

Minutes of the 134th Meeting of the Board of Corporation of Sunderland College held on Tuesday 15th May 2018 at 6.00 pm in the Conference Room, City Campus

PRESENT: Mr J Barnett, Mrs E Bass, Mr G Blyth, Mr T Crompton, Mrs A Hodgson, Mr R Lawson (Chair), Mr P McEldon, Mr J Parkinson, Mr M Patton, Mr K Ramanathas, Mr R Saelzer, Ms E Thinnesen (Principal).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr N Harrett, Deputy Principal
Mr D Howells, Vice-Principal (Finance & Resources)
Mr M Hughes, Head of Hartlepool Sixth Form College (HSFC)
Ms V Morton, Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience)
Mr I Nixon, Executive Director, Commercial Activity
Ms J Quinn, Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Achievement)
Ms N Robson, Director of People & Organisational Development

CLERK: Martin Gershman

Bd/18/036 APOLOGIES AND CONSENT FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies were received and absence consented to from Ms J Cramman, Mr S Marshall and Mr D Measor.

Bd/18/037 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 20TH MARCH 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th March 2018 were accepted as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

Bd/18/038 MATTERS ARISING

Bd/18/024 – Appointment of Gill Southern

The Clerk informed governors that Ms Southern is currently unable to proceed with her application. An application has been submitted by Jonathan Phillips, Plant Director of Gestamp Washington, which will be considered by the Governance Committee at its next meeting on 4th June.

Bd/18/024 – Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Lead Governor

The position of SEND lead governor remains vacant. The Chair will speak to Mr Crompton about this.

Bd/18/024 – Dashboard briefing

Three briefing sessions for governors have taken place and a final session will be arranged, before governors give final feedback to Paul Ramshaw, the Director of IT and MIS at the next meeting.

Bd/18/039 EXECUTIVE REPORT

The Principal presented her report to governors. The funding situation was highlighted. Having made the economies necessitated by the current demographic decline, colleges will face very challenging staffing and capacity issues in then implementing growth again, as the demographic position gradually recovered. This will be raised at the next meeting of the Resources and Capital Project Committee (RCPC).

The Integrated Communities Strategy will have implications for the College's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision, female empowerment and tackling hate crime, amongst other things.

The reduction in the proportion of employers in the North East reporting skills gaps to the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NE LEP) is pleasing. The Curriculum and Quality Committee (CQC) should keep the NE LEP's priorities in mind and challenge the College as to how these are being delivered. The College is doing a great deal of work on its digital subject provision. The Principal and Mr Ramanathas met the previous day to discuss the increase in the number of those not in education, employment or training (NEET). Young Asian Voices are looking to launch an employability hub at the City Campus.

During the following academic year a 'big picture' strategy for the future curriculum offer at HSFC will be developed, with support from the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA).

(Redacted)

Progress has been made on reorganisation at Sunderland with further work to be done at HSFC. The Principal, Deputy Principal and Vice-Principal (Finance & Resources) will be doing some 'blue-sky' thinking over the summer break on the curriculum and funding.

The Chair reported that he attended the College's first long service awards dinner. One lady attending has 42 years of service and there were quite a number of individuals with 30 years' service. A senior member of staff sat on each table and was asked to give a speech about each recipient. The event was very positive, the entertainment was very good and staff really appreciated this. The Principal explained that this is part of the College's reward and recognition strategy.

(Redacted)

- The Board:
- i) Received and noted the report
 - ii) Noted that the RCPC will discuss coping with growth after the current demographic dip
 - iii) Noted that the CQC will challenge the College on its achievement of the NE LEP's priorities
 - iv) (Redacted)
 - v) Noted that the relevant parts of the minute and report should remain confidential

Bd/18/040 GENDER PAY GAP (Confidential)

(Redacted)

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report
- ii) (Redacted)
- iii) Noted that the minute and paper should remain confidential

Bd/18/041 'WHISTLEBLOWING' – DRAFT PROCEDURE (Confidential)

(Redacted)

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the draft policy
- ii) (Redacted)
- iii) Noted that the minute and paper should remain confidential

Bd/18/042 HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE ANNUAL REPORT

The Vice-Principal (Finance & Resources) presented the report, which has previously been discussed by the Resources & Capital Projects Committee (RCPC). He commented that the raising of awareness and profile for Health & Safety had generated an increase in reporting of incidents. There had, however, been no incidents reportable (RIDDOR) to the HSE to date. The defibrillator training has been very useful.

A lot of work has been carried out at HSFC, particularly on fixed wire electrical testing.

Fire risk assessments are in place for all sites. Enforcement authority visits by the Fire Service to Bede, City and Washington campuses have raised no issues.

Now that a great deal of work to standardise procedures carried out over the past 18 months is complete, there will be a greater focus on near misses in the future.

(Mr Saelzer left the meeting)

A governor commented that "it is believed" on page, one and "can be attributed" on page eight of the report should be amended. The Vice-Principal (Finance & Resources) responded that this will be changed for the end of year report.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report
- ii) Noted that the wording on page one and eight would be changed for the end of year report.

Bd/18/043 GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR) – ORGANISATIONAL APPROACH

The Vice-Principal (Finance & Resources) presented the report. The Clerk informed governors he would circulate an updated privacy notice to them.

(Mr Saelzer re-joined the meeting)

The College is currently mapping all of its GDPR requirements to all College committees. *A governor asked how this will impact upon the tracking of student destinations.* The Deputy Principal responded that it will still be possible, but consent can no longer be assumed and must be sought. The reasons the College requires information should be explained and demonstrated to be lawful in the Information Asset Register. The governor observed that the College received a great deal of information from other organisations. The Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) explained that there is a data sharing protocol in place with partner organisations such as the schools and the LA. The Principal highlighted that other procedures are being tightened up, such as the use of USB sticks, which is one of the biggest risks. There is a major focus on cybersecurity in the College. A governor pointed out that two local colleges have recently experienced major breaches of information security. Another governor reported that the Audit Committee has recently examined GDPR, IT infrastructure and cybersecurity. Mr Ramshaw will report to the next Board meeting on the latter two issues. *Another governor highlighted that direct marketing is a difficult area and the option to market other products/services needs to be included when consent is sought.* The Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) explained that the College already does this, but the consent of parents needs to be considered. The Principal informed governors that lawyers had delivered a whole staff CPD day on GDPR on 16th April. A governor requested that training on GDPR be provided for governors.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report
- ii) Noted that an updated privacy notice will be sent to governors by the Clerk
- iii) Noted that Mr Ramshaw will report to the next meeting on IT infrastructure and cybersecurity
- iv) Noted that the Clerk will arrange training in GDPR for governors

Bd/18/044 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY – ANNUAL REPORT & POLICY REVIEW

The Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) presented the report. The format of the report has been changed to ensure alignment with statutory duties, as a result of discussion at the Equality & Diversity Committee. Next steps have been identified for all sections of the report. The report will be published on the website.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report

Bd/18/045 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

The Deputy Principal gave a verbal update on the QIP:

- Integration of HSFC has continued since the appointment of Mr Hughes. The curriculum planning process has been reviewed and now the management structure. The post-merger steering group continues to meet.
- The implementation of dashboards has not progressed as quickly as intended and this is linked to the ongoing restructuring. Management information is improving and there are action plans to accelerate this.

- Progress has been made since the appointment of the Director of People & Organisational Development in raising the effectiveness of performance management. The first workshop on line managing capability issues has been held. A lot of work is ongoing, but it is too early to judge the impact.
- CPD has been delivered to maths teams and a new approach adopted to evaluation of teaching, learning & assessment (TLA), as part of the improvement of delivery in English and maths to raise outcomes. Predicted achievement is currently ahead of both targets and where the College was at the same time last year.
- Work scrutiny of Level 1 and 2 courses by the Quality Team has identified improvements in the impact of written feedback.
- A T & L conference for the whole College has taken place and significant new strategies have been implemented. A & AS level predictions are slightly below target. While there has been improvement in Sunderland Sixth Form, there has been a drop at HSFC associated with some legacy issues. *A governor asked about interventions.* The Deputy Principal responded that absolutely everything that could be done for these students, who were on two-year A-level programmes, is being done. *Another governor observed that attendance was the most important issue, as students first need to be consistently present for intervention to be possible.* A more holistic approach to TLA has been introduced, which considers outcomes, value-added and College values as well as teaching observations.
- A working group chaired by the Principal has achieved significant progress with the Pro Monitor system and the action plan includes an upgrade to the system in time for September. There is still some work to do.
- Sunderland and HSFC strategies for raising attendance and retention have been received. Reward strategies are in place and text messages are being used, but this is still below target. *A governor asked if expectations for attendance were being laid down and hammered home.* The Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) responded that this is done at open events and expectations are emphasised to parents. Employers expect 100% and this is highlighted to students. The Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Achievement) added that a text was sent to parents for every session missed. *A student governor asked what the rewards offered were.* The Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) responded that this varied between curriculum areas. At City Campus, monetary rewards are available for trips. *The governor asked what was available to sixth formers at Bede Campus.* The Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) responded that in Art this included opportunities to go on trips including, after auditions, a recent one to a festival in Malaysia. Certificates for high attendance were presented at Creative Arts assemblies. The Head of HSFC also mentioned trips, such as a recent Sports and Health residential visit to the Lake District. These opportunities were also offered to high attainers. The Chair observed that the approach included both incentives and sanctions.
- The target of a 50% reduction in bullying incidents related to social media has not been achieved, but there has been a 32% fall to date.
- Additional staffing effort has been put into providing timely support to students with their next steps, including internal progression and career opportunities. This

is expected to produce results, but it is too late to say if this has improved outcomes.

- Achievement rates are looking positive, but the final outcomes are some time off.
- Value-added for A and AS level is -0.1, which is pleasing. *A governor commented that there is still more to be done.* The Deputy Principal responded that the College will continue to work to achieve positive VA.

A governor thanked the Deputy Principal for the information but commented that it was difficult to absorb so much verbally. He asked that this be provided in written form in future.

The Board: i) Noted the verbal report
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Bd/18/046 BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENTS 2017/18 TO DATE

The Vice-Principal (Finance & Resources) presented the report, which had been previously discussed by the RCPC. The operating surplus of £72,000 at the end of February was £29,000 below budget, mainly due to additional superannuation obligations.

(The Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Achievement) left the meeting)

The Vice-Principal (Finance & Resources) is continuing to work on the budget for 2018/19, when the financial impact of the current year's enrolment of 4,103 ESFA-funded students will be experienced.

Adult learning was £250,000 ahead of the same time last year and is expected to achieve its target, as are apprenticeships, despite the national issues with new starts.

Staffing and non-staffing expenditure was £500,000 and £700,000 ahead of budget because income from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the North-East Collaborative Outreach programme (NECOP) is not accounted for until actually received. Operating costs are expected to be in line with budget and the profit target to be achieved. The cash position has improved and the College has repaid the sum of £950,000 to the Bank. Significant income from the SLC and franchise programmes has improved cash balances. The banking covenant compliance test was shown for the end of January.

A governor asked whether the deficit for the refectories, Bistro and the travel agency would continue. The Chair responded that Paul Kirkup, the Food and Beverages manager, gave a good presentation to the last RCPC meeting. The governor explained that she was most concerned about the refectories because students wanted reasonably priced food. The Vice-Principal (Finance & Resources) responded that the deficit would not be allowed to continue. Planning work to ensure students will still get good quality affordable food is ongoing. The Chair added that the Food & Beverages Manager identified that the College is using a very wide range of suppliers and that savings can be made by using fewer, bigger providers, but this could have an impact locally. The Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) added that she has met with the Food & Beverages Manager and there were actions which can be taken around what was offered and branding. Some of the College's food prices are significantly lower than other colleges, for a wide variety of reasons.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report

Bd/18/047 ESTATES & FINANCING UPDATE (Confidential)

(Redacted)

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report
- ii) Noted that the minute and paper should be confidential

Bd/18/048 APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL AUDITORS FOR 2017/18 ACCOUNTS & INTERNAL ASSURANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2018/19

The Vice-Principal (Finance & Resources) presented the report, which has previously been discussed by the Audit Committee. He commented that the College expects and receives a high quality service from KPMG. A question was raised at the Committee about the rotation of the audit partner and KPMG have confirmed that they are compliant with their own code of practice in relation to this.

The Audit Committee agreed that the College should not appoint internal auditors for 2018/19, but should continue with the approach adopted of seeking third-party assurance from a range of expert sources and consultants. This did not necessarily cost a great deal, for example the JISC audit was free of charge. Penshaw View were used to provide external assurance for Health & Safety. Mr Blyth, Chair of the Committee, confirmed that there were other ways of delivering the assurance the Board required. A draft internal audit plan will be submitted to the next Committee meeting, identifying who will provide assurance during 2018/19.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report
- ii) Approved the appointment and remuneration of KPMG as external auditors for the College's 2017/18 financial year accounts, subject to confirmation that the fee will not rise by more than 3% above the previous year's fee
- iii) Approved the proposed process for internal assurance in 2018/19

Bd/18/049 FEEDBACK FROM STUDENT COUNCIL LUNCH

The Chair, Mr Crompton and Mrs Hodgson attended a lunch and meeting with student representatives at the Washington Campus on 28th March. There were no HE student representatives present. Provision of food at HSFC was a particular concern and the use of tokens for recipients of free meals has since been challenged and discontinued. Students were happy with the quality of teaching, particularly at HSFC. Provision of careers advice at HSFC was an issue they wanted to be addressed. A request was also made for a budget for the HSFC student council. The Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) explained that the council budgets were set before the merger. The HSFC student council will need to produce a plan first. The Chair commented that the students were a very impressive group and they have been invited to make a presentation to the next meeting. The Assistant

Principal (Student & Customer Experience) added that the new Student Council president will attend the October meeting. *A governor asked if there were active councils at all four campuses.* The Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) responded that the City Campus council was less active and she has met with them separately to try to build their confidence. There are strong curriculum-based focus groups and the College will continue to focus on the development of student voice. A student governor pointed out that the council at Bede is very active and meets on the last Thursday of every month. The meetings are well structured and proper minutes are kept. A whole college visit to Flamingo Land is currently under consideration. The Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) added that they have organised speakers for this year's student conference. The governor asked if one council could offer encouragement to another and the Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) responded that the Chair of Bede has been to City to do this.

The Chair thanked the Principal and Assistant Principal (Student & Customer Experience) for responding to this and highlighted that it was important students felt the College was responding to their views.

The Board:

- i) Noted the feedback from student representatives and that a presentation and response from the College will take place at the next meeting.

Bd/18/050 GOVERNORS' EXPENSES POLICY

The Clerk presented the report and informed governors there had been no claims to date in 2017/18.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report
- ii) Approved the Expenses Policy

Bd/18/051 APPROVED MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES

Governors had received the approved minutes of the 6th March 2018 meeting of the RCP Committee.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the minutes for information.

Bd/18/052 MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

Governors had received and approved the minutes of the meetings held for executing documents under seal on 28th February 2018 and 29th March 2018.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the minutes for information.
- ii) Approved the minutes.

Bd/18/053 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

Bd/18/054 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting would take place at **6:00 pm** on **Tuesday 3rd July 2018** in the Conference Room at City Campus.

(Mr Parkinson and Mrs Bass left the meeting)

CLOSED ITEM - CONFIDENTIAL

Bd/18/055 (Redacted)

<p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i) Received and noted the reportii) (Redacted)iii) (Redacted)iv) (Redacted)v) Noted that the minute and paper should be confidential
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The meeting closed at 8:25 pm