



MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 9th JULY 2013

Date: Tuesday 9th July 2013
Venue: Sixth Form College
Room: Committee Room
Time: 1700hrs - 1940hrs

Present: Mr J Boyle (Chair)
Mrs C Bellamy
Mr S Brennand
Mr G Canning
Cllr D Clapham
Mr J Corry
Mr G Curry
Mr S Davies (late arrival)
Mr A Goodinson
Ms F Greeves
Mr H Heath
Mr S Sheard
Ms K Talboys
Ms J Trembles
Mr N Webster
Mr P Welsh

Together with: Mr J Kewin (Presentation)
Mrs A Pickup (Director of Finance & Personnel)
Ms G Yeadon (Deputy Principal)
Dr J Burgess (Clerk to the Corporation)
Mrs J A Trainor (Assistant to the Clerk to the Corporation)

- | | | Action |
|----------------|--|--------|
| 21.2013 | Preliminaries
The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and formally introduced Mr James Kewin, Deputy Chief Executive of the Sixth Form Colleges Association. Apologies were received from Rev Dr R Murphy, Dr D Sanders and Mr R Weaver. It was with regret that members were informed that Ms Harrison had resigned from the Board the previous day. | |
| 22.2013 | Declaration of Interest
The Principal drew attention to her role as a Governor at Collegiate High School, Director of the Teaching School and Fylde Coast Academy Trust. Mr Boyle drew attention to his interest in agenda item 18 and noted his role as Chair of the Collegiate Trust Board, Director of the Teaching School and Director of the Fylde Coast Academy Trust. | |
| 23.2013 | Consideration of any items of urgent business
None. | |

24.2013 Briefing on developments and challenges within the Sixth Form College Sector by Mr James Kewin, Sixth Form Colleges Association Deputy Chief Executive

In his opening remarks, Mr Kewin informed Governors of the scope and size of the English College Sixth Form sector and emphasised the remarkable success story of this high performing part of the educational world. He highlighted higher attainment, success rates and value added scores above those in any other part of the post 16 provision. College Sixth Forms currently contribute to 14% of entrants to higher education institutions and Ofsted rated over 80% of providers as good or outstanding, which is a significantly better outcome than any other segment of the sector.

However, the significant challenges facing Sixth Form Colleges were discussed at some length over five broad areas;

- Comprehensive and radical curriculum reforms,
- Intense competition from a proliferation of new providers during a period of demographic downturn,
- More rigorous and demanding Ofsted inspections,
- Increasingly difficult industrial Relations climate due to widening pay disparities between teaching staff in schools and sixth forms,
- Significant and disproportionate funding cuts on top of a range of earlier harsh reductions and equalities.

The immediate future appeared to offer little relief to college leaders with continued uncertainties particularly beyond 2015/16. Governors were urged to concentrate on enhancing quality, to keep focused to an agreed core mission and to continue to build upon partnership and collaborative working. It was critical for colleges to understand their audience, to find new ways of working with both partners and new providers. The Association was committed to strengthening the national brand and was constructively engaging with Government in order to move Sixth Forms from the margins to the mainstream of national educational policy.

Governors discussed the opportunities of the pupil premium and the possible VAT equalisation campaign but they were advised that a number of new post 16 initiatives emerging from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills were not available to sixth form colleges. Finally, the inherent tensions within a national pay bargaining system were explored in the context of locally securing, retaining and developing talented teachers.

The Chair thanked Mr Kewin for travelling from London to brief Governors in such a succinct and informed manner.

Mr Kewin left the meeting

**25.2013 Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on the 26th March 2013
(Paper A)**

The Deputy Principal noted a correction in 9.2013 from “retention” to “progress” in respect of the ipad scheme. She outlined some qualitative evidence to support the positive aspects of the scheme.

25.2013 D1 Resolved: that, subject to the correction above, the Minutes be approved

26.2013 Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 26th March 2013 not appearing elsewhere on the agenda
None

27.2013 Report on Chair’s Action
The Chair reported that whilst he had not taken any significant actions since the last meeting, he had attended a number of regional Association of Colleges’ meetings, a Sixth Form College Association seminar on “Risks and Revising Instruments and Articles” as well as joining part of their National Annual Conference in Nottingham. He had laid the foundation for a potential governance benchmarking exercise with the Chair, Principal and Clerk of Priestley College Warrington. In addition, work associated with the Teaching School and Multi-Academy Trust continued a pace.

28.2013 Principal’s Report – Summer 2013
(Paper B)
Student Retention
Student Retention overall is marginally lower than last year, in part due to a fall in Upper Sixth retention. On a positive note, Lower Sixth retention is slightly higher which should improve progression to the Upper Sixth next year.

