

BARNSELEY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD ON TUESDAY 17 MAY 2016 PART I

PRESENT:

G Beever	Governor	G McSkimming	Governor
N Bowen	Governor (Vice Chair)	C Partridge	Governor
S Brian	Governor	R Pourali	Governor
R Dewar	Governor	D Shepherd	Governor
E Holmes	Governor (FE student)	S Turton	Governor
P Jagger MBE	Governor (Vice Chair)	M Wesson	Governor (Staff)
B Mansford	Governor	C Webb	Governor (Principal)

IN ATTENDANCE:

A J Oaks	Clerk to the Board	Y Koursis	Deputy Principal
D Harding	VP Curriculum	J Miccoli	VP TL & Student Services
P Briscoe	VP Quality	T Johnson	VP Corporate Services

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

16.52 Apologies for absence were received from S Perryman and R Eccleston.

Vice Chair Paul Jagger took the Chair and welcomed Yiannis Koursis to his first meeting.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

16.53 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. Standing declarations from C Partridge (KPMG) and G Beever (in respect of Wellspring Academy Trust) were noted.

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2016

16.54 The Minutes of the meeting (Part I) held on 15 March 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

16.55 The Board received a list of actions arising from previous meetings which were summarised by the Clerk. With respect to international partnership work with the Shoaibi Group, the Deputy Principal indicated that he was currently reviewing all partnerships and requested the update be deferred to the next meeting when he would have more meaningful information for the Board. With regard to Minute 16.05 and training on Prevent, the Clerk reminded Governors of the importance of Board members undertaking specific training in this area to assist them in discharging their statutory responsibilities. Staff Governor Mia Wesson who had undertaken the ETF module confirmed that it would be helpful to Governors. The Clerk undertook to forward the link to the ETF website as a reminder.

APPOINTMENT OF STAFF GOVERNOR

16.56 The Clerk reported that following elections held the previous week, the staff had elected Ross Hooley, ILT Teacher in Music, Media and Performance for appointment to the Board.

Interest had been extremely positive, with nine members of staff nominated. Further to confirmation of Mr Hooley's eligibility for Board membership, the Board:

RESOLVED 16.57 To appoint Mr Ross Hooley as a staff member of the Board for a term of office of four years.

GOVERNANCE AND SEARCH COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 16.58 The Board received the Minutes of the G&S Committee meeting held on 11 April 2016. The Chair referred to the recommendations of the Committee to participate in a self-evaluation session in autumn using the Code of Good Governance as a basis, and to approve a draft Conflicts of Interest Policy. The Clerk explained that the previously no such policy had existed and that the introduction of the policy reinforced and protected the integrity of the Board's decision making processes and reputation.

RESOLVED 16.59 To approve the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 16.60 The Board received the Minutes of the Q&S Committee meeting held on 26 April 2016. The Chair of the Committee, N Bowen referred to the work of the Committee and how it was now focusing its attention on priority areas such as English and maths and AS /A2 results. Over the last 12-18 months the Committee had evidenced significant and ongoing improvements and were expecting to see a good set of results from the Sixth Form in the summer.

The Principal joined the meeting.

- 16.61 The Chair commented that he had attended one of the Committee meetings and was able to confirm the depth of scrutiny given to the data and the value of the work undertaken by staff which was very reassuring to the Board. D Shepherd, as link governor commented that he was heartened to see the predicted AS grades and that if confirmed would place the College in the top quartile in terms of results for SFCs. Governors agreed that the improving trend was most positive. Further to discussion the recommendation for the Board to approve the Higher Education Self Evaluation Document was put forward.

RESOLVED 16.62 To approve the HE Self Evaluation Document.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2016/17

- 16.63 The Board received a report setting out the top eight strategic priorities that had been agreed at the strategic seminar in February 2016. The Board were requested to agree final wording and agree the method by which the strategic priorities would be monitored throughout the year. Governors agreed the priorities represented the outcome of the seminar, but comments were raised by one Governor with regard to the wording. It was suggested that the objectives could be 'smarter' and include metrics alongside to assist with monitoring performance. The Principal explained how the Action plans underpinning each of the priorities were developed and of the clear targets both qualitative and quantitative contained within them, linked to the Master Target File, which were scrutinised by Governors three to four times a year in link visits.

C Partridge joined the meeting.

- 16.64 Considerable discussion followed whereby Governors shared their views and understanding of what 'good' or 'excellent' represented and how they believed they should fulfil their statutory responsibility to monitor strategic objectives. Other Governors believed that the mechanism currently in place was appropriate as it allowed individual governors to challenge management and monitor progress against detailed targets and to understand the work being undertaken at an operational level.

It was suggested that perhaps further consideration could be given to including the metrics. The Chair summarised the points made by the Board, stating that it had been a very useful discussion, however he recognised the views did not concur with the concerns raised by the individual governor. It was suggested that if the Board were content with the top level priorities overall, the wording could be refined by the Principal outside of the meeting to represent 'smarter' targets for final agreement.

RESOLVED 16.65 to approve the eight top level strategic priorities for 2016/17 subject to refinement of wording to satisfy the Board.

- 16.66 To conclude the discussion on strategic priorities, Governors confirmed their willingness to continue as link governors for statutory areas of Safeguarding (M Wesson), Prevent (M Wesson), Equality and Diversity (R Pourali), SEN (S Turton) and Health and Safety (P Jagger).

AUDIT COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 16.67 The Board received the Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 7 April 2016. C Partridge referred to the business conducted by the Committee, which provided much assurance to the Board of depth and level of scrutiny undertaken. The Committee had looked at an early internal audit plan based on high level risk and determined which areas should be included in the scope.

- 16.68 The Chair invited the VP Corporate Services to speak to the Board Assurance Framework which was presented for consideration and approval. The VP explained how the BAF had been developed and refined with the support of the Committee and internal auditors, and that high level risks were now matched to the strategic priorities where applicable. Governors acknowledged the level of work that had been input to the framework and believed that it was sufficiently detailed to allow the Board to maintain a focus on assurance. To clarify the reporting cycle, C Partridge commented that whilst the Audit Committee would receive the BAF at every meeting she proposed the BAF should be presented to the Board on an annual basis in early summer subject to any critical risks requiring the Board's attention in the interim.

RESOLVED 16.69.1 To approve the Board Assurance Framework

RESOLVED 16.69.2 That the Board Assurance Framework be presented to the Board for consideration on an annual basis in early summer.

STUDENT SUPPORT FUND POLICIES

- 16.70 The Board received three Student Support Fund Policies for approval. The VP TL&SS referred to the policies: FE SSF 14-18 with total anticipated spend of £721k; FE SSF 19+ with total anticipated spend of £299k; and HE SSF, explaining the funding and rationale for supporting students. It was anticipated that the cost of student support funds in 2016/17 would be around the same as the allocations from EFA and SFA. The Chair commented that it was pleasing to see the level of commitment to providing extra elements of support and invited Governors to comment. The Principal responded, commenting that the SSF was an entitlement, based on student need, and that whilst it was difficult to predict the outcome, the College had been extremely accurate in previous years with allocations. Responding to a question about the appeals process, the VP TL&SS said that whilst there was an appeals process it had never been invoked and no complaints had ever been received from students regarding lack of entitlement. Further to full discussion it was:

RESOLVED 16.71.1 To approve the FE Student Support Fund Policy for 14-18

RESOLVED 16.71.2 To approve the FE Student Support Fund Policy for 19+

RESOLVED 16.71.3 To approve the HE Student Support Fund Policy.

APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES TO WELLSPRING ACADEMY TRUST

- 16.72 The Clerk advised the Board that in accordance with the College's power under the Articles of Association for the Wellspring Academy Trust, the Board was requested to approve the appointment of two sponsor appointed Trustees. Dianne Murray, VP Young People and Communities at the College who had been a Director/Trustee for four years, had expressed her willingness to be reappointed for further four years. Secondly, the Principal proposed that Deputy Principal Yiannis Koursis be appointed to the Trust. The Clerk advised that in accordance with the Articles, the Trust was obliged to accept the appointments.

RESOLVED 16.73.1 To appoint Mrs Dianne Murray, VP Young People and Communities, as a Trustee of the Wellspring Academy Trust for a term of office of four years.

RESOLVED 16.73.2 To appoint Mr Yiannis Koursis, Deputy Principal, as a Trustee of the Wellspring Academy Trust for a term of office of four years.

DATA DASHBOARD

- 16.74 The Board were given a demonstration of the Data Dashboard which would be made available to all Governors in the coming weeks. Board members were impressed with the level of data, both quality and financial, that could be interrogated and agreed it was a powerful tool to assist with monitoring performance, particularly to inform forthcoming meetings. In response to questions regarding access, refinements and accuracy, the VP Quality advised that the data was updated on a monthly basis. The Chair encouraged Governors to access and use the Dashboard to inform feedback at a future meeting, suggesting the autumn meeting, to allow sufficient time for Governors to assess its value.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- 16.75 The Principal's report covered activities and events of interest in the last two months. Of note were two key events, that of the official opening of the Construction Centre by Sir David Blunkett, and the shortlisting of the Learning Technology Unit for the TES 2016 Awards for 'outstanding use of learning technology' which was noted given the Board's focus on investment in IT to improve the learner experience. The Principal commented that there had been many more outstanding successes he had wanted to include in the report, and that his next report would feature HRH Prince Andrew with the Head of Enterprise in respect to a further Award.

The Report was noted and received.

WELLSPRING ACADEMY TRUST

- 16.76 The Chair made reference to the Report from the Trust, which had been provided for information to the College as its sponsor. The Board would receive a report from the Principal at the next meeting regarding the College's relationship with the Trust.

The Report was noted and received.

GOVERNOR/ LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

- 16.77 The Chair invited Governors to provide feedback on recent link visits. D Shepherd, who had undertaken an OWL at the Sixth Form and met with staff commented that he had been impressed by the levels of teaching and learning observed and the use of facilities by students, commenting that the free space was now more like a University environment which was appropriate, and demonstrated how the changes translated to the student experience and impact of strategic priorities. B Mansford had attended a link and an OWL at Honeywell meeting staff and students, both experiences had been positive.

- 16.78 R Dewar, R Pourali and D Shepherd had attended different Student Forums and were very complimentary about the level of respect learners had for staff and their peers. Both learner forums had been very well attended. M Wesson had undertaken a link visit to the Sixth Form which was also reported to be positive. She shared students' comments regarding the timing of the trial exams, which was reiterated by Student governor E Holmes, who suggested that the timing could be improved and that she was aware this was currently being addressed by the Principal of the SFC.
- 16.79 The Chair was impressed at the level of commitment shown by Governors in the last few weeks making such a significant number of link visits which he believed was valued by staff.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

- 16.80 The Board received the Minutes (Part I) of the F&R Committee following its meeting held on 19 April 2016, which did not contain any recommendations for Board approval. R Dewar made reference to Minute 16.37 and the College's success in principle, in negotiating recognition rights for the wider teaching staff which now extended to UCU, UNISON, ATL and GMB; which had addressed a key risk within the Board assurance framework. Governors were also asked to note that the Committee had requested strategies for IT and International be brought forward to the next Committee meeting for consideration.

The Minutes were noted and received.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ SAFEGUARDING

- 16.81 M Wesson informed the Board that she had arranged a further link visit with P Briscoe in respect of Safeguarding and Prevent and that she continued to meet regularly with the Central Safeguarding team. R Pourali confirmed that she would be attending the next meeting of the E&D Strategy group and spoke of the success of the recent Jobs and Skills event which had provided many opportunities to promote the College.

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2016/17

- 16.82 The Board received the Calendar of Board and Committee meetings and key events for 2016/17. The Chair asked members to note that in the context of the Area Based Review, subject to the outcome of the final Steering Group meeting in June, it was possible that additional meetings may need to be scheduled into the Calendar.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- 16.83 The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 12 July 2016 at 4.00 pm.

End of Part I

Signed _____

Date _____ 2016