



MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON

Date: Tuesday 24th March 2015
Venue: 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
Mr G Curry
Ms J Gray
Ms W Middlemas
Ms J Trembles
Mr N Webster
Mr P Welsh

Together with: 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)

Apologies Apologies were received from Mr S Brennand, Mr A Goodinson, The Rev Dr R Murphy and Mr N Wilson.

1.2015

Preliminaries

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mr Murat Cobandag, new Student Director, nominated by the Student Council. The Directors noted that Ms E Bradley had stepped down as a student director.

Directors noted the resignation of Ms C Bellamy from the Corporation due to pressure of work and the fact that Mr S Brennand's term of office had come to an end.

Directors asked for their thanks to be passed on to Ms Bellamy and Mr Brennand for their time and commitment to the Corporation.

The Chair handed over to Cllr Clapham, Chair of the Search and Governance Committee for the next item.

The Chair of the Search and Governance Committee proposed the appointment of Dr Phil Anderton to the vacant Director position on the Corporation.

Action

JB/KB

Dr Anderton had the skills currently required by the Corporation and had already been approved by the Search and Governance Committee in readiness for a vacancy.

Directors approved the appointments of Mr Cobandag and Dr Anderton and Dr Anderton was invited to join the meeting. Introductions were made.

1.2015 D1: Resolved: to approve the appointments of Mr Cobandag and Dr P Anderton to the Corporation.

The Chair of the Corporation resumed his position for the rest of the meeting.

2.2015 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3.2015 Consideration of any items of urgent business.

None.

JT joined the meeting.

4.2015 Presentation on Fylde Coast Academy Trust and Fylde Coast Teaching School by John Boyle, Chair of Directors

The Chair delivered a presentation on the history and structure of Fylde Coast Teaching School (FCTS) and Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT).

He explained the legal status of FCTS and FCAT as companies limited by guarantee and the concept of 'Members'. He also described the strategy employed by the College at the time to reduce threats from a) local political uncertainty; b) the likelihood of external Academy chains seeking to gain a foothold in the area with the added threat of new school Sixth Forms; and c) ensuring a continued stream of well educated students applying for the college. Blackpool Sixth Form College (BSFC) and Hodgson Academy (HA) are the primary Members of FCTS which had been set up to improve teaching and learning and the performance of schools across the Fylde Coast area, and Blackpool in particular, where deprivation and social problems had led to lack of aspiration, poor examination results, difficulties in recruiting good teaching staff and poor performing schools.

FCTS was developed to promote system leadership across the Fylde generally, provide staff development and initial teacher training, and to take advantage of opportunities for schools to work together to maximise funding and good practice. This was enabled by the publication of the School's White Paper 'The Importance of Teaching 2010' which advocated the sharing of best practice from 'excellent' institutions. The Directors of FCTS are three directors appointed by each of BSFC and HA plus the chairs of the three Academy Councils.

The College's relationship with Hodgson Academy had developed as each had a vested interest in improving education within the feeder schools. In addition, and due to regulations in place at the time, the College had been unable to apply for teaching school status on its own and had joined with Hodgson (who has similar goals) in order to do so.

FCTS now has 16 schools/academies within its Alliance and provides Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and continual professional development (CPD) opportunities as well as a structured approach to improving leadership, an identified area for improvement across Fylde Coast schools/academies.

FCAT was set up as a multi academy trust (MAT), in liaison with the Department for Education (DfE), to support failing schools in the area. FCTS is the 'sponsor' for FCAT. The Members of FCAT are FCTS, J Boyle as Chair of BSFC, T Nicholson, C McConnachie as Executive Head and Chair respectively of HA. F Greeves was previously a director as Principal of BSFC and as this position is vacant the College Principal, Ms J Gray was proposed for this position. FCAT currently incorporates three academies, Aspire, Unity and Montgomery each with its own academy council of governors. The MAT is now looking to strengthen its establishment by also attracting 'good' and 'excellent' local schools/academies in order to help support further improvements to education and learning across the Fylde Coast.

The Chair explained that he would refer back to his presentation at the end of the meeting under the confidential item at 17.2015.

5.2015 Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 9th December 2014

The minutes of the meeting were approved with an amend to the wording at 77.2014 i.e. 'Governors welcomed **the appointment of Ms Ellie Bradley** as the new Student Governor'.

6.2015 Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- a) **Register of Business Interests** (Item 82.2014 from the previous minutes) – the Clerk confirmed that most of the business interest forms had now been returned and that those outstanding would be chased.
- b) **Appointment of new Safeguarding Director** (Item 89.2014 from the previous minutes) – the Chair of the Search and Governance Committee reported that it had not yet been possible to appoint to the vacancy. The matter would be discussed again at the next meeting of the Committee.
- c) **Responses to homophobic bullying** (Item 91.2014 from the previous minutes) – the Deputy Principal informed Directors that no incidents of homophobic bullying had been reported but that the College was aware of the need to continue monitoring on this. The LGBT (Lesbian, Gay B-Sexual, Transgender) Star Group had been revived to look at issues of concern.

KB
(Search agenda)

7.2015

Chair's Report

The Chair reported that it had been necessary to bypass the Search and Governance Committee in order to bring the approval of the new Director to this meeting. This was done in the knowledge that the candidate had already been approved as a potential Director by the Governing Body.

8.2015

Principal's Report and performance against Key Performance Indicators – February 2015

The Principal provided her first report to the Corporation (Paper 8.1) and highlighted the following issues:

a) Recruitment

There had been a fall in recruitment of students to date (4% lower than the same time last year), due mainly to the demographic decline in the area. The Principal explained that she had met with a number of feeder schools, including Aspire Academy and Montgomery High School, to promote recruitment. She was also a member of the Fleetwood Education Trust and so in a position to influence recruitment from Fleetwood schools.

b) Attendance

Attendance levels were the same as the previous year. The College had focussed on persistent absence and this had reduced to below the end of year target. The Principal explained the intention to introduce a new single pastoral model as discussed at the recent conference, and that interviews for the mentor role were underway. The model had proved to be very successful in improving attendance and raising achievement in other organisations.

c) Achievement

Achievement levels remained good, but there were some subject areas that were causing concern, including Maths. The College was focussing on a 'back to basics' approach where appropriate, and actions were in place to address specific issues.

d) Destination data

Higher education applications were slightly lower than the previous year but it was noticeable that more students were choosing to take up apprenticeships and meaningful work opportunities. A significant number of these were also offering opportunities to take further work based qualifications as part of the contracts. The number of 'Not in education, employment or training' (NEET) was virtually nil.

e) Teaching and Learning

There had been fewer lesson observations than the previous year but these had been more rigorous and targeted to areas of concern. The focus was on the impact on the learning outcomes from each lesson rather than the quality of the teaching in isolation. A consultant had been employed to look at a more effective way of carrying out lesson observations and improving associated documentation in readiness for September 2015.

f) Estates

The Vice Principal provided a brief summary on the Phase 5 developments which were progressing well to time and on budget. A final handover in August 2015 was expected. The College was reviewing the internal layout of the new build in order to maximise space for current needs.

g) Staffing

A number of staffing matters were reported. Directors were made aware, particularly, of the sad death of Jill Thackray from Additional Learning Support, after a short illness.

The Principal had been appointed as an Ofsted Inspector and had been elected as the North West representative on the Association of Colleges' (AoC) for sixth form colleges.

h) Strategic Plans

Directors noted the strategic plans included in the Report which were Red, Amber and Green (RAG) rated, and the key focus on improving value added scores.

Challenges

In response to a question about the decline in student numbers, the Principal confirmed that the percentage of total market share had also reduced and that this would impact on future outcomes.

Asked about where, specifically, achievement levels were falling, the Principal explained that, for some subjects, higher grades and added value scores were giving cause for concern and the reasons for this were being investigated. The Deputy Principal reported that, from January 2015, the College is using 'working at' rather than 'predicted' student grades in order to calculate more accurate final grades.

Asked if students deciding to take a 'gap year' impacted on (NEET) figures, the Deputy Principal confirmed that this was not the case, but that the College had an obligation to follow up and report on the final destinations for gap year students.

In response to a question about plans in place to improve offers for Gifted and Talented students, the Principal explained that, following feedback from students at the recent conference, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) had agreed to review the offer for all students. This would include withdrawing subjects no longer appropriate, and providing additional study opportunities and more effective combinations for others.

In response to concern raised about the fall in student applications, the Deputy Principal reported that there had been a recent upturn in these. The School Liaison Team was working with feeder schools to help students with their applications and to carry out interviews. Focus groups with Gifted and Talented students had been established to identify curriculum and support requirements and work to improve marketing through the press, social media and on the College website was being carried out.

The demographic dip in terms of potential student numbers was a cause for concern and discussions with the Finance Team in respect of the implications of this had taken place.

The Director of Finance and HR confirmed that for the 2015/16 academic year, the College would lose c£90k as a result of the estimated drop in numbers. The following year, the College would lose further funding in light of changes to the Devolved Capital Formula and changes to the teacher pension rates. The College was aware of these and work was in hand to make savings and maximise funding strategies.

Asked about what the College was doing to close the gap in terms of AS and A2 level achievement, the Director of Learning explained that the SLT was looking closely at the mixed curriculum and where this could be adjusted to better support students.

Asked if there had been any issues in the Phase 4 development left by the original contractors, who had since ceased trading, the Vice Principal reported that there had been a few problems which the College was paying to put right but that this was being deducted from the amount the College owed to the failed company with full agreement from the Receivers. In addition, a Performance Bond was in place. Therefore the College was not at any financial risk nor would it incur any extra cost.

In response to a question about the planned staff dining facility as part of the Phase 5 developments, the Vice Principal explained that this was a strategic move to provide a central area for all staff in order to improve inter departmental relationships as well as physical space. Currently, staff were fragmented across the whole College and some subject areas were isolated from the main area.

It was noted that a significant number of students taking both A Levels and BTec qualifications struggled with A Level examinations and the College was looking at how they could be better supported to make the right subject choices initially and focus on what is really important in order for them to succeed.

Asked about support in place for teaching staff requiring improvement, the Director of Learning confirmed that those that had been identified had been provided with support plans.

Directors thanked the Principal for her report.

9.2015 Teaching, Learning and Leadership

Directors noted and approved the Destinations Report (Paper 9.1) which provided a detailed explanation of numbers of students enrolling at higher education institutions and taking up employment opportunities/apprenticeships.

9.2015 D1: Resolved: to receive and approve the Destinations Report.

10.2015 Strategic Development

Directors noted and approved the Five Year Vision for the College revised in light of feedback from the recent conference (Paper 10.1).

10.2015 D1: Resolved: to receive and approve the revised Five Year Vision for the College.

11.2015 Safeguarding

Directors received and noted the minutes of the meeting of the FCAT Safeguarding Board held on 9th February 2015 (Paper 11.1).

The Deputy Principal explained that Level 3 safeguarding refresher training had been delivered to College and FCAT colleagues earlier in the month. Six College staff were now trained to Level 3. Training on the Prevent Strategy (aimed at preventing radicalisation of young people) would be scheduled later in the year.

The Chair of the FCAT Safeguarding Board had asked the Deputy Principal to join the Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) as a college representative, but this had not been possible due to lack of capacity. She would, however, be attending the twilight meetings that had been scheduled and would report back on these as required.

Challenges

In response to a question about the usefulness of the FCAT Safeguarding Board, the Deputy Principal confirmed that the meetings were highly effective and an important forum for the College. Representatives from each organisation on the Board were working together on joint projects and developing consistent processes. The meetings were also an opportunity to discuss difficult safeguarding cases in a safe environment and consider learning points for future reference.

In response to a comment about the fact that, although considered good practice, there is no legal requirement for organisations to obtain Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance from those staff appointed prior to the introduction of the checks, the Deputy Principal confirmed that this was the case. However, the College, and FCAT organisations did carry out checks on all staff and this was explicitly referenced in the safeguarding policy.

In response to a comment in the safeguarding section of the Principal's Report, the Deputy Principal confirmed that there had only been 2 cases of gross misconduct by students this year, compared to 10 at the same time last year. However, the College would remain vigilant and ensure that reporting mechanisms remained robust and consistent.

11.2015 D1: Resolved: to receive and the minutes of the meeting of the Fylde Coast Academy Trust Safeguarding Board for 9th February 2015.

Committee Meetings

12.2015 **Audit Committee**

The Chair of the Audit Committee provided a brief summary of the meeting held on 26th February 2015. The Chair praised the work of the Finance and Student Liaison Teams in relation to the Budget Setting and Student Journey Reports (Papers 12.2a and 12.2b) and asked for thanks to be passed on to staff.

12.2015 D1: Resolved: to receive the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 26th February 2015.

12.2015 D2: Resolved: to approve the Budget Setting and Monitoring Report for February 2015.

12.2015 D3: Resolved: to approve the Report on the Student Journey to the end of Term 1.

12.2015 D4: Resolved: to approve the Internal Audit Report Number 1.

13.2015 **Search and Governance Committee**

The Chair of the Search and Governance Committee reported back on the key points from the meeting held on 19th January 2015.

Directors noted the change in terminology from 'Governor' to 'Director' agreed at the meeting and the work in progress to fill vacancies on the Corporation, including that of the Safeguarding Director.

Elections for a new Parent Director and processes for appointing a teaching Staff Director were underway.

The results of a skills audit completed by Directors at the recent conference would be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee. The Committee would also need to identify a Vice Chair following the resignation of Ms Bellamy, and to consider a replacement Chair of the Corporation when Mr Boyle's term of office came to an end in June 2015.

13.2015 D1: Resolved: to receive the minutes of the Search and Governance Committee meeting held on 19th January 2015.

14.2015 **Administration and Finance Committee**

Directors noted that the meeting of the Committee scheduled to take place on 3rd March 2015 had not taken place due to it being inquorate. The next meeting is scheduled for June 2015.

The Director of Finance and HR presented the Management Accounts for the period ending 31st January 2015 (Paper 14.2b) highlighting the minor changes since the budget had been set.

KB
(Search
agenda)

Challenges

In response to a request from Directors, the Director of Finance and HR agreed to include information on the original amounts allocated against costs when showing increases and decreases in future reports.

Asked about the 'Provisions' under the Current Assets heading in the balance sheet on page 21 of the report, the Director of Finance and HR explained that these indicated the capital grants received by the College.

The Chair thanked the Director of Finance and HR for her report.

14.2015 D1: Resolved: to approve the Management Accounts to 31st January 2015 and the changes to the budget as set out in the report.

15.2015 Governance Self-Assessment Committee

Directors received the minutes of the Governance Self-Assessment Committee meeting held on 1st December 2014,

15.2015 D1: Resolved: to receive the minutes of the Governance Self-Assessment Committee meeting held on 1st December 2014.

16.2015 Any other business

None.

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

17.2015 Confidential item.

This item was minuted as confidential.

18.2015 Estimation of new risk areas identified during the meeting

None.

19.2015 Date and time of next meeting

Day: Tuesday

Date: 5th May 2015

Time: 17:15hrs

Venue: Committee Room

Signed:

Chair:

Date:

AP