

BARNSELEY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD ON TUESDAY 14 JULY 2015

PART I

PRESENT:

P Bird	Governor (staff)	G McSkimming	Governor
C Booth	Governor	C Partridge	Governor
N Bowen	Governor (Vice Chair)	R Pourali	Governor
S Brian	Governor	D Shepherd	Governor
S Burkinshaw	Governor (FE Student)	J Thirkell	Governor (Chair)
R Dewar	Governor	S Turton	Governor
R Kent	Governor (HE Student)	M Wesson	Governor (staff)

IN ATTENDANCE:

A J Oaks	Clerk to the Board	P Singh	VP Comms and Recruitment
C Webb	Deputy Principal	A Fairest	VP Property Development
L Miah	Director of Finance	J Miccoli	VP Teaching & Learning
T Johnson	VP Corporate Services	P Briscoe	AP Access to Learning

Prior to the start of formal business the Learner Voice Adviser (Clare Hill) made a presentation to the Board on behalf of the Student Union, highlighting activities undertaken in 2014/15 against the agreed budget. The Board were very impressed with how the SU had engaged students and promoted its activities within college. In response to questions from Governors, Clare explained how officers were elected, the approach used to establish campaigns and monitor engagement and ways in which the SU engaged with wider groups in terms of equality and diversity and promoted events. Clare encouraged governors to attend Learner Forums which would demonstrate the breadth of activity and engagement across a variety of areas. The Chair thanked Clare for attending.

The Learner Voice Adviser left the meeting.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

15.117 Apologies were received from G Beever and J Ward.

15.118 The Chair welcomed Ryan Kent, who had been elected as the next HE Student Governor and thanked Steven Burkinshaw for his contribution to the Board over the last year as the FE Student governor.

15.119 The Board formally acknowledged the death of Mr Michael Taylor on 14 May 2015. Mr Taylor had made a significant contribution to the Board and Audit Committee over a number of years.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

15.120 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. C Partridge's standing declaration was noted.

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2015

15.121 The Minutes of the Board meeting (Part I) held on 12 May 2015 were agreed as a true and accurate record subject to a minor amendment to para 15.73, 4th to last line, where

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“Director of Finance, was amended to ‘Deputy Principal’. The Minutes were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

- 15.122 The Board received a list of actions arising from previous meetings. The Chair was pleased to report that R Dewar had volunteered to become a Director of the College’s two subsidiaries. With regard to 15.84: monitoring of the risk register, it was noted this would be actioned from September onwards. With regard to the Chair’s term of office, the Chair stated that it was her intention to remain with the Board until Christmas and to continue in the role of Chair until that time. This formed a separate agenda item at the end of the meeting.

BOARD APPOINTMENTS

- 15.123 The Chair reported that the G&S Committee had met on 7 July 2015 to consider applications received for membership of the Board. The Minutes of the meeting were tabled to members. The Committee were recommending that following a successful interview, Professor Roger Eccleston from Sheffield Hallam University be appointed to the Board. Following due consideration, it was:

RESOLVED 15.123.1 to appoint Professor Roger Eccleston as a member of the Board for a term of office of four years.

RESOLVED 15.123.2 That Professor Eccleston serve as a member of the Quality and Standards Committee.

- 15.124 The Student Union had elected Ryan Kent and Ella Holmes as student governors from 1 September 2015. Ella had been appointed as SU President and in line with the Student Union Constitution was automatically elected as a Student (FE) governor. Ryan had duly been elected as HE Student governor. The Board were content to ratify the appointments in accordance with the Board’s Standing Orders regarding term of office.

RESOLVED 15.125 To appoint Ella Holmes as a student member (FE) of the Board;

RESOLVED 15.126 To appoint Ryan Kent as a student member (HE) of the Board.

CODE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE FOR ENGLISH COLLEGES

- 15.127 The Board received a report summarising the purpose of the Code which was presented for adoption. The Clerk explained that as with the previous Foundation Code, the College would report on compliance against the Code within the corporate governance statement in the Accounts. The new Code was based on core values of college governance to support governors and senior leaders develop and maintain excellence in governance. The report summarised the core values and ten principal responsibilities within the Code, against which the Board would measure its effectiveness and map compliance. Governors were content to adopt the Code as a general set of principles and would look to further review how the Board might comply with each. Further to consideration, it was:

RESOLVED 15.128 To adopt the general principles of the Code of Good Governance from 1 August 2015

RESOLVED 15.129 To delegate responsibility to the Governance & Search Committee to review the principles and determine an appropriate mechanism to enable the Board to measure performance and compliance against the Code.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES BUSINESS

- 15.130 The Chair of F&R referred to the meeting held on 7 July 2015, the Minutes of which had been circulated by email in advance of the meeting. Paper copies were tabled to members. The

Chair summarised the business that had been conducted at the meeting, emphasising the rigour and scrutiny given by the Committee to the proposed budget and three year financial plan. Assurances were given that it was a compliant budget that met or exceeded financial targets and the Board were asked to note the assumptions in terms of income and potential growth in HE, international and projects and the need for close scrutiny both by management and the F&R committee. With regard to expenditure, a prudent pay forecast had been made and the Chair believed that the performance review process remained an appropriate way to ensure delivery of the budget. In terms of the cash position, the Chair had requested the committee receive a more visible forward profile at its next meeting and that a strategic conversation around securing financial stability should take place at the annual strategic seminar where there would be the opportunity for in-depth challenge and debate.

- 15.132 In response to a question from C Partridge regarding covenants, the Director of Finance explained what movements in performance would trigger a potential breach. Whilst it was recognised to be fairly low risk, the Board were anxious that management maintained close scrutiny and open discussions with the banks. In response to a question from S Turton, the Director of Finance reported that specific members of the senior management team had been assigned as strategic leads for the areas of largest growth. Providing assurance to members, the Deputy Principal commented that a significant amount of time was expended by the SMT reviewing the implications and impact of government policy on the financial position.

RESOLVED 15.132.1 To approve the Budget and three year financial plan from 2015/16 to 2017/18. Including SFA financial health grade of Satisfactory

RESOLVED 15.132.2 To approve £1,150k of annual capital for 2015/16

RESOLVED 15.132.3 To approve Sub contracting costs of £669k in 2015/16

RESOLVED 15.132.4 That full consideration be given to sustaining financial stability at the annual strategic seminar.

- 15.133 Further recommendations had been made by the Committee which were endorsed by the Board.

RESOLVED 15.133.1 To approve the Memoranda of Understanding between the College and its subsidiaries and the CiC.

RESOLVED 15.133.2 To approve the Financial Regulations.

AUDIT COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 15.134 The Chair of Audit, C Partridge, presented the Minutes (Part I & II) of the meeting held on 2 July 2015 and summarised the business that had been conducted. The Minutes demonstrated the rigour and scrutiny given by the Committee to the business at the meeting, clearly highlighting it was discharging its responsibilities for monitoring risk and internal control and governance arrangements effectively. The Chair commented that at the request of the Committee in the spring term, management would be presenting a Board Assurance Framework (BAF) for discussion to the next meeting together with a revised risk register that would be brought to the Board for approval. Internal audit would also have a focus on the BAF. She referred to the lengthy debate that had taken place with regard to the KIS data and how the Committee were assured that actions had been taken by management to address the findings.

- 15.135 The Audit Committee had been content with the proposed amendments to the College's Financial Regulations from a controls perspective and noted that further amendments may be necessary post-SORP. The Annual Internal Audit Plan had been revised and agreed by the Audit Committee subsequent to the Committee meeting, and was recommended for Board approval. The Chair commented that three days had been set aside in the Plan for a

review of Corporate Governance (Board effectiveness); however should the Board commission a separate external review of Governance, this would be replaced by another area of high risk. In response to a question from D Shepherd regarding formulation of the Plan, the Chair of Audit assured the Board that it was a high risk focused plan and that considerable discussion had taken place at committee regarding the appropriateness of the areas identified; with changes being requested, for example to include the College's new finance system within this year's work and a suggestion that other areas where substantial assurance had been given year on year had been deferred to 2016/17..

- 15.136 The Chair commented that the Committee had reviewed its Terms of Reference and were satisfied that they reflected the requirements of the JACOP. Members of Audit had been asked to complete a 'Committee Effectiveness survey for evaluation at the year end which would be analysed and outcomes discussed in the autumn term. To conclude its business, the Committee had considered the performance of the Auditors against agreed KPIs and based on the report were recommending their reappointment.

RESOLVED 15.136.1 To approve the Financial Regulations.

RESOLVED 15.136.2 To approve the Anti Fraud Policy, the Anti Fraud Response Plan and the Anti Bribery Policy with a further review to take place in two years;

RESOLVED 15.136.3 To approve the Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2015/16

RESOLVED 15.136.4 To reappoint ICCA as internal auditors for 2015/16

RESOLVED 15.136.5 To reappoint Grant Thornton UK LLP as financial statements auditors for year ending 31 July 2015.

COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2015/16

- 15.137 The Board received the Development Plan 2015/16 for consideration and approval. Strategic priorities for 2015/16 had been agreed at the annual seminar and approved by the Board in March 2015. Top level actions plans had subsequently been developed by SMT and link governors had been invited to have oversight of these. It was proposed that R Eccleston take the lead for SP 6, given his area of expertise. Top level action plans were also being developed in the four key statutory areas: Safeguarding, SEN, E&D and H&S. Referring to the targets summarised within the report, the Principal commented that the data presented to the F&R and Q&S Committees and the Board throughout the year would allow Governors to scrutinise and challenge performance against targets efficiently and that if governors wished to drill down further, the Master Target file, which would be issued in September would facilitate this.

- 15.138 C Partridge observed that the targets set out in detail within the Plan might be better represented to the Board in a rag rated format at the end of each term, to align with link governor monitoring visits. The Chair agreed, and suggested this be co-ordinated for Governors at appropriate points during the year without causing disruption to management. S Brian observed that the GCSE success rate target for Maths and English had been lowered from 48% to 45% in 15/16. The AP Access to Learning explained that 45% was well above the NA but the decision was taken by the College to lower the target due to condition of funding rules and increased pressure for learners to achieve. In terms of performance against the current year's targets, the Board would receive the outturn report in late Autumn.

- 15.139 The Chair noted that the Link governors for the statutory areas of Safeguarding and SEN would need to be determined prior to her standing down as Chair.

RESOLVED 15.140 To approve the Development Plan 2015/16.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

- 15.141 The Board received the Safeguarding Policy which had been revised and updated to reflect current statutory guidance. The Assistant Principal for Access to Learning summarised the key changes, which reflected the guidance and set out responsibilities of key staff, the role of governors in safeguarding, allegations made against staff and photographing learners under the age of 18. The Policy was extremely comprehensive in terms of the College's commitment to complying with its duties and safeguarding its learners. The Policy also set out clearly the duties and responsibilities of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, a position currently held by the AP Access to Learning, with the support of a Deputy. A Safeguarding Team Leader was appointed as Operational Safeguarding Lead.
- 15.142 It was proposed that the designated Governor for safeguarding should make at least two link visits per year to ensure the College was meeting its statutory duties in this regard to provide additional assurance to the Board over and above scrutiny of the Annual Safeguarding report. The AP added that in terms of the new CiF, management would maintain a strong focus on leadership and management within this area.
- 15.143 The AP advised that a separate Policy for Prevent duties was being developed due to the substantial national guidance issued as a result of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Following a question from the Chair on timing, it was confirmed that the Board would receive the new Policy at the October Board meeting.
- 15.144 The Chair reported that she had completed a safeguarding link visit and would be providing a written report as required. Further to the visit, she advised the Board that all governors would undertake Level 2 Safeguarding and Prevent training in the autumn term. She urged members to consider the need for a governor to take up the link governor role for safeguarding and who this might be, given specific awareness and background knowledge were required. The Chair commented on how impressed she was with the distance travelled by the College in terms of meeting its requirements and complying with the legislation and guidance, adding that the model implemented was extremely robust and impressive.

RESOLVED 15.145 To approve the Safeguarding Policy 2015.

SEN POLICY

- 15.146 The AP Access to Learning presented a SEN Policy for consideration and approval. This was the first such Policy to be implemented at the College and had been developed as a result of statutory guidance issued by the DfE in the SEN Code of Practice. The Policy was very comprehensive, reflecting the guidance. The Chair of the Board had volunteered to be the designated link governor for SEN for 2015/16. In this role she would undertake link visits to satisfy herself and the Board that the College was complying with its legal duties. The AP referred to the local authorities the college was currently working with in respect of High Needs Learners and how the college was aiming to reduce levels of support for these learners, and increase independence. Under the new CiF, a separate judgement would be given for SEN therefore it remained an area of high focus.
- 15.147 The Chair reported that she had completed a SEN link visit and that the number of conversions completed was quite significant in addition to audits that had taken place in the area, all with positive outcomes. She commented that this was a great credit to the college and staff within the department. She added that the evidence she had seen demonstrated that the staff training had made a difference to the quality of special needs delivery and interventions that would be scrutinised at inspection.
- 15.148 The Principal asked that Governors endorse the statement within the Policy regarding the College's stance with regard to LA financial support. *"Where there is significant discrepancy between Barnsley College and local authority assessments of High Needs, students will not be enrolled until an agreement on High Needs status and payment for support has been reached."*

RESOLVED 15.149 To approve the SEN Policy 2015, incorporating the statement as agreed.

STUDENT UNION BUDGET

15.150 The Board received a report summarising spend against the SU budget for 2014/15. As highlighted prior to the start of the meeting, a total of £9,426 had been spent against a budget of £10,000. For 2015/16 the SU were seeking approval of a £14,000 budget for planned areas of activity which were highlighted within the report.

RESOLVED 15.150 To approve a budget of £14,000 to the Student Union for 2015/16

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES IN SAUDI ARABIA

15.151 The Board received a report summarising opportunities for technical and vocational education with Interserve (formerly ESG) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and seeking approval to enter into a contractual arrangement for the work. Interserve were to operate three vocational colleges in KSA plus a National Construction Polytechnic as a strategic partnership initiative with the Consolidated Construction Company (CCC), which was the largest construction company in KSA. Interserve had also secured a capability building contract to support other vocational college improve performance and a contract to establish and operate a specialist Inspection Technology & Quality Assurance National Institute (ITQAN), to train industrial inspectors and QA personnel to work in the oil, gas, petrochemical, power and metals industries.

15.152 The College had been approached by Interserve to develop educational content and to produce curriculum materials and resources for the ITQAN College. A detailed scope of works had been provided including costings and a timeline for delivery from September 2015 to August 2016. Interserve had agreed to pay the college quotation of £150k which included a 25% profit margin. Governors agreed to take the opportunity forward.

RESOLVED 15.153 to approve entering into a contract with Interserve.

CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY

15.154 The Report was deferred to a future meeting.

RECRUITMENT UPDATE

15.155 The VP Comms & Recruitment presented the report on Recruitment highlighting the currently position for 2015/16 and summarising the work undertaken in year to meet targets. The EFA headcount was 4,455 compared to 4,719 in the previous year; the 3 year plan indicated an EFA contract headcount of 4,275 for 2016/17. Under the lagged funding system, recruitment in 2015/16 would determine the funding for 2016/17. The college was therefore seeking a reduction in EFA funded college based headcount between the current year and next by a maximum of 180 students. This was recognised by Governors as a challenging target in the context of the decline in year 11 cohort in Barnsley and a planned increase in 16-18 Apprentice numbers.

15.156 Further to questions and concerns raised by governors, the VP explained that the forecast in the 3 year plan was based on increasing the Barnsley Year 11 cohort from 83% to 86%; increasing progression at 16 yrs from 79% to 82%; increasing progression at 17 yrs from 36% to 37%, and maintaining the headcount of year 11 pupils from outside of the borough. Details were provided of current applications and extra district, together with a comprehensive list of activities being undertaken to encourage recruitment in the light of

competition from neighbouring Colleges. In response to a question, the VP provided the enrolment figures for competitor colleges. Some learners had left to go to competitor colleges during the year but following a continued dialogue with them they had returned to the college.

- 15.157 Governors acknowledged the risk to the college of not meeting the EFA contract values and asked to be kept informed of progress through the summer months if the target was at risk of not being met.

The Report was noted and received.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

- 15.158 The Principal's report provided an informative update on college activities over recent weeks. Governors commented on the wide range of activity and media publicity which was quite significant. The Excellence Awards had been an extremely successful event at the end of June, with over 300 staff, VIPs and students attending. The College had won the Educate the North Award for innovation and congratulations had been conveyed to the Enterprise team for this remarkable achievement. The Principal was pleased to report that the College had achieved confirmation of its IIP status and that a report would be presented to the next meeting.

The Report was noted and received.

GOVERNOR / LEARNER/ COLLEGE ENGAGEMENT

- 15.159 D Shepherd and N Bowen had completed a meeting with C Webb to monitor progress against the strategic aim of ensuring an 'Outstanding Sixth Form College that is a first choice A level provider' at the year end. NB commented that following a rigorous review of progress they had been given a great degree of confidence that the outcomes had been achieved in terms of that particular objective. S Turton reported positively on her meeting with N Jones to review the action plan currently being developed for 2015/16 for growth in apprenticeships and HE. C Partridge and M Wesson had completed a visit to review progress against objectives for English and maths and were satisfied with progress. P Bird had met with the lead for STEM and had further questions he wanted to discuss with his link governor G McSkimming and proposed providing feedback to the next meeting. The verbal reports gave assurance to the Board that the college's performance against the 2014/15 strategic objectives were on target.

QUALITY AND STANDARDS BUSINESS

- 15.160 The Board received the Minutes of the Q&S Committee meeting that had been held on 24 June 2015. The Vice Chair summarised the business that had been conducted at the meeting, providing evidence of rigour and scrutiny of quality data. Although there was no official data available on attendance, the committee had requested some comparators with other Colleges to satisfy itself attendance was well above average. He advised the Board that the Committee had agreed to allow the VP Q&A to explore alternative data dashboards for consideration. The Chair expressed concern that this should be a priority in the autumn term. The Deputy Principal advised the Board that the college was facilitating a visit from a Director of Learning at another college who would validate the attendance data and also provide an effective example of a data dashboard.
- 15.161 The Chair made reference to the resolutions within the Minutes at 15.49 that Governors would be provided with the College performance data compared to the sector, by the end of the summer term, together with an overview of the CiF. The Clerk undertook to follow this up with the VP Q&A.

The Minutes were received.

TERM OF OFFICE OF CHAIR

15.162 Further to the Chair confirming her intention to continue until Christmas, the extension to the Chair's appointment and office of Chair was approved to 31 December 2015.

RESOLVED 15.162 That the term of office of J Thirkell be extended to 31 December 2015 and that she be reappointed as Chair of the Board for a term of office concurrent with her membership.

STATUTORY COMPLIANCE – REPORT FROM GOVERNORS

15.163 R Pourali provided feedback on a link visit undertaken in April. Since that time she had undertaken two further links visits one with a student. Referring to the duties placed on the college and governing body in respect of the Prevent agenda, she welcomed the opportunity for staff and governor training. Clarification was sought as to the impact the college makes in disadvantaged communities in respect of the wider E&D agenda. The VP Comms and Recruitment responded.

15.164 She was pleased to report that following the review of the Single Equality Scheme, there were no gaps greater than 3% and the AP Access to Learning had confirmed that the gaps continued to reduce. She was also pleased to learn that the College was developing a Transgender Policy and that the College was now linked with a Faith Forum. She thanked the AP for his contribution to the LA consultation, within which learners with learning difficulties had played a huge part in respect of transport arrangements. Overall she believed the visibility of equality and diversity within the college had improved significantly.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

15.165 The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 20 October 2015 at 4.00 pm.

Signed _____ Chair

Date