

BARNSELEY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD ON TUESDAY 13 MAY 2014

PART I

PRESENT:	G Beever	Governor
	P Bird	Governor (Staff)
	C Booth	Governor
	N Bowen	Governor
	S Brian	Governor
	H Cunningham	Governor (Student)
	A Eckford	Governor
	P Helm	Governor
	G McSkimming	Governor
	R Pourali	Governor
	M Wesson	Governor (Staff)
	H Worsley	Governor (Student)
IN ATTENDANCE:	A J Oaks	Clerk to the Governors
	C Webb	Deputy Principal
	D Harding	VP Quality and Adults
	P Singh	VP Comms and Recruitment
	T Johnson	VP Corporate Services
	L Miah	Director of Finance
	A Fairest	VP Property Development

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

14.50 Apologies had been received from J Thirkell and M Taylor.

The Chair welcomed Simon Brian to his first formal meeting.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

14.51 The Chair reminded members of the requirement to declare any financial or personal interests in any agenda items. Following consideration, no interests were declared however members reserved the right to declare any interests should any arise during the course of the meeting. The Principal and A Eckford declared an interest in the Wellspring Trust report, as Directors of the Trust.

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2014

14.52 The Minutes of the meeting (Part I) were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

14.53 The Board received a list of actions arising from previous meetings. The Clerk reported that the peer review had been delayed due to a change of Chairmanship at Hull College. It was hoped the initial meeting would be convened in June. The Clerk reported that following consultation, only one Governor had requested access to Board and Committee papers electronically.

MEMBERSHIP

14.54 The Clerk reported that Mrs Sharon Pickering had tendered her resignation from the Board on 2 April 2014 due to her continuing conflict of interests. Correspondence had been sent to the CEO of Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council with a view to seeking another LA representative on the Board. The Chair asked that thanks be formally recorded for the significant contribution made by Ms Pickering during her term of office.

- 14.55 It was proposed S Brian and M Wesson be appointed to the F&R Committee and Audit Committee respectively.

RESOLVED 14.55.1 To appoint Simon Brian to the Finance & Resources Committee
RESOLVED 14.55.2 To appoint Mia Wesson to the Audit Committee.

PRINTING SOLUTIONS

- 14.56 The Board received a report setting out the rationale to upgrade the College's printing and photocopying requirements and seeking approval to award a four year Contract to a new supplier which would achieve savings of £130,000 pa. The College had commissioned consultants to produce tender documentation based on specific criteria and tenders had been sought through the National Education Printers Agreement which had 12 registered suppliers. Three tenders had been evaluated based on price, quality and support, and two companies had made a presentation to the college on 2 May 2014. The Principal reported that since the report had been issued, the College had been offered the contract for 5 years, which would achieve savings of £150,000 pa during the period of the Contract. It was therefore recommended to award the Contract to Vision, at a cost of £191,000.

RESOLVED 14.56 To award the Contract for the College's printing and photocopying to Vision from August 2014 for a five year period..

UPDATE ON STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2013/14

Teaching and Learning

- 14.57 The Board received a report prepared by the VP Teaching and Learning, highlighting activities being undertaken to support improvements in teaching, learning and assessment across the college. The report was comprehensive and demonstrated a range of initiatives employed across the college. 90% of staff had participated in peer practice observations, with 317 staff engaging at least once, both within and across departments. The Principal stated that there was a significant emphasis on improving the use of IT in delivery of the curriculum, including rigour and detail of feedback to learners.
- 14.58 The activities included cross college English and Maths 'embedding' walkthroughs, which had commenced in November 2013 with a view to producing a good practice document to be shared across college. In terms of quality assurance, graded observations had been undertaken in line with College policy. A total of 236 observations had been undertaken as at 8 April with 95% of these graded good or better, against a target of 96%. Governors noted that this profile was 12.5% above the S4S GFE national average of 82.5%. 49% were graded 1, against a college target of 38%. No inadequate lessons had been observed.
- 14.59 Following an observation by Governors with regard to the cutting edge 'Teachmeet' initiative, the Principal commented that this allowed the sharing of good practice between the College and the Schools and was of great benefit to both.

H Cunningham joined the meeting.

- 14.60 Following further comment from Governors, the VP Q&A remarked that in respect of results and destinations particularly in English and Maths, the college was looking into a range of models to improve performance in the broader sense; moving away from lesson observation only towards a more rounded approach, which Governors fully supported.

Teaching and Learning internal and external observations

- 14.61 The Principal presented a further report highlighting the outcome of external curriculum reviews and observations carried out during February and March 2014 against the current internal profile. Since 2008 Protocol had been engaged to carry out external reviews and observations in order to validate the internal process, support the departments to improve and to identify areas of good practice.

- 14.62 A summary of the departments and curriculum areas involved in the reviews and observations had been provided. The final external report concluded that 'in relation to this sample of the College's work, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding'. The report highlighted key strengths, including "much inspirational teaching and learning across the breadth of provision". Further detail from the Report had been provided within the report for Governors' information.
- 14.63 The overall external grade profile was 92% good or better against the internal grade profile of 95%. The detail of the profile was summarised within the report, which provided a high level of assurance to the Board in terms of the quality of the College's teaching and learning.

Enterprise Strategy

- 14.64 The Board received a report highlighting progress in support of the Enterprise Action Plan, which encompassed three strands: enterprise, entrepreneurship and employability. Governors were provided with an overview of activities, which had involved 15 curriculum departments and 3,000 students. The programme focused on development of skills and offered support for business start-ups, promoting a culture of enterprising behaviours and aptitude amongst staff and students. The report was comprehensive and demonstrated the breadth and diversity of activities in the programme, support for which was provided through iTrust, with funding from Barnsley College Enterprising Futures Fund (BCEF).
- 14.65 Governors were encouraged to link with the Junior Leadership Team programme where it was hoped learners could be given an opportunity to shadow Governors in their day jobs, to help learners understand different industries and leadership roles. Dates of forthcoming events were provided, to encourage Governor engagement.

Maths and English

- 14.66 The VP Quality and Adults presented the update in support of the strategy to 'significantly improve the English and Maths of all full time students'. The report summarised the actions that had been taken in key focus areas, to improve performance in GCSE and to embed English and Maths into the curriculum, and included the appointment of Advanced Practitioners in both areas, the sharing of good practice, rigorous observations and walkthroughs, which Governors had noted during participation in OWLs.
- 14.67 Governors asked various questions regarding the engagement of learners and of progress, particularly for those learners who may find English and Maths more challenging. The VP explained that major efforts were being made to embed the subjects, such as smaller group sizes and more frequent sessions during the week to allow greater interaction with tutors.

STEM

- 14.68 The Deputy Principal presented a report highlighting progress against the STEM strategic priority, summarising the breadth of work undertaken within the Engineering and Construction departments to develop new HE provision. The AMRC department had continued to support the delivery of engineering apprenticeships and had praised the work the College had delivered. It was hoped this would lead to the college doubling the number of Apprentices for September 2014.
- 14.69 In terms of delivering outstanding teaching and learning in STEM, details were provided of the pilot pathfinder programme to recruit STEM graduates, which had progressed well. However the recruitment of highly experienced staff and managers in STEM subjects had been difficult and the College was actively seeking a resolution to this to mitigate potential risks. Governors noted the challenges and applauded the efforts being made to appoint more experienced staff. It was also noted that the completion of the new learning resource via the building of the new construction centre would have a positive impact on learners.

Higher Education

- 14.70 The Board received a report highlighting progress against the action plan to successfully transfer UCB and develop the whole College HE offer which included creating an HE management/ monitoring infrastructure and planning for 2014/15 and beyond.

The action plan built upon the work undertaken on the previous year's strategic priority 'to develop new markets in HE'. The Assistant Principal for HE was now based permanently in the UCB building at an operational level for all activities in the centre and it was believed that her presence had made a significant impact on the success of the transfer, which was reiterated by H Cunningham.

- 14.71 Details were provided of each strand, demonstrating excellent progress. The College was expected to achieve its HE income target for 2013/14, the activity in the UCB building making a much smaller contribution to central college costs than the rest of the College. The report concluded that the transfer had been successful, with plans to offer HE pathways across all vocational areas into the future. This would provide L3 learners who chose not to take up a place at University an opportunity to progress from FE to HE in Barnsley College.

Progression

- 14.72 The Board received a report from the VP Communications and Recruitment (VP C&R) summarising progress against the strategic priority 'increased student progression to sustainable employment and/ or HE'. In terms of collating data on progression, the College was ahead of other colleges in the sector with regard to implementing detailed tracking and monitoring systems. A table highlighting the current data was provided. An external agency had been engaged to undertake a survey on students' destinations six months after leaving the college. The Student Services department had organised 'Inspiring professionals' talks for learners to promote career opportunities which had resulted in a 20% increase in career appointments with the Work Skills Advisor. A 6% increase in UCAS applications this year was reported, with further details provided of University choices. The Report was noted and received.

LEARNER SURVEY RESULTS

- 14.73 The VP C&R presented an analysis of the Learner on-programme satisfaction survey carried out in January 2014. A total of 4,843 students had participated, compared to 4,688 the previous year. The survey, which had been benchmarked against 108 other providers within the sector, had been more comprehensive this year. A detailed analysis had been appended for Governors' information highlighting areas where improvements were required.
- 14.74 Governors raised questions with regard to the scores which placed the College in specific quartiles when benchmarked against other colleges, asking if there were any themes emerging that could be identified. The Chair referred to the results and asked student governors if they recognised any correlation with regard to their own personal experience and invited them to comment. Both students agreed that changes in staffing caused disruption to the organisation of the course, but in terms of assessment, H Cunningham disagreed with the score on a personal level, her experience being more positive. The Principal stated that the analysis was not as anticipated and that management would be drilling down to resolve the issues, mainly through the learner forum process, which Governors now had the opportunity to observe. Following a request from Governors the VP undertook to ensure the percentage of those participating in the survey would be included in the next [exit] survey.

RECRUITMENT 2014/15

- 14.75 A report was presented to highlight the current position with regard to recruitment for 2014/15 which had slowed down in the last 2 years due to known demographics. The current financial plan assumed recruitment for 14/15 to be in line with the number recruited this year, estimated to be 4,675. Details of applications and course offers were provided, together with action being taken to increase the number of new applications. In order to improve progression for 16-18 year olds, the College was working with all departments to ensure learners receive appropriate IAG or progress internally, targeting IAG at learners who may be at risk, and on re-enrolment in May 2014 to monitor activity against departmental forecasts.
- 14.76 The VP C&R explained that the College was also using the Learner Support Fund to attract more applicants. It was noted that the main competitors to progression for this cohort in addition to local schools and colleges were the opening of the new Academy in Chapeltown, and New College Pontefract SFC. The report provided comprehensive details of planned recruitment activities in order to achieve funding targets.

Governors raised questions about marketing, and the Principal explained that the College's strategy was to put more effort into school liaison teams, including primary schools, rather than on publicity as this would provide more security in the longer term.

The Report was noted and received.

APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE

- 14.77 The Board received a report summarising apprenticeship activity, forecast success rates 2013/14, learner and employer survey results and the College's plans for growth of provision. To date 1800 apprentices were in learning, compared to 1500 in 2012/13. The ERU, working with businesses and taking feedback from employers, had expanded the apprenticeship provision over the last year. Work with the NHS had expanded to securing contracts with Sheffield and Barnsley Hospitals, the latter providing a long term opportunity for growth.
- 14.78 The ERU had been pivotal in promoting the One Barnsley Pledge, and over 110 businesses in the area had now signed up, recruiting 2.5% of their workforce as apprentices. The final overall success rate for 2013/13 was 85% . Learner surveys and Employer survey results were noted.
- 14.79 The 2012 funding reforms, which had been followed by the Government's implementation plan, were subsequently followed by new funding principles in which the employer would be required to co-invest. Consultation was still underway although it was clear that employers were not in favour. Implications for the College included the loss of Apprenticeship numbers and funding, uncertainties with regard to employer contribution and lack of SME engagement. The Principal stated that these risk factors were difficult to predict and that reports would be presented to the F&R Committee to enable Governors to monitor the situation. In the meantime, Governors were fully supportive of the College's approach to maintaining strong relationships with employers.

WORK BASED LEARNING UPDATE

- 14.80 The VP funding, data and compliance reported that the overall success rate for 2012/13 was lower than reported previous due to a software coding error. The actual overall success rate was 85% and expected to rise to around 90% at the year end, approximately 15% above the national average.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- 14.81 The Board received a report summarised the outcome of the staff survey undertaken in December 2013. The VP Corporate Services highlighted key points arising from the survey, commenting that all results with the exception of one question, were ahead of external comparators. At above 90% the score maintained the trend over the last three years. A Stress analysis based on HSE benchmarks had been included and showed the College to be well ahead in terms of national benchmarks. In response to a question from R Pourali regarding the break-down of the analysis in terms of age, gender and ethnicity, the VP explained that since 2009 Trade Unions had objected to such an analysis being undertaken and therefore results were analysed by department and did not differentiate between identified protected characteristics. Recognising that the Board had not received this level of detail, the VP was invited to highlight any areas of concern. The Principal shared further details with Governors, stating that SMT were fully aware of the issues and were taking appropriate action.

The Report was noted and received.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- 14.82 The Principal's report highlighted events and activities that had taken place since March. A successful open day took place on Saturday 5 April with 571 attending. Feedback in respect to the helpfulness of staff and of the facilities had been extremely positive. The progression fair and the Apprenticeship Pledge events had taken place in March and had also been very successful, the latter being attended by over 50 key local business people.

The Report was noted and received.

WELLSPRING ACADEMY TRUST UPDATE

Declarations of interest were noted and the Chair invited the Deputy Principal to present the report.

- 14.83 By way of allowing the Board to maintain oversight of the College's sponsorship of the Trust, a report had been prepared by the Deputy Principal. An update on Directors, Members and personnel was provided, together with key activities that had taken place during the year, which included the creation and embedding of the infrastructure to support the Trust. Schools that had successfully transferred to the Trust included Forest Academy, with Springwell School, the Barnsley PRU and Grimsby PRU due to convert in the coming weeks. A further primary school and another PRU in Grimsby were expected to convert in September 2014 and an application to set up a cross phase Free School in Leeds was shortly to be submitted. Conversion of the schools in Barnsley had been beset by high levels of legal processes during the last two years, severely delaying the programme.
- 14.84 The Trust had been unsuccessful in its bid for additional funding for Forest Academy but feedback from EFA was such that further bids would be considered. A bid for capacity funding had been partially successful, with £59,000 being granted to support school improvement work and curriculum development. In 2013 the College had agreed a loan of up to £200,000 to cover central office costs in the interim period. The Trust was currently in deficit and in debt to the College by £168,000. With the conversion of the forthcoming Academies into the Trust, the Trust was expected to break even at the 2014/15 year end, with management fee income of approximately £260,000. The Deputy Principal stated that if the planned conversions were completed as expected it was unlikely the current loan to the Trust would need to be increased and as the Trust continued to expand, the loan would be repaid.
- 14.85 Noting that Forest Academy was due for an Ofsted inspection, Governors raised questions with regard to the potential reputational risks, particularly the need to demonstrate significant improvement. The Principal agreed and reported that engagement between the new Head, parents and staff at the Forest Academy and the WAT were excellent and had already made an impact,
- 14.86 Following a proposal from the Chair, members considered the frequency with which reports should be presented to the Board on the Wellspring Academy Trust to maintain the appropriate oversight. Following discussion it was proposed that a formal update including the financial position with the College be provided twice a year to the Board, and that the Principal incorporate progress updates as part of the Principal's report for each Board meeting.

RESOLVED 14.86 That a formal update on the Wellspring Trust Academy be provided to the Board twice a year with progress reports incorporated into the Principal's report to each Board meeting.

INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

- 14.87 The Director for International, David Wolstenholme, was welcomed to the meeting to make a presentation to the Board.
- 14.88 Further to the Board's approval in May 2013 to expand the A level provision, Governors were informed that following the successful submission to the Chinese Ministry of Education to recognise the partnership between Jinling and Barnsley, Sinocampus were seeking to expand provision to a further two schools in China in August 2014. From the initial cohort of Year 10 students recruited in August 2013, all 34 were on target to progress to their second year of study. The College had shortlisted potential A Level teachers with a view to them being in place for the September 2014 start in Nanjing.
- 14.89 Further to the discussion that took place with Opal College in London, opportunities to develop a partnership were in place to attract students from Qatar and Bangladesh.
- 14.90 An update was provided on the development of overseas collaboration, establishing satellite campuses in Hong Kong, China, Vietnam, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Jakarta. Three UK Universities had been approached to become validating partners for accrediting MBAs and

Masters degrees in Accounting and Finance. Vocational work was also progressing in relation to the Hospitality and Catering initiative in Nigeria and the vocational College partnership with the Red Cross in the Philippines. Governors asked several questions for further clarification regarding capacity to expand, financial viability and risks. Governors sought further information regarding the link with Nigeria as a result of the recent adverse media publicity. Mr Wolstenholme stated that in the interim the students would travel to Barnsley; however in the future there was an expectation that staff would travel overseas. Governors were given assurances that the appropriate procedures would be implemented to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff and learners, including risk assessments based on commonwealth and government advice; if conditions were to change the College would be in a position where it could withdraw. The Chair thanked Mr Wolstenholme for the report.

D Wolstenholme left the meeting.

FEEDBACK FROM LINK VISITS AND OWLS

- 14.91 The Chair invited feedback from Governors who had undertaken OWLs or link visits. M Wesson reported that she had recently visited the Hair and Beauty department and shadowed a learner with a hearing impairment. She commented that she had been grateful for the opportunity to participate in the OWLs, and that the visit had provided her with a different perspective on the learner experience.

COMMITTEE MINUTES

- 14.92 The following Unconfirmed draft Minutes of Committee meetings were received and noted.

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| 14.92.1 | Governance & Search Committee – meeting held on 11 March 2014 |
| 14.92.2 | Audit Committee – meeting held on 27 March 2014 |
| 14.92.3 | Finance & Resources Committee – meeting held on 10 April 2014. |

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AND SAFEGUARDING

- 14.93 R Pourali reported on her recent attendance at the College's E&D strategy group meetings which had included reviewing equality impact assessments. For information, she reported that 360 Engagement were holding an Equality Conference on 21 June 2014 at Barnsley Town Hall and that this was an excellent opportunity for the College to become involved. Details would be circulated via the Clerk.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

- 14.94 The next meeting would be held on 15 July 2014 at 4.00 pm.
- 14.95 Governors were reminded that an Equality and Diversity training session would take place on 3 June 2014 and that the Excellence Awards would take place at the Metrodome on Thursday 26 June. In addition, a Self assessment event on 8 October had been added to the Governors Calendar of meetings.

Signed _____ Chair

Date _____