



MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON

Date: Tuesday 8 July 2014
Venue: Sixth Form College
Room: Committee Room
Time: 1715hrs - 1830hrs

Present: Mr J Boyle (Chair)
 Cllr D Clapham
 Mrs K Clowes
 Mr G Curry
 Mr A Goodinson
 Ms F Greeves OBE
 Mr H Heath
 Mrs W Middlemas
 Mr S Sheard
 Ms K Talboys
 Ms J Trembles – late arrival
 Mr N Webster
 Mr P Welsh
 Mr N Wilson

Together with: Ms G Yeadon (Deputy Principal)
 Mrs A Pickup (Director of Finance & HR)
 Mr A Lloyd (Vice-Principal Information Systems and Resources)
 Miss E Trotter (FCAT Corporate Services Lead)
 Mrs K Buddle (FCAT Governance Administrator)

Apologies Apologies were received from Mrs C Bellamy, Mr S Brennand, Mr J Corry and The Rev Dr R Murphy.

		Action
34.2014	Welcome The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting	
35.2014	Preliminary Meeting Prior to the scheduled meeting, the Chair asked for a preliminary meeting to discuss and approve the appointment of the new Blackpool Sixth Form College Principal. He advised that after a national campaign conducted by a national Recruitment Agency 16 Applications had been received. After an initial assessment by the Committee and a preliminary interview by the Recruitment Agency, 5 were summoned for the 2 day selection process which had finished immediately prior to this meeting. The selection panel consisted of a 'carousel' of exercises, activities and assessments involving Governors, Managerial and Non Managerial Staff, Students and external employer stakeholders.	

Staff and students passed on their thanks to the Appointments Committee for involving them in the recruitment process. This had been appreciated by all parties and was seen as a key factor in the success of the process.

The Chair, on behalf of the Appointments Committee, recommended that Jill Gray, currently Assistant Principal at Runshaw College, be appointed as the new Principal of the Blackpool Sixth Form College with effect from 1 January 2015.

35.2014 D1 Resolved: to approve the appointment of Jill Gray, as Principal, from 1st January 2015.

The Chair left the meeting to contact Jill Gray with confirmation of her appointment.

Mr Welsh took over as Chair for the next part of the meeting.

36.2014 Declarations of Interest
None.

37.2014 Consideration of any items of urgent business.
None.

38.2014 Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 1st April 2014
The minutes of the meeting were approved.

39.2014 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 1st April 2014

- 12.2014 – Mrs Clowes agreed to contact Jon McLeod in Marketing about her appointment to the Sustainability Group and details of the meetings of the Group.
- 13.2014 – The Student Services Team had received the Corporation's congratulations on the successful Customer Service Excellence Award assessment visit.
- 14.2014 – A training session for governors on potential Ofsted questions had taken place on 3rd June 2014. A list of possible questions and model answers would be made available to all governors.
- 16.2014 – A Board Assurance Framework had been established and work was under way to develop assurances.
- 18.2014 – The Department for Education (DfE) Report 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' would be considered in detail by the new FCAT Safeguarding Board over their next meetings.
- 20.2014 – Amendments to the Draft Strategic Aims 2014 – 2018 had been made by the Principal.
- 22.2014 – New governor appointments, changes to committees and the governance structure were all in place.
- 25.2014 – A 'Thank you' dinner for Mr R Weaver, Dr D Sanders and Dr J Burgess had been held on 20th May 2014.

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40.2014 Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Corporation held on 1st May 2014.

The minutes of the meeting were approved.

41.2014 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 1st May 2014

There were no matters arising. Cllr Clapham explained the confusion which had led to him to not being able to provide his apologies for the meeting.

42.2014 Principal's Report - July 2014 incorporating progress against the College Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

Governors considered the Principal's Report (Paper 9) which provided graphs illustrating progress against the KPIs with explanatory information.

Challenges

The Principal provided the following responses to questions from governors on her report:

- Whilst student applications for 2014/15 looked to be in decline, this was due to the fact that the Admissions Team had 'cleaned up' data earlier in the year. This meant that students that had persistently not attended for interview had been removed from the applications list. Generally, application numbers were healthy with the highest number ever recorded from the local state 11-18 schools.

The Chair rejoined the meeting and advised that Ms Gray had accepted the offer for the post of Principal.

Responses to Challenges (continued)

- Of the lessons observed to be 'Good' or better, 33% of these were classed as 'Outstanding'. (This figure was shown incorrectly on the graph and the Principal agreed to amend it). The graph referred to the number of tutors observed as well as the number of lessons observed.
- Staff were still over-estimating success rates against predicted grades. The Senior Leadership Team was focussing on moderating predictions, especially in light of changes to qualifications and lack of experience in grading from new teachers.
- Many members of staff had put themselves forward as examiners and considered this a key part of their continuing professional development.

The Principal drew governors' attention to B2 of her report on the Data Dashboard. Due to the way in which information is reported on the Dashboard, the College's performance is shown to be in the bottom 40% nationally in the following three categories:

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1. Level 3 classroom learning qualifications excluding AS, A2 and A Levels
2. Level 3 academic value added, and
3. The percentage of students entered for at least one A Level attaining 3 or more A Levels at A* - E.

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) has had a significant impact on two of the categories, and, using current data, the College would now be rated in the top 40% nationally in terms of Category 1. The College is tightening up on enrolment onto these courses to ensure greater success in the future in terms of Categories 1 and 2.

However, the fact that the College enables students to study a mixed programme of Level 3 BTECs and A Levels disadvantages us in terms of Category 3, and this is likely to continue next year as only 56% of students studying A Levels in 2014 study three or more.

Governors noted and accepted the information provided by the Principal on the Dashboard and supported the continued direction for the College in terms of courses provided. It was also noted that the Association of Colleges had recognised that this was an issue for colleges across the country that provided a range of qualifications in addition to A Levels.

The Principal also highlighted the following points from her report:

- All students without the qualifications were enrolled into GCSE English and Maths courses.
- There was a downward trend in achievement in science nationally across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, even in good schools. The removal of the primary level SATS tests in science was one of the possible reasons for this. More science In-Service Training (INSET) days were planned with school staff in order to help address the problem.

In response to a concern about the validity of the papers for the meeting, and whether or not they had been approved in advance of the meeting, the Principal confirmed that all papers in her report had been endorsed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). It was agreed that appropriate filepath trails would be added to the footers of future documents for governors so that the validation process was more visible.

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Governors thanked the Principal for her report.

42.2014 D1 Resolved: that the Principal's Report be received.

43.2014 Report on Chair's Action since the last meeting

The Chair reported that he had nothing to report.

44.2014 Safeguarding Report

The Deputy Principal presented the Annual Safeguarding Report (Paper 10).

Overall, referrals had increased from 89 in 2012-13 to 120 this year. In the main, students being referred were suffering from emotional/mental health conditions. There had been a significant three-year increase in the number of students referred because they are having suicidal thoughts (4 cases in 2011-12, 12 cases in 2012-13 and 20 cases this year). The Report provided contextual information about Blackpool which explained some of the reasons for this.

Challenges

The Deputy Principal gave the following responses to questions from governors on the Report:

- The single central record would hold information on Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for every member of staff and all governors.
- DBS records for staff would be rechecked every five years and every four years for governors (in line with reappointments and renewals to terms of office).
- There is no statutory requirement for governors to be DBS rechecked but it is seen as good practice. It was noted that DBS checks were only one small factor in helping to support safeguarding. It was also important that the College have robust policies and procedures in place for whistle-blowing, bullying etc and that a sensitive culture is developed to ensure students are comfortable about coming forward with any problems.
- It was difficult to be certain about why referrals had increased but it was possibly down to the fact that the College was continually working to improve its approaches to providing support for students. However, it was important for the College to identify issues for those students that did not readily come forward.

One of the governors pointed out that local authorities had made a number of changes to their safeguarding procedures and that these may need to be considered by the FCAT Safeguarding Board.

44.2014 D1 Resolved: to approve the Annual Safeguarding Report.

45.2014 Student Governor Report, July 2014

Governors considered a report from Mr Nathan Wilson on student activities and perspectives of the College (Paper 11).

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Agenda)

Governors remarked on how well received the involvement of students in the recruitment for the new Principal had been. Student governors commented on how much they had enjoyed the process and how useful it had been in helping them understand the background to appointments.

The Chair thanked Mr Wilson for his report.

45.2014 D1 Resolved: to receive the Student Governor's Report.

46.2014 Disadvantaged Funding Strategy

Governors considered the Disadvantaged Funding Strategy (Paper 12). The Deputy Principal explained that the support provided by disadvantaged funding was helping to close the gap in performance between those students who qualified for the funding and all students. The College spends more on support for these students than it receives in income for them. The full impact of the Strategy would be demonstrated by the results expected in August 2014, and this would be brought to the next meeting of the Corporation.

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Challenges

The Deputy Principal provided the following responses to questions from governors on the Strategy:

- The attendance and retention rates for 'Closing the Gap' students are lower than for students generally but these are narrowing. It was important that the College worked to close the gaps faster.
- Closing the Gap students were highlighted on the MRIS database on arrival at the College. Teaching staff could access this information. Often, these students needed support to improve their literacy and this was identified via self assessments, again on arrival into College. Staff were informed that all information pertaining to students needed to be used appropriately.
- The speed in which the College could implement intervention actions would help to close the gaps more quickly. Staff needed to engage students and remind them of the importance of their commitment in achieving their goals. Appointments with relevant support agencies, including careers advice, were scheduled in order to keep students motivated. However, students often had complex issues to address, such as caring responsibilities, and it was not always obvious as to why their attendance levels dropped.

The Principal explained that, although the College had been alert to issues for Closing the Gap students for a number of years, the use and impact of Government funding provided for individual students was being more rigorously monitored and the College had to have precise evidence of how successful this was being applied. From September, a new method of recording progress against targets for all students would be in place.

Governors thanked the Deputy Principal for her answers and asked for their thanks to be passed to staff for their continued focus on supporting Closing the Gaps students.

46.2014 D1 Resolved: to approve the Disadvantaged Funding Strategy.

47.2014 Administration and Finance Committee Meeting 11th June 2014

47.2014 D1 Resolved: to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2014.

48.2014 Matters arising from the Minutes of 11th June 2014

Governors were provided with a revised proposed budget (Paper 13.2) and made aware of the slight changes. The Capital Grant of £500k was now incorporated into the balance sheet.

Projections for 2015 – 2016 and 2016 - 2017 were also provided in order for governors to see the impact on the College of a reduction in the Education Funding Agency (EFA) grant in 2016. The Chair of the Committee assured governors that plans were in hand to address the funding decrease. There was some flexibility in the College's budget but 2016 – 2017 would be a difficult year for all colleges, not just the Sixth Form College. Approximately 10% of colleges were expected to be at risk of funding deficits as a result of the reduction of the EFA grant in 2016.

Challenges

The Chair of the Committee and the Director of Finance and HR provided the following responses to questions from governors:

- Colleges were handling the income reduction expected in 2016 in different ways. The Sixth Form College had been making plans over the last 18 months and had already agreed changes to the Curriculum offer next year to improve cost effectiveness.
- As with other colleges across the country, the Sixth Form College was lobbying Government about the reduction in funding through the Association of Colleges (AoC).
- The College had been analysing potential future developments for colleges in light of the next Parliamentary elections. It was expected that, whichever party came to power, there would still be a move towards academisation or the collation of schools into Trust arrangements.

Ms J Trembles joined the meeting.

48.2014 D1 Resolved: to approve the proposed budget for 2014 – 2015.

48.2014 D2 Resolved: to receive the budget projections for 2015 – 2016 and 2016 – 2017.

48.2014 D3 Resolved: to approve a virement of £4k from the College budget to support the fitting of the Phase 4 new build.

48.2014 D4 Resolved: to approve the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Employers' Discretions Statement of Policy.

48.2014 D5 Resolved: to approve, in principle, Health and Safety Report No 4. The Report would be circulated to governors and comments on it received at the next meeting.

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49.2014 Strategic Planning and Standards Committee Meeting 10th June 2014

49.2014 D1 Resolved: to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 10th June 2014.

50.2014 Matters arising from the Minutes of 10th June 2014.

The Chair of the Committee reminded governors that this had been the last meeting of the Committee. In future, strategic matters would be discussed by all governors during Corporation meetings.

The Committee had discussed stakeholder feedback on the College. A summary report of the feedback would be brought to the next Corporation meeting for consideration by governors.

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Agenda)

The Inspection of Provision Reports for Biological and Physical Sciences had highlighted capacity for two members of staff to improve. The Chair of the Committee provided an explanation about the comment as it could have been misconstrued. The comment meant to imply that the two new staff members were eager and willing to make the identified improvements. It did not mean that they needed support to improve their competency in an individual capacity. Future Inspection of Provision Reports would be brought to Corporation meetings.

The Strategic One Year Development Plan and Staff Development Priorities would be incorporated into a 'z bend' format.

The Chair thanked the Chair of the Committee and members of the Committee for their work on strategic planning over the years and for finalising the work in readiness for handing over to the Corporation.

- 50.2014 D1 Resolved: to approve progress on the Strategic Development Plan 2013 – 2014.**
- 50.2014 D2 Resolved: to approve the One Year Development Plan for 2014 – 2015 and Staff Development Priorities.**
- 51.2014 Safeguarding Board 20th May 2014**
51.2014 D1 Resolved: to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 20th May 2014.
- 52.2014 Matters arising from the Minutes of 20th May 2014**
 Governors discussed the proposal for the FCAT Safeguarding Board. The new Safeguarding Board would supersede the Sixth Form College's Safeguarding Board and include participation from Unity, Aspire and Hodgson Academies. It would be chaired, initially, by Dr David Sanders, a recent governor at the Sixth Form College and a recognised expert in safeguarding matters.
- 52.2014 D1 Resolved: to approve the establishment of the joint FCAT Safeguarding Board and the Terms of Reference for the Board.**
- 53.2014 Audit Committee Meeting 17th June 2014**
 The Principal questioned 21.2014 of the minutes which referred to the distribution of the management of College risks. She emphasised the point that the new members of staff that had responsibility for particular risks were all Senior Leadership Team (SLT) members and asked that the minutes be amended to reflect this.
- 53.2014 D1 Resolved: to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 17th June 2014 with the above amendment.**
- 54.2014 Matters arising from the Minutes of 17th June 2014**
 In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, Cllr Clapham provided a summary of the meeting. The Committee had received the Risk Report and Risk Register for June 2014 and internal audit reports from Baker Tilly and Mazars.
- Asked about the outcome of the request for Baker Tilly to re-consider its annual increase in fees, Cllr Clapham confirmed that, following the request, this had been reduced to a 1.5% increase from 2.6% increase.
- 55.2014 Search Committee Meeting 12th May 2014**
55.2014 D1 Resolved: to receive the minutes of the meeting held on 12th May 2014.
- 56.2014 Matters arising from the Minutes of 12th May**
56.2014 D1 Resolved: to approve the extension of Mr Philip Welsh's term of office as Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee until his formal appointment as Chair of the Corporation.

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56.2014 D2 Resolved: to approve the proposed committee changes and new committee structure for 2014 – 2015.

56.2014 D3 Resolved: to approve the draft Standing Orders 2014 - 2015.

56.2014 D4 Resolved: to approve the draft Calendar of Meetings 2014 -2015

56.2014 D5 Resolved: to approve the change of name of the Committee to the Search and Governance Committee.

57.2014 Any other business

- Governors thanked Mr Harry Heath for his two years of service on the Corporation and his contribution to Corporation and Audit Committee meetings and wished him well for his further studies and future career.

Mr Heath thanked governors for the opportunity to be a part of the governance structure and for the insight into the background to the running of the College, which he felt would be of benefit to him in the future.

- Governors congratulated Mr A Goodinson on the successful dramatic arts and music events that had been delivered at the College over the year.
- The Chair thanked members of the Appointments Committee, Dr David Sanders and Mr Tony Nicholson for their support in helping to recruit the new Principal.

58.2014 Estimation of new risks

- Appointment of new Principal and transition process. This would be monitored as part of the probation period for the post.

Signed:

Chair:

Date:
