15 August. We have agreed to defer any cash payment to the LA re the land payment. Once the ESFA payment is received on 16 August, we go up to 53 cash days in hand.</p> <p>In terms of the Management Accounts, we are looking to fall about \$50k short of the budgeted surplus. SB talked through the actions that have been taken around the budget.</p> <p><b>Q – What would the ideal year end position?</b> The recommended min level of cash is 25 days in hand and we are currently predicted to end the year with 12 days.</p> <p><b>Q – What is the view of the ESFA on this?</b> We have been predicting 12 days for some time now. They are uncomfortable with this, but can see that we have stabilised the position this year and they are comfortable with the plan.</p>	

	<p><b>Q – When can we hope to be nearer to the 25 days?</b> We hope to get back to 20-21 days by the end of 2024-2025 and would hope to be back up to the 25 days by the following year.</p> <p>MC noted that the budget is very conservative, making no assumptions around interest rates, the transport subsidy and any possible additional income.</p> <p>SB has added a budget document to the folder.</p> <p>Operating surplus predicted at the end of 2024-25 of 879k. Any capital spend comes out of this. We are predicting the cash reserves to be around £650k, which is 21 cash days in hand. Going for 25 would have meant reducing capital spend. There are some critical areas of capital spend on IT that are needed.</p> <p>The bus subsidy – we are confident we will not need to pay the full amount that has been budgeted. We can track whether each route is breaking even during the year, and we will only be charged at the end of the year if there is a cumulative deficit. The risks are the pay award, for which we have budgeted for 2% and cannot afford more if it is not funded, and agency costs, although the internal cover supervisor should help with this. In terms of capital risks, there is a delay in the recovery of the funds from the refurbishment of the IT suite.</p> <p>SB talked through the process for setting the budget. We are judged on the cash days, ratio of assets to liabilities and debts to income. We are likely to be on requires improvement this year, and possibly next year, then good the following year. and could be back to outstanding for 2026-27.</p> <p>We will aim to share more information about the financial position of the college with all governors, as all governors are responsible for the financial position of the college.</p> <p><b>Q – Are there any alumni who could be approached with regards to supporting the college?</b> This is an area for development. We have been exploring ways to get business to invest, while ensuring we uphold the college principles.</p> <p><b>10.5 Education Skills Funding Agency Approval on 2023-24</b> Accounts Annual Accounts sign-off – the accounts for 2022-23 were looked at. The outstanding issues have now been resolved.</p> <p>The delay was due to a breach of the loan agreement because the fee was consolidated into the payments. The ESFA have not had any feedback from the treasury on this.</p> <p>As a result of the cash flow issue, the auditors have had to reassess the college as a going concern. In order to do that, they required the draft budget for 2024-25, and a loan waiver from the bank, due to us not meeting the terms of the loan covenant. This has now been issued and the auditors are now happy to sign off the accounts.</p> <p>SB read out the additional sentence that has been added to the report.</p> <p><b>Proposed MC, seconded IT – Annual Accounts and Report 2022-23 approved unanimously</b></p>	
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	<p>SBR thanked the team for their work on getting the budget and the annual report up to date.</p> <p><b>10.3 Careers and employability report – AMu gave an update.</b> Since the report, the future progression day has now taken place. Over 60 employers and organisations attended AMu talked through how the day went. This will be run slightly later next year to manage any exam clashes.</p> <p>There was a particular focus on performing and creative arts.</p> <p>Year 13 leavers information will come to Ethos in September.</p> <p>AMu talked through some of the careers / work experience information in the report, and some of the companies with whom our students have been undertaking work experience.</p> <p>Noted that Lloyds bank are offering significant opportunities and that we are looking to roll out some work on apprenticeships with them.</p> <p>There is also a pilot programme with Mott Macdonald around engineering apprenticeships and university</p> <p>We are also looking at a curriculum programme with experience in law with Osborne Clarke, also with other apprenticeships and university progression.</p> <p>These will be part of the regular lesson curriculum, and will include staff from the firms acting as mentors.</p> <p>We have also secured two teacher placements from engineering and business working with international companies – the outcome has to be the development of an action plan, to incorporate co-design into the curriculum. We are working to incorporate this design into CPD</p> <p>Highlighted the graphic in the policy that will be discussed under item 12.4.</p> <p><b>10.4 College Three-Year Strategic Plan</b> – MC talked through the plan and the process that has been undertaken to get to the current plan, and the six strategic priorities.</p> <p>the Views of both students, staff and governors were taken into account whilst constructing our three year plan.</p> <p>Noted some of this work has started and is building on work from previous years. There is also a KPI document which indicates which committee will be responsible for each KPI.</p> <p><b>Proposed MC, AC 2<sup>nd</sup> – Strategic Plan Approved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>10.7 Staff Pay Awards Update</b> – MC gave an update. The funding from the last spending review was 1.8% uplift. Teachers pay has not yet been agreed. We would only be able to afford the 2% we have budgeted for unless this is funded. We have been in touch with eh SFCA to discuss what other colleges will be voting for. The feeling is that many collages will not be able to afford more than this.</p>	
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	<p><b>10.8 S48 inspection update</b> – MC gave an update. There are some actions that will be monitored by Ethos. There is a self-assessment report written in the light of this, that needs to be approved by the GB. The first draft will go to Ethos, alongside the action plan. There is training tomorrow for colleagues at the college. We anticipate the inspection will happen in the next academic year.</p> <p>The RPE scheme of work will also need to be approved, via the Ethos Committee.</p> <p>Could include some extracts in the external review regarding the knowledge of the governors of the ethos of the college</p> <p><b>10.6 Estate development plan.</b> The programme of works for the current year is complete. Moving into August there is the Local Skills Improvement Partnership project, which is the DT room refurbishment project which is funded by the DfE.</p> <p>We have appealed against the unsuccessful Condition Improvement Fund bid for security.</p> <p>Lettings income – 22-23 we made £20k, in the current year that has increased to £85k and we expect that to increase to at least £120k.</p> <p>IT strategy – we are looking to seek external funding / donated assets, we will need to out in cash investment and may need to consider leasing.</p> <p>The funding that has been put in is for disaster recovery. We are developing an IT strategy that will set out the framework.</p> <p><i>MC &amp; SrMH left the meeting</i></p> <p><b>Q – If we do have extra money, will we use it for the IT works?</b> This will be a decision for governors, and will need to be made in the context of the cash balances. We will have a clearer picture of how the year is progressing at Easter and can have that conversation then.</p> <p><b>Q – When will the changing rooms be open in the pavilion on the 3G?</b> This will be open from September and will also be part of the justification in the price increase. We have held back on completely kitting out the kitchen due to the cash position. We will do some trial openings to establish whether it will bring in enough revenue to meet costs.</p> <p><b>Q – Will the newer equipment be window 11 compliant?</b> Some of the new equipment will not be windows 11 compliant, but here is a cheap patch from MS which allows us to bridge the gap.</p> <p><b>10.9 New financial handbook</b> – this is applicable from 1 Aug. There is no major new content, but all the guides have been consolidated into a single financial handbook. <b>All governors must to read the handbook</b></p> <p><b>We will also need to update the estate management strategy.</b></p> <p><b>We should also have reserves and cash management policy- SB</b></p> <p><b>Audit cttee should undertake a review of internal controls – Audit</b></p>	<p><b>All Govs</b>  <b>SB</b>  <b>SB</b>  <b>Audit</b></p>
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<p><b>9. College Self-Appraisal Report</b> [SAR]</p>	<p><b>9.1 SAR:</b> SC talked through the key points of the report Noted the feedback from Ofsted inspectors that we had invited in. We have reduced the number of data drops and have revised the lesson observation framework <b>Q – When are the SAR and QIP reviewed?</b> This is being reviewed and will come to the FGB in December. Some information could come to Strategy in September. Key areas of focus will be around feedback and assessment, setting high standards that are shared by all staff – the QIP overview will be added to the folder of papers for the meeting. <i>MOS &amp; SC left the meeting</i></p>	
<p><b>12. Policy Reviews</b></p>	<p><b>12.1 Student Admissions Policy:</b> AMu talked through the key changes. Discussion around appeals and tribunals. <b>Q – Is the satisfactory a minimum standard?</b> Yes, this is considered to be 3 Es, but there will be a discussion with the careers team to ensure decisions are the best for the student. <b>Proposed SBR, seconded IT – Approved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>12.3 SEND Policy:</b> AMu talked through the changes. This has been overhauled to cover all of the statutory duties around admissions and supporting students with additional needs. There has been work this year to ensure that we have streamlined the processes for applicants with EHCPs. AMu talked through the consult process for those students. This is a legal process and must be carried out with due diligence with the applicant and carers. <b>Q – Any issues this year?</b> No, we have 45 places through the ESFA allocation and are currently up to 40. <b>Proposed IT, seconded RB – Approved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>12.4 Careers information Advice and Guidance Policy:</b> AMu talked through the key points. This has had a complete overhaul, especially around duties and responsibilities, the alignment between curriculum and careers etc. <b>Proposed SBR, seconded MH – Approved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>Q – How far are we from meeting the Gatsby benchmark?</b> We are meeting everything except the work experience element.</p> <p><b>12.2 Environmental Policy:</b> This was presented to Resources and governors in March and was to come back with some wording relating to Laudato Si. SB read the relevant wording from the policy. SB will also add the front sheet. <b>Proposed AC, seconded MH – Approved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>12.5 Disciplinary Policy and Procedure:</b> SB talked through the key changes. The policy was not shared with the papers in the Teams folder. <b>LS to share after the meeting and all to approved by email</b></p>	<p>LS</p>



<p><b>13. Risk Management</b></p>	<p><b>13.1 Review of Board of Governors' Risk Register Items:</b> SB talked through the process. Principalship reviews the register four times per year, the last review was on 1 July. Any changes are highlighted in red and summarised in the accompanying document.</p> <p>SB talked through the risks that have been added since the last Board of governors meeting and the mitigations for those.</p> <p>Noted that the Full Governing Body needs to maintain an overview of the whole register.</p> <p>Risk Register approved.</p> <p>AMu and SB left the meeting.</p> <p><b>13.2 Safeguarding/PREVENT Review:</b> AC has met with Laura on 28 June. There has been some concern about some of the new students and whether they will arrive and some have been involved with critical incidents in Bristol. MC has reassured AC that there are things in place for dealing with any security issues that arise.</p>	
<p><b>11. Board of Governors Operations</b></p>	<p><b>11.1 Governor Briefing next meeting:</b> cyber security</p> <p><b>11.2 Governor recruitment and induction / 11.6 Appointment of Student Governors / 11.7 Appointment of Foundation Governors / 11.8 Appointment of Co-opted Member of Resources Committee / 11.11 Careers, Employability and Local Skills Link Governor:</b></p> <p>Two new foundation governors have been approved by the Bishop – Gareth Beynon and Doug Jenkins</p> <p><b>Proposed SBR, seconded AC, approved unanimously.</b></p> <p>Sara Allen (not present) was to be appointed - subject to conformation from her, and DBS, <b>appointed as co-opted member on the Resources committee.</b></p> <p>Aaron Skinner and Risha Hussain welcomed as student governors and formally appointed as such.</p> <p><b>Agreed DR to be appointed as a co-opted member of the Ethos committee.</b></p> <p>Discussed the induction programme. SBR will contact the new governors regarding the induction.</p> <p>DJ to join Audit and Ethos and take on the employability and skills link role. GB to join TCQ</p> <p><b>11.3 Governance External Review / Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Governance:</b> SBR talked through the key points and the key actions.</p> <p><b>Q – Who was the report discussed with?</b> The report was discussed with MC and SBR, as well as LS earlier today. We will produce a detailed action plan that can be shared with the GB by email.</p>	

	<p><b>11.4 Governors' Skills Report / 11.5 Governor Committee Terms of Reference:</b> These will become part of the external review action plan.</p> <p><b>11.9 Appointment of Chair of Governors:</b> SBR to continue as Chair of Governors</p> <p><b>11.10 Appointment of Vice Chair of Governors:</b> Discussion around this, agreed to defer discussion until September. SrMH will deputise in SBR's absence, but is not willing to take on the full Vice Chair role.</p> <p><b>11.12 Calendar of Meetings 2024/2025:</b> Agreed to swap the dates of Strategy and Ethos – Ethos 18/9, strategy 11/9. Governors day – February 14 February 2025. Add FGB 15 October for results and remove the one in May.</p>	LS
<b>13. Correspondence</b>	13.1 None	
<b>14. Any Other Business</b>	SrMH to be included in new governor induction.	
<b>15. Date Next Meeting</b>	<p><b>15.1 Date of Next Meeting</b> – Governors' Diary [Agreed dates]</p> <p>Board of Governors – Thursday 26 September 2024, 16:00</p> <p>Audit Committee – Wednesday 27 November 2024, 16:00</p> <p>Ethos Safeguarding Welfare Committee – Wednesday 18 September 2024, 16:00</p> <p>Resources Premises Human Resources Committee – Wednesday 20 November 2024, 16:00</p> <p>Strategy, Search &amp; Remuneration Committee – Wednesday 11 September 2024, 16:00</p> <p>Teaching Curriculum Quality Committee – Wednesday 13 November 2024, 16:00</p>	
<b>Minutes Agreed</b>	<p><b>Minutes Approved</b></p> <p><b>Date</b></p> <p><b>Signature</b> _____ <b>Chair of Governors</b></p>	