



**ST BRENDAN'S**  
SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

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

**OPEN – MINUTES**

**In Person and Virtual Meeting** Held On: Thursday 3 July 2025

**D-Building Room D2/D3 at 16:00– 19:30 hrs**

**Governors Present:** Svetlana Bajic-Raymond [Chair of Governors], Uzoamaka Agyare-Kumi, Antonia Corrigan, James Creamer, Marian Curran [Principal], Sr Margaret Harlock MBE, Michelle Hazelwood, Doug Jennings, Melaine Jonik, Mark O'Sullivan, Paul Ryan, Aaron Skinner, Peter Turner, Iain Turri, [16]

**Apologies:** Gareth Beynon, Roger Bridgeman, Ramatu Hassan-King, Jasper Chu, Risha Hussain [4]

**Absent without Apology:** Maragret Abazie-Humprey [1]

**Attending:** Leanne Sowersby [Governance Professional], Alexandra Moruzzi [Vice Principal, Student Experience Progression], David Beesley [Vice Principal, Curriculum, Quality and Innovation], Shane Blackshaw [Executive Director, Finance]

**Quorum Present:** 16/17 [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:</b> Svetlana Bajic-Raymond [Chair of Governors] welcomed everyone, especially UA, who introduced herself. SBR opened the meeting with prayer.</p> <p><b>1.2 Quorate:</b> The meeting was declared quorate.</p>	
2. Declarations of Interest	<p><b>2.1 Declarations:</b> There were no additional declarations.</p>	
3. Minutes Previous Meetings	<p><b>3.1 Previous Minutes:</b> 14 February 2025, 26 March 2025, 5 June 2025</p> <p>The Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting, 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. Matters Arising & Actions	<p><b>4.1 Actions Report:</b> see actions report for details</p>	
5. Governors' Committee Reports	<p><b>5.1 Audit Committee:</b> SBk updated. The meeting was very brief, as it was not quorate. SBk sent a follow-up email with the points that would have been covered. The only action item was to appoint a lead governor for Cyber Security. Nicholas Ogborne has volunteered for this. <b>Proposed DJ, seconded, MC NO approved as cyber security governor.</b></p> <p><b>5.2 Ethos Safeguarding Welfare Committee:</b> AC updated on safeguarding. Has met with LHH and gave an overview of current safeguarding issues. There is now a named PC dealing with drug related issues. There is a need for more Prevent training. Keeping Children Safe in Education will have minimal changes.</p> <p>Martyn's Law requires a Head of Security. Lanyard use has been better.</p> <p>Noted that LHH is leaving the college and governors thanked her for her outstanding work over this time.</p> <p><b>5.3 Resources Premises Human Resources Committee:</b> JC updated. The staff relations issue has been discussed. A social value policy was received, a Health and Safety and Bursary Policy.</p> <p><b>5.4 Strategy, Search &amp; Remuneration Committee:</b> SBR updated. The majority of items are on the agenda.</p> <p><b>5.5 Teaching Curriculum Quality Committee:</b> MOS updated. Noted that in some areas there has not been as much progress as others, and CPD is being used to address this. MOS talked through some of the affected subject areas.</p>	