Student Attendance
The College achieved an overall student attendance, as at the end of May 2013, of 92.6% against a target of 93%. The attendance reward scheme had contributed to an improving situation and there is a welcome decline in the number and proportion of persistent absentees.

Lesson Observations
There is an improved lesson observation profile with nearly 75% of all lessons receiving a good or outstanding grade in contrast to 71% in the previous year. The focus in the next academic year will be to improve the quality of lessons in additional studies and personal tutor sessions.

Study Programme Reforms
The Principal outlined the rationale of the Department of Education’s reforms and the new requirement for full-time students to have completed 540 hours or more of evidenced learning within the year.

Progression Coordinators
The College would be appointing 4 Progression Coordinators to assume the tutoring responsibility over the 600 Upper Sixth students. This is designed to facilitate more individualised careers and HE advice and provide an enhanced attendance mentoring of the second year students.

New Leadership arrangements

After a long and very successful association with the College, Mr Andrew Boden is leaving to become a Deputy Principal at Sir John Deane's College. The Principal was pleased to announce that Ms Stephanie Benson, currently Head of Social Sciences, has been promoted to the post of Director of Learning, whilst Ms Helen Dougall will assume the role of Head of an enlarged Social Sciences Department, initially for a one-year period. Governors placed on record their sincere thanks to Andrew for his dedication and hard work and wished him every success in his new appointment.

The Fylde Coast Teaching School Ltd Update - Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT)

The Principal advised that the academisation process of Unity College is progressing well and benefitting from the professional support from Appleyards and the appointment of an experienced Head and National Leader of Education to the role of Principal. The Development Plan 2013/14 for Unity Academy was tabled for information.

FCAT will be bidding to sponsor the Collegiate/Bispham School later in the week.

28.2013 D1 Resolved: that the Principal's Report be received

29.2013 Key Performance Indicators – June 2013 (Paper C)

Governors scrutinised the 12 key performance indicators and discussed specific areas of under-achievement. They noted the significant increase in applications to join the College at this stage of the year and hoped that these would be converted to Lower Sixth students during the summer.

29.2013 D1 Resolved: that the KPI June 2013 Report be received

30.2013 Student Governor Report June 2013 (Paper D)

Mr Harry Heath introduced a detailed and comprehensive review of the year from the students' perspective and highlighted the work of the Students' Council and noted the success of the Attendance Reward Scheme. The Chair warmly thanked Harry for the Report and his personal final message at the end of the Report.

30.2013 D1 Resolved: that Report by the Student Governor on the College 2013 be received

31.2013 The Governance Perspective on the Ofsted Inspection Process (Paper E)

This briefing document informed Governors of Ofsted's 2012 Common Inspection Framework with its focus on judging leadership & management upon its success in improving the outcomes and teaching, learning & assessment for all learners. It highlighted governor involvement in the inspection process and clarified the key Ofsted questions for governors.

The characteristics of governors in an outstanding college were illustrated with selected quotations from recently published reports. The Chair observed that from his research into Ofsted Reports, judgements on Teaching, Learning & Assessment and the impact of effective governance went together. It was not possible to over-emphasise the importance of outstanding governance in setting the culture and priorities of a college.

The Principal advised that Ofsted would be keen to identify effective Performance Management for teachers which drilled down to subject level assessments.

31.2013 D1 Resolved: that the Governance Perspective on the Ofsted Inspection Process be received

Mr Brennand left the meeting

32.2013 Minutes of the Accommodation Working Party held on 25th April 2013 and the 8th July 2013

(Papers H & I)

Mr Welsh, Chair of the Working Party, advised Governors that the outcome of the bid to the Education Funding Agency to undertake Phase 4 of the property re-development strategy was only £422k against a project estimated to cost £2.1m. However, with the utilisation of the £500k capital reserve and up to £300k from revenue funds it was agreed in April 2013 to seek tenders from 5 contractors on the basis of three options:

1. Full scheme for the 3 storey building, including the enabling works.
2. A completed ground floor, including enabling works, but with a first and second floor shell only.
3. Enabling works to include demolition, services and access road.

Following a rigorous Tender Evaluation process and interviews Globe, a Warrington based company, were ranked 1st in both options. For Option 1 their construction costs were £1,299k (£1,702k total cost including contingency, fees and VAT) and for Option 2 construction costs were £1,151k (£1,519k total cost including contingency, fees and VAT).

At the previous day's Working Party meeting the Director of Finance confirmed that the College could afford to adopt Option 1 (estimated total costs £1,702k) based upon detailed cash projections over the next 3 years and a forecast for the fourth year. She had tabled a summary spreadsheet indicating that the College could manage to avoid using cash reserves up to a £166k deficit.

Governors noted the recommendations of the Working Party and scrutinised tabled drawings of the 3-storey building, which would provide engineering accommodation on the ground floor and up to 8 new classrooms. They questioned managers on the cladding, the rationale for no solar shading on one elevation, sustainability features and the affordability of the project in the light of the removal of income protection in future years.

They were assured by the responses, noting that stunning teaching & learning accommodation does provide the College with a competitive advantage. However, they requested that specialists confirm that the existing site can take the additional utility loads for the new Project.

32.2013 D1 Resolved: that the Minutes of the Accommodation Working Party held on 25th April 2013 and the 8th July 2013 be received

32.2013 D2 Resolved: that, subject to utility load assurances, Globe be approved as the Contractor for Option 1 of the Phase 4 Protect, to a construction cost of £1,299k and a total project cost of £1,702k

32.2013 D3 Resolved: that the College Management proceed with explorations with Globe to secure additional value engineering opportunities for the Project

33.2013 Minutes of the Administration and Finance Committee held on 19th June 2013
(Paper F)

33.2013 D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received

34.2013 Matters arising from the minutes of the 19th June 2013

Mr Welsh, Chair of the Committee, reviewed the key points discussed at the meeting. He drew attention to the current very positive operating surplus and cash position as at 30th April 2013.

Proposed Budget 2013-14 and projections for 2014 -15 & 2015 -16
(Paper G)

The Director of Finance tabled two updated budget summaries for the next three financial years. Two small changes had been made since the meeting on the 19th June 2013. As a result of the decision above to proceed with Phase 4 of the Accommodation Strategy and utilise the £500k investment, the forecasted operating surplus for next year was £184k and £49k for the following year. The forecasted slippage from 'outstanding' to 'good' in the Financial Health score for 2014/15 was explained and discussed.

Mr Davies arrived

Recognising Governors' interest in the level of contingences within the budget, and particularly within the staffing budget, the Director of Finance confirmed that appropriate contingencies were in place and were supported by a detailed rationale. She advised that these projections reflected a very prudent assessment. Governors questioned the staffing costs to income and were assured that this was at 69% for the three years. The Board approved the budget.

Health & Safety - Revised Fire evacuation policy

Mr Welsh described the adoption of a new "Ofsted style" grading system with explanatory criteria, which had been applied to the 3 planned fire evacuations undertaken during the year. Governors were interested to learn of this innovation.

After discussion, they agreed that the College would normally undertake 2 planned evacuations per year, but if one of these is graded as a 3 (requires improvement), it is repeated until either a grade 1 (excellent) or a grade 2 (good) is achieved.

34.2013 D1 Resolved: that the draft Budget for 2013 - 2014, and forecasts for 2014/15 and 2015/16 be approved

34.2013 D2 Resolved: that the College moves to two planned grade 1 or 2 fire evacuations per annum

35.2013 Minutes of the Strategic Planning and Standards Committee held on 11th June 2013
(Paper J)

35.2013 D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received

36.2013 Matters arising from the minutes of the 11th June 2013
The Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018
(Paper K)

The Principal advised Governors that she had sharpened the focus of the 5 Year Plan to address improving outcomes and enhancing teaching and learning standards. The changes were highlighted in red. Governors supported the changes but recommended that the numerical reference be highlighted in the circles.

Principal

The Strategic Development Plan 2013 – 2014

The Principal noted that an additional objective had been included as a result of the liP Assessment and featured as “4.5 Improve access to health and wellbeing activities for staff”.

36.2013 D1 Resolved: that, the Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018 be approved

36.2013 D2 Resolved: that, the Draft Strategic Development Plan 2013 – 2014 be approved

37.2013 Minutes of the Safeguarding Board held on 21st May 2013
(Paper M)

Ms Talboys, Vice-Chair of the Board was pleased to confirm that the Safeguarding Board was established and at its first meeting had agreed an ambitious work plan for the next two years. However, it would be flexible and dynamic in order to respond to external developments.

37.2013 D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received

38.2013 Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 18th June 2013
(Paper N)

38.2013 D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received

**39.2013 Matters arising from the minutes of the 18th June 2013
Risk Register (Paper O)**

Mr Curry, Chair of the Committee, drew members' attention to the updated Risk Report and Risk Register.

He also reviewed the Internal Audit Reports in respect of: Progress Review, Follow Up, Corporate Governance, Risk Assurance Stocktake, Procurements and Payments and confirmed these as excellent.

The Committee had considered the AoC's Audit & Accountability Annex to the Foundation Code of Governance. However, as a number of questions still remained unanswered by the AoC, approval of this Annex was deferred.

The Chair thanked Mr Curry for his long service on the Audit Committee and for his dedicated, distinctive and thorough approach to the role of Chair.

39.2013 D1 Resolved: that the Risk Register June 2013 be received

**40.2013 Minutes of the Search Committee held on 20th May 2013
(Paper Q)**

40.2013 D1 Resolved: that the Minutes be received

41.2013 Matters arising from the minutes of the 20th May 2013

Cllr. Clapham, Vice-Chair of the Search Committee reviewed the key points discussed at the meeting. The re-appointment of Ms Trembles had been considered and was now recommended to the Corporation. An extensive review of the Committee Structure and chairing arrangements had been carried out in line with the decisions of the Corporation in March 2013. These were detailed in Paper R.

The annual review and updating of the Standing Orders 2013 – 2014 (Paper S) had been completed to reflect the changes in tenure of offices, committee chairing & membership and these were recommended to Governors for approval. The schedule of meetings for the coming year had been reviewed and agreed. (Paper T)

The matter of succession planning for the Chair of the Corporation had been discussed at some length and Governors were advised to re-read and note the points made in item 26.2013 before the next agenda item.

41.2013 D1 Resolved: that, subject to DBS clearance, Ms Trembles be re-appointed as a Governor for a four-year period with effect from 15th December 2013

41.2013 D2 Resolved: that the proposed committee changes and new structure for 2013 /14 be approved

41.2013 D3 Resolved: that the Standing Orders 2013 – 2014 be approved

41.2013 D4 Resolved: that the Schedule of Meeting dates 2013 - 2014 be approved

Mr Boyle left the meeting and Mr Welsh took the Chair

42.2013 Election of the Chair of the Corporation 2013 – 2015

Mr Welsh reminded Governors that the current Chair's term of office ends on the 1st September 2013 and it was necessary to either elect a successor or seek a way to re-elect Mr Boyle for a fifth two year period (as well as re-elect him for a fourth term of office as a Governor from April 2014). Despite the invitation for nominations circulated in early June 2013, no other nomination had been received. Mr Boyle had declared his position at the last Search Committee (see minute 26.2013).

Mr Welsh argued that the College really needed a further period of continuity in the chairing role to fully establish the Teaching School along with the Fylde Coast Academy Trust and to see the conclusion of the Phase 4 Property Strategy. It would be sensible to undertake detailed succession planning and have a two year period of preparation for the potential candidates who wished to take over in 2015. Governors agreed with this position and proposed that the eligibility rules be suspended in respect of this special case. Cllr. Clapham and Mr Curry proposed and seconded Mr Boyle as Chair for a further two years and for a further 4 years as a Governor from April 2014.

Governors agreed to Dr Sander's proposal that all eligible governors be invited to consider the role of Chair and to formally declare their interest in becoming the Chair of the Corporation in 2015 to the October 2013 meeting of the Search Committee. If again there was no interest from existing Governors, then it would be necessary to plan a recruitment campaign to recruit a Chair of the Corporation.

Clerk

42.2013 D1 Resolved: that the rules referring to the maximum period of service as a Chair of the Corporation and a Governor be suspended at this time in the case of Mr John Boyle

42.2013 D2 Resolved: that Mr John Boyle be re-appointed Chair of the Corporation for the period 1st September 2013 – 31st August 2015

42.2013 D3 Resolved: that, subject to DBS clearance, Mr John Boyle be re-appointed a Governor for the period 7th April 2014 – 7th April 2018

Clerk

42.2013 D4 Resolved: that all eligible Governors be invited to declare their interest to the 14th October Search Committee in being nominated for the role of Chair of the Corporation in 2015

Clerk

Mr Boyle rejoined the meeting and resumed as Chair

Mr Welsh congratulated Mr Boyle on doing a marvellous job as the Chair over the last eight years and confirmed the above decisions of the Corporation. Mr Boyle thanked Governors for their support and gave his assurance that he would continue to do his best in the role.

43.2013 Farewell to Student Governor

Governors warmly thanked Mr George Canning for his two years of service on the Corporation and his distinctive contribution to the Residential Conferences and wished him every success in the recent exams and in his future undergraduate studies and subsequent career. George spoke of his enjoyment being both a member of the Corporation and a student who had benefitted from some outstanding teaching and tremendous enrichment activities.

44.2013 Informal Review of the process and outcomes of the meeting

Governors concluded that:

- The opening presentation from the Sixth Form College Association was very useful and informative
- There should be a separation of the Fylde Coast Teaching School Report from the Principal's College Report
- "Hot topics" should be identified both in Committees and in the SMT that could feature on the Corporation agenda to prompt further discussion and debate.

Clerk

45.2013 Estimation of new risk areas

The key new risk related to the decision to approve the start of the Phase 4 Accommodation Strategy.

46.2013 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Corporation is **Tuesday 17th December 2013 at 1715hrs.**

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

Signed:

Chair:

Date:
