

**NOTRE DAME CATHOLIC SIXTH FORM COLLEGE
MINUTES FROM THE STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 3.00PM**

PRESENT John Barnes (Committee Chair & Vice Chair of Corporation) Justine Barlow (Principal)
 David Wright (Chair of Corporation)
 Father Michael Hall (Chair of C&S & Vice Chair of Corporation)
 Paul Casey (Chair of Audit)

IN ATTENDANCE: Denise Hark (Clerk to the Corporation)

Quorum – two governors

Father Michael opened the meeting with a prayer.

| | | |
|-------------|---|---------------|
| 1.00 | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND MEMBERSHIP MATTERS | ACTION |
| 1.01 | There were no apologies for absence as members were in attendance. | |
| 2.00 | COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE | |
| 2.01 | Draft Committee Terms of Reference were considered, and the following amendments were agreed: | |
| 2.02 | The strategic overview in the purpose section should state that the Committee had been put together to support the SLT in strategy going forward. The Chair of Corporation added that the main purpose of the Committee is to provide more steer to Corporation on Strategy and future governance requirements. | |
| 2.03 | The composition of the Committee should also take into account that there are now two Vice Chairs of Corporation. | |
| 2.04 | It was agreed that the Clerk draft updated terms of reference and circulate to the committee for approval. | |
| 3.00 | DECLARATION OF INTERESTS | |
| | <i>Governors must declare any changes or potential conflicts of interest in items on the agenda.</i> | |
| 3.01 | There were no declarations of interest made. | |
| 4.00 | NOTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING | |
| | The notes from the previous meeting held on 18 September 2024 were received and agreed as a correct record. | |
| 5.00 | STRATEGIC UPDATE – CONFIDENTIAL ITEM | |
| | This item is minuted in the Confidential Part II minutes. | |

| | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| 6.00 | GOVERNOR RECRUITMENT UPDATE | |
| 6.01 | Mark McEvoy had been appointed as a Foundation Governor and will join the Curriculum and Standards Committee. | |
| 6.02 | The Clerk reported that there had been an expression of interest in the Staff Governor vacancy. | |
| 6.03 | There are currently vacancies for 1 staff, 1 Co-opted and 2 Foundation Governors. | |
| 6.04 | Father Michael reported that he would ask his contacts at the Huddersfield Catenian Circle if they were aware of anyone who would be suitable for one of the Foundation Governor vacancies. | |
| 6.05 | The Governor Skills Audit had identified that the main skills area required on the Board was financial expertise. | |
| 6.06 | A governor suggested an approach could be made to accounting companies which offer work experience to Notre Dame students. The Principal agreed to look into this and would also ask the DFO if she had any suitable contacts in her network who might be interested in becoming a Co-opted Governor with financial skills. | |
| 7.00 | GOVERNOR SKILLS AUDIT | |
| 7.01 | A Governor Skills Audit had been undertaken following the December Corporation meeting. | |
| 7.02 | The main skills areas identified where representation needed to be boosted were Finance and Estates. This had been discussed in the previous item. | |
| 7.03 | A further area where there was less confidence amongst governors was IT. | |
| 7.04 | The Principal suggested that the Clerk contacts one of the Assistant Principals regarding IT packages available to support staff to see whether any of these would be suitable for governors. Action: Clerk. | |
| 7.05 | The planned introduction of Governor Hub could also be useful in addressing IT confidence. | |
| 8.00 | GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN | |
| 8.01 | A report had been circulated with the papers for the meeting which included a commentary on the current position regarding areas identified for improvement following the External Board review. | |
| 8.02 | It was noted that a number of recommendations had been completed since the External Board report had been received in August 2024. | |

| | | |
|-------------|--|--|
| 8.03 | Recommendation 1.9 – to invite College managers to present to the Board will be addressed through regular reports to the Curriculum and Standards Committee meetings. | |
| 8.04 | The Chair of Audit suggested that College managers could also make presentations to the Audit Committee on areas such as Data Protection or Health and Safety. | |
| 8.05 | The Chair of Corporation noted that Risk is an area for development and should be included on the Governance Action Plan. | |
| 8.06 | The Governance Action Plan should also have an ongoing action on CPD for governors setting out what areas of training must be completed by all governors. | |
| 8.07 | Recommendation 3.4 – to seek further opportunities for student voice. The student governors now present their written reports to Corporation. Governors also receive results from the Student Experience surveys. The Principal agreed to task the Deputy Principals to identify areas where students might interact with governors. | |
| 8.08 | The Chair referred to recommendation 1.7 on providing additional support for new governors. It was agreed to provide a Governor Mentor/Buddy for all new governors for their first six months as a governor. Father Michael agreed to trial this with the newly appointed Foundation Governor. | |
| 8.09 | Governors considered recommendation 1.8 – Governors to be given more opportunities to see the College at work. It was noted that Governors are invited to College events but attendance at these events would depend on individual governors' availability. | |
| 8.10 | A Governor suggested the possibility of more engagement with parents. It was suggested that a couple of governors could make themselves available at open days. | |
| 8.11 | The Chair of Corporation suggested that the Governor page on the College website could be looked at to make it more user-friendly. | |
| 9.00 | GOVERNOR TRAINING PLAN | |
| 9.01 | A copy of the current year's Governor Training record had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. | |
| 9.02 | It was agreed that the Clerk emails all governors to ensure that the information in the report is up-to-date and to notify governors that appropriate training carried out through their work can also be included in the record. | |
| 9.03 | A discussion took place on areas for training at the start of Corporation meetings for the remainder of the academic year. | |

| | | |
|--------------|--|--|
| 9.04 | It was agreed that training should be provided by the IT Network Manager at the April Corporation meeting so that governors can understand the infrastructure and risks which governors need to be aware of. | |
| 9.05 | The Principal suggested that Lockdown training could be provided at the July Corporation meeting if the new system is in place. | |
| 10.00 | GOVERNANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT | |
| 10.01 | A report which suggested areas for inclusion in the Governance Self-Assessment Framework had been included with the papers for the meeting. | |
| 10.02 | Some of the areas had already been completed this academic year. These included the one-to-one conversations with the Chair and the Governor Skills Audit. | |
| 10.03 | The Clerk suggested the possibility of reinstating the meeting evaluation forms which had previously been issued after each meeting. It was agreed that meeting evaluation forms should be included in Governance Self-Assessment, however, these should be in electronic rather than paper format. | |
| 10.04 | All self- evaluation elements, including the Corporation and Committee self-assessment questions which were circulated with the meeting papers, would be included in an annual report to Corporation on its effectiveness. This would be prepared by the Clerk and presented to the Strategic Governance Committee annually in September. Any areas identified for improvement would be included in the Governance Development/Action Plan for the following year. | |
| 11.00 | ANY OTHER BUSINESS There were no items of Any Other Business raised. | |
| 12.00 | DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING | |
| 12.01 | Tuesday 13 May 2025 on Microsoft Teams at 5.00pm. | |

The meeting closed at 6.47pm