

BARNSELEY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD ON TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2016

PART I

PRESENT:

G Beever	Governor
N Bowen	Governor (Vice Chair)
S Burkinshaw	Governor (student)
P Clarkson	Governor (Staff)
R Dewar	Governor
K Dickinson	Governor
P Jagger	Governor (Vice Chair)
G McSkimming	Governor
S Perryman	Governor (Chair)
D Shepherd	Governor
S Turton	Governor
C Webb	Governor (Principal)

IN ATTENDANCE:

A J Oaks	Clerk to the Board	P Briscoe	VP Quality
Y Koursis	Deputy Principal	T Johnson	VP Corporate Services
D Harding	VP Curriculum	L Lawton	VP Finance
L Leek	Principal, SFC		

The Chair welcomed Kay Dickinson to the meeting who was to be appointed on the recommendation of the Governance and Search Committee at Item 6.2. Steven Burkinshaw, elected as Student governor, was also welcomed to the meeting.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

16.224 Apologies for absence were received from S Brian, R Hooley, C Partridge and R Pourali.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

16.225 The Chair reminded members of the requirement to declare any financial or personal interests in any agenda items. Members reserved the right to declare any interests should any arise during the course of the meeting. G Beever, C Webb and Y Koursis declared interests as Directors of Wellspring Academy Trust, in relation to Agenda Item 17. R Dewar and C Webb declared an interest in item 8b in respect of Think Barnsley Limited. Staff present declared an interest in item 10, Pay award.

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2016 (Part I)

16.226 The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2016 (Part I) were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

16.227 The Board received a list of actions arising from previous meetings. The Chair provided an update on Prevent training, confirming that by the end of the year all governors would have completed the module. It was noted that P Jagger, who had agreed to act as the interim link governor for Safeguarding, had undertaken a link visit earlier in the day. The Chair reminded

members of the importance of the E&D workshop and Board effectiveness event on 25 January with external facilitators and hoped everyone was able to attend .

- 16.228 With regard to Minute 16.187 the Deputy Principal reported that through the newly appointed Director of Marketing the college was developing a strategic approach which included working closely with the Heads of the secondary schools and that a timely update would be presented to the Board in due course. With regard to the anomaly identified in the Safeguarding annual report presented in October, the VP Quality reported that the referrals were all related to one incident, raised by one learner.

APPOINTMENT OF STUDENT GOVERNOR

- 16.229 The Chair informed the Board that S Burkinshaw had been elected by the Student Union for appointment as Student (HE) Governor. The Clerk had confirmed his eligibility.

RESOLVED 16.229 To appoint Steven Burkinshaw as a student member of the Board.

Kay Dickinson withdrew from the meeting.

GOVERNANCE AND SEARCH COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 16.230 The Chair referred to the Minutes of the G&S Committee meeting held on 1 November 2016 which had focused on the outcome of the recent recruitment process, resulting in two recommendations for appointment to the Board, Ms Kay Dickinson and Mr Conor Moss. C Moss had been unable to attend the meeting. The Chair commented that Kay Dickinson had been recruited specifically to replace R Dewar and that it was the intention she be appointed as Chair of the F&R Committee. The Board welcomed the new members, whose background and expertise would ensure the Board continued to maintain its strong and diverse skillsbase. A handover meeting between R Dewar and K Dickinson had already taken place. It was further proposed that C Moss and S Burkinshaw be appointed to the Quality and Standards Committee.

RESOLVED 16.230.1 to appoint K Dickinson and C Moss as Board members for a term of office of four years;

RESOLVED 16.230.2 To appoint K Dickinson as a member and Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee;

RESOLVED 16.230.3 to appoint C Moss and S Burkinshaw as members of the Quality and Standards Committee.

- 16.231 The Board received and noted the formal resignation of Robert Dewar, Governor, Chair of F&R Committee and Chair of BCDC and Think Barnsley Limited. The resignation had been reported to the subsidiaries at their respective Board meetings on 29 November 2016. It was proposed to the Board that K Dickinson be appointed as Director to both subsidiary companies, in the position of Chair. It was further proposed that Ms Tricia Smith, Director of Business Development at the College, be appointed as a Director of Think Barnsley Ltd.

RESOLVED 16.231.1 to appoint K Dickinson as a Director and Chair of BCDC and of Think Barnsley Limited;

RESOLVED 16.231.2 To appoint Ms T Smith as a Director of Think Barnsley Limited.

K Dickinson joined the meeting and was formally welcomed to the Board.

AUDIT COMMITTEE BUSINESS

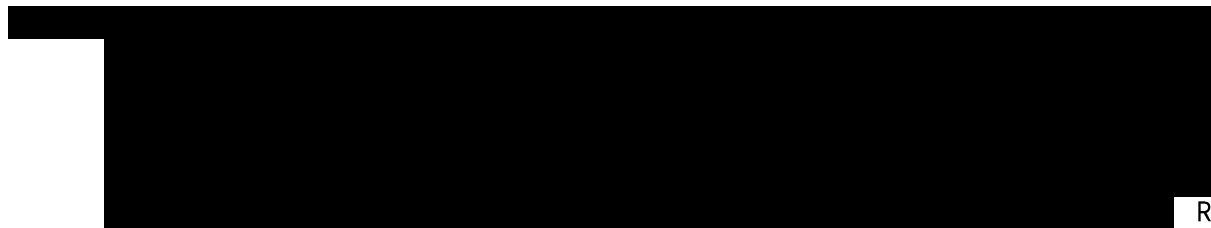
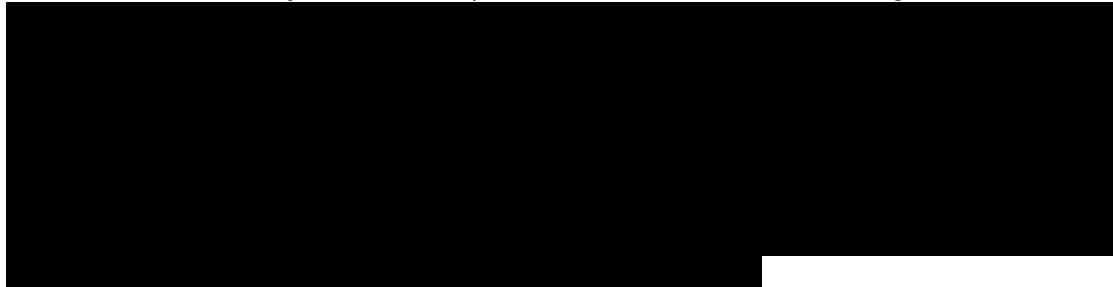
- 16.232 The Board received the Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 29 November 2016. In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, S Turton summarised the business conducted by the Committee, the key focus of which had been the external audit findings and the Committee's Annual Report to the Board and Accounting Officer.

- 16.233 The Accounts had been prepared on a going concern basis and the assessment confirmed that the College had a reasonable expectation that it has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future, and for this reason would continue to adopt the going concern basis in the preparation of its Financial Statements. Due to historical debts, Think Barnsley Limited required a Letter of Support from the College to confirm it as a going concern. It was noted that this year there was a requirement for the Regularity Self Assessment Questionnaire to be approved and signed off by the Chair and Accounting officer.
- 16.234 On the basis of the auditors' regularity audit opinion and the additional sources of evidence providing assurance to the Committee of the college's assurance framework, the Committee was able to provide an opinion to the Board that the college's audit arrangements, framework of governance, risk management and control, and processes for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness, were adequate. This opinion supported the Corporate Governance Statement contained within the Financial Statements pages 21 to 26. The Chair thanked S Turton for a comprehensive summary and invited members to comment.

RESOLVED 16.235 To approve the Annual Report of the Committee to the Board and Accounting Officer for submission to the SFA together with the Financial Statements 2015/16.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 16.236 The Minutes of the F&R Committee meeting held on 6 December 2016 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. R Dewar summarised the business of the Committee which had focused on the Financial Statements for year ending 31 July 2016 and the SFA Financial dashboard. In summary, the financial performance continued to be strong in EBITDA terms,



R Dewar congratulated the VP Finance and her team for the positive financial outturn, which was commendable given the challenges of working through new accounting standards alongside the implementation of a new finance system. He also praised her for the work she had undertaken in relation to ensuring banking covenants had been met. The Board and Principal reiterated his comments and congratulated the VP.

- 16.238 In response to a question from D Shepherd regarding the SFA financial health grade, R Dewar referred to the three key financial KPIs, commenting that the Committee would continue to monitor performance, and that plans were in place to discuss further income growth which would improve the grade.

RESOLVED 16.238.1 To approve the Financial statements for the College and its subsidiaries for year ended 31 July 2016

RESOLVED 16.238.2 That the Chair and Principal be authorised to sign the Financial Statements and Letter of Representation for submission to the SFA by 31 December 2016

RESOLVED 16.238.3 That the Chair be authorised to sign a Letter of Support for Think Barnsley Limited.

QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE BUSINESS

16.239 The Board received the Minutes of the Q&S Committee held on 10 November 2016. The Chair of Q&S summarised the business that had been conducted and asked members to note that in line with the new HE Annual Provider review process the Annual Assurance Statement had been approved and submitted to HEFCE by the deadline of 30 November 2016. Board members were informed that the Committee continued to scrutinise areas of concern and that the level of detail provided on quality matters enabled members to interrogate and challenge at the right level. The committee was comfortable with management's actions to bring about improvements. Referring to the SAR judgements, the Chair said these reflected the positive feedback and data considered by the Committee. In response to a question from G McSkimming regarding the implications of the Sainsbury review on the policy for English and maths, governors shared their views and concluded that should government policy subsequently change the strategy adopted by the College had positioned it well.

COLLEGE PAY AWARD

16.240 Declarations from staff were noted. The Board received a report from the VP Corporate Services seeking approval to implement the AoC recommended pay award for 2016/17. The VP CS confirmed that the 1% pay award was affordable and had been factored into departmental budgets. He was pleased to report that all three trade unions had accepted the recommendation. Governors were informed that in addition to the pay award, all College staff would receive an additional two days leave on 20 and 21 December 2016 which had been proposed by the Principal by way of making efficiency savings.

RESOLVED 16.240 to approve a pay award of 1% on all salary points, or £250, whichever was greater, with effect from 1 January 2017.

COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT

16.241 The VP Quality presented the College Self Assessment Report for 2015/16 in which the College had judged itself to be outstanding in the four key judgements within the Common Inspection Framework. In terms of cohorts, 16-19 study programmes and Apprenticeships were judged 'Outstanding', and Adults and High Needs Learners as 'Good'. The VP Quality reported that in respect of the 18 department grades, 11 were a grade 1; six were a grade 2, and one department (Construction) was a grade 3. Of twelve support departments, eight were a grade 1 and four a grade 2. Governors, including staff and student members, had participated on the validation panel alongside external members.

16.242 P Jagger reported that he had undertaken a strategic priority monitoring visit that morning and believed the College's self-assessment was honest in terms of progress and the current position, and that this had been validated by learners in a subsequent themed learning walk he had undertaken, thereby triangulating the evidence well. D Shepherd commented that the report was excellent, and on noting that comprehensive evidence was available to form the relevant judgements, asked if the Board was sufficiently challenging in all areas. The Chair responded, stating that whilst he believed it was well evidenced, the Board's effectiveness would be an area for further exploration at the event in January. He added that it was appropriate for the Board to continue to closely monitor performance against not only strategic objectives but quality and financial matters. The VP Quality advised that further work around the Prevent agenda was being undertaken with learners, and that keeping them safe remained a priority.

RESOLVED 16.243 to approve the College Self Assessment Report and overall effectiveness grade of outstanding for 2015/16.

UPDATE TO SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 16.244 The Board received the revised Safeguarding Policy which had been updated to reflect recent guidance issued by DfE in September 2016. The VP Quality presented the report highlighting the areas that had been updated, which focused on Looked After Children, Education Health and Care Plans, Female Genital Mutilation and 14-16 learners. The Board considered the Policy to be extremely comprehensive. P Jagger, as the link Governor, reported that he had undertaken a link visit earlier in the day and was able to provide assurance to the Board that the College was meeting its statutory obligations through policies and procedures that were fit for purpose.
- 16.245 Following the VPs comment that staff would receive training following the revisions to the policy, P Jagger proposed the Board also receive appropriate refresher training to ensure it could discharge its responsibilities effectively and was kept up to date. The Clerk undertook to arrange a suitable training event in 2017.

RESOLVED 16.245 to approve the updated Safeguarding Policy.

ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 16.246 The Board received the Annual Report on Equality and Diversity which set out key information for the Board in relation to equality and diversity. The Principal: Sixth Form College presented the report, stating that the College was a vibrant and dynamic place that sought to meet its statutory duties in a creative and forthright manner. It created an environment of respect and understanding, where everyone was an individual with unique needs and skills. The report provided assurance that equality and diversity in 2015/16 had been a priority, permeating all activity, improving the lives of students and “not just existing in the liminal world of good intentions”. The Principal SFC explained that the public sector duty arose from the Equality Act, which was an important piece of UK legislation in that it sought not just to limit behaviours but to drive positive change through the conferment of a statutory duty to ‘Eliminate unlawful discrimination’, ‘Advance equality of opportunity’ and ‘Foster good relations’.

D Shepherd left the meeting.

- 16.247 The Principal SFC referred to the staffing profile, compared to the sector average and the local Barnsley area. The college’s BaME staff cohort had increased by 0.1% since 2014-15 and was marginally less diverse than Barnsley and significantly less diverse than the sector average. The representation of BaME Governors remained static, although above the Barnsley average for BaME; whilst the Governors’ gender representation remained persistently below the college and that of the borough. Noting the data, the Chair agreed that the Board needed to increase its diversity and address gender representation and whilst Kay’s appointment had helped, further work was required to close the gap.
- 16.248 Link Governor R Pourali, who was not able to attend the meeting, had provided feedback following her last link visit, which the Clerk referred to. In her opinion, the College was successfully closing data gaps and was working proactively with other partners to create opportunities for communities and learners to work together. She also believed that participation with the community was greater than that described in the report. Further to discussion the Board was satisfied that it was effectively discharging its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and that the College was not only meeting its duties but was exceeding them.
- 16.249 To enable Board members to discharge their responsibility in this area fully, refresher training was being delivered by an independent consultant in January 2017.

The Report was noted and received.

UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- 16.250 Governors had completed the first series of meetings to monitor progress against the strategic action plans and were due to make subsequent visits in January as a lead into the strategic seminar. Individual Governors provided feedback on progress to the Board which

indicated that in the main they were comfortable with progress against the strategic objectives and would continue to closely monitor progress going forwards. Following his meeting with the Deputy Principal in respect of SP8 (around growth in HE) P Jagger reported that he intended to meet C Moss prior to the next scheduled meeting to update him on the discussion around the HE strategy and to explore ways they could best support the achievement of goals. Governors looked forward to discussing progress further at the seminar.

GOVERNOR/ LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

16.251 P Jagger had undertaken a themed learning walk earlier in the day in Health Sciences and Computing. The Clerk advised Governors of the deadlines in respect of governor/learner engagements to encourage take up of the opportunity for OWLs and graded lesson observation link visits in the new year.

STRATEGIC SEMINAR

16.252 The Board received a further draft of the programme and discussed the finer detail of the proposed content to ensure it would be focused on key topics and provide sufficient time for strategic debate. Further to discussion the Deputy Principal agreed to liaise with the Clerk to produce a further draft for Governors' consideration based on views shared.

16.253 The Chair proposed management prepare bullet point briefings and provide background reading papers for governors in preparation for the seminar.

S Burkinshaw left the meeting.

REPORT FROM WELLSPRING ACADEMY TRUST

16.254 The Board noted and received the termly report from Wellspring Academy Trust.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

16.255 The Board noted and received the Principal's Report. The Chair drew attention to various College achievements worthy of special note: student Jack Syddall from Construction had won Gold in the World Skills UK 2016 Competition, and the College finished in second place in the Target Two Point Zero regional competition, beating competition from Greenhead College and New College Pontefract, amongst others. Governors noted that many students had attended the Remembrance day service at the Town Hall which was commendable.

TRAINING EVENTS

16.256 The Clerk advised Governors that the venue for the training event on the afternoon of 25 January 2017 would be Wortley Hall.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

16.257 The next meeting would be held on 14 March 2017 at 4.00 pm.

On behalf of the Board, the Chair took the opportunity to thank Mr Dewar for his outstanding contribution to the Board over the last two years, particularly in his role as Chair of the Finance & Resources Committee. The Board wished Mr Dewar every success in his future career.

End of Part I

Signed _____ Chair Date _____