

BARNSELEY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD ON TUESDAY 14 MARCH 2017

PART I

PRESENT:

G Beever	Governor
T Abbott	Governor (Student)
N Bowen	Governor (Vice Chair)
S Brian	Governor
P Clarkson	Governor (Staff)
K Dickinson	Governor
R Hooley	Governor (staff)
P Jagger	Governor (Vice Chair)
G McSkimming	Governor
C Moss	Governor
C Partridge	Governor
R Pourali	Governor
S Turton	Governor
C Webb	Governor (Principal)

IN ATTENDANCE:

A J Oaks	Clerk to the Board
Y Koursis	Deputy Principal
L Leek	Principal, SFC
L Lawton	VP Finance
T Johnson	VP Corporate Services
V Dalton	VP Finance VP Funding, Data & Compliance
P Briscoe	VP Quality and Student Experience

N Bowen took the Chair.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

17.01 Apologies for absence were received from S Perryman and D Shepherd.

The Board congratulated P Briscoe on his appointment as VP Quality and Student Experience.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

17.02 The Chair reminded members of the requirement to declare any financial or personal interests in the agenda items. Members reserved the right to declare 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 12.

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2016 (Part I)

17.03 The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 December 2016 (Part I) were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

- 17.04 The Board received a list of actions arising from previous meetings. The Chair reported that there were a small number of Governors still to undertake the ETF Prevent training module which the Clerk would follow up. It was agreed that the action point around monitoring strategic priorities had been superseded by the strategic seminar. The Deputy Principal reported that the college had engaged an external company to conduct market research with stakeholders and that through them work to engage with secondary schools had commenced. A further update would be provided to the next meeting.
- 17.05 The Clerk advised that it would be timely for the Board to participate in further safeguarding/ refresher training this year, and that an event would be arranged to take place in the autumn, perhaps commissioning external providers alongside the college's Safeguarding team who could provide case studies to examine.

STRATEGY

Outcome of Strategic Seminar

- 17.06 The Board received a report summarising the outcomes of the recent strategic seminar which provided a backdrop for the Principal's presentation of the Mission, Vision and Values and proposed strategic priorities for the next three to five years. The Chair remarked that the event had been positive and believed Governors had given the Principal a clear steer at the close of the seminar with regard to the proposed objectives going forward. Noting the background paper, the Chair invited the Principal to make his presentation. Handouts of the slides were tabled.
- 17.07 The Board had agreed to focus on three themes for 2017/18: Sustainability, Quality and Reputation. The proposed Vision "Transforming Lives", was intrinsic to all three themes. The College's purpose (Mission) was largely unchanged from the existing mission as the results of the survey indicated that 75% of staff believed the purpose should be retained. One minor change was proposed – that 'pass their exams' be replaced with 'pass their qualifications'. The proposed values were 'Aspirational, Caring, Supportive, Respectful and Genuine'.
- 17.08 The Principal advised that further work would be undertaken to refine the vision, purpose and values and that management were reflecting on management behaviour drivers. In total there were 17 strategic objectives/goals across the three themes. For each theme and objective, associated performance measures had been provided, which would be developed to incorporate actual measures. Governors discussed the strategic aims and associated KPIs which would be developed to underpin the scorecard and considered the mechanism that might be adopted to measure performance.

S Turton joined the meeting.

- 17.09 The Principal was comfortable with the KPIs proposed for Quality and Sustainability, commenting that a significant number were quantitative and therefore easily measured. The performance measures within the Reputation theme, by comparison were largely qualitative and more challenging to determine the most appropriate method by which to represent high level measures. The Principal explained that the Master Target file would incorporate the performance measures and become a 'golden thread' running through all aspects of the Strategic Development Plan. Governors shared their thoughts and views on the draft, and noting there were 17 objectives, were keen to understand how collectively, they could discharge their fiduciary duty to monitor strategy. The Principal commented that whilst the model had not been drafted with link visits in mind, it would be more appropriate for Governors to link with curriculum areas – an idea proposed by Sue Pember at the Board development event in January. The Clerk commented that going forward the Board would be spending more time on strategy, therefore meetings could be themed and Governors given sufficient opportunity to interrogate in more depth any areas where they felt required more challenge. The Chair believed the proposed scorecard captured the direction of travel very well and was pleased with the first draft.

- 17.10 It was agreed that the final Vision, Purpose and Values and agreed Strategic Priorities should be presented to the Board for formal approval at the next meeting. The Report was noted and received.

Governors' Development Event

- 17.11 The Board received a report summarising the outcome of the recent governor development event. Dr Christine Rose, a professional consultant, had delivered an Equality and Diversity workshop, which had been followed by a session on Board effectiveness, delivered by Dr Susan Pember OBE. Several areas for further consideration had been identified in both sessions and these were highlighted within the report. The Clerk reported that many positive comments had been received about the content and delivery of both sessions, with members saying that it would have been helpful to have had more time, particularly on E&D. The group debate around governance had been very well received, and Governors believed this should be repeated each year.
- 17.12 The Clerk referred to the Appendices where the key areas for action had been annotated. Given it was a sizeable piece of work, the Clerk advised that it would be appropriate and within its remit for the Governance and Search Committee to incorporate the outcomes into an improvement action plan to take forward and enable monitoring of progress by the Board during the year. The Board were content to accept the Clerk's proposal and agreed that the event, the outcomes and action plan provided clear evidence of Board self-evaluation.

RESOLVED 17.13.1 **that the Governance and Search Committee develop a Governance improvement action plan (GIAP) incorporating the outcomes identified at the governor development event.**

RESOLVED 17.13.2 **That the Board monitor progress against the GIAP at each of its meetings.**

LEARNER VOICE

Governor / Learner engagement

- 17.14 Written feedback from recent link governor visits had been circulated to Governors with papers. Since the beginning of the academic year there had been a total of 15 link visits, comprising 4 OWLS, 6 PR observation, 2 themed walk throughs, 1 Learner forum, 1 curriculum link and 1 E&D steering group. C Partridge provided verbal feedback from the OWL she had undertaken in Travel and Tourism, commenting that she had been impressed at the enthusiasm and level of engagement amongst learners which was inspiring. She had raised some points in her written report provided to the Principal and Chair which related to learner aspirations, departmental space and Apprenticeships links.

C Moss joined the meeting.

- 17.15 R Pourali, who had attended a recent Equality and Diversity Strategy group meeting, provided an update to the Board and gave significant assurances about the embedding of E&D and British Values within the curriculum. She added that the College's work with external organisations was impressive.
- 17.16 P Jagger advised that he would be making another Safeguarding link visit to the Designated Safeguarding lead on 26 April 2017. He made reference to the Chairman's recent link visit to Childhood Studies where the Chair had reported there were a significant number of safeguarding issues being addressed and that he had been impressed by the responsiveness and professionalism of staff.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Finance and Resources Committee

- 17.17 The Chair of F&R Committee provided an overview of the business that had been conducted at the meeting on 7 March 2017 and drew attention to recommendations made for Board approval. The Minutes of the meeting had been circulated to Governors on 10 March. The Committee had recommended the approval of three senior post holder policies, subject to an external legal opinion being sought to ensure they were fit for purpose. The Clerk confirmed that she had already taken action to pursue this with Martineau's. The Chair of F&RC explained that robust discussion had taken place around the tuition fees policies and annual capital expenditure, and that the Committee had been given sound assurances from the VP Finance that the policies were in line with financial planning and forecasts. In addition, lengthy discussion had taken place in respect of learner numbers and funding, and the staff survey results. The committee had complimented the VP Corporate Services on the innovative approach around variable hours contracts. The Chair then referred the Board to each of the recommendations that had been made by the Committee, which the Board were content to endorse.

RESOLVED 17.17.1 to approve the senior post holder Disciplinary, Grievance, Capability and Probation policies subject to legal opinion.

RESOLVED 17.17.2 to approve the Tuition Fees Policies for Further Education and Higher Education.

RESOLVED 17.17.3 to approve the Annual Capital Budget for 2017/18 at £1,700k.

Quality and Standards Committee

- 17.18 The Board received the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2017. The Chair informed members that the Committee had received a briefing on ALPS prior to the meeting which had been very helpful. Progress against forecasts was positive, with no areas of concern identified. The Committee had been pleased with the college's continued focus on attracting the more able and gifted students to enrol at the college and also with the outcome of the Ofsted good practice visit that had taken place in English and Maths. The Chair also reported that the Committee had challenged management on actions taken to improve lesson observation grades where they were not at the level expected and had been assured by management's response. Discussion had taken place in relation to observations in HE where there was further work to be undertaken. Overall there had been rigorous questioning and challenge by the Committee on key areas of focus and the Chair felt assured by evidence of actions taken and progress made.

The Minutes were received.

PRINCIPAL'S OVERSEAS VISIT

- 17.19 The Principal reported that he was seeking the Board's permission to travel to China and Indonesia from 2 to 14 April 2017 to review the A Level provision. Part of the visit would be to meet and talk to students and staff but also to negotiate a new contract through an Agent to increase the return on the college's investment. He would also be exploring further opportunities in Chengdu in respect of similar provision and would then move on to Indonesia to review the provision there.

RESOLVED 17.19 to approve the Principal's overseas visit.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- 17.20 The Principal's report was received, and Governors were very complimentary with regard to the snapshot they had been given to demonstrate the excellent work taking place within the college and with partners. The Report was noted and received.

WELLSPRING ACADEMY TRUST

- 17.21 The Board, as sponsor, received its termly report from the Trust. The Board noted the Trust continued to expand and was performing exceptionally well. The Chair reported that Dianne Murray, one of the sponsor appointees to the Trust Board who was appointed for a further four year term in June 2016, would be leaving the College in June 2017, and wished to continue as a sponsor appointed Trustee. The Clerk had confirmed this was possible under the current arrangements. In addition, the Principal had expressed a wish to resign his Trusteeship and step down from the Trust Board. He explained that this was mainly due to the increasing number of Trust Board and Committee meetings clashing with meetings at Horizon and/or Springwell, which meant he had been unable to engage with the Trust Board at the level expected. The Board considered the proposals which would reduce sponsor appointed Trustees to two, and concluded that given Wellspring's performance this did not present any risk.

RESOLVED 17.21.1 That the Principal be authorised to resign from the Wellspring Academy Trust Board with immediate effect;

RESOLVED 17.21.2 That Dianne Murray continue to serve out her term of office as a sponsor appointed Trustee of Wellspring Academy Trust.

BOARD BUSINESS CYCLE

- 17.22 The Board received a draft schedule of business for the next two meetings for information. The Clerk explained that more time would be allocated to strategy going forward, in response to the points identified at the recent Board development event.

The Schedule of business was noted and received.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- 17.23 The next meeting would be held on 16 May 2017 at 4.00 pm. The Clerk reminded Governors that there would be legal briefing prior to the meeting at 2.30 pm.

End of Part I.

Signed: ____S Perryman_____ Chair

Dated: ____16 May 2017