



MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON

Date: Tuesday 5th May 2015
Venue: Blackpool Sixth Form College
Room: Committee Room
Time: 5.15pm

Present: Mr J Boyle (Chair)
 Dr P Anderton
 Cllr D Clapham
 Mr M Cobandag
 Mr J Corry
 Ms T Fish
 Mr A Goodinson
 Ms J Gray
 Ms W Middlemas
 Ms J Trembles
 Mr N Webster
 Mr N Wilson

Together with: Mr M Hodgkinson (Observer)
 Ms S Benson (Assistant Principal: Academic)
 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 – FCAT)
 Ms K Passant (Additional Inspector for Ofsted – for the first part of the meeting)

Apologies Apologies were received from Mr G Curry and Mr P Welsh.

		Action
20.2015	Preliminaries The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and, particularly Ms Tracey Fish, who had been elected as potential Parent Director and Mr Michael Hodgkinson, who had been elected as Staff Director designate. The new Directors provided a brief resume of their background and experience.	
	20.2015 D1: Resolved: To appoint Ms Fish immediately as Parent Director and Mr Hodgkinson as Staff Director with effect from 1st September 2015.	
21.2015	Declarations of Interest None.	
22.2015	Consideration of any items of urgent business None.	

23.2015 **Presentation on Leadership and Management – an Ofsted perspective**

Ms Kathy Passant, former Principal of Runshaw College and an additional inspector for Ofsted, delivered a presentation on leadership and management from an Ofsted perspective highlighting the way this area would be assessed, the type of meetings that were likely to take place and examples of questions that inspectors might ask during an inspection.

Directors were made aware of the six main areas of interest to inspectors i.e. evidence of an ambitious vision for the College, improved teaching and learning through rigorous performance management, robust self-assessment, successful planning, promotion of equality and diversity and safeguarding of learners. The presentation also provided information on key documents required by inspectors, critical questions for key managers, Directors and students and hints and tips on how to ensure as good an experience as possible from the inspection.

Challenges

Directors voiced a concern that, at the recent Residential Conference, it had been apparent that students were unaware of the term 'study programme', but that this was something that they might get asked about during an inspection. Ms Passant reassured Directors that knowledge of the actual terminology was not important, but that evidence of activities to provide social and personal development and wider learning was, and that students should be able to provide this when asked.

In response to a question about whether or not Ofsted inspectors were allowed to view documents relating to safeguarding cases, Ms Passant confirmed that this was the case. Where possible, student names should be removed from documents but inspectors could be trusted to maintain confidentiality.

In response to a comment about a recent homophobic bullying incident that the College had reported to Blackpool Council, Ms Passant explained that procedures for taking these further were determined by the individual local authority. In theory there was no requirement for the reporting of incidents beyond the age of 16. However, it is the responsibility of each college to provide what they see as appropriate support for every student irrespective of age.

Asked about the schedule of meetings during an Ofsted inspection, Ms Passant explained that the Lead Inspector would usually decide this. Meetings with the Principal would take place at the beginning of the inspection and safeguarding and quality assurance issues were likely to be discussed early on in the process.

Asked about the numbers of Directors that might be required to meet with inspectors, Ms Passant explained that this was usually determined by people's availability. Inspectors would not usually specify which Directors they would want to see, though they would expect to meet with the Chair at some point.

Directors asked if the Ofsted inspection was likely to follow the National College for Teaching and Leadership's self-evaluation tool which had been recently revised in line with the All Party Parliamentary Group's 20 Questions for School Governing Bodies to ask themselves. Ms Passant explained that whilst the information in the self-evaluation tool was relevant, inspectors would be guided in different ways to gather the information they needed.

Asked about the documents that the College would be expected to provide for the inspection, Ms Passant emphasised that there is no prescriptive list of these. It was expected that the College would be able to provide statutory documents, including minutes of meetings on its website. Inspectors would be looking at the impact of good planning and preparation within lesson observations and so would not necessarily require sight of the scheme of work, for example.

Directors discussed the key points raised in the presentation and the importance of good practice in maintaining the College's 'outstanding' grade. It was acknowledged that effective leadership and management was pivotal to the success of performance against the other Ofsted grading elements including outcomes for learners and the quality of teaching and learning. The Principal explained that lesson observation procedures were being amended to better reflect Ofsted inspection requirements. In addition, Ms Passant had agreed to carry out a robust mock Ofsted inspection of leadership and management after half term so that any areas of concern could be identified and addressed. A report on this and issues for Directors would be brought to the next meeting. The Deputy Principal confirmed that she was the College Nominee for Ofsted matters.

GY/ KB
(agenda)

The Chair thanked Ms Passant for her informative presentation and she left the meeting.

Introductions were made for the benefit of the new Directors.

24.2015 Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 24th March 2015

The minutes of the meeting were approved with an amend to Ms Benson's title – to Assistant Principal: Academic (from Director of Learning).

24.2014: D1: Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 24th March 2015 with the amend to the Assistant Principal's title.

25.2015 Matters arising from the meeting not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- a) **Thanks passed on to Ms Bellamy and Mr Brennand** (Item 1.2015 from the previous minutes) – the Chair confirmed that this had been done.

- b) **Additional information on Management Accounts** (Item 14.2015 from the previous minutes) – the Director of Finance and HR confirmed that original amounts allocated against costs when showing increases and decreases will be included in future reports.

26.2015 Chair's Actions

The Chair confirmed that apart from attendance at meetings etc., he had undertaken no Chair's actions.

27.2015 Teaching, Learning and Leadership – Report on Disadvantage Funding

The Deputy Principal spoke to a report which had already been circulated to directors on disadvantage funding (Paper 9.1), highlighting the fact that the gaps in achievement between students in receipt of the funding and those not, were narrowing, though there was still work to do to. The College was focussing on attendance comparisons as well as outcomes data. Upper 6th attendance, in particular, was a concern.

The College was using 'working at' grades of students to assess levels of achievement. This included mock examination results as well as assessment of coursework. It was acknowledged that this was a more accurate method of assessment than predicted data which had been the method used in previous years. The final data capture point would be 8th May 2015 and this should provide a realistic forecast of how students would perform in the summer examinations.

In addition to the £713k in disadvantage funding, the College also received £120k towards support for students with additional learning needs.

Challenges

Asked whether it was possible to draw down further disadvantage funding, the Deputy Principal explained that this was allocated centrally to a formula based on student postcodes, and the College would be unable to influence this further. The £120k provided for additional learning needs was to support just 20 students (£6k per student).

Asked how the student counselling service was linked to the disadvantaged funding stream, the Deputy Principal explained that the College had to identify a proportion of time to reflect the use by students in receipt of the funding.

In response to a question about the new pastoral structure which was currently in development, the Deputy Principal confirmed that this would help to support all students, irrespective of whether or not they were in receipt of disadvantage funding. The Pastoral Leads would be in place by June and the rest of the team by August in readiness for the start of the new academic year.

The Principal explained that the new initiative would allow the College to scrutinise data more thoroughly in order to identify and address particular issues for individual students. The next report on progress of students in receipt of the funding would be brought to the first meeting of the Corporation in the new academic year.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Principal for her informative report.

27.2015 D1: Resolved: to receive the Report on Disadvantage Funding.

28.2015 Principal's Report and performance against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – April 2015

The Principal spoke to her report which had already been circulated (Paper 8.1) and performance against the KPIs (Paper 8.2) and outlined a number of issues for Directors' attention.

a) Student recruitment

Recruitment of students for the next academic year was progressing well. There had been a 10% increase on the previous year in the number attending taster sessions and the College was focussing on getting attendees signed up to start in September 2015.

b) Attendance

The Head of Student Services and the Heads of Department had launched 'Target 96', a strategy aimed at improving attendance. This has been very successful and has positively impacted on improved attendance. The end of year prediction for attendance is 93.5%, a 1% reduction on last year's figure. Persistent absence had reduced to below 8%.

c) Teaching and learning

89% of teachers had been graded 'Good' or better following formal observations. A new lesson observation process, based on Ofsted requirements, would be put in place from September 2015.

d) Staffing matters

Next year, continuous professional development would be carried out across the whole year. The Assistant Principal: Academic would lead on this. The College would be recruiting a new Head of Maths following the resignation of the current incumbent. Membership cards and lanyards would be introduced for all staff, students and Directors.

e) Finance

Staff costs were likely to increase in the shorter term due to the creation of the new pastoral structure. Fixed term contracts for staff currently in these roles were being maintained in the interim. The College may also need to pay a high grade to attract an 'Outstanding' Head of Maths.

f) Estates

Reconfiguration of the Phase 5 build had been required to accommodate the new pastoral team and other logistics issues. A final location for Fylde Coast Academy Trust staff was still to be agreed.

g) Principal's Activities

The Principal had met with Dan Berry, Headteacher at St George's School in Blackpool and had agreed, after referral to the Chair of Directors and the Chair of the Search & Governance Committee, to invite him to consider joining the Corporation as a Director. His presence on the Board would support a robust challenge for the College on teaching and learning matters. The Principal agreed to contact Dan for a confirmed acceptance of the position.

JG

At the recent Fylde Coast Teaching School Alliance (FCTSA) Away Day, the Principal had been asked to take the lead on the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Leadership Development strand. Directors agreed that the improvement of the College should remain the focus for the Principal and that the College needed to work with all Fylde Coast schools irrespective of whether or not they were members of the FCTSA. The Principal explained that she was part of the Blackpool Challenge initiative which was looking to support improvements to education across the whole of the borough and would keep Directors up to date on developments.

Challenges

Asked about whether changes to the staffing structure would lead the College to spending more than the Department for Education (DfE) recommendation of 70% of income, the Principal acknowledged that this was possible but that the costs would even out over future years.

Asked if the current Head of Maths would remain in place until after the summer examinations, the Principal confirmed that this would be the case. However, it was unlikely that there would be time for a structure handover period to the new appointee.

In response to a question about the underperforming courses highlighted in the Principal's Report, the Deputy Principal and the Assistant Principal: Academic confirmed that interventions had proved successful in improving achievement in some of them, notably the AS Maths, Psychology, Geography, Biology and Chemistry courses. However, others needed further support. It was also important at this stage to support students to achieve as well as they realistically could in the summer examinations without putting undue pressure on them to do more.

Asked about how the College was likely to respond to Ofsted requirements, the Principal explained that inspectors would want to know about actions taken and those planned and emphasised that the robustness of the performance management of these would be pivotal to the College's final grade. Inspections would focus on the impact, rather than the delivery, of actions.

In response to a question about curriculum changes, the Principal confirmed that these would be brought to the Student Council for consideration once completed. Students' recommendations had been incorporated into the new timetable. The Assistant Principal: Academic agreed to attend the Student Council meeting to explain developments.

Asked about the risk rating against her report, the Principal confirmed that the previous report had also been rated 'Medium'. The reduction in funding and the potential failure to recruit a new Head of Maths were significant factors in the rating.

Asked about the increase in net borrowings forecasted for the rest of the current year shown in Paper 8.2, the Director of Finance confirmed that this was due to the capital payments to be made on the current building phase and reflected the depletion of cash balances, rather than due to an increase in borrowing.

Asked about whether the operating surplus reforecast would possibly follow the profile exhibited in previous years in which the surplus increased, the Director of Finance advised that apart from certain expenses including the writing down of part of the estate, this would likely be the case.

In response to a question about the move away from mixed courses, the Principal confirmed that this had not been promoted to new applicants. Staff would work with students to identify the best options to them individually, which might result in a mixed programme of academic and vocational qualifications.

Due to confusion about the graph showing value added scores for AS, A2 and BTEC courses, the Deputy Principal agreed to amend this to a more traditional format for the future.

The Chair thanked the Principal for her Report and update on progress against the Key Performance Indicators.

28.2015 D1: Resolved: to receive the Principal's Report and Progress against the Key Performance Indicators.

29.2015 Strategic development

Directors reviewed the Statement of Public Value (paper 10.1). The Principal explained that the changes from the previous year were the addition of paragraphs on employment and health and social benefits. The Statement would form part of the Strategic Plan for the College.

Challenge

Directors suggested that the paragraphs on environmental benefits be revised to include the impacts of the statements in line with the other benefits outlined in the document.

JG

Following a brief discussion, Directors approved the Statement subject to its compliance with the Association of Colleges Code of Good Governance for English Colleges.

29.2015 D1: Resolved: to approve the Statement of Public Value subject to compliance with the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges.

30.2015 Safeguarding
Directors noted the minutes of the Fylde Coast Academy Trust Safeguarding Board meeting held on 16th March 2015 (Paper 11.1).

The Deputy Principal explained that all College staff would be provided with training on the 'Prevent Strategy' (Government strategy to address the threat of terrorism) and the elements which impact on the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable young people.

30.2015 D1: Resolved: to receive the minutes of the Fylde Coast Academy Trust Safeguarding Board meeting held on 16th March 2015.

31.2015 Search and Governance Committee meeting 27th April 2015

Directors noted the minutes of the meeting held on 27th April 2015. The Chair of the Committee provided a summary of the meeting and reported the following matters:

- Following an unsuccessful recruitment exercise, the Committee had still to appoint a Safeguarding Director.
- The Committee had considered the adoption of the Association of Colleges Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and were asking for this to be ratified by the Audit Committee before recommending to the Corporation.
- An email asking for expressions of interest in the positions of Chair and Vice Chair had been circulated. The Clerk agreed to recirculate this.
- A review of the Residential Conference held in February 2015 had taken place (Paper 12.7). Feedback had been mainly positive with further training on Advance Level Performance Systems (ALPs) and Value Added scores identified. The Principal explained that she and the Deputy Principal were scheduled to meet up with Julian Appleyard from Rochdale Sixth Form College to discuss these in more detail.
- A review of the Standing Orders for the College had been deferred until the final number of Directors had been agreed.
- The Committee structure had been revised. As the building strategy was nearing completion, the Accommodation Working Group had been removed from the structure. The Audit Committee had been increased to 4 members to ensure quoracy. Dr Anderton had been appointed to the Audit Committee. Dr Anderton and Ms Middlemas had been appointed to the Remuneration Committee.
- A calendar of meetings for the next academic year had been considered and was recommended for approval by the Corporation.
- A review of the performance of Committee Chairs had been deferred to the next meeting of the Committee pending the return of appraisal forms.

KB (Audit & Corp agendas)

KB

KB (Training Plan)

KB (Search agenda)

KB (Search agenda)

Following a brief discussion, Dr P Anderton volunteered to take over the role of Safeguarding Director, and this was approved by the Corporation.

Challenge

Following a brief discussion on the proposal to reinstate the Strategic Planning and Standards Committee, it was agreed to defer a decision on this until enough time had been given to assess the effectiveness of current arrangements. The Chair reminded Directors that the Corporation had decided to withdraw the committee in 2014 and that additional Corporation meetings had been scheduled each term to discuss strategic issues in order to involve all members of the Board.

31.2015 D1: Resolved: to note the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 27th April 2015.

31.2015 D2: Resolved: to approve the appointment of Dr Phil Anderton to the position of Safeguarding Director.

31.2015 D3: Resolved: to approve the revised Committee restructure for 2015-16.

31.2015 D4: Resolved: to approve the calendar of meetings for 2015-16.

32.2015 Any other business

One of the Student Directors raised the role of the College's Career Academy and the importance of work experience placements for students. Following a brief discussion on the matter, the Principal agreed to provide a full list of links with employment agencies currently enjoyed by the College for the next meeting.

JG

Staff and Student Directors were asked to leave for the next item.

33.2015 Confidential item

This item was deemed confidential and minuted as such.

Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday 1st July 2015 at 5.15pm.

Signed:

Chair:

Date:
