



MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON

Date: Tuesday 8th December 2015
Venue: Blackpool Sixth Form College
Room: Committee Room
Time: 17:15hrs

Mission Statement: *"Inspiring Learning, Developing Mind and Character, Building Your Future"*

Present: Mr J Boyle (Chair)
Dr P Anderton
Cllr D Clapham
Mr M Cobandag
Mr J Corry
Mr G Curry
Mr M Hodgkinson
Ms W Middlemas
Ms J Trembles
Ms M Wakefield
Mr N Webster
Mr P Welsh

Together with: Ms S Benson (Assistant Principal: Academic)
Ms T Cooper (Assistant Principal: Vocational)
Mr A Lloyd (Vice Principal: Information Systems and Resources)
Ms A Pickup (Director of Finance and HR)
Ms G Yeadon (Deputy Principal)
Mrs K Buddle (Governance Administrator: Fylde Coast Academy Trust)

Apologies: Apologies were received from Mr D Berry, Ms J Gray (Principal) and Mrs S Hawitt (Clerk).

		Action
56.2015	Preliminaries The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and particularly Ms Mia Wakefield, new Student Director. Apologies were noted.	
57.2015	Declarations of interest None.	
58.2015	Membership matters Directors approved the following: a) the appointment of Dr P Anderton as Vice Chair of the Corporation until 8 th December 2017.	

- b) the re-appointments of Cllr D Clapham as Chair and Mr G Curry as Vice Chair of the Search and Governance Committee until 9th July 2017.
- c) the re-appointment of Mr J Corry as Chair of the Audit Committee until 9th July 2017.
- d) the appointment of Mr J Boyle as Chair of the Standards Board as an interim measure. The Search and Governance Committee would consider the appointment of a long term chair for the Board at its meeting on 25th January 2016.

59.2015 Consideration of any items of urgent business

None.

60.2015 A Level Performance Systems (ALPS) training

The Vice Principal delivered a presentation and training session on ALPs, a value added measure that the college uses to assess the progress a student makes over their time at the college. ALPs uses a formula based on the number and grades of GCSE passes a student has on entering the college and their qualifications on leaving, identifying added value compared to their predicted leaving qualifications and grades. A company called Alchemy Gold carries out the calculations and provides data for each individual college at student, subject and qualification levels. Information is made available nationally in order for colleges to benchmark their progress.

It was noted that ALPS scores only take into consideration GCSE and A Level qualifications and do not recognise achievement of BTECs as part of the calculations. The College offers a mixed curriculum of A Level & BTEC and this is not catered for by the ALPs system. This means that the College's performance will appear to be not as strong as those colleges only offering A Levels, and this may give a false impression when comparing institutions. None the less ALPS was a valuable internal tool for tracking student progress and identifying trends.

J Trembles joined the meeting.

In order to better understand how the scores are calculated, Directors were provided with examples to work on themselves.

Questions from Directors

In response to a question about whether or not all colleges are provided with ALPS scores, the Vice Principal confirmed that all those that buy into the scheme are. Most sixth form colleges do buy in to the scheme.

Asked if the scores were affected by the fact that there are different examination boards for some subjects, the Vice Principal confirmed that this did not make a difference.

Asked if it would be possible for the college to provide its own internal ALPs type calculations taking BTEC achievement into consideration, the Vice Principal acknowledged that this might be possible but that benchmarking progress against other colleges would not.

The Deputy Principal also explained that the college would need to be confident that any internal scores were accurate in order to satisfy inspection regimes.

In response to a question about the difficulties of achieving a high added value measure for students coming into the college with already high grades, the Vice Principal explained that the main aim of the ALPs scheme was to provide a framework to compare progress with other organisations rather than to meet added value targets for individual students.

Asked if it would be possible for the college to calculate added value scores for students taking mixed qualifications by dividing the score by the number of A Levels they were taking, the Vice Principal explained that this would make meaningful benchmarking against other organisations impossible as comparisons would not be 'like for like'.

In response to a question about collection of data, the Vice Principal confirmed that this is carried out at different points across the year in order for the college to assess progress and address any issues across individual student and subject areas. Meetings between the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Heads of Department take place on a regular basis in order to consider any areas that need strengthening.

