



MINUTES OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE OF THE CORPORATION OF BLACKPOOL SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Date: Tuesday 4th October 2011
Venue: Sixth Form College
Room: Committee Room
Time: 1715hrs - 1915hrs

Present: Mr R Weaver (Chair)
Mr S Brennand
Mr G Curry
Miss K Edwards
Mr A Goodinson
Ms F Greeves
Dr D Sanders
Ms K Talboys

Mrs Lorraine Atkinson (Head of Business & IT for the presentation)
Mr J Boyle (Observer)
Ms K Kirkwood (Deputy Principal)
Mrs J A Trainor (Assistant Clerk to the Corporation)
Dr J Burgess (Clerk to the Corporation)

32.2011	Preliminaries and apologies for absence The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, introduced Mrs Lorraine Atkinson and noted the apologies of Dr A Mohan. Congratulations were extended to Montgomery School on outcome of their recent Ofsted inspection.	Action
33.2011	Declaration of Interest None.	
34.2011	Consideration of any items of urgent business The Principal requested the help of a governor to participate in the forthcoming self-assessment validation panels on the 29 th and 30 th November. The Chair urged members to review their availability, as the process was both enlightening and beneficial.	Members To check availability
35.2011	Curriculum area presentation – Business & IT Mrs Lorraine Atkinson provided Governors with an informative overview of Business & IT and the numbers of students involved in this area of the College. She illustrated the Value Statement of the Department, “Everyone is an individual – an exception to be valued”, through mini-case studies of three students, with differing strengths and abilities, who had progressed successfully through one of the three major study routes.	

During discussion Mrs Atkinson revealed that the outstanding care and attention given to all students by staff within the Department was the key to enabling young people to reach their potential. She also explained the key features of the Careers Academy and how her team strive to raise aspirations of younger students during their visits to local schools. Governors warmly thanked Mrs Atkinson for her presentation and wished her and the Department well in the future.

Mrs Atkinson left the meeting

36.2011 Minutes of the meeting held on 14th June 2011.

(Paper A)

36.2011 D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be **approved**.

37.2011 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 14th June 2011

Strategic Development Plan 2011 - 2012

(Paper B)

Governors reviewed the final version of the Strategic Development Plan 2011 – 2012. It was confirmed that the printed version is primarily an internal document for staff, and is not in the public domain.

37.2011 D1 Resolved: that the **Strategic Development Plan 2011 – 2012 be received**.

38.2011 Examination Results 2011

(Paper C)

The Clerk apologised for the incorrect assembly and poor readability of the results tables and circulated improved copies.

On the positive side, the Principal stated that the overall A level pass results, excluding General Studies, was 98%, which was in line with last year's result and the national pass rate of 97.8%. Pleasingly, high-grade passes had improved significantly to 51.2% just slightly below the national average of 52.6%. There was also a sharp improvement in the number of students achieving an A*, this year 125 (97 last year) now just 1% below the national average. The number of College subjects securing 100% pass rate improved from 18 to 23. The Arts subjects again did exceptionally well and improvements in high grades were noted in Classical Civilisation, History, German and Economics. BTEC results were very strong at all levels.

The areas for improvement at A level include General Studies, where there was a 2.5% decline, together with Computing, ICT, Biology and Physics.

There have been a significant number of under-performing AS students, principally in four or five subject areas, which has reduced the College's overall AS level pass rate by 2.1% to 85.5% (the national average is 88.2%).

It was confirmed that following the January Module results, a number of improvement strategies were implemented for September 2011 and have continued, particularly in Maths and Chemistry, including staffing changes, personal support planning, team working and the introduction of a specialist focus and pedagogy changes including a move to more collaborative learning.

Governors sought further details and re-assurance that improvements in results would be achieved and wondered if a presentation from the under-performing areas would be timely. The Deputy Principal outlined a number of curriculum changes, the introduction of mock examinations, the encouragement of staff to become External Examiners, the provision of external support to the Heads, the greater staff ownership of student achievement data and the close monitoring of the staff concerned. She felt the urgency of change was now recognised by the teachers. It was noted that the problems in Maths were evident in the secondary school sector and, therefore, a collaborative approach might be a solution. The Student Governor observed that there was now a stricter and more focused approach evident in Maths.

38.2011 D1 Resolved: that the **Examination Results 2011 be received.**

39.2011 Value Added Report 2011
(Paper D)

The Principal drew attention to the fact that the College's headline value added scores were very good overall, at 3 for A level (top 25% nationally), 2 for AS level (top 10% nationally) and 2 for BTEC Year 2 results (top 10% nationally). Governors reviewed the individual subject analysis and particularly noted the "blue" subjects, the poorer performing areas, but also recognised the excellent achievement on the BTEC programmes.

39.2011 D1 Resolved: that the **Value Added Report 2011 be received.**

40.2011 Official Headline Success Rates 2011

The Principal tabled a report illustrating the performance of the College in overall retention, achievement and success rates. She expressed disappointment at the slippage of the headline success rate to 85.21% from 86.46% last year. She re-stated her ambition to move this to 90%.

40.2011 D1 Resolved: that the **Official Headline Success Rates Report 2011 be received.**

41.2011 Review of the international Baccalaureate Report
(Paper E)

The Clerk advised Governors that as this Report was a full, detailed and comprehensive document, highlighting the inadequate performances of identifiable post holders and containing some commercially sensitive financial information, it should be treated as Confidential.

The Deputy Principal acknowledged that the management team were devastated when the results of the College's first cohort of IB students were published. The Chair of the Corporation was immediately alerted and a major review of all aspects of the programme initiated. Only four students successfully achieved the full Diploma, with nine of the twelve students under-achieving in their predicted points score. Upset students and parents had shared their concerns with the Principal, Deputy Principal or Head of Student Services. Every effort was extended to assist each of the twelve students to either secure a university place or undertake further studies at College and currently nine students are pursuing an undergraduate course.

The Deputy Principal was concerned for Governors to recognise the many good areas in planning, training and delivery of the programme before naturally focusing on the errors made in curriculum design and implementation; the inadequacies in not securing best practice advice; some lack of attention by managers and the mistakes made at the time of examinations. The Report and the subsequent actions and outcomes addressed the shortcomings of the College. However, the Principal observed that other evidence, including attendance records and emails from IB students, indicated some student accountability for the results.

Governors noted the extensive, professional and rigorous approach of the review and the very robust nature of management actions to ensure that the current IB students are both protected and supported in their final year. However, they sought assurances that the lessons learnt and the resultant staff changes, the re-assignment of responsibilities and the support plans will ensure a radically different set of result in 2012. The Principal and Deputy Principal stated that they believed the actions taken and monitoring arrangements now in place have already secured a higher quality of programme and the subsequent half-termly monitoring will ensure that this continues.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Principal for the Report, noting its depth and thoroughness and that her frankness and clarity as to the reasons for the IB outcomes were both remarkable and brave and, in so doing, enabled the Committee to have full confidence in the Report and its conclusions.

41.2011 D1 Resolved: that **Review of the International Baccalaureate Report be received.**

41.2011 D2 Resolved: that **Governors acknowledge and fully support the actions taken by the Senior Management detailed in the Review of the International Baccalaureate Report and feel those actions were wholly appropriate and sufficient.**

- 42.2011 Lesson Observations Summary Report 2010 - 2011**
(Paper F)
The Principal introduced the table of outcomes that featured both management observations and those undertaken as part of internal inspections. Governors welcomed the report but questioned the low number of outstanding and good judgements achieved in the 191 reported observations.
- The Deputy Principal acknowledged that the College was deliberately tough on observation grading but believed that there was too much teacher driven didactic practice. The observation programme for the current year had started earlier than usual and she was hopeful of an improved final profile. The Chair noted the correlation of lesson observation scores to the previously discussed Results Report.
- 42.2011 D1 Resolved: that Lesson Observations Summary Report 2010 – 2011 be received.**
- 43.2011 Annual Review of Complaints and Compliments 2010 - 2011**
(Paper G)
Governors carefully reviewed the details of the 45 formal complaints received during the year, noting that all but one had been concluded and achieved a satisfactory outcome. The process had undergone external review during the year and was considered a notable strength of the College. Discussion regarding student road safety provided assurance that the College staff were taking all reasonable actions in the face of some difficulties with Lancashire County Council planning officials. Governors congratulated the College and students on the Compliments received.
- 43.2011 D1 Resolved: that the Annual Review of Complaints and Compliments 2010 – 2011 be received.**
- 44.2011 Teaching Schools Initiative**
The Principal provided a tabled written report of the background of the Teaching School with Hodgson Academy and the current situation, which was evolving very quickly. Governors welcomed the Report and the opportunity to discuss the benefits, sharing of joint services and numerous opportunities. Specifically, they urged the College to progress the Continuous Professional Development route of a practice based Masters Degree with Edge Hill University.
- 44.2011 D1 Resolved: that the Teaching Schools Initiative Report be received.**
- 44.2011 D2 Resolved: that full support is extended to the three or more teachers selected for leader training.**
- 44.2011 D3 Resolved: that support is given to exploring the most appropriate and beneficial business model for the Teaching School.**

44.2011 D4 Resolved: that the present over-arching governance arrangements, outlined in the Report, are welcomed and supported until a more formal model is adopted.

45.2011 Annual Review of the Committee Performance Indicators 2010 -11

(Paper H)

Governors reviewed the key responsibilities of the Committee against the reported activities and outcomes. They were content to confirm the continuation of the same PIs for the current year.

45.2011 D1 Resolved: that the Annual Review of the Committee Performance Indicators 2010 -11 be received.

45.2011 D2 Resolved: that the Performance Indicators for 2011 – 12 be continued from the previous year.

46.2011 Any other business – Collegiate High School update

The Principal informed Governors that the 2011 results for Collegiate High School showed a very slight decline in numbers achieving 5 GCSE A* - C at 44% in comparison to 45% in the previous year. However, there were no exclusions. The new Senior Team are in place and looking forward to welcoming an Ofsted Inspection over the next two days.

47.2011 Estimation of Risk

Governors noted the increased reputational risk arising from the results of the International Baccalaureate along with those of Maths and Chemistry.

48.2011 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee was confirmed as **Tuesday 29th November 2011 @1715hrs.**

Members
Note

The Chair thanked members for their support, attendance and contributions and closed the meeting.

Signed:.....

Name:.....

Date:.....