

GOVERNANCE⁴FE

EXTERNAL REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH COLLEGE

21ST FEBRUARY 2024



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF REVIEW OUTCOMES & RECOMMENDATIONS

Within the overall review of governance effectiveness, this is a positive report demonstrating a well-developed level of maturity of governance at the college. This summary of review outcomes should be read in conjunction with the full report as the report contains important contextual information, rationale, and evidence for all the recommendations made. The review considered the Board's effectiveness and governance maturity across the 5 principal areas.

GOVERNANCE ROLES & STRUCTURES

Strengths include well-defined roles; a strategic focus; clarity in curriculum rationale; financial systems are robust, and organisational culture oversight is increasing. Reporting standards are high, and the CEO's report as the first key agenda item, efficiently anchors subsequent discussions. The corporate dashboard aids governors in overseeing KPI achievement and their alignment with the strategic plan. Development areas include adapting governance annually to the college context; annually agreeing key priorities as areas of focus; and enhancing the Governance Professional's insight into the organisation's operations to support the Board's strategic focus. Implementing a board portal could streamline governance and compliance (potentially requiring adjustments to internal regulations).

RELATIONSHIPS

Board development is well-integrated, and governors feel valued for their contributions. Reporting is transparent, fostering trust and confidence. The Board actively seeks and incorporates stakeholder feedback into major decisions. An annual informal discussion should focus on mutual expectations and feedback for improvement, enhancing the relationship between the Board and management. Appointing a Senior Independent Governor could provide additional support and intermediation.

ENABLING

Board members enhance their understanding through college visits, data benchmarking, and stakeholder reports, fostering effective challenge and contributions. Governors ask probing questions, with executives responding positively and providing clarifications. Engaging the Board early in decision-making and utilising a meeting effectiveness survey, could further leverage the governors' experience and knowledge.

ALIGNMENT

Board members understand the organisation's strategy and its linkage to practices and KPIs. They are aware of strategic risks and opportunities, aided by an assurance map. There is an opportunity to reassess vision and values to ensure they align with the college communities. Involving board members in this process and increasing governor oversight of the values being embedded in college day-to-day activity (its culture), will increase alignment behind the mission and vision.

TEAM

Governors understand how their skills and experiences support oversight of the strategic plan. The Board and executive members show a strong commitment to improving governance. Implementing a formal succession plan for governors and the Executive team is recommended. Publishing an annual report by the Search & Governance committee on its work (including recruitment practices) would enhance transparency. Setting and monitoring progress against established Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) principles for the Board is also recommended to further foster diversity and inclusion.