Asked if the college was unique in offering a mixed curriculum, the Vice Principal explained that this was not the case. A number of colleges were now providing a range of qualifications to suit student needs.

The Chair thanked the Vice Principal for his presentation on ALPs.

61.2015 Amendment to Standards Board Report

The Assistant Principal: Academic explained that the SLT had uncovered a discrepancy in the ALPs scores in a report that had gone to the Standards Board on 22nd September 2015 which would impact on the college's target in respect of achievement by gifted and talented students.

Asked if the target would be adjusted in light of the findings, the Assistant Principal: Academic acknowledged that it would need to be reviewed, and agreed to bring a revised target to the next Standards Board meeting on 22nd February 2016.

SB
(Standards
Board)

62.2015 Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 8th September 2015

The minutes of the meeting were approved.

63.2015 Matters arising from the above minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

There were no matters arising.

64.2015 Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 1st July 2015

The minutes of the meeting were approved.

65.2015 Matters arising from the above minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

- a) **Prevent Strategy – dates for future training sessions and link to e-learning training** (Item 34.2015 from the previous minutes) – the Clerk confirmed that these had been circulated to Directors.
- b) **Learning walks** (Item 39.2015 from the previous minutes) – Directors discussed the value of learning walks and agreed that they be introduced as part of the induction for new directors. However, it was felt that further participation in learning walks was outside the remit of a director's role. Directors who felt that they wanted to take part in a learning walk in order to gain an insight into college activities were asked to contact the Clerk in order to take part in one next term; this would be done in consultation with the Principal.
- c) **Amendment to the Statement of Public Value** (Item 29.2015 from the previous minutes) – Directors received the revised Statement of Public Value (Paper 9.3). Asked what 'photo voltaics' were (in Section 3 ii, Pollution Reduction), the Vice Principal explained this was a system of converting solar energy into usable power for the college. Asked what 'grey water' was (also in Section 3 ii of the statement), the Vice Principal explained that this was the collection and use of rain water.
- d) **Wider circulation of list of college links with employment agencies to students** (Item 32.2015 from the previous minutes) – the Deputy Principal explained that the information was going through a final check before being made available.
- e) **Student awards** (Item 44.2015c from the previous minutes) – the Deputy Principal reported that college students had achieved the BTEC Student of the Year award for 2014-15 and the National Student of the Year Maths Prize. A secondary school student, now studying at the college, had achieved the Blackpool Evening Gazette Education Award. In addition Laura McGuirk had won a Radio Wave staff award and Pete Wright, the Times Educational Supplement Further Education Award Teacher of the Year.

Directors asked that their congratulations be passed on to all prize winners.

Directors

66.2015 Report on Chair's Action since the previous meeting

The Chair reported that he had recently attended a number of conferences on area based reviews (ABRs). An announcement on 3rd December 2015 had identified that ABRs in Lancashire would be carried out across two separate areas; 'Lancashire Coastal' beginning in September 2016 as part of Wave 4 and 'Lancashire Pennine' beginning in April 2016 as part of Wave 3.

The budget cuts expected as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review had not been as severe as predicted and the college was likely to retain c£550k of core funding it had expected to lose for at least another year.

The Review also highlighted the fact that sixth form colleges could now convert to academy status, but only in response to an ABR recommendation and with the agreement of the Regional Schools Commissioner. The Chair pointed out that, although academies could regain VAT, which was regarded as a key benefit of converting, they were not allowed to borrow money, and that colleges with outstanding loans and those that were looking to convert purely to regain VAT were unlikely to be allowed to do so.

The Sixth Form College Commissioner had confirmed that the Government was looking to strengthen the sector, which was a positive message for the college.

67.2015 Principal's Report

Directors received the Principal's Report (Paper 11.1).

The Deputy Principal reported that the college was short of its recruitment target by 51 students, which would impact on funding next year.

In terms of staff upgrades, 84 out of 86 support staff had been successful. A 0.9% pay award, back dated to 1st September 2015 had been agreed for all support staff. 7 out of 11 teaching staff who had requested a pay upgrade had also been successful.

In response to a recommendation from Ofsted, following a letter asking for an update on strategies in place to address a dip in performance identified in the data for 2013-14, the college was taking part in further training on GCSE provision.

Questions from Directors about the Principal's Report

In response to a question about income and expenditure reports, the Deputy Principal confirmed that these had been submitted to the Administration and Finance Committee for scrutiny.

In response to a question about student recruitment for next year, the Deputy Principal confirmed that there had been 638 applications as at 17th November 2015.

67.2015 D1 Resolved: to accept the Principal's Report December 2015.

68.2015 Attendance and Retention Report

The Assistant Principal: Academic provided responses to questions from Directors on the report (Paper 12.1).

68.2015 Questions from Directors

In response to a question about whether the college compared its performance on attendance and retention with that of other colleges, the Assistant Principal: Academic confirmed that benchmarking data was used to assess performance and to help set targets in these areas. The Deputy Principal explained that it was not always easy to compare performance as some organisations used different criteria for what constitutes absence and persistent absence.

Asked about the reasons for changes to the pastoral system, i.e. the move to dedicated pastoral mentors, the Assistant Principal: Academic explained that this had been in response to student feedback which had identified access to pastoral care mentors as an issue. In the new system, pastoral mentors did not have teaching responsibilities so were free to support more students. Challenged further about whether there was evidence that the new system was more effective than the previous one, the Deputy Principal explained that the current system had been phased in and trialled with Upper 6th students initially and attendance had improved as a result. Feedback from staff and students had confirmed that the new approach was working well.

The Upper 6th Student Director also confirmed that, having experienced both systems, the new one was more efficient and accessible.

68.2015 D1 Resolved: to receive and note the Attendance and Retention Report.

69.2015 Compliments, Concerns and Complaints Report

The Deputy Principal answered questions on the Report (Paper 13.1)

Questions from Directors

In response to a question about the numbers of compliments, concerns and complaints received, the Deputy Principal acknowledged that there had been a decrease in all three compared to the previous year. SLT would be looking at how to encourage greater feedback, and the range of options for collecting data, at its next meeting.

Asked if the procedures for providing feedback had changed and if this might have affected the numbers of responses, the Deputy Principal confirmed that it had not. The Vice Principal pointed out that changes to staffing might have impacted on the amount of feedback collected.

In response to an observation from a Director, the Deputy Principal agreed to amend the dates in the tables at Items 2.2 and 4.2 of the report.

69.2015 D1 Resolved: to accept the Report on Compliments, Complaints and Comments 2014-15.

GY

70.2015

College Action Plan

The Deputy Principal responded to questions from Directors on the College Action Plan (Paper 14.1).

Questions from Directors

Asked about the 'Red' rated actions, the Deputy Principal confirmed that there was one under the 4.4 theme (ensure all staff have access to continuing professional development) but the majority were 'Green' or 'Amber'.

In response to a concern about the current 'working at' grade for upper high level BTEC students which was at 36% compared to a target of 80%, the Assistant Principal: Vocational explained that this was largely to do with the way in which the BTECs were assessed. In the initial BTEC assessments, students had been given the opportunity to address more pass criteria than merit and distinction criteria; as the year progresses students are assessed on more merit and distinction criteria. Staff were confident that the proportion of upper high grades will increase. In response to a request from Directors, the Assistant Principal: Vocational agreed to include explanations of these kinds of anomalies in future reports.

70.2015 D1 Resolved: to approve the College Action Plan

71.2015

College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2015-16

The Deputy Principal answered questions on the College SAR for 2015-16 (Paper 15.1).

Questions from Directors

Asked about the issues graded as 'Red', the Deputy Principal confirmed that there were concerns in respect of improving A Level student outcomes in Maths and Science and improving the value added of some of the most able students as highlighted on pages 7 and 8 of the report. These items had been brought forward from last year's plan as priority areas for the college.

In response to the college's overall self-assessment rating of 'Good' (from 'Outstanding'), the Deputy Principal explained that SLT felt this was a more accurate reflection of the college's current position, particularly in respect of outcomes for learners and A Level ALPs scores. However, it was felt that strategies were beginning to work and that improvements in both areas were expected.

In response to a question about the outcomes for learners score, the Deputy Principal confirmed that, despite the fact that the college achieved its best ever results in July 2015, SLT had felt satisfied that this theme could only be scored at 2 ('Good') at the moment, predominantly due to improvements needed in value added.

Asked about what the college was doing to address underperformance in some subjects, the Deputy Principal drew Directors' attention to the Quality Improvement Plan on page 57 of the SAR, explaining that the college was looking to eliminate negative value added scores over the year.

Asked when progress against actions would next be assessed, the Deputy Principal explained that a review would take place in January 2016 following the mock exams and completed BTEC assignments. A report on outcomes would be brought to the February meeting of the Standards Board.

In response to a question about the possible correlation between student attendance and the lower performing subjects, the Vice Principal accepted that there might be some across a few of the subjects, including core maths and engineering, but that for level 3 Maths, attendance was the best in the college.

Asked who defined 'high' and 'higher tariff' universities (page 56 of the report), the Deputy Principal explained that the Universities and Colleges Admissions Services (UCAS) agreed the criteria for these. The college was looking to send more students to the Russell Group universities (24 research intensive world class universities). Although there had been an increase in the proportion of students accessing these universities, the numbers were still lower than expected.

In response to a question about whether the list of 'high tariff' universities included specialist elite colleges catering for students reading music, arts and sports subjects, the Deputy Principal confirmed that it did not and explained that these were being added to the next report.

Asked if she felt that downgrading the college from 'Outstanding' to 'Good' might trigger an Ofsted inspection, the Deputy Principal explained that the SAR should reassure Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) that the college has acknowledged where it needs to improve and has developed actions to address this.

The Deputy Principal asked that Directors familiarise themselves with the SAR and the Quality Improvement Plan which was likely to be an area of focus for future Ofsted inspections.

71.2015 D1 Resolved: to approve the Self-Assessment Review and Quality Improvement Plan 2015-2016.

72.2015 Directors' Residential Conference February 2016

Directors considered the programme for last year's residential conference (Paper 16.1) and briefly discussed items for this year's programme. It was agreed that a section on ABR strategies be included and that stakeholder conversations remain as last year. An after dinner speaker was still required and Directors were asked to pass on any suggestions to the Principal.

SLT
Clerk
(Standards
Board
agenda)

All

73.2015	<p>Safeguarding Directors received the minutes of the FCAT Safeguarding Board meeting held on 15th October 2015 (Paper 17.1).</p> <p>The Clerk reported that students from FCAT organisations including the college had attended, or were scheduled to attend, the first part of meetings to provide their perspectives on safeguarding priorities.</p>
<p>Committee Meetings</p>	
74.2015	<p>Administration and Finance Committee meeting held on Tuesday 6th October 2015 The Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee provided a summary of the meeting held on 6th October 2015, highlighting the fact that the Committee Terms of Reference had been amended to remove items identified as management matters and to include annual reviews of the Sustainability Policy, the Health and Safety Policy and the Financial Regulations.</p> <p>One of the committee members queried a question that he had asked at the meeting, which the Clerk agreed to amend in the minutes.</p> <p>The Financial Report for year ending 31st July 2015 and an increase in the level of expenditure to £40k for designated signatories were recommended for approval to the Corporation.</p> <p>74.2015 D1 Resolved: to approve the Financial Report for year ending 31st July 2015.</p> <p>74.2015 D2 Resolved: to approve the increase in level of expenditure to £40k for designated signatories.</p>
75.2015	<p>Administration and Finance Committee meeting held on Thursday 12th November 2015 The Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee provided a summary of the meeting held on 12th November 2015.</p> <p>The Management Accounts for the period ending 30th September 2015 and the Disaster Management Plan were recommended for approval to the Corporation.</p> <p>75.2015 D1 Resolved: to approve the Management Accounts for the period ending 30th September 2015.</p> <p>75.2015 D2 Resolved: to approve the Disaster Management Plan.</p>
76.2015	<p>Audit Committee meeting held on Tuesday 24th November 2015 The Chair of the Audit Committee provided the key points from the meeting held on 24th November 2015 highlighting changes to the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) that all Directors needed to be aware of.</p>

Clerk

Asked if Mazars (external auditor) had provided advice on the revised SORP, the Chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that the Audit and Assurance Partner from Mazars had fed back on the changes at the last meeting and recommended that all Directors be informed of implications.

In response to a question, the Chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that the Head of Internal Audit as mentioned in the Internal Audit Report referred to Lisa Randall, the Head of Internal Audit at RSM (Baker Tilly).

Following a discussion, it was agreed to include a training session on the revised SORP at the residential conference in February 2016.

76.2015 D1 Resolved: to include training on the revised SORP at the residential conference in February 2016.

76.2015 D2 Resolved: to approve the Internal Audit Report 2014-2015.

76.2015 D3 Resolved: to approve the Annual Report of the Audit Committee 2014-2015.

76.2015 D4 Resolved: to approve the External Audit Completion Report ending 31st July 2015

77.2015 Search and Governance Committee meeting held on Monday 28th September 2015

Directors noted the minutes of the meeting held on 28th September 2015 and discussed the recommendations made by the Committee.

In response to a question about the suggested change in quoracy numbers (to two Independent Directors for each of the committees), the Chair of the Corporation assured Directors that the proposal was to meet need rather than to ensure attendance. It was important that the right skills were in place on each of the committees and that independent directors, rather than staff and/or student directors, were involved in making decisions.

77.2015 D1 Resolved: to approve the reduction in numbers of independent Directors on the Corporation by one to nine.

77.2015 D2 Resolved: to approve the amendment to quoracy of committee meetings to two independent Directors.

77.2015 D3 Resolved: to approve the current committee structure and membership.

77.2015 D4 Resolved: to approve the revised Staff and Student Engagement Consultation document.

77.2015 D5 Resolved: to approve the Director Attendance Report 2014-15.

77.2015 D6 Resolved: to approve the Governance Charter.

77.2015 D7 Resolved: to approve the revised Guide to the Governing Body.

77.2015 D8 Resolved: to approve the Standing Orders for 2015-2016.

78.2015 Standards Board meeting held on 25th November 2015

Directors received the minutes of the Standards Board meeting held on 25th November 2015. The Chair of the Corporation remarked on the poor attendance at the meetings and reminded Directors that this was a full governing body meeting to discuss strategic matters and that all Corporation members were expected to attend. Directors confirmed that the meeting dates were now in their diaries.

79.2015 Remuneration Committee meeting held on Monday 7th December 2015

The Chair reported that this meeting had been deferred as the Principal was taking part in an Ofsted inspection as an inspector. A new date would be circulated to members of the Remuneration Committee.

80.2015 Estimation of new risk areas

Directors were reminded that, although the financial situation was better than expected, the college would still need to consider future income opportunities.

81.2015 Thank you and farewell to Mr P Welsh

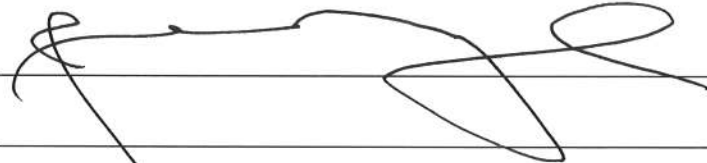
As this was Mr P Welsh's last meeting, the Chair thanked him for his time on the Corporation as a Director and as Chair of both the Administration and Finance Committee and Accommodation Working Party. The Chair also passed on his thanks for the personal support that Mr Welsh had provided him during this time.

Gifts were presented in behalf of the Corporation and Mr Welsh thanked everyone for their good wishes.

82.2015 Date and time of future meetings:

- Residential Conference – Friday/Saturday 5th/6th February 2016, De Vere Hotel, Blackpool.
- Standards Board – Monday 22nd February 2016, 5.15pm, Committee Room, Blackpool Sixth Form College.
- Corporation Meeting – Tuesday 15th March 2016, 5.15pm, Committee Room, Blackpool Sixth Form College.

Signed:



Chair:

Date:

