## PETER SYMONDS COLLEGE

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD ON MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2020

Present: Tim Rogerson (Chairman) Graham Rockett

Leo Buckley Sara Russell (Principal)

Chris Edwards Amanda Storey
Lynne Evans Alan Sydney
Barry Neaves Tina Thorne
Anthea Palmer Joanna Townsend

Michael Wesley

In Attendance: Dave Cartwright (Vice Principal)

Nick Allen (Deputy Principal Quality)

Lucy Edevane (Deputy Principal Welfare and Progression)

Irfan Khan (Finance Director)

Hilary Walsh (Clerk)

Item		
		Action
1.	Apologies - Apologies received from David Williams, Harmesh Bhambra, Estella Hurlock, Roger Huxstep and Rob Sykes.  TR welcomed the Clerk back after her leave of absence and thanked VO for covering for the Clerk during her absence.	
2.	The Board ratified the appointment of Estella Hurlock as Student Governor for a term of one year effective from 4 March 2020. All in favour.  Estella is a Tutor rep and the Student Parliament elected her as a Student governor.	
3.	Minutes of the meeting dated 9 December 2019  The minutes were accepted as a correct record save for a typing error at 12.1, which the Clerk noted and amended.	
4. 4.1	Matters arising from the minutes 9 December 2019  Point 3.2— the Clerk reported that SR had emailed all teaching staff to seek nominations for the Staff (teaching) governor vacancy. Unfortunately, there has been no response and therefore the Search committee agreed	

	that a further request be made to the teaching staff in the late Spring term	
	when it is hoped that timing with regard to teacher workload should be	
	better.	
4.2	<b>Point12.5</b> – the Clerk reported that the meeting with the prospective	
	Mercer nominee has been delayed due to timing of the necessary procedure at the Mercers. The Clerk is to hear from the Mercers' but it is	
	hoped that the meeting will now take place before the next Search &	
	Governance meeting on 27 <sup>th</sup> April.	
4.3	<b>Point 4.5</b> – IK reported that there is no notice period attached to moving	
	money from the Nationwide account.	
4.4	<b>Point 8.2</b> – the Board noted that the Audit committee have not yet met to	
	explain the driver for the request that the Risk Register reflect the risk of	
	whistleblowing.	
4.5	<b>Point 6.5</b> – for the record, the Clerk reported that subsequent to the last	
	Board meeting the Board, 14 of 16 eligible governors (i.e. excluding student	
	governors) confirmed their agreement for the College to contribute 16% to	
	its latest CIF bid (61,710). In so doing this will add further points to the CIF scoring system and therefore maximise the chance of the College receiving	
	an award. The agreements had been received by email and agreement was	
	sought in this fashion to meet the deadline for submitting the CIF bid.	
5.	Principal's matters	
	Paper circulated: Principal's matters January 2020	
5.1	Ofsted inspection. SR reported on the excellent outcome of the Ofsted	
	report. TR thanked the three governors who met with the inspectors as he	
	could not attend due to working abroad. The Board congratulated SMT and	
	all staff for their efforts and the excellent outcome.	
5.1.1	SR reported that due to the outcome the College should not have a further	
	full inspection for another five years. A more in depth analysis of the	
	outcome of the inspection is to be reported to the Curriculum & QA	
	committee next Monday.	
5.2	National Audit Office study on the financial sustainability of colleges –	
	this was noted by the Board. SR's report on the study is for information	
	only and is self- explanatory.	
5.3	<b>Teachers' Pay update</b> – SR reported that no settlement for 19/20 had been	
	agreed with the unions and the National Joint Council. The Board noted	
	that there is a possibility of a two year pay deal.	
5.3.1	SR reported that the offer from the NJC for a 1.5% increase for support	
	staff was still on the table and it is hoped that the unions will accept this	
	before the next College JNCC meeting. SR highlighted the knock-on effect	
	of the delay in any agreement on Personnel in dealing with the payroll	
	before the end of the tax year. The Board therefore agreed therefore that	
	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	

		1
	approval of the final settlement for support staff should be sought by email rather than be delayed to the next Board meeting in May.	Clerk
5.4	<b>NEU Sixth Form Colleges Industrial Dispute</b> – SR reported that two further strike days are planned for 27 <sup>th</sup> February and 10 <sup>th</sup> March. The purpose of the strike is to bring attention to the lack of funding for the Sixth Form sector and the hope that the Budget, to be announced on 11 <sup>th</sup> March, may address the underfunding.	
6.	Report from the Search & Governance committee  Papers circulated: draft minutes of the meeting 10 <sup>th</sup> February 2020	
6.1.	E-governance -TT reported that the committee had considered the development of e-governance. Following up the comments received from governors on e-governance, the Clerk had met with the Head of IT and GR to consider possible options. One such option is a package called Governorhub, which the Clerk saw demonstrated by the Clerk at QMC who have used it for some time. IK reported that when he worked at QMC he had found it very useful and the governors found it accessible.	
6.2	TR, GR and the Clerk have trialled the package and TR reported that all information and documents a governor needs to access is available, akin to a one stop shop as detailed in the minutes.	
6.3	TT reported that the committee had concluded that the Board should move to an electronic paperless system. The suggested package is a good fit bearing in mind its usability and cost. In the long term it will reduce the Clerk's administrative time and also be better for the environment and reduce printing and postage costs.	
6.4	The introduction of the package is dependent on all governors having portable IT to access it at meetings and to move to using College emails. The latter will also ensure compliance with GDPR requirements. TR reported that if a governor did not have access to portable IT then the College will make it available for use during the governor's term of office. This will ensure that no one is precluded from being appointed a governor.	
6.5	The Clerk reported that GR has kindly agreed to provide training on how to access College emails either at the governor training day in March or at a Board meeting.	
6.6	The Board noted and agreed the introduction of e-governance. This will therefore be rolled out over the next few months.	
6.7	Succession planning – TT reported that there are a number of vacancies (staff, Mercer nominee and one other) current or coming up and plans are in place to deal with them.	
6.8	<b>Expenses policy</b> – the Clerk has updated this policy in line with the suggestions made by the committee and set out in the minutes.	

	T	1
	BN arrived.	
6.9	<b>Governor training</b> – TT reported that this will comprise in part a strategic discussion regarding future accommodation needs, in part training from IK on interpreting the accounts and in part an update on Prevent from LKE.	
6.9.1	TR stressed the importance for all governors to attend the training. The Clerk reported that it will take place at Winchester University and start at 4 pm and finish at 6 or 6.30 pm. The committee decided it may be best to have a separate social event for governors in the summer term rather than a supper at the end of the training day.	
6.10	<b>Grading Panels</b> - the Board noted that new governors are best served to attend these to learn about the College. TR explained their content for the benefit of new governors. The Clerk will circulate to all governors the dates for this year and seek volunteers.	Clerk
6.11	Resolved: the Board approved the appointment of Joanna Townsend as a member of the Curriculum & QA meeting. All in favour.	
7.	<b>Risk Management</b> Papers circulated: Updated Risk Register and Minutes of the meeting on 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2020 circulated by email and summary matrix with the agenda,	
7.1	DC reported on the most recent Risk Management Group (RMG) meeting. It was noted that the committee had reviewed items 6 and 7 of the register. In addition risk 6.1.2 9 (insufficient funding) has been down- graded for both probability and trend from a 'red' risk to an 'amber' risk.	
8.	Equality Analysis 2020 (for the year 2018/19), Equality Objectives 2020-24 and review of the Equality Objectives 2016-20	
	Paper circulated: Equality Analysis 2020 (for the year 2018/19), Equality Objectives 2020-24 and review of the Equality Objectives 2016-20	
8.1	LKE reported that it would be best for the Board to consider first the review of the Equality Objectives 2016-20 followed by the Equality Analysis as these inform the Equality objectives for 2020-24	
8.2	<b>Review of the Equality objectives 2016-20</b> – the objective for the 16-19 students was to improve the outcomes for students with mental health difficulty with two targets- to increase student retention rate and the qualification retention rate.	
8.2.1	The impact of measures taken to achieve the targets confirm that the increase in student retention was achieved and indeed substantially better than the target increase set for the period. However, the second target is more difficult to quantify because since the target was generated the College has moved from one to two year courses.	

- 8.2.2 The objective for AHED students was to improve the outcomes for AHED students with a mental health difficulty. The target was for their success rate to be in line with national benchmarks. The numbers involved during the period were very small (2018/19 only 3 students) but there was a good outcome for those students reflecting the substantial positive work carried out at AHED to support such students,
- 8.2.3 The objective for staff was to undertake a gender pay analysis and to act on the results. VO has carried this out and it is now routine with actions identified, published and progressed.
- **8.3** Annual Equality Analysis LKE reminded the Board that this analysis is a snapshot of where the College is at this point in time. She highlighted the following:
  - Page 4 this sets out the College's commitment to raise awareness and encourage disclosure of a protected characteristic amongst staff and students both on the sixth form site and AHED.
  - Page 5 section 3 refers to the key issues that emerged from student focus groups relating to end of year exams and exam access arrangements and the College's mental health and wellbeing services. This showed up, unexpectedly, that students who had extra time were experiencing anxiety issues when sitting an exam with students who do not require extra time. Action is to be introduced to prepare those students on what to expect and how to deal with such situation.
  - Page 6 section 3.2 sets out the feedback from a focus group on the Mental Health and Wellbeing support in College and the actions taken to address the issues raised including better advertising of the range and extent of the support offered.
  - Page 8 shows the results of the cross-college survey of sixth form students in April 2019. LKE highlighted the really high score from the L6students that they feel safe at college and the College promotes a culture of acceptance and equality.
     The Board noted this was a response from the induction survey for L6. NA reported that this was the first time that L6 had been asked the question at that time of the year (December) as they are usually asked in summer. The results were 1% lower than the previous year.
  - Page 8 refers to the improved system at AHED for identifying, supporting and monitoring students encountering mental health difficulties e.g. Mental Health First Aid Support from the Head of Study Support and Counselling at AHED. This highlights the fact that the geography of the two sites makes it difficult for AHED students to access the Wellbeing services on the sixth form site.
  - Page 9 this is the data analysis provided by NA and shows both
    the retention rates and achievement (3 A levels or equivalent) of
    students receiving free school meals is less than would be
    expected nationally. NA reminded the Board to apply caution in
    over interpretation of the data as the number is very small (41
    students) and also indicates that these students are more likely to
    drop from 3 to 2 A levels.

The Board queried the difference in attainment from those in the bottom income quartile (positive) to those on free college meals (negative). NA confirmed that the latter was a better indicator as the former is based solely by postcode.

- Page 11 sets out the proposed Equality Objectives for the Sixth Form College, AHED and College staff
- **8.4 Equality Objectives 2020 -2024** LKE highlighted that this document sets out the objectives and the action plan to implement and monitor each one. The objectives have to be approved and published by April this year.
  - To continue to develop and improve support for students with mental health issues:
  - The action plan highlights the need to improve communication with both students with mental health issues and relevant teaching staff as to expectations regarding study. The aim is to remove stigma and to ensure that teachers do not assume a lower expectation of MH students
  - To develop new therapies/strategies offered to students from the Hub rather than just the current CBT talking therapies offered to students.
  - To extend MH training to all front line safeguarding staff including Lead Tutors and Resident House Parents. LKE has sought funding from the Staff Development budget and the Mercers to fund the training which is 2 days and for up to 20 members of staff.
  - The Board raised the issue of improving the resourcing of the Hub
    as feedback from the focus group confirms difficulty in the Hub
    balancing drop in sessions with one to one counselling. LKE
    reported that she has applied to the Mercers' for further funding
    for an additional member of staff.
  - The Board asked if a student's disclosure of a mental health issue is passed on to the HE institution they may go on to attend after College. LKE reported that there is not a process in place for this to take place. However, the point was raised that UCAS ask for self disclosure and a relevant student's positive experience of the support at College will encourage them to self-disclose at University.
  - The Board asked if steps are in place for all the student body to support students with mental health issues. LKE confirmed this is the case via tutorial.

## To improve the attainment of students in receipt of Free College Meals:

- The action plan highlights that the Head of Student Welfare is to meet individually with the students in this group to determine the barriers to learning and possible additional support needed.
- The Board enquired as to the reference to inviting this group of students to SUN events. LKE reported that this refers to promotional events by the University of Southampton in widening participation by this group.

## To encourage aspiration in female students:

 This objective is born out of the equality data referred to in the Equality Analysis report, which shows that the number of equally qualified female students is 2% less than their male counterparts to

8.5

8.6

LKE referred to the report and highlighted the table providing an analysis of 10.1 the number of applications per subject area and offers made. The second part of the report sets out plans for preparing the next year's cohort including areas for further development. The Board noted the huge increase in the number of successful applicants 10.2 in the Humanities and Arts compared to the previous year with 7 out of 10 applicants receiving offers to study History. Conversely, places offered to study Physical, Chemical and Mathematical Sciences are substantially down on the previous year. Half of the successful students have GCSE scores greater than 7.75. The 10.3 Board enquired how many of the successful applicants were from fee paying secondary schools. LKE reported it was 16%. The Board noted that feedback from students involved in the process 10.4 welcomed the practice interviews with both teachers and governors. LKE reported that not all students have subject practice interviews and there needs to be greater awareness that they are available. Those governors who had assisted in the practice interviews highlighted 10.5 the need for some students to have assistance in proof reading their personal statements for correct grammar and for better self-promotion in some of the student and staff references. SR reminded the Board that despite the areas for further development, the 10.6 College significantly out performs all other SFCs nationally save for Hills Rd Cambridge. SR confirmed that the press release had named the feeder schools from 10.7 which the successful students had attended. It was a pity that local reporting did not include this information. 11. **Governor snapshot** Paper circulated: Governors' Snapshot 2019-20 February 2020 11.1 NA highlighted the following: Figures 2 and 3 confirm that retention for both L6 and U6 follows the same trend as this time last year and is high at 93%. Attendance at Tutorial is down and for Jan-Feb was only 75%. This is concerning as students receive a great deal of information via the tutorial system. NA reported that in a bid to stem this trend, SMT are exploring different approaches which includes reinstating the common tutorial in the timetable. Figure 7 should be amended to read Ofsted instead of EQR for the full inspection. NA reported that the College Study Support may form part of the forthcoming inspection by Ofsted of HCC on SEND. NA referred to the priorities and the one amber rag rated i.e. review support staff pay structure in light of SFCA proposals and changes to the National minimum wage. NA reported that the

	restructure had been started but could not be concluded until the teachers' pay settlement is finalised.	
12.	Finance report: Income/expenditure to endo of December 2019.  Papers circulated — Financial Report for Policy and Resources Committee  Meeting 10 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2020; Income/Expenditure up to 31 12 19; Balance sheet as at 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2019.	
12.1	IK referred to his paper and confirmed that the Annual Statement and Financial Statements for Y/E 31 July 2019 had been submitted to the ESFA.	
12.2	The Board noted that the financial health score was now 'Outstanding'.	
12.3	The report is for the 5 month period actual and 7 month forecast. At the December P&&R meeting, the forecast was the same as the budget but since then has been reviewed. The revision to forecast is set out in the table on page 2 of the report and highlighted in yellow on the Income/Expenditure sheet. This confirms a downward revision to forecast by £6,900 resulting in a new revised forecast of £75,482.	
12.4	IK reported the Balance Sheet remains strong and a good surplus position.	
12.5	IK agreed that in future he will mark the revisions to forecast as a minus or plus to make it easier to understand.	IK
12.6	The Board noted the positive outcome of the reassessment of the College's risk rating as an employer of the LGPS form high to medium. This will result in a saving of £90,000 over 3 years.	
12.7	The cash flow is invested in accordance with the Treasury Policy.	
	The Board had no questions.	
13.	Budget report on Integrated College Financial Model (IFMC) Papers circulated: Paper circulated: Budget forecast 2020/21- 2021/22 Commentary and appendices.	
13.1	IK reported that the ESFA have introduced a new financial model effective from 2020 and known as the Integrated Financial Model for Colleges (IFMC) in a bid to reduce the number of colleges from falling into financial difficulties.	
13.2	The new model consolidates four previous finance returns within one single return with multiple uses. It therefore replaces the biannual returns (the December College Finance Record and the July College Financial Plan), the Cash flow Against Debt Servicing (CFADS) return and the cash flow template introduced earlier in 2019.	

13.3 The model requires colleges to provide month by month cash flow, income and expenditure data covering four years - 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. The model is therefore more integrated with cash flow and the Balance sheet. 13.4 The Board noted that the 2018/19 Outturn has already been submitted to ESFA as part of 2018/19 audited financial statements and 2019/20 Forecast Outturn has been produced under agenda item 12 and includes actuals for the period 1 August 2019 to 31 December 2019, forecast for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 July, and budget forecasts for 20/21 and 21/22. IK reported that the model has a number of limitations not least that it has 13.5 technical issues and new versions are produced each week. In addition, the College has to complete the model using its own assumptions. The AoC issued some guidelines but not all are clear and the ESFA have proved unhelpful in this regard. 13.6 The Board has to be confident that the assumptions made to complete the model are reasonable. P&R had considered the risks and assumptions summarised in the paper at its last meeting. IK highlighted that the biggest risk is the fact that the main source of income for the College is its funding allocation. As the funding allocation for 2020/21 is not known until the end of February, IK has worked with both NA and the Head of MIS on the ESFA funding allocation toolkit to arrive at a figure. 13.7 IK reported that once there is more definite information with regard to the funding allocation, pension costs and any grants that may be announced in the March Budget he will carry out a stress test although there is no opportunity to amend the figures in the model until next year. 13.8 IK has made some amendments to the 2020/21 figures that had been submitted in 2019 as part of the 3 year financial plan and an explanation of the changes, mainly expenditure, is in the report. The Board noted the key budget risks for 2020/21 and 2021/22 at pages 7 13.9 and 8 of the report. Next year the model will need to be submitted by January. It would 13.10 therefore assist if the funding allocation for 2020/21 was brought forward but this is unlikely. The Board noted the limited value of the tool and is much less relevant to 13.11 the College than to failing colleges. The Board agreed that IK has completed the model as best he can with the 13.12 information available and the assumptions made are reasonable.

13.13	IK referred the Board to Appendix A of the report which is the financial	
	planning checklist which governors need to have read and approved prior to the model being submitted.	
13.14	The Board had no further questions but thanked IK for all his work on the IFMC.	
14.	Report from the Estates committee  Papers circulated: draft minutes of the meeting on 29 <sup>th</sup> January and sent electronically Terms of Reference for the committee and draft Confidentiality policy.	
14.1	LE referred to the draft minutes and confirmed that the College is waiting to hear the outcome of the recent CIF bid in relation to repairs to the AHED roof and the College Conservatory replacement. IK reported that the outcome should be known in a couple of weeks.	
14.2	Work started over half term and will be completed in the Easter break to replace the boilers serving Freeman, Art Block and Potter.	
14.3	The Board was reminded that if the CIF bid is unsuccessful then there will have to be a priority review of the current estate projects due to the tight budget this academic year.	
14.4	The committee considered the planning permission for the Art building and future accommodation needs which are to be considered by the Board under agenda item 16.	
14.5	LE drew attention to the committee's discussion on Health & Safety issues and in particular the College's plans for dealing with the Coronavirus. SR assured the Board that this is very much on the radar for SMT and update daily with the recommendations of Public Health England. Currently, the advice is that colleges should not close but ensure good hygiene standards are adopted ('catch it, bin it, kill it) and the washing hands regularly.	
15.	Report from the P&R committee Papers circulated: draft minutes of the meeting 10 February, Financial Regulations and Procedures (amendments in red), Market Strategy, ICT Strategy, paper on renewal of Waste Collection Contract and Asset Disposal Policy.	
15.1	AJS referred to the draft minutes. The committee had considered agenda items 5, 12 and 13 referred to above. In addition, it had considered the draft amendments to the Financial Regulations and Procedures. AJS reported that there were no major changes but there was a change in the authorisation levels in the tender process. This reflected the committee's increased appetite for SMT to have a greater ability to control the budget.	

- 15.2 IK had provided the committee with a bad debtors report outlining the bad debts written-off for the financial year 2018/19 in line with the Financial Regs and Procedures. They mainly relate to boarding debts and fees due to AHED. However, there is now a greater appetite and success in recovering Boarding bad debts.
- The committee endorsed the recommendation from IK to appoint Veolia the contract for Waste collection. The current providers Biffa are not providing the service they agreed to deliver. The Board noted that the tender process had been followed and Veolia are not only competitive but also are the most accommodating to collect at times to least disturb the neighbours.
- The Board asked for details of the breakdown of how much recycling and general waste the College generates as the table in the supporting paper does not provide this information which will determine overall cost. IK assured the Board that the Veolia will not cost the College more than the current provider Biffa. Veolia have agreed a fixed cost for one year and then reviewed with the hope of extending it for another 12 months.
- The committee recommend the adoption of the Asset Disposal Policy. The policy sets out how to safely and economically dispose of assets when they reach the end of their useful life.
- The Board noted the Market Strategy and IT Strategy and the reports on both to P&R referred to in the draft minutes.
- 15.7 Resolved: the Board approved the following:
  - The amendments to the Financial Regulations and Procedures as set out in the draft circulated with the agenda
  - The Asset Disposal Policy as per the draft circulated with the agenda
  - The award of the Waste Collection Contract to Veolia for an initial period of one year
  - Recommendations: for the Board to approve 2019/20 forecast outturn (separate paper as agenda item 12) and 2020/21 2021/22 budget forecasts with the assumptions outlined in the paper by IK on the IFMC and as summarised in table 1 on page 4 of that paper for inclusion in Integrated Financial Model for College (IFMC) template.
    - note the risks identified section 4.5. of the paper
    - note that the IFMC will be prepared on the basis of numbers outlined in this paper and it will be submitted to the ESFA before the deadline of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020.
    - Note that the budget assumptions used in this paper will be stress tested once we will have confirmation of funding and other factors, later in the year.

All in favour.

17.	<ul> <li>Any other business</li> <li>Founders Day Service is to take place at Winchester Cathedral on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 at 5.30 pm. All governors are invited and KH is to send invitations in due course</li> <li>Governor training will take place on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at Winchester University. The Clerk will send an email to all governors requesting confirmation of attendance.</li> </ul>	Clerk
	LB left the meeting.	
16.	Discussion on Future accommodation strategy.  Due to the commercially sensitive nature of the discussion this is recorded in a separate confidential minute.	
	There being no further business the meeting ended at 6.05 pm	