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## BARNSLEY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2018

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<b>PRESENT</b>	N Bowen	Governor (Chair)
	D Shepherd	Governor
	C Webb	Principal/Governor
	R Wood	Governor
<b>IN ATTENDANCE</b>	A J Oaks	Clerk to the Board
	S Perryman	Governor (Chair of Board)
	Y Koursis	Deputy Principal (to Minute 17.96)
	P Briscoe	VP Quality and Student Experience

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#### **APOLOGIES**

18.00 Apologies were received from C Moss, R Hooley and E Hodgson.

#### **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

18.01 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.

#### **MINUTES**

18.02 The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2017 were agreed as an accurate record subject to a correction to the reference DLHE in paragraph 17.84. The Minutes were signed by the Chair.

#### **MATTERS ARISING**

18.03 The Committee received a list of actions arising from previous meetings. With regard to 17.90 the Chair reminded members of the decision to invite members of the senior management team into meetings when it was appropriate. Following a brief discussion in respect of the business for the meeting members recognised the need for management to use their discretion in respect of inviting members of SMT to meetings and accepted that they would be invited when it was appropriate.

18.04 The Clerk referred to the cycle of business and confirmed that this had been reviewed with the Chair and was deemed appropriate to the end of the academic year.

#### **HIGHER EDUCATION SELF EVALUATION DOCUMENT**

18.05 The Committee received the HE SED for 2016/17. The VP Quality and Student Experience explained that the production of the SED was a QAA requirement and that it would form part of the evidence base for the HE Review being undertaken in June 2018. Governors agreed that the SED was both descriptive and evaluative, gave an honest and accurate overview of the organisation, including its track record in managing quality and standards, and details of relationships with degree awarding bodies or awarding organisations and of external reference points required to be considered. The Document also described the approach used by the college in assuring the academic standards and quality of provision and explained how effective it was in meeting the expectations of the Quality Code and of further improvements. The SED had been through internal moderation within College and was presented to the Committee for Board approval.

- 18.06 In response to a question from S Perryman, the Principal explained the difference between the HE SED, which was a review and assessment of the whole year's quality and standards; a holistic view, and the HE Annual Provider review, which was about the robustness of quality assurance and academic governance processes. He reminded members that at the previous meeting, Conor Moss had suggested the HE SED be produced and presented for consideration by the Committee earlier in the academic year as it formed a key part of the assurance aspect and was therefore important in terms of signing off the HE APR. With the College in transition in terms of the new Office for Students arrangements, it was not known whether the timing of the submission of the APR would continue to be the same. Further to a comment from the Principal, the Clerk confirmed that no comments or observations had been made on the SED by governors who were unable to attend the meeting.
- 18.07 D Shepherd commented on the document, which he believed was fair and accurate in terms of the issues governors were aware of within HE, and that it was balanced by evidence and fact. He felt that the covering report could have been enhanced by the Executive drawing out the key issues in more detail, particularly the impact on students and financial implications of failing to maintain high standards of academic quality and rigour and asked whether management were content the SED reflected the current position. The Principal responded to further questions raised regarding advice and guidance for members' information. S Perryman observed that the document lacked data and was very much process focused. The Principal acknowledged this, commenting that this was the nature of the evaluation document, and that through the year the committee would receive more data rich reports including NSS and KIS to allow it to have sufficient comfort with regard to standards and to feel sufficiently assured in order to sign off the APR later in the year. Members agreed with the comments but acknowledged that the SED was produced in accordance with the QAA requirement which would be a desk based review when undertaken.

**RESOLVED 18.08 to recommend the HE Self Evaluation Document be approved.**

#### **QUALITY STRATEGIC PILLAR**

- 18.09 The Committee received a comprehensive report from the VP Q&SE updating it on progress against the quality strategic goals. The report indicated that four of the seven goals were rag rated green. Two goals – 'Deliver sector leading English and maths outcomes' and 'Deliver an outstanding sixth form' were rag rated amber, the latter having been green at the last review. The Chair referred to the Sixth Form outcomes, reminding members that the SFC was in a period of transition with an interim Principal in place which had led to some instability with regard to leadership. In addition to the Principal being promoted, the SFC had also lost its Director of Quality and Standards. Concerns with regard to the outcomes of the December submission for ALPS had been shared with the Chair and he had subsequently arranged a link visit which was scheduled to take place on 19 February. The VP Q&SE provided further information, explaining that predicted grades at 6 and 7 were much lower than target of 3 and 4 following the December submission. The Principal stated that it had been a challenge for teachers in the first year of teaching and assessing the new linear A level in terms of benchmarking. A further analysis undertaken since December showed ALPS to be nearer the target but still low. Governors expressed concern that this was a step back in progress but accepted it was difficult to compare progress in the first year of linear A Levels.
- 18.10 Discussion took place with regard to the instability and of the actions being implemented by management. The Principal reported that the new Principal was taking up her permanent post in March and until then he had been overseeing the work of the interim Principal and other key staff, in addition to attending meetings to provide support and leadership direction where required. The Principal anticipated targets after the summer mock examinations would be much improved. In terms of overall achievements, teachers were working as effectively as in the previous year and there were no concerns arising from the teaching and learning observation profile which members were pleased to note.



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D Shepherd referred to the covering paper which he felt did not highlight the seriousness of the financial implications for the College should improvements not be evidenced. The VP Q& SE and the Principal assured the Committee that there would be an updated position available for the Chair's link visit and certainly for the next Committee meeting.

- 18.11 In respect to the issues identified, discussion took place with regard to the reporting structure whereby it had been agreed that a deep dive into any concerns would only be necessary where an area was rag rated red, or had received two amber ratings. The Principal was of the view that the current amber did not require any further intervention at this stage as actions were already in place and concerns had also been shared with governors at the recent strategic seminar. He hoped to report on a more positive picture at the next meeting, and should there be lack of progress, a more detailed report would be provided. The Committee would then have the option to seek further detail if appropriate.
- 18.12 S Perryman thanked the Principal, commenting that whilst the paper and the additional information provided had helped members understand the actions being taken he believed the update could have been annotated more clearly within the report to provide a more rounded context. To conclude the discussion the Chair emphasised the importance and accuracy of predicted grades, which was critical to the success of the Sixth Form.
- 18.13 The VP Q&SE summarised the position with regard to Maths and English, which was rag rated amber for the second time. The 2016/17 achievement grades for GCSE English and maths particularly for A-C (new grades 4-9) were lower than expected which had caused concern. This was known to be an issue across the sector, not just in the College. Attendance cumulatively showed an improvement compared to the previous year which was pleasing and reflected the efforts made by staff in the department. Other concerns related to staffing and increased levels of sickness absence which was impacting on the provision. Actions that had been implemented by management were summarised in the paper and included the college modifying its Essential Skills policy to split out the previous grade E learners so only the top 50% undertook a resit. This ensured the college had a cohort of learners retaking GCSE maths and English from a stronger starting point and was commented on positively by members. The Principal spoke of the results for maths and English generally, which were good compared with the sector, and also Functional skills which was performing very highly.
- 18.14 The strategic goal for HE remained rag rated red and a separate paper had been provided for the Committee's consideration. The VP Q&SE informed the Committee that the results of the learner voice induction survey had raised concerns showing a 5% drop in overall satisfaction. However in Engineering, the overall satisfaction rate was poor at 34%. Governors noted that there was also very poor participation from that area. There were ongoing concerns with regard to the performance in the department, and the previous Head had left the college in December. Whilst performance was being closely monitored by SLT, the college was on a journey to give HE provision parity with FE provision to attract new students and growth. Management hoped to see improvement in the area when the HE Pathway leader was firmly embedded. The next tranche of Graduate outcome data would be made available for the committee at the next meeting. The Chair thanked the VP for the report and the committee acknowledged and endorsed the actions management were taking.

The Report was noted and received.

## **HIGHER EDUCATION REVIEW**

- 18.15 The Committee received the notes of the inception/scoping meeting which had taken place on 22 November 2017. The meeting had been attended by the Chair of the Board and governor K Dickinson. As agreed at Board, the Q&S Committee would receive regular updates with an interim report being presented around Easter, and the final report to Board in July. The Deputy Principal tabled the Minutes of the second meeting which had been held on 24 January focusing on the market and marketing. An external consultant had been

commissioned to support and advise the group's work. A third meeting, held on 6 February had focused on quality matters and one of the outcomes was a decision to review the peer observation process. The Deputy Principal stated that there were some sound recommendations arising from the review which were data rich. Discussion took place with regard to reporting on progress/ outcomes to the Board. In response to suggestions at the seminar that an earlier report would be helpful, the Deputy Principal was reluctant to bring the date forward as he believed it would limit more productive work that could be undertaken around growth. Further to discussion, it was agreed that the Deputy Principal should provide a verbal update to the Board in May, with the final report being presented in July as scheduled.

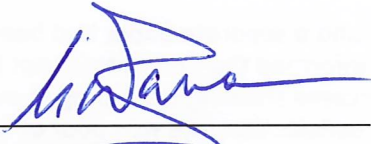
**RESOLVED 18.16**      **That the Deputy Principal present a report to the Board in May on progress to date with regard to the HE Review**

#### **ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS**

18.17 The Committee received a report summarising complaints to date in 2017/18. The analysis showed an increase of eight complaints compared to the same period the previous year. Complaints had been analysed by type, department, gender, ethnicity and disability. Of the 17 complaints made, 16 had been successfully resolved which was noted. Governors noted that the increase from 1 to 5 complaints within the Engineering department triangulated with the reports and discussions that had taken place earlier in the meeting and were therefore not unexpected.

The Report was noted and received.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed.

Signed  Chair      Dated 24 April 2018