

Minutes of the 136th Meeting of the Board of Corporation of Sunderland College held on Tuesday 16th October 2018 at 6.00 pm in the Conference Room, City Campus

PRESENT: Mr J Barnett, Mrs E Bass, Mr G Blyth, Miss K Booth, Ms J Cramman, Mr T Crompton, Mrs A Hodgson, Mr R Lawson (Chair), Mr P McEldon, Mr D Measor, Mr M Patton, Mr J Phillips, 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)

MINUTE TAKER: Sara White

Bd/18/080 APOLOGIES, CONSENT FOR ABSENCE & DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Apologies were received and absence consented to from Mr S Marshall.

Bd/18/081 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 3rd JULY 2018, MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BOARD MEETING HELD ON 21ST AUGUST 2018 & MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BOARD MEETING HELD ON 28TH SEPTEMBER 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd July 2018, the minutes of the Special Board meeting held on 21st August 2018 and the minutes of the Special Board meeting held on 28th September 2018, were all accepted as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

Bd/18/082 MATTERS ARISING

None

Bd/18/083 EXECUTIVE REPORT

(Staff and Students Governors left the meeting).

Confidential - Merger Update

Discussions on this item were recorded separately in the confidential minutes.

(Staff & Student Governors re-joined the meeting)

Strategic Vision, Values & Plan

The Principal provided a presentation on the Strategic Vision, Values and Plan which have previously been presented to Governors. Governors confirmed approval of the new Vision Statement "Excellence at the heart of everything we do" and also approval of

the 5 strategic goals within the new Strategic Plan 2019-2023. It was recorded that Governors are to agree the Strategic KPI's for the Strategic Plan and bring back to the next Board Meeting. Governors were provided with a demonstration of the new Values video.

The Board:

- i) Approved the new Vision Statement
- ii) Approved the Strategic Plan 2019-2023, 5 Strategic Goals
- iii) Agreed for the Principal to send out the long version of the Strategic Plan and for Governors feedback/input into the soft narrative.
- iv) Governors to agree the Strategic KPI's for the Strategic Plan at following Board meeting

Bd/18/084 HIGHER EDUCATION STRATEGY (HE) AND PARTNERSHIPS (Confidential)

(Staff & Student Governors left the meeting)

Discussions on this item were recorded separately in the confidential minutes

(Staff & Student Governors re-joined the meeting)

Bd/18/085 SELF ASSESSMENT GOVERNANCE – VERBAL REPORT

The Principal informed Governors that discussions have been held at the Governance Committee around how to further enhance Self-Assessment of Governance (in the context of our vision for 'Excellence at the heart of everything we do'). All agreed that strong Self-Assessment is important against Strategic Goals and KPIs and the UK Code of Good Governance. It was agreed to form a small working group to finalise the Self-Assessment for 2017/18 and also to agree the structure of Self-Assessment for 2018/19. The following Governors agreed to form part of the working group: Tom Crompton, June Cramman and Mark Patton.

The Board:

- i) Agreed the formation of a small working group to:
 - Finalise the Self-Assessment for 2017/18
 - Agree the structure of Self-Assessment for 2018/19
- ii) Tom Crompton, June Cramman and Mark Patton agreed to form part of the working group

Bd/18/086 NEW REPORTING MEASURES

The Deputy Principal & Deputy Chief Executive provided a presentation which summarised the outcome of the government consultation on performance reporting for FE Groups and multi-site colleges. The ESFA have confirmed that Sunderland College operates more than one college, and therefore as of 1st August, HSFC and Sunderland College fall into the scope of separate performance reporting and will be allocated separate campus identifier numbers by the ESFA. We do not meet the criteria to be classified as a multi-site college. Ofsted will

continue to inspect at the level of a legal entity i.e. the 'group', