

## **BARNSELY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD ON TUESDAY 16 DECEMBER 2014**

#### **PART I**

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##### **PRESENT:**

G Beever	Governor
P Bird	Governor (Staff)
C Booth	Governor
N Bowen	Governor
S Brian	Governor
S Burkinshaw	Governor (Student)
A Eckford	Governor
P Helm	Governor
C Partridge	Governor
D Shepherd	Governor
M Taylor	Governor
J Thirkell	Governor (Chair)
J Ward	Governor (Student)
M Wesson	Governor (Staff)

##### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

A J Oaks	Clerk to the Governors
D Harding	VP Quality and Adults
C Webb	Deputy Principal
T Johnson	VP Corporate Services
J Miccoli	VP Teaching, Learning & Student Support
P Briscoe	AP Access to Learning

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#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

14.213 Apologies were received from G McSkimming and R Pourali.

#### **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

14.214 The Chair reminded members of the requirement to declare any financial or personal interests in any agenda items. C Partridge's standing declaration was noted.

#### **MINUTES**

##### **Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2014**

14.215 The Minutes of the Board meeting (Part I) held on 21 October 2014 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

#### **MATTERS ARISING**

14.216 The Board received a list of actions arising from previous meetings. The Principal was pleased to report that in addition to The Forest Academy, four schools had joined Wellspring Academy Trust on 1 December 2014. Springwell Special Academy, Springwell Alternative provision Academy, Grimsby Phoenix Park PRU and Grimsby Young People's Centre. The Academies would be known as Springwell Academy, Phoenix Park Academy and Sevenhills Academy. Work with regard to Elements Primary continued at a pace and the Trust was also in discussion with other schools with respect to joining the Trust.

14.217 As a result of the delays in conversion, the Trust required a letter of support from the college to enable the financial statements for the Trust to be signed off. The Principal

reminded members of the discussion at the previous Board meeting regarding extending the debt to the Trust, which had been agreed. The Vice Chair signed the Letter of Support which would be presented to the Wellspring Board on 17 December 2014.

- 14.218 With regard to the action point on data from the learner survey, it was agreed to defer presentation of further information to Governors to the March 2015 meeting.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF STUDENT GOVERNOR**

- 14.219 The Student Union had elected Jayne Ward for appointment as HE student governor. Introductions were made and Jayne was formally welcomed to the meeting.

**RESOLVED 14.217      to appoint Ms Jayne Ward as a member of the Board until 31 July 2014.**

#### **RESIGNATIONS**

- 14.220 The Chair reported that A Eckford, Vice Chair, had tendered his resignation from the Board with effect from 8 February 2015 as he was relocating to the north west. The Vice Chair would attend the seminar in February and Chair the F&R meeting on 3 February before standing down from his position.
- 14.221 The Chair reported that Gary Vaughton had tendered his resignation earlier in the month as he had found it increasingly difficult to attend meetings due to work commitments. He had indicated he would wish to continue to have some involvement with the college and to return to the Board should time allow. The Chair commented that the Clerk had begun work immediately with a view to recruiting new members and two applications had already been received which would be reviewed by the G&S committee at its next meeting.

#### **AUDIT and FINANCE & RESOURCES BUSINESS**

- 14.222 The Minutes of the Audit committee and Finance & Resources Committee meetings held on 3 December 2014 were provided for information, with reference being made to the business conducted and recommendations in respect of the audited financial statements and letter of support for Think Barnsley, by the Chair of each Committee. A Eckford reported that the Committee had expressed its concern with regard to 16-18 learner numbers and thanked the Principal for forwarding the additional information requested, which had provided further clarification of the position. N Bowen commented that the Quality and Standards Committee would be looking at the position in detail at its next meeting.
- 14.223 D Shepherd referred to F&R Minute 14.145 and the reference to enrolling extra borough learners to the sixth form college. Whilst he acknowledged that this was an aspect the college should investigate, he believed it was far more critical to ensure the curriculum offer was competitive, a comment that was reiterated by other Governors. The Chair added that the Q&S Committee would be considering the curriculum offer as part of its cycle of business.

#### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE BOARD AND ACCOUNTING OFFICER**

- 14.224 The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the annual report to the Board which provided a positive and sound opinion on the College's assurance framework. The Clerk advised the Board that under the new audit framework, the report would be submitted to the SFA together with the Financial Statements.

**RESOLVED 14.224.1      that the College's audit arrangements, framework of governance, risk management and control, and processes were adequate for ensuring the effective and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the safeguarding of its assets, and**

**RESOLVED 14.224.2** that the report be approved for submission to the SFA together with the Financial Statements.

#### **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND EXTERNAL AUDIT MANAGEMENT FINDINGS FOR YEAR ENDING 31 JULY 2014**

14.225 The year end accounts reported an operating surplus of £1,350,000. Overall the college had exceeded its budget and forecast operating surplus. EBITDA of £5m was significantly better than budget. The Director of Finance stated that further to the F&R and Audit Committee meetings, the funding reconciliation from the SFA had been received. Previously in the accounts there had been a provision of £78k for the adult skills budget. The SFA had required a £7k claw back, therefore income was understated by £71k. The accounts had been unadjusted and this would be carried forward. The year-end position with regard to the college's subsidiaries was summarised, with Think Barnsley Limited being reliant upon a letter of support from the College to enable it to continue trading.

**RESOLVED 14.225.1** To approve the Financial statements for the College and its subsidiaries

**RESOLVED 14.225.2** That the Chair and Principal be authorised to sign the Financial Statements and Letter of Representation for submission to the SFA by 31 December 2014

**RESOLVED 14.225.3** That the Chair be authorised to sign the Letter of support to Think Barnsley College.

#### **COLLEGE PAY AWARD**

14.226 The Board were asked to consider and approve a general pay award to be applied to all Barnsley College pay points subject to confirmation of affordability. The report was presented by the VP Corporate Services, who informed members that the proposed 1% pay award was in line with the AoC recommendation. The cost to the college of making the pay award was £120,000. The Board was fully supportive to implementation of the pay award.

**RESOLVED 14.226** To implement a 1% pay award to all Barnsley College pay points with effect from 1 January 2015.

#### **COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT 2013/14**

14.227 The VP Quality and Adults presented a summary report to the Board highlighting the outcomes of the self-assessment process for 2013/14. The grade for overall effectiveness was 'Outstanding'. The report identified strengths and areas for improvement against each of the college's strategic objectives. The VP explained how the withdrawal of many of the short programmes had impacted on overall success rates, although performance was better and improving on key qualifications. He also explained about the work being undertaken to improve maths and English by recruiting more teachers who can teach GCSE. The importance of continuing to develop links with LEPs to ensure the curriculum offer would meet the changing economic needs was endorsed by the Board. In respect of the Ofsted inspection framework, the VP emphasised the impact of the changes that had been discussed at the Q&S Committee. It was anticipated that the framework would be agreed by March 2015, for implementation from September 2015.

14.228 At 12% of the whole College provision, improving the performance in the SFC was a priority for improvement. Commenting on SFC performance, D Shepherd emphasised the significance of driving improvements given the capital investment on the new build, and asked for further information from the VP PD on the proposed strategy. The VP responded, assuring governors that new experienced staff and managers had been appointed and progress in-year was being rigorously monitored – in short the college had adopted a whole new approach to monitoring the performance in this area. More care was also being taken in the selection and entry process. The Vice Chair stated that following a meeting with the

Deputy Principal and Principal of the Sixth Form College, he was pleased and reassured by the prompt actions that were being taken by management to bring about the necessary improvements. He added that the use of ALPS, predictions and targets and holding learners to account had given him a great degree of confidence in the new approach.

- 14.229 In response to a question from the Chair, the VP advised the Board that the whole college SAR would be available in January. He added that management would continue to focus on areas of underperformance and ensure the quality of teaching and learning was reflected in outcomes across the whole college. Following discussion the Board endorsed the overall grade of Outstanding.

#### **QUALITY AND STANDARDS BUSINESS**

- 14.230 The Board received the Minutes of the first meeting of the Committee held on 11 November 2014. N Bowen, Chair of the Committee assured the Board that the Committee would be scrutinising the data in both good and poor performing areas and challenging management to ensure progress was being made against action plans. The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled for 26 February which would enable the Committee to report on progress to the Board in March.
- 14.231 The Board received a summary report on Teaching and Learning from the VP T&L covering the first term. Following a question from the Chair regarding the teaching and learning observation process and excellence in teaching, the VP said that an Advanced Practitioner in English and maths had been appointed who was currently undertaking further training which would be rolled out to staff in January 2015. Governors sought further details of the staff development programme and the actions being taken regarding assessment and feedback. The VP was confident that the new approach was being well embedded and said some staff had made giant leaps in confidence teaching English and maths.
- 14.232 The Assistant Principal commented that the college was currently on a journey whereby they were working towards a situation where learners were being taught English and maths across all classes and early evidence indicated that the new approach was working well. Further questions were raised regarding the level of staff qualified to teach English and maths. The VP advised of the position and of the resources being made available to trainee teachers. Following an observation by J Ward in respect of access to the resources by students, the VP stated that the college would address this issue to allow trainee teachers access to staff ILT areas.

#### **EVALUATION OF OUTCOMES AGAINST 2013/14 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

- 14.233 The Principal presented a report summarising performance against high level strategic objectives and quality targets set out within the 2013/14 Development Plan. An evaluation of the FE effectiveness targets showed the College maintaining its overall Grade of outstanding in terms of self assessment. In terms of the FE success rate target, while overall learner success rates had been achieved, the college had not met its targets for success rates in AS programmes, A2 programmes, learners 19+ on long courses and in Apprenticeships. High level equality success rate targets indicated the College had closed the gaps and achieved its targets.
- 14.234 In FE progression and destinations, all targets had been achieved except progression from AS programmes to A2 programmes. HE effectiveness targets had all been achieved. The FE and HE responsiveness targets had all been achieved with the exception of recruitment, where the College was 443 learners down on target for 16-18 year olds. The Principal emphasised that where targets had not been met, Governors should recognise that the college had performed extremely well.

## **UCB CHARTER**

14.235 The Board were asked to consider and approve a student Charter for UCB. Following the QAA interim visit in March 2013 it had been recommended to integrate existing information into a single HE Student Charter or similar. A further QAA visit to monitor progress was planned for March 2015. Following consultation with staff and students and input from the Student Union, the Charter was proposed for approval.

**RESOLVED 14.235 To approve the UCB Charter.**

## **ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

14.236 The Board received the annual report, presented by the AP Access to Learning, which contained several inspirational case studies in addition to the data. Referring to key points for Governors' information, the AP said the College was well ahead of the borough in terms of its recruitment of BME learners at 4.1% 16-18 and 22.7%. The College continued to try and close performance gaps, and based on the data for the end of 2014, one area of focus for 2014/15 in addition to progress and destinations, was to close gaps in success rates of adults on short programmes, achievement rates of 16-18 ethnic minority learners on short programmes, and success and retention rates of 19+ males on long programmes. Monitoring would begin at departmental level through performance review.

The Report was received. The Clerk requested Governors retain the report for future reference as part of the E&D training later in the year.

## **PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

14.237 The Principal's report highlighted activities and events that had taken place since October. The Graduation Ceremony that had taken place on 7 November had been extremely successful and had been followed by another open day that received a satisfaction rate of 94%. The Principal reported that 75 staff had taken industrial action during the strike in November and that further strike action was planned in February 2015. The VP CS commented that the JE process should be concluded by March 2015.

*C Partridge left the meeting.*

## **STRATEGIC SEMINAR PROGRAMME**

14.238 The programme for the strategic seminar had been formulated by a small group of Governors working together with the Principal and Deputy Principal. Two external speakers had been secured to provide a national and local context to inform the event and a group of employers would be invited to join a discussion panel. Students would also attend and participate in governor/learner question time session.

## **GOVERNOR/ LEARNER ACTIVITIES FEEDBACK**

14.239 Governors who had engaged in learner forums, link visits and observations of teaching and learning this term provided feedback to the Board. S Burkinshaw commented that observing a formal observation from a Governor's perspective was interesting, particularly understanding what the tutor was looking for in a good/outstanding lesson. M Wesson had observed a L2 Diploma in Sport formal lesson observation and had been impressed with the process, particularly how English and maths was integrated and of the use of ILT in different learning techniques. She had also attended a Learning for Living and Work learner forum and was impressed with the opportunity all learners were given to speak and to be listened to, with SMT taking forward points of action.

The Chair thanked governors for their feedback. It was noted that the 2 further dates set aside in the calendar of governor meetings would be cancelled as Governors were choosing dates and times at their convenience now that activities had been extended. The Clerk agreed to circulate a revised calendar of meetings.

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ SAFEGUARDING**

14.240 The Chair reported that she had undertaken a safeguarding link visit on 25 November with the AP Access to learning and the Safeguarding team leader. The Chair commented that from the evidence in the quality of work undertaken since her last visit, it was very clear that the college had moved forward significantly and that interaction with staff and students and the practices in place within the College were exemplary.

14.241 The Assistant Principal proposed an E&D link visit be arranged for R Pourali, which the Clerk agreed to arrange.

## **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

14.242 The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 17 March 2015 at 4.00 pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chair

Date \_\_\_\_\_