

MEETING OF THE FULL GOVERNING BODY

**Thursday December 3rd 2020, The Feast Day of St Francis Xavier, 6pm
Held remotely on the ZOOM video conferencing platform**

College mission statement:

We at St Francis Xavier College aim to provide for the educational needs of our students in a Catholic environment that proclaims Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life. We are committed to a community based on mutual respect where we recognise our responsibilities to ourselves and others.
July 2005

**MINUTES
PART ONE**

PRESENT:

Mr C Garvey, Foundation Governor, Chair	Mr Graham Thompson, Principal
Mr N Sheta, Foundation Governor	Mrs E Preece, Staff Governor (non-teaching)
Mr M Belfourd, Foundation Governor, Vice Chair	Ms R Clark, Staff Governor (teaching)
Mr D Freeman, Foundation Governor	Ms P Rowe, Co-opted Governor
Mr P Barber, Foundation Governor	Ms S Jones, Co-opted Governor
Mrs B Meier, Foundation Governor	
Mr S Ebele, Foundation Governor (6.07pm)	
Mrs K Taylor, Foundation Governor (6.35pm)	
Mr R Vianello, Foundation Governor	

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms K Foan, Associate Principal, Curriculum
Mr C Graham, Associate Principal, Ethos
Mrs E Lewis, Clerk to the Governors

The meeting was opened at 6.05pm by Mr Garvey. It was quorate throughout and, apart from transitory connectivity interruptions, all were able to see / hear one another.

- 1. OPENING PRAYER:** Offered by Mr Thompson who also passed on good wishes on the Feast of St Francis Xavier received from Professor John Sullivan former SFX teacher now supervising Christian Education at Liverpool Hope University.
- 2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Received from Mr John Opara were accepted. Mrs K Taylor and Mr S Ebele had also sent apologies for anticipated late joining.
- 3. DECLARATION / REGISTER OF INTERESTS:** None were disclosed in matters on, or relating to, the agenda. Governors were reminded to complete and return the declaration form to the Clerk from which the register would be updated.

4. **ELIGIBILITY TO BE A GOVERNOR:** Governors were reminded to return completed forms to the Clerk.
5. **INTRODUCTIONS & MEMBERSHIP:**
 - 5.1. **Mr Donald Freeman:** Mr Freeman had been appointed Foundation Governor to a four-year term of office from 20th October 2020. He was introduced and welcomed.
 - 5.2. **Mr Colin Garvey, Mr John Opara and Mr Paul Barber:** It was noted that each of these foundation governors had been re-appointed, by the Bishop, to a four-year term of office from 19th September 2020.
 - 5.3. **Mr Colin Garvey:** It was noted that Mr Garvey would step down as Chair of Governors and retire as a foundation governor on 31st December 2020.
Mr Garvey announced that Mr John Opara would also retire on 31st December 2020 and paid warm tribute to Mr Opara's 23 years' service to the governing body which included 11 years as Chair of Governors.
 - 5.4. **Ms Karen Foan:** Appointed Associate Principal, Curriculum & Quality from 24th August 2020, was welcomed.
6. **REVISION TO CONDUCT OF BUSINESS (STANDING ORDERS / BYE LAWS):** It was unanimously agreed to accept the recommendation of the Governance Committee that the Conduct of Business, approved 1st July 2020, be revised as per the draft version included in the papers for this meeting, to:
 - 6.1. change the term of office of the Chair or the Vice Chair from one year (as determined most recently in July 2009) to two years from the date of commencement of the appointment as Chair or Vice Chair (para 1)
 - 6.2. decouple the start of a term of office as Chair or Vice Chair from the start of the academic year (para 1)
 - 6.3. change and improve the process of recruiting student governors (para 25 onwards)

The approved, revised Conduct of Business was adopted with immediate effect. The next routine update would be March 2022.
7. **ELECTION OF CHAIR OF GOVERNORS:** Proposed by Mr Garvey and seconded by Mr Vianello, Mr Nader Sheta was unanimously appointed as Chair of Governors for a two-year term of office to commence on 1st January 2021.
8. **MINUTES OF PART ONE OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1st JULY 2020:** The minutes had been included in the papers for the meeting and previously circulated in draft on 3rd September 2020. They were agreed to be a true and accurate record and approved for signing in due course by the Chair. Mr Garvey commented that the length and detail of the minutes was important to evidence the depth of discussion.
9. **REVIEW OF ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:** All had been addressed or would be reported via items on the agenda.
10. **MATTERS ARISING (other than agenda items):** There were none that would not be covered by items on the agenda.
11. **INFORMATION COMMUNICATED BETWEEN MEETINGS:** Governors acknowledged the summary of documents / reports / data listed on the agenda which had been circulated since the previous meeting.

12. **CHAIR'S ACTION:** There was none to be reported.

13. **STUDENT GOVERNORS' REPORT:** Student Governors seats were currently vacant.

14. **SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT (SAR) for 2019 – 20 and QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR 2020 - 2021:**

14.1. **College SAR & Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP):** Ms K Foan, Associate Principal, introduced the "College Self-Assessment Report 2020, Executive Summary" and the "Quality Improvement Plan 2020 – 21" which had both been included in the papers for the meeting.

SAR: Ms Foan explained how evidence for the SAR had been gathered and confirmed that each curriculum department and all cross-college areas including governance had been incorporated. The process of finalising the SAR with agreed strengths and weaknesses was ongoing and the final version would be shared with Governors prior to filing with Ofsted in January 2021.

Ms Foan summarised how the judgement grade of "good" in each key aspect of the Education Inspection Framework (EIF), leading to "good" for overall effectiveness, had been determined. She highlighted what the college does well and discussed what the college can improve.

Mr Garvey recalled the college's quality review session¹ that he and other governors had attended. He applauded the excellent presentations and remarked that several Heads of Department / Faculty had described retention as an issue and asked Ms Foan to talk about what that meant and what is being done to address it. Ms Foan explained that the college achievement rate was below national average overall because of retention. She and Mr Thompson gave some illustrations of where / why students leave part way through a course and do not, therefore, achieve the qualification. Ms Foan explained that where, as an example, it is recognised that a student was not succeeding on an A level programme action could be taken to retain the student by transferring them to a vocational course. She confirmed that each Head of Department had been set this strategy as a target action for improvement.

Mrs Meier asked what the impact of retention was on funding. Ms Foan advised funding would not be reduced by a change at course level but if the student left the college completely, grant income would be reduced.

QuIP 2020 – 2021: Ms Foan advised that the improvement plan was drawn from the SAR and mapped to the key priorities of the EIF. It was structured to show key actions and milestones & targets against each improvement statement. In due course during the year, progress & impact would be populated, and RAG rated. She discussed significant elements of the QuIP.

[Mrs Taylor joined the meeting at 6.35pm]

Ms Foan highlighted strategies to ensure continued development of the digital learning innovation strategy in teaching and learning noting the close alignment with priorities of staff CPD.

She emphasised the setting of robust targets arising from the quality review process;

¹ Friday 27th November 2020. Mr Garvey, Ms Rowe and Mrs Meier attended.

analysis of outcomes and achievement rates and research into how particular groups of students had been affected by lockdown.

Ms Foan emphasised the concentration on maintaining good practice in all aspects of behaviour and attitudes and personal development particularly whilst pandemic restrictions were in place and described how the key actions in the plan would support and improve these.

Ms Foan commented that the first improvement target under Leadership and Management (L&M) had underpinned the main focus since the academic year began “To ensure the Health, Safety and well-being of Staff and Students during COVID pandemic whilst maintaining effective learning and teaching”.

Preparation for “denominational²” and Ofsted inspections was noted to include training and awareness raising for governors. Monitoring the effectiveness and competence of personnel newly appointed to key management roles was acknowledged to be a key target under L&M.

The SAR executive summary for 2019 – 2020 with EIF judgements graded as “good” and the QuIP for 2020 – 2021 were both noted and accepted.

14.2. **Governance Self-Assessment:** An analysis of feedback from governors on the effectiveness of governance and progress against improvement targets with an attendance report and summary of training and development for 2019 – 2020 had been included in the papers for the meeting. Mr Garvey introduced the report and commented on the need to reflect on the effectiveness of holding governing body and committee meetings remotely. He noted advantages with managing commitments and an improvement in attendance, but suggested that other aspects of interaction and collective, nuanced discussion between governors was lost online and was an aspect that needed attention.

Ms Rowe wondered what prevented some governors from completing and returning the survey on which the self-assessment report was based. It was agreed that the process of an online questionnaire was straightforward and an expectation of 100% response was reasonable.

15. SAFEGUARDING:

15.1. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF STUDENT PROTECTION (SAFEGUARDING inc PREVENT):**
Mr Graham, Designated Safeguarding Lead.

15.1.1. **Safeguarding Child Protection Policy 2020:** The updated policy had been included in the papers for the meeting and a digest of main changes had been circulated. Mr Graham introduced the policy and explained it followed a template provided by the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Partnership. He referred to his written report on Safeguarding presented to the previous meeting and his intention to deliver a similar review to the summer 2021 meeting. He reviewed and explained descriptively each of the revisions in the update. Governors were shocked and concerned by some of the examples Mr Graham had given. They assured themselves that Mr Graham and other members of the welfare team were adequately supported in their roles with effective supervision and counselling as necessary. Mrs Taylor commended the caring communication

² Since the meeting it has been advised that “denominational” will become Catholic School Inspections.

and support between the council, college and other organisations. Mr Garvey said that governors were very appreciative of what staff do in the college to protect and keep students safe and maintain a calm atmosphere in the college. Ms Rowe acknowledged that safeguarding was a complex and ever-changing area of responsibility for governors. Mr Graham confirmed that the responsibility of governors was to keep an informed watching brief that the Senior Leadership of the college was implementing the approved college policy and taking appropriate actions as set out in the DfE statutory guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (KCSiE).

The policy as presented was duly approved and would be endorsed with Mr Garvey's electronic signature. The policy would be reviewed next in December 2021.

15.1.2. **Coping with safeguarding in Covid times:** Mr Graham reflected on developments and adjustments since his annual report to the July 2020 meeting. He said he had seen an increase in the number of online conferences with social services and child protection agencies. He said it was clear that there were huge issues coming out of covid for students the biggest of which was anxiety. He advised that safeguarding and support for student wellbeing would continue through tutorials and described the range of risk assessments and provision that were in place.

15.1.3. **Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part two for governors):** Mr Graham reminded governors that the most recent (September 2020) update of KCSiE had been circulated and they should confirm to the Clerk that they had specifically read part two of that statutory guidance, so that this could be recorded.

15.1.4. **Available training for governors incl. online courses:** Mr Graham had delivered a safeguarding training session to governors at this meeting last year (2019) which would be updated and repeated in December 2021. He re-iterated the expectation that governors would take the external online training course. The Clerk would arrange for log-ins to be re-sent to each governor and set a deadline for completion of the course.

15.1.5. **Internal Audit Safeguarding Assignment:** It was noted that Safeguarding procedures for governors and staff would be reviewed by the Internal Audit Service in January / February 2021. Governors training and recruitment arrangements would be sampled during the assignment.

16. **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT TO GOVERNORS (no 84)** Governors had been invited to submit questions in advance of the meeting. Mr Thompson introduced his report which had been included in the papers for the meeting. It began with an executive summary of the headlines from the autumn term in which Mr Thompson acknowledged the unusual start to his tenure as Principal and paid tribute to the staff and students of the college. Appendices included a glossary of titles, abbreviations and acronyms used in the report.

16.1. **SECTION 1: RESPONSE TO COVID-19.** Mr Thompson described the arrangements and response to Covid-19 which had been put in place and developed to support the safe enrolment of students and return to on-site teaching and learning.

16.2. **SECTION 2: OUTCOMES and ACHIEVEMENT 2020.** Mr Thompson commented on the debacle in the summer and the eventual acceptance and release of Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) as the formal outcomes for students. He said that the results

were the best in a long time for the college. He put this into context and outlined the rigorous process that had been followed to reach the CAGs. Mr Thompson explained the graphs and data in illustrating A Level pass rates, A Level value added outcomes (Predicted L3VA) and the A Level ALPs score. He also presented the Level 3 Vocational results by grade, the ALPS Value Added Score and Level 2 results including English and Maths progress scores.

Mr Thompson reviewed the achievement rates which had been presented for comparison over three years as overall, by level, by gender, age, ethnicity and by disability / learning difficulty. The overall achievement rate of 87.8%, significantly improved over the period compared, was analysed and noted to reflect an 87.8% retention rate which would continue to be a focus for college-wide improvement in 2020 – 2021.

Mr Thompson cross-referenced his report on outcomes back to the SAR and QuIP. In response to the summary of progression and destinations of learners and the headline that 86% of leavers in 2020 continued with their education and 6% moved into employment, Mr Garvey acknowledged the hard work that had gone into gathering the detailed information.

Mr Thompson advised that his paragraph about exams in summer 2021 had been superseded by an announcement that day which set out emerging plans which Mr Thompson outlined. He said that it would now be possible to start preparing the students.

- 16.3. **SECTION 3: RECRUITMENT.** Mr Thompson reported buoyant recruitment confirming a roll of 1250 at the census point against a funding target of 1160. He commented that this was a good outcome, on the back of three years of under-enrolment, which would secure a lagged increase in funding of approximately £698k. He acknowledged the successful impact of the extended platform of social media marketing techniques. He outlined the enrolment process in the context of covid precautions and commended the work of all staff and particularly the marketing and recruitment team.

Mr Thompson reviewed the key features of recruitment and enrolment data as illustrated in his report with tables showing conversion rates and applications and enrolments statistics including from Catholic partner/former partner schools, other schools, borough, gender and course / qualification type. It was noted that those declaring to be Catholic had continued to decline and had dropped by 4% on last year to 25% - Mr Thompson explained that marketing to former schools would be a focus. The minority ethnic representation was comparatively static at 84%.

Mr Thompson highlighted courses which had grown and those which had dropped in numbers and confirmed that the reasons were being analysed where there were significant shifts. He noted the drop in number of students who had not achieved a (CAG) pass grade in GCSE English or Maths which meant fewer students were retaking those qualifications this year at SFX.

Mr Thompson emphasised that the drive to maintain good student recruitment and enrolment numbers would not let up and drew attention to the challenges the campaign would face including new competition and looming retraction of free transport.

Mr Garvey expressed the satisfaction of governors with the improvement in enrolment this year and endorsed the commitment to a continued upward trend. Mr Vianello commented that each year governors had noted a drop in the Catholic population which underscored the importance of proclaiming the Catholic ethos of

the college. Mr Thompson agreed that this was a valid point and said that the evident Catholic ethos and atmosphere of the college was recognised to be a significant attractor to non-Catholics.

- 16.4. **SECTION 4: FUNDING and FINANCIAL HEALTH.** Mr Thompson reported the impact of Covid-19 on the college's finances and financial health which would remain "requires improvement" for 2020 – 2021. His report set out the factors which had made an adverse impact, including a pause in the staff cost saving, restructuring programme. He noted that inextricable link between recruitment and funding and the expectation of increased grant income for 2021 – 2022 resulting from growth in student numbers would lift the predicted financial health grade and return it to "good". He referred to some of the good news outlined in the Comprehensive Spending Review about which precise details were awaited. Mr Thompson advised that the FE White due to be published this autumn had been delayed to spring 2021. He said the impact on Sixth Form Colleges (SFC) would probably not be great as the focus was expected to be on minimising duplication of courses and skills for adults, although it would be relevant if the academisation of Catholic Sixth Form Colleges was included. Mr Barber commented that it was hoped that this would be the case. Mr Thompson announced in his report the recommended closure of the smallest of the 14 Catholic SFCs in July 2022.
- 16.5. **SECTION 5: CURRICULUM MATTERS.** Mr Thompson outlined priorities and the ongoing changes in the curriculum including the focus on transition to RQF³ and preparation for delivery of T Levels in September 2022. This included capacity building and the challenge of forging links with business to source work placements in the current situation of so many businesses operating from home. Mr Thompson brought governors up to date with progress with Digital Innovation and blended learning and associated assessment practices. He acknowledged the worth of advanced adoption of *Google Classrooms* which had supported the college transition to effective remote teaching and learning during lockdown and other pandemic restrictions.
- 16.6. **SECTION 6: IN-YEAR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2020.** Mr Thompson set out the objectives for the year drawn from the current (2019 – 2022) overarching strategic plan which provided a set of themes for all areas of the college to work towards. Expressed as an acronym "CRICKET", Mr Thompson had given a detailed progress report against each objective throughout his report.
- Catch -up
 - Recruitment
 - Inspection
 - Curriculum
 - Kindness
 - Emotional and Mental Wellbeing
 - Teach Each Other
- 16.7. **SECTION 7: STAFFING MATTERS.** Mr Thompson reviewed successful staff recruitment which included two senior external appointments. He presented data which showed the ethnic makeup of the staff to be 53.3% from BAME heritage including 42% of teachers, significantly higher than in comparable inner London

³ Regulated Qualifications Framework

schools and colleges where it is 26%.

Mr Thompson described the staff wellbeing forum which had actively developed a range of engaging activities to support the wellbeing and mental health of staff. He applauded staff members, Aaron Takyi, Anna Mason and Tom Spindler who were driving the initiative and referred to Appendix 8 for a summary and photographic record. Mrs Preece corroborated that support and teaching staff were all working together in the drive and Mr Thompson would ensure that more time was made for it to continue and grow.

Mr Thompson praised the efforts of staff to continue the CPD / Staff Development programme innovatively despite the Covid restrictions.

- 16.8. **SECTION 8: COLLEGE EVENTS.** Mr Thompson remarked that whilst the restrictions of Covid-19 had limited the number and range of events, the college had tried to offer as many as was possible with virtual trips and speakers *zooming* into lessons. Progress review evening with parents took place remotely and had been successful with increased participation.
- Mr Thompson reported how the annual Open Day in November had been reimagined into a virtual event launched on 19th November 2020 which had exceeded expectations and received excellent applause from governors. The virtual tour remained accessible on the college website and the launch event had boosted applications and early commencement of interviews. Mr Thompson noted the intention to hold an “in-person” Open Day on Saturday 27th February 2021, circumstances and restrictions permitting.
- Other events included resources and materials for black history month and two dedicated UCAS days for year 13 students which had secured good participation and momentum.

- 16.9. **SECTION 9: CATHOLIC ETHOS.** Mr Thompson summarised the extent and range of activities and focus on the Catholic ethos and values of the college including kindness and the work of the College Chaplain providing daily reflections for staff and thoughts for the day for students; bible study groups and participation in staff and student wellbeing.
- Mr Thompson noted with regret that the annual Remembrance Sunday service in the chapel, for members of the Old Xaverians, had not been possible this year, but the college had made a collection for the Royal British Legion and observed the two minutes silence on Armistice Day.
- Mr Thompson commended the work of the ALS⁴ team developing and delivering a social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) curriculum of enrichment classes to support mental health and wellbeing for students with a high level of need.
- Marking the season of Advent, Mr Thompson described how the whole college was engaged in supporting those in need through financial contributions to charity in the local community and donating items a food bank which was running out of space with goods. There was to be a week-long Christmas jumper day in aid of the *Save the Children Fund* and Mrs Preece had been co-ordinating a collection of new pyjamas for children spending Christmas in hospital.

The Principal’s report concluded with thanks and good wishes to Mr Garvey on his retirement and Christmas greetings to all governors.

⁴ Additional Learning Support

The report, with executive summary and appendices, was accepted.

Mr Garvey suggested that governors consider inviting Kate West, the college Chaplain to speak to them at a board or committee meeting to find out more about the work she is doing.

On behalf of all governors, he thanked Mr Thompson and all the staff for the tremendous work they had done during the term and the summer holiday.

17. REPORTS FROM GOVERNORS' COMMITTEES: Mr Garvey confirmed that minutes / draft minutes included in the papers would be taken as read.

17.1. Audit committee (met remotely on 17th November 2020, chaired by Mr Sheta). Draft minutes had been included in the papers for this meeting.

Mr Sheta presented the Annual Report of the Audit Committee to the Principal and Governing Body for 2019 – 2020, noting that it would be filed with the ESFA along with the audited report and accounts.

The annual report of the Audit Committee had been included in the papers for the meeting and was received formally by the Governing Body.

Mr Sheta referenced the draft minutes of the meeting on 17th November 2020 which recorded that the committee had:

- 17.1.1. Elected Mr Richard Vianello as chair of the committee for two years and Mr Somayina Ebele as vice-chair for two years. Mr Sheta thanked them both for stepping up to these roles.
- 17.1.2. Accepted a refreshed letter of engagement with Buzzacott, external auditors (Financial statements and Regularity) which Mr Sheta had signed electronically on behalf of the governing body.
- 17.1.3. Received the Annual Summary of Assignments Completed by RSM (Internal Audit Service) for 2019 – 20. The summary report had been included in the papers for this meeting.
- 17.1.4. Received the updated risk register and policy for the autumn term 2020 which had been included in the papers for this meeting. The ranking was unchanged from summer 2020. The committee was reviewing counter-fraud arrangements. Fraud would be inserted as a discrete risk on the register.
- 17.1.5. Endorsed the Board Assurance Framework agreed in summer 2020 as still relevant. The BAF had been included in the papers for the meeting.

Mr Sheta reported that the committee had:

17.1.6. Received, from Buzzacott Auditors, in joint session with the F&R Committee, the Audited Annual Report and Accounts (Financial Statements) for the year ended 31st July 2020, included in the papers for this meeting, and had:

- 17.1.6.1. Confirmed that the FMCE (Financial Management Control Evaluation) internal review had been completed for 2019 – 2020 and accepted by both

the Audit & the F&R Committees. The overall self-assessed judgement was noted to be “good”.

17.1.6.2. Agreed on a joint recommendation that the statements by the Governing Body in the audited Report & Financial Statements (Consolidated Accounts) for year ended 31st July 2020, including that it is a going concern with adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, should be signed, subject to any material changes arising from report of the funding assurance review undertaken by KPMG at the direction of the ESFA during w/c 23rd November 2020.

Governors understood that the auditors (Buzzacott) would not sign off the accounts until the funding assurance review report had been received and any material impact on the accounts had been assessed. The filing deadline with the ESFA was 31st January 2021.

In making the recommendation, Mr Sheta summarised the headline results:

- operating deficit -£802K
- operational deficit -£90k
- Both the financial statements audit, and the regularity audit had produced received clean (unqualified) reports as confirmed in the Post-audit Management Report which had been included in the papers for this meeting.

Mr Belfourd advised that an updated version of the accounts had been issued that afternoon with a minor modification. He explained why note 4 had been updated in response to a mandatory requirement in *The College Accounts Direction for 2019-2020 (version 2)* to disclose financial support (other grant income of £521k) received under COVID-19 support schemes.

Mr Thompson informed governors that provisional discussion between Ms Foan and KPMG suggested that no issues had arisen from the funding assurance review that would change the amount of funding granted to the college for the year 2019 – 2020. However, the process of reporting back to the ESFA would take 4 – 6 weeks and it was not known by when Buzzacott would receive the formal notification they required to sign off the end of year report and accounts.

It was unanimously approved that the audited, consolidated Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31st July 2020 (SFX annual report and accounts) should be signed digitally by the Chair of Governors on behalf of the governing body (subject to the outcome of the funding assurance review). This decision would be revisited, prior to filing with ESFA, should the outcome of the review have any material impact on the accounts.

Mr Thompson would also duly sign as Accounting Officer using a digital signature.

Mr Belfourd recommended, on behalf of both committees, that the letter of representation from the Governing Body to the Buzzacott Auditors,

which had been included in the papers for the meeting, could be signed by the Chair of Governors. He explained why it included representation that construction of a building, for which professional fees of £41k had been prepaid, is highly likely to go ahead.

It was unanimously agreed that the letter of representation from the Governing Body to Buzzacott should be signed and sent.

The Audit Committee is scheduled to meet next on 2nd March 2021

17.2. **Finance and Resources Committee (met remotely 22nd September 2020 and 17th November 2020. Mr Belfourd had chaired both meetings).** Draft minutes had been included in the papers for this meeting and Mr Belfourd reported that they recorded that the committee had:

- 17.2.1. Re-elected Mr Belfourd as Chair of the committee for two years from 17th November 2020 – subject to his reappointment as foundation governor in June 2021
- 17.2.2. Reviewed annual updates of Financial Regulations and associated policies which were then subsequently approved by the governing body via email and had come into effect on 1st October 2020 for the year 2020 – 2021.
- 17.2.3. Exceptionally varied the tender process in the Financial Regulations to support the letting of contracts for supply and installation of replacement entry turnstiles in the foyer - this work was completed successfully in the half term holiday.
- 17.2.4. Noted that Michael Belfourd had attended the ESFA early intervention meeting on 8th September 2020 which had proceeded positively.
- 17.2.5. Monitored the Funding / Financial plan including cashflow forecasts: The committee was updated by Mrs Searle at both meetings. On 17th November, the committee reviewed and accepted a narrative summary supporting the “ESFA Cashflow forecast template” which was subsequently signed by Mr Thompson and filed with the ESFA by the due date, 27th November 2020. Governors noted that the template showed that the college has adequate cash resources for the 12 months to November 2021 and does not require any emergency funding in that period. The growth in student numbers achieved for 2020 – 2021 would deliver a positive impact on lagged funding in 2021 – 2022 when it is predicted that the financial health would return to “good”.
- 17.2.6. Been updated on the performance and activity of the Trading Subsidiary (SFX Corporate Services Ltd). The annual report and accounts had been audited and subsequently signed at a meeting of the Board of Directors of the TS held on 5th November 2020. An overall surplus of £51,124 generated in 2019 – 20 had been gift-aided to the college under a deed of covenant.
- 17.2.7. Received the annual Review of the Health and Safety Policy plus a stand-alone Appendix 1 for covid which had been included in the papers for this meeting. On behalf of the committee, Mr Belfourd recommended the updated policy for approval and the covering statement for signing.
Policy approved for digital signing by the Chair of Governors and Principal.
- 17.2.8. Noted that the ESFA Financial Dashboard had not yet been circulated and is expected to be delayed until March / April 2021 after the Finance record return is filed to meet the deadline of 31st January 2021.

17.2.9. Reviewed the level of restricted funds in the Friends of St Francis Xavier bank account which pays out student prizes and awards.

Mr Belfourd proposed, on behalf of the committee, that £1k from the college's main bank account should be transferred into the Friends of St Francis Xavier account. This was approved unanimously.

17.2.10. Concurred with the Science department nomination, supported by Mr Thompson, of Jonathan Asiegbunam to receive the Professor Keohane Memorial Fund prize of £300. Jonathan had progressed from SFX to read Construction Engineering Management at Loughborough university.

The recommendation that the £300 prize be awarded to Jonathan Asiegbunam was approved unanimously.

17.2.11. Monitored treasury investments and supported the movement of a maturing deposit of £389k from the Allied Irish Bank (AIB) to Scottish Widows to earn a better rate of interest with instant access. The total amount currently on deposit was £1,762,257

Mr Belfourd advised that the Finance Record return required to be filed with the ESFA by 31st January 2021 would be submitted by Mr Thompson as Accounting Officer and by doing so Mr Thompson would confirm that the return was consistent with the budget (financial forecast) for the year and had been discussed and agreed with members of the governing body who had been given delegated authority to approve the return. Mr Belfourd expressed his view that the governing body could appropriately, and compliantly, delegate the approval to the F&R Committee of "the financial forecasts and assumptions for the 2020 to 2021 year" within the ESFA Finance Record 2020 because the forecasts and assumptions would be consistent with those included in the Financial Health Calculator return to the ESFA in July 2020 and the November 2020 ESFA Financial Return (which were based on the College's financial plan).

Delegation of authority to approve submission of the finance record return was duly given unanimously to governors on the F&R Committee which would meet in January to discharge that delegated authority.

The F&R Committee was scheduled to meet next on 19th January 2021⁵ to receive the financial return required by the ESFA – the Finance Record – outturn and current year.

17.3. **Curriculum Standards and Quality Committee (met remotely 13th October 2020, chaired by Ms Rowe).** Draft minutes had been included in the papers for this meeting and Ms Rowe summarised that the committee had:

17.3.1. Re-elected Ms Rowe as Chair of the committee for two years to October 2022

17.3.2. Elected Mrs Meier as Vice Chair of the committee for two years to October 2022.

17.3.3. Welcomed Michael Belfourd as a governor observer to the meeting. Ms Rowe reminded all governors⁶ that they could attend the meetings of the committee.

⁵ This meeting would now take place on Tuesday 26th January 2021

⁶ Excepting staff and student governors as per the Terms of Reference of the CSQ committee.

- 17.3.4. Received update reports on outcomes and the Quality Improvement plan in its final update for 2019 – 2020 including a summary of the impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning.
- 17.3.5. Received updates on key development and implementation priorities of the Digital learning Innovation Strategy.
- 17.3.6. Discussed commitment to and continuation of the Governor link scheme. Ms Rowe commented that it had been a year since the scheme had started and it needed a revival to move forward. She had continued her link with the Business department and Mrs Meier was forming a link with the English department.
- 17.3.7. Reviewed the student experience in the form of student feedback gathered as an initial response to online learning.
- 17.3.8. Reviewed the staff experience and response to a benchmarked staff satisfaction survey which showed positive feedback.

The CSQ committee will meet next on 2nd February 2021 when a head of a curriculum department would be invited to attend.

17.4. **Governance Committee (met remotely 4th November 2020, chaired by Mr Garvey).** The committee had:

- 17.4.1. Discussed succession planning particularly in relation to appointing a new chair of governors to succeed Colin Garvey who will retire on 31st December. The committee unanimously agreed that the Conduct of Business (Standing Orders) should be amended as proposed in item 6.1 and 6.2 of the meeting today.
- 17.4.2. Discussed the mechanics and improvement to the recruitment and appointment process of student governors resulting in the proposal that the Conduct of Business (Standing Orders) should be amended as proposed in item 6.3 of the meeting today.
- 17.4.3. Considered the schedule of meetings to accommodate the additional financial returns required to be collected by the ESFA.
- 17.4.4. Discussed the impact, advantages, and disadvantages of remote meetings and what the future mix would / should be.
- 17.4.5. Endorsed the significant importance of all governors attending a meeting early in the autumn term to receive and analyse the results / outcomes.
- 17.4.6. Endorsed to development and embedding of one-to-one discussions with individual governors as a key ingredient in the process of self-evaluation of the effectiveness of governance.

The Governance Committee will meet next on 9th June 2021 when Mr Sheta would take the Chair.

- 17.5. **Appeal Committee:** had not met since the previous meeting of the Governing Body.
- 17.6. **Remuneration Committee:** had not met since the previous meeting of the Governing Body.

[Ms Clark left the meeting during item 17]

18. GOVERNANCE: Chair / Clerk

- 18.1. **Committee Membership:** Current membership of committees had been included in the papers for the meeting highlighting changes and vacancies. It was agreed that:
- 18.1.1. Mr Sheta would step down from the Audit Committee and join the Finance & Resources (F&R) Committee, following his appointment as Chair of Governors.
 - 18.1.2. Mr Sheta would join the Curriculum Standards & Quality (CSQ) Committee
 - 18.1.3. Mr Sheta would no longer chair the Remuneration Committee, following his appointment as Chair of Governors.
 - 18.1.4. Mr Freeman would join the F&R Committee and the CSQ Committee.
 - 18.1.5. A vacancy on the Audit Committee would be filled by a foundation governor currently progressing through the appointment process.
 - 18.1.6. Mr Vianello, as Chair of the Audit Committee, would join the Governance Committee.
- 18.2. **Date of next meeting: the next scheduled meeting would be Thursday 18th March 2021.** The provisional additional meeting on Tuesday 26th January 2021 was no longer required to receive the financial record submission.
- 18.3. **Governor Engagement: Feedback from meetings / conferences etc:** The Clerk reported encouraging level of participation in SFCA Governance Webinars and referred to the summary of governance training in 2019 – 2020 included in the Governance SAR report. Mr Sheta, Mr Belfourd and Mr Thompson had attended Chairs' meetings run by the Association of Colleges (AoC).
ACTION: Governors to provide fuller feedback to the meeting in March 2021.
- 18.4. **Review of Focus morning, 10th October 2020:** The Clerk reported attendance by 11 governors plus Mr Thompson and herself. It had been the first such event held remotely and had worked well. Mrs Lewis outlined the programme which had included an introduction to *Google Classroom*. A *Governors* class had been set up and was still live to access using college email credentials. Documents available in the *classroom* include KCSiE and the presentation Mr Thompson had given at the focus morning. Other topics of the morning included the link governors scheme and the pros and cons of remote meetings.
- 18.5. **Vacancies on the Governing Body:** The Clerk reported the progress of applications from volunteers to fill foundation governor vacancies and confirmed that the Diocese had been made aware of the Governing Body's preference for a Priest to be appointed to fill the vacancy to be created by Mr Opara's retirement. Mrs Lewis noted that the parent governor vacancy remained outstanding. Two student governors would be appointed in spring following agreement to adapt the process reached in item 6.3.

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- 19.1. Mrs Meier said that she and Ms Rowe had been impressed by the college initiative to create a foodbank to support students and their families which had been described at the Quality morning. She proposed that governors donate to this cause and would send an email with details on how to contribute via the Clerk. She had some other ideas for governor involvement in college initiatives which she would carry forward to the next meeting.
Mrs Meier commended the value of the quality review morning and endorsed the governor link scheme, reporting the recent commencement of her connection with the Head of English.

Mr Garvey added his endorsement of the quality review event and recommended it to all governors.

- 19.2. Mr Thompson expressed warm thanks on behalf of all governors to Mr Garvey for the outstanding support, astute insight and experience he had given to the college in his 15 years as a governor including 5 years as Chair of Governors. Mr Thompson also expressed thanks on behalf of Mrs Flannery, former Principal, who had emailed to acknowledge the support she had received from Mr Garvey.

Mr Garvey replied that he regarded his service as a governor as a privilege that he had enjoyed. He committed to there being a celebration of the service given by Mrs Flannery, Mr Opara and others who had left during 2020 when it was safe to get together to do so.

20. Governors confirmed that they were satisfied that the information received, and all decisions taken at this meeting were centred on improving the experience and levels of achievement of students at St Francis Xavier College in a safe, healthy environment that promotes British values, the mission & values of the college and equality, diversity and inclusion.

This part one of the meeting concluded at 8.35pm. Mrs Preece withdrew and Ms Clark had already left.

Next meeting of the full Governing Body: 18th March 2021

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____