	<p>Also noted the importance of continuing links with employers and careers work.</p> <p><b>5.6 Finance Committee:</b> IT updated. The committee has met twice and has discussed management accounts and the budget.</p>	
<b>6. Diocesan Education Strategy</b>	<p><b>6.1 Aquinas Partnership Report / 6.2 Diocesan Education Strategy Report / MAT update:</b> MC updated. It is still the diocesan plan that St Brendan’s will join a MAT in April 2026. We did arrange a meeting with the CEO of the Cardinal Newman Trust, but he was unable to meet due to an Ofsted at one of the schools. We will arrange a meeting with him in the Autumn term.</p> <p>We have received the due diligence that has been conducted on the Cardinal Newman Trust. <b>This will be shared with governors.</b></p> <p>Discussion around governors’ duties in relation to this issue.</p> <p>Governors agreed a response to the Diocese request:</p> <p>“We have received communication from the Director of Education, but we are seeking further information and clarification to gain a clearer understanding of its implications for St Brendan’s Sixth Form college.”</p>	<b>MC</b>
<b>7. Principal’s Report</b>	<p><b>7.1 Student Enrolment 2025/2026:</b> MC talked through the key points. Due to industrial disputes Year 11 taster day was moved and was still well attended.</p> <p>Acceptances are at 2339. We have budgeted for 2300 for next year.</p> <p>Noted that attendance has dropped, and some of this is due to strikes, and the college needs to consider how to support students who will have been impacted.</p> <p>Noted that there is likely to be a drop on the post 16 population from 2028-2030, and this will likely impact funding.</p> <p>It was suggested that the enrolment report should include information about the population changes, in terms of 16-18 years olds, for the population from which our students are drawn.</p> <p><b>7.2 Staffing / Recruitment:</b> MC gave an update. The major recruitment is for the Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing. There could be a slight risk of over-recruiting students, which may mean we need to look at staffing.</p> <p><b>7.3 Staff Industrial Relations update:</b> We have heard today that the industrial dispute has been resolved. Noted that the original list of, ‘asks’ increased from 12 to around 30, and these have all now been resolved. We now need to work towards rebuilding the college community. MC talked through some examples of the, ‘asks’ and how these have been resolved.</p> <p>Discussion around how this was managed from the staff perspective.</p> <p><b>Q – What practical actions are the leadership taking to ensure that staff are feeling heard?</b> On a wider national scale, there will be consultation on workload. There is also a need to look at staff engagement and the ways to do this, as well as supporting middle leaders around communicating with staff members. There is a need to mend some potential divides between staff.</p>	

	<p><b>Q – How is the staff cohort now?</b> There is a mixture of emotions. There is a need to revisit and rebuild relationships.</p> <p><b>Q – Can the sharing of the financial implications of decisions be continued?</b> Yes. We do an annual financial update around where we are. The rest of the leadership team need to be able to effectively communicate this information.</p> <p><b>Q – How do we rationalise performance, strikes, pay and working from home?</b> This could be discussed further at Resources as a staff wellbeing issue.</p> <p>Noted we have had to amend the management paragraph at the beginning of the UCAS application to discuss this.</p> <p><b>7.4 Teaching and Learning update:</b> DB introduced himself and talked through the key points. Noted that the lesson observations are showing very good behaviour of students. A focus for next year will be more active learning of students.</p> <p>There will also be an oracy project next year. DB will take on the staff development and developing a teaching and learning policy. Consistency of assessment will be a focus moving forward.</p> <p>In terms of the Big Five results, this is the first year since 2019 that there has been no disruption to any exams. Our current Year 13 have the lowest entry point of the past three years. There are more positive figures for the current Year 12. We are seeing good progress with students around the C grades and are working to make improvements in the A-A* range.</p> <p>We are seeing much better curriculum planning, with getting the start of Year 12 right, and clear expectations of students.</p> <p><b>Q – Should we be considering the curriculum offer to take account of a potential need for construction workers?</b> We offer a broad variety of qualifications within the college; we do have an AAQ in engineering. We do not have construction, which would require a specific set of skills and resources. We will have designers, engineers, etc. We are in contact with local employers in terms of what they are requiring.</p> <p><b>Q – Can we have an update on whether the actions have made improvements?</b> Yes, this should be seen this in the summer results and key assessment points etc.</p> <p><b>7.5 College Annual Strategic Conversation with ESFA Report outcomes:</b> The outcomes are shared for information.</p>	
<p><b>8. College Self-Appraisal Report</b></p>	<p><b>8.1 College Quality Improvement Report update:</b> DB talked through the key points. The report has now been RAG rated. DB will keep governors updated on new qualifications.</p> <p>Noted that we have 100% destinations information for 2023-24 leavers.</p> <p>Discussion around DB’s first few weeks in the college, the improvements that have been made and the ideas and planned developments.</p> <p><b>Q – Do we consider the armed forces as an opportunity within the curriculum?</b> We would make sure we make students aware of the opportunities, and we do have members come in from sections of the forces.</p>	

<p><b>9. College/ Financial Matters</b></p>	<p><b>9.1 Current College Cash Flow Update and Management Accounts:</b> SBk gave an update. Latest Management accounts have just been published.</p> <p>EBITDA (operating surplus) is £1,034k. Cash position will be around £750K by end of July, which is 24 cash days in hand and around double the amount of last year. The provisional financial health assessment is Good.</p> <p>SBR noted the excellent work done by SBk and the team and noted the praise from Becky Edwards in the finance training. Noted that the finance training has been recorded and <b>LS will send out the link</b>. This is not to be shared outside of the college.</p> <p><b>9.2 Budget Approval 2025-2026:</b> SBk talked through the key points. EBITDA is £991k. This is lower than this year, due to not having included any in-year funding in the budget. The cash balance is forecast at £1,221k, which is 34 days in hand – a significant improvement.</p> <p>SBk talked through the sensitivity analysis and the potential risks etc. Plans to address some of the risks can be further developed when we have a clearer idea of the funding for 2026/27.</p> <p>SBk has now earmarked some contingency amounts for emergencies.</p> <p>The pay award has been budgeted at 4%, and this looks to be the likely figure. We have currently budgeted for 4% from September 2026.</p> <p><b>Q – Is the 4% funded by the government?</b> There has been an update to the funding, from which this will be largely covered, though this is not exactly covered. This is now a medium risk.</p> <p>There is an increased risk around recruitment.</p> <p>SBk talked through the medium risks, and mitigations that have been put in place for these.</p> <p>Governors are asked to approve the forecast outturn for 2024/2025, the budget for 2025/26 and the CFFR.</p> <p>Discussion around some of the assumptions and how these have changed from previous years.</p> <p>The budget does not take account of any potential costs and risks associated with joining a MAT in 2026, such as the top-slice.</p> <p><b>Approval of 2024/25 Forecast outturn, budgets for 2025-26 and 2026/27, and the CFFR – approved unanimously.</b></p> <p><b>9.3 Careers and Employability Report:</b> AMz talked though the key points. Noted that all leavers’ destinations for 2023/24 are now known.</p> <p>Noted the resources in the careers team and the ongoing recruitment. The Gatsby benchmark requires all students to receive 1 to 1 careers guidance. The college must also apply for the Matrix accreditation.</p> <p>Careers guidance is important to the experience of the students, as well as for Ofsted etc.</p> <p>Governors praised the work being done to ensure that students have a good service.</p>	<p><b>LS</b></p>
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	<p>Discussion around how destinations are recorded and tracked. Positive relationships between the careers team and students have improved this.</p> <p><b>9.4 College Three-Year Strategic Plan 2024-2027 Update:</b> MC noted the key points, and highlighted the update in report 9.4.2. This report also includes the targets for the upcoming academic year. The first Professional Development Review date is provisionally set.</p> <p><b>9.5 Estate Development Report:</b> The 2024/25 plan is on target with the exception of the IT infrastructure disaster recovery plan. This has been moved to 2025/26 to allow more time to assess options. SBk talked through the plan for 2025/26. The priorities are based on business need, affordability and deliverability, as well as the areas of highest risk. The gross investment is just over £0.5m, which is split over CapEx spending and a leasing programme.</p> <p>Projects include health and safety upgrades, IT upgrades etc. The total cost budgeted for next year is around £336k.</p> <p>We are considering alternative options for the security gates now the CIF bid has again been unsuccessful. One is working with WECA. If this is unsuccessful, then there is an option to pare back the project and fund it ourselves.</p> <p>The CapEx budget for 2026/27 is provisional, until we have a clearer idea of funding and what we have been able to achieve this year.</p> <p>Discussion around the CIF bid, the potential reasons for refusal. It is unlikely that we would be able to get funding for this. There may be other projects for which we could get funding.</p> <p><b>9.6 Staff pay awards 2025-26:</b> MC gave an update. This is done through collective bargaining through the SFCA. 4% has been agreed. Alongside this will be the workload consultation.</p> <p><b>9.7 S48 Inspection Update:</b> We have received communication that we will have an inspection next year. The new Head of RE will lead the Ethos Day in preparation for this.</p> <p><b>Q – Can governors be invited to the Ethos Day? Yes – MC will arrange this.</b></p> <p><b>Q – How much notice is provided of the inspection? 2 days</b></p> <p>Discussion around the implications of the inspection. Governors will be involved in the inspection.</p> <p><i>AC and SrMH left the meeting</i></p> <p><b>9.8 External Auditor’s Fee Payment 2024-25 – Authorisation:</b> text SBk updated. The auditors have issued their planning letter. The fee is £15k (+VAT) for the main audit, plus £1k (+VAT) for the teachers’ pension certificate. <b>Governors approved the payment.</b></p> <p><i>AMz and DB left the meeting</i></p>	MC
<p><b>10. Board of Governors’</b></p>	<p><b>10.1 Governors’ Briefing next Meeting:</b> Martyn’s Law</p> <p><b>10.2 Governor Vacancies / Recruitment update:</b> There is one vacancy for a Foundation Governor, and three further vacancies will arrive</p>	

<p><b>Operations</b></p>	<p>during the next academic year. MC has found an organisation who can help with recruitment of Foundation Governors, governors were happy to move forward with this.</p> <p><b>10.3 Appointment of Student Governors: Ramatu Hassan-Kin and Jasper Chu formally appointed – proposed MC, seconded SBR.</b></p> <p><b>10.4 Appointment of Chair of Governors: Svetlana Bajic-Raymond re-elected as Chair. Proposed MC, seconded JC.</b> SBR noted she plans to resign as Chair at Christmas.</p> <p><b>10.5 Appointment of Vice Chair of Governors:</b> JC has already been voted as Vice Chair. DJ has also volunteered to take on the Vice Chair role – <b>approved, proposed MC, seconded MOS.</b> SBR discussed the roles of Chair and Vice Chairs.</p> <p><b>10.6 Governance Review Action Plan Update:</b> An updated version was circulated. SBR talked through the key points and some remaining actions.</p> <p><b>10.7 Code of Governance:</b> SBR noted that the Corporate Code of Governance. The AOC code of governance has now been updated and can be used. Discussion around the AOC code requirements. <b>Proposed MC, seconded MC – AOC Code of Conduct Adopted.</b></p> <p><i>DJ left the meeting</i></p> <p><b>10.8 Change to Instrument and Articles: Proposed MC, seconded AS – Governors agreed in principle to the change to the articles as proposed – by removing articles 10.6 a) and b) relating to student governors not voting on financial matters.</b></p> <p><b>10.9 Calendar of meetings 2025-2026:</b> Agreed</p> <p><b>10.10 Governor Day – 13 February 2026:</b> This will be planned in the autumn.</p>	
<p><b>11. Policy Reviews</b></p>	<p><b>11.1 Student Admission Policy:</b> Proposed SBR, seconded MC, Policy approved</p> <p><b>11.2 SEND Policy:</b> Proposed UA, seconded MC, Policy approved</p> <p><b>11.3 Prayer and Liturgy Policy:</b> Proposed PR, seconded UA, Policy approved</p> <p><b>11.4 Financial Regulations March 2025:</b> Proposed MC, seconded IT, Policy approved</p> <p><b>11.5 Accountability and Local Needs Statement:</b> MC talked through the key points. Proposed MC, seconded MOS, Policy approved</p> <p><b>11.6 Treasury Management Policy:</b> Policy noted by governors</p> <p><b>11.7 Bursary Policy:</b> Policy noted by governors</p>	
<p><b>12. Risk Management</b></p>	<p><b>12.1 Review of Board of Governors' Risk Register Items:</b> SBR thanked SBk for the glossary of terms for the risk dashboard. Discussion around some of the risks allocated to the full board. The evaluation of progress relates to actions relating to each risk. SBk explained where the percentage figures for the completed controls come from. Governors can see the full register at any point.</p>	

	<b>12.2 Safeguarding/PREVENT Review:</b> Discussed at 5.2 above	
<b>13. Correspondence</b>	<b>13.1 Letter from Sharon Toombs NEU:</b> Discussed at 7.3 above. <b>13.2 Governors' correspondence to BFc, staff NEU rep:</b> Discussed at 7.3 above.	
<b>14. Any Other Business</b>	<b>14.1:</b> None	
<b>15. Date Next Meetings</b>	<p>Board of Governors – Wednesday 24 September 2025 at 16:00</p> <p>Strategy, Search &amp; Remuneration Committee – Wednesday 10 September 2025 at 16:00</p> <p>Ethos Safeguarding Welfare Committee – Wednesday 17 September 2025 at 16:00</p> <p>Teaching Curriculum Quality Committee – Wednesday 5 November 2025 at 16:00</p> <p>Finance Committee - Tuesday 11 November 2025 at 16:00</p> <p>Resources Premises Human Resources Committee – Wednesday 19 November 2025 at 16:00</p> <p>Audit Committee – Wednesday 26 November 2025 at 16:00</p> <p>Governors' Day 2024/2025 – Friday 13 February 2026</p>	
<b>Minutes Agreed</b>	<b>Minutes Approved Wednesday 24 September 2025</b>	
	<b>Signature</b> <b>Chair of Governors</b>	