

Minutes of the 126th Meeting of the Board of Corporation of Sunderland College held on Tuesday 7th February 2017 at 6.00pm in the Conference Room, City Campus

PRESENT: Mrs S Atkinson, Mr J Barnett, Ms E Bass, Mr G Blyth, Mr T Crompton, Ms A Fellows, Ms S Forster, Mr A Holmes, , Mr C Gofton, Mrs A Hodgson, Mr H Kemp, Mr R Lawson (Chair), Mr P McEldon, Mr J Phillips and Mr R Saelzer

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr N Harrett, Mr D Howells, Ms V Morton, Mr I Nixon and Ms J Quinn

CLERK: Ms P Veitch

Bd/17/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were accepted from Ms E Thinnesen. Declarations of interest were received from Mrs C Gofton and Ms Fellows in connection with item 015.

Bd/17/02 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 6 DECEMBER 2016

The minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

Bd/17/03 MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk advised that the current tenure periods of the two Vice Chair positions are due to expire on 19th March and 24th March 2017 respectively. All Governors (with the exception of the Principal, Staff Governor & Student Governor) were invited to seek nomination for either of the positions. 2 duly supported nominations have been received by the deadline from Mr Crompton and Mr McEldon.

The Board:

- i) approved the appointment of Mr Crompton and Mr McEldon as Vice Chairs of the Corporation for a period of 2 years.

Bd/17/04 EXECUTIVE REPORT

(Redacted)

The Board:

- i) Discussed and received the report; and
- ii) (Redacted)
- iii) Agreed this report content and minute be deemed confidential.

Mr Kemp joined the meeting at 6.25pm

Bd/17/05 AREA BASED REVIEW UPDATE

(Redacted)

The Board:

- i) Reviewed and discussed the recommendations agreed at Steering Group 4; and
- ii) Specifically approved recommendations 9 and 13; and
- iii) Noted the current position regarding the proposed merger with Hartlepool 6th Form College which will be subject to ongoing discussion.
- iv) Agreed the minute be deemed confidential.

Bd/17/06 COMPLAINTS BI-ANNUAL REPORT

The Assistant Principal Student and Customer Experience presented the report which showed there have been 9 formal complaints received this academic year to date. Governors queried whether compliments are recorded as suggested previously by Governors. The Assistant Principal Student and Customer Experience agreed to review the Policy regarding this.

The Board received the report for information

Bd/17/07 QUALITY POLICY AND STRATEGY ANNUAL REVIEW

Governors reviewed the proposed minor amendments which reflect the introduction of new Quality Coordinator posts, new College structure and a Curriculum and Performance Committee.

The Board approved the Quality Policy and Strategy 2016-17.

Bd/17/08 ENGLISH/MATHS UPDATE

The Board:

- i) Received the report; and
- ii) Agreed the report be deemed confidential for commercial reasons.

Bd/17/09 HE MONITORING SELF EVALUATION DOCUMENT

Governors reviewed the report prepared by the new Director of HE, Participation and Skills noting it had been considered in detail at the Curriculum and Quality Committee held in January.

The Board noted and received the report.

Bd/17/10 TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT (INTERNAL INSPECTION/OBSERVATION PROGRAMME UPDATE)

Governors discussed the update following a variety of observations that have taken place in accordance with 2016-17 Plan for Observations highlighting emerging strengths and areas for development. Governors welcomed the report but also commented on typographical errors contained within the Executive Summary.

The Board:

- i) Received the report for information; and
- ii) Agreed the report be deemed confidential.

Bd/17/11 HEADLINE ACCOUNTABILITY (QUALITY) PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Deputy Principal reported that current performance indicators are generally positive but the College will need to minimise further withdrawals from Apprenticeship 16-18 programmes and HN programmes to maximise achievement in these areas. Governors discussed the impact of the City Campus on behaviour and the zero tolerance approach adopted. They went on to consider the attendance targets (which included post-Christmas data) and the continued focus by teaching staff and personal tutors to improve attendance. English and maths attendance has improved since last academic year.

The Board discussed and received the report.

Bd/17/12 APPRENTICESHIP PERFORMANCE UPDATE (SUBCONTRACTED AND COLLEGE PROVISION)

The Executive Director Commercial Activity reported there has been a positive start to the year in terms of directly delivered apprenticeship enrolments (+22%) but disappointing starts from subcontractors. Governors discussed the strong focus on in year retention for 2016/17 and the improved use of Smart Assessor. The College is predicting to fall short of the 16-18 apprenticeship allocation and a number of steps are being taken to mitigate the shortfall. Governors will receive further updates on the forthcoming apprenticeship reforms and levy at the Governor Strategic Event on 15th February.

The Board:

- i) Discussed and received the report; and
- ii) Agreed the report be deemed confidential.

Bd/17/13 LINK GOVERNOR FEEDBACK

Mrs Hodgson gave a detailed report following meetings with the Assistant Principal English, Maths and Employability and Work Based Learning Manager. She was pleased to see robust progress in attendance tracking and follow up to ensure students are engaged and timely interventions take place. Subcontractors appear to be better at timely completion and it is apparent that staff are keen to adopt best practice. In summary Mrs Hodgson reported there has been rapid progress with English and maths for

apprenticeship provision and the right controls are in place to significantly improve outcomes for learners.

At this point the Chair highlighted that 2 of the Link Governor roles will become vacant. He asked Governors to consider whether they felt the Link Governor Scheme provides value and should be continued. Governors discussed the key issues relating to Ofsted's expectations together with the requirement of the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges which states 'the Board to be alert to college issues and use various methods to meet with students, staff, parents and employers, such as learning walks and having link governors'.

Governors acknowledged it aids their understanding, but were also mindful of the need to avoid operational involvement and the role of the Executive in providing assurance.

The Board:

- i) Received the Link Governor update; and
- ii) Considered the impact of forthcoming Link Governor vacancies; and
- iii) Agreed to refer the matter to the Governance Committee and Principal for further consideration.

Bd/17/14 BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENTS

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented the report which shows there is an operating surplus for the 4 months to 30 November 2016 of £200k which is in line with the budgeted figure. In terms of 16-18 Learner Responsive students enrolled at 4th January 2017 there are approximately 3,442 compared to 3,630 by 6 January 2016. In terms of 19+ provision, the College is still at a less advanced stage because proportionately, many more 19+ learners than 16-18 learners are enrolled later in the year through workplace delivery and via subcontractors.

The Vice Principal is reviewing planned against actual learner numbers and performance with each curriculum area and will provide an update at the next meeting of the Board in March.

In terms of 16-18 apprentices, there is a shortfall of £337k. The Vice Principal Finance and Resources advised that a detailed plan will be circulated to Governors once the budget process has been completed.

Referring to the discussion about commercial outlets at the Resources and Capital Projects Committee in January, Governors were advised that Facility Directors and the Finance Director and Chefs are reviewing catering provision including menus, portion size, income, and outlets.

The Board discussed and received the report.

It was agreed to consider the following items next

Membership

Governors considered an expression of interest for the role of Governor from Mr Ramanathas from Young Asian Voices. Based on his experience of working with young people in the Asian community and local region, Governors agreed his skills and experience would make a valuable contribution and approved his appointment.

The Student Governor has expressed interest in opportunities to further engage in the work of the Governing Body and Governors agreed his appointment to the Curriculum & Quality Committee.

Performance Reviews

Performance reviews of the Chair, Governors (excluding new Governors) and the Clerk have now been completed.

Chair: Respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the statements. Where respondents provided additional feedback, comments were very positive. The Chair of the Governance Committee remarked he was disappointed that only 11 out of 16 responses had been received, representing a 69% return (57% last year).

Governors: Governors that served during the 2015/16 academic year, have met with the Chair for an individual review meeting. The key themes arising from the confidential one to one reviews were as follows:

- An apprenticeships presentation or workshop (arranged for next strategic event on 15th February).
- A workshop/training session on constructive challenge (being arranged for March)
- Consideration of whether Governor could be set an objective in terms of the number of student experiences each year (i.e. through graduation, observing lessons, student lunch etc.).

In relation to the last point, Governors were wary of setting a specific target to be monitored against but agreed that Governors should be encouraged to engage with students.

The Board:

- i) Approved the appointment of Mr K Ramanathas (subject to the normal application process being concluded); and
- ii) Agreed that the Student Governor be appointed to the Curriculum and Quality Committee; and
- iii) Received and discussed the report.

All staff and the Staff and Student Governors withdrew from the meeting at 7.30pm in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government as Part B of the report is considered confidential as it relates to Senior Post Holders.

Bd/17/16 GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS (PART B)

The Board received the report.

The Deputy Principal and Vice Principal Finance and Resources returned to the meeting.

At 8pm Mrs Atkinson left the meeting and Mrs Gofton withdrew prior to consideration of the following item. Ms Fellows was not required to withdraw from the meeting.

Bd/17/15 ESTATES UPDATE (CLOSED ITEM)

The Board:

- i) noted the decision made by written resolution; and
- ii) discussed and received the report.

Bd/17/17 APPROVED MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES

The Board received the minutes.

Bd/17/18 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

Bd/17/19 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting will take place at 6pm on Tuesday 21st March 2017 in the Conference Room at City Campus.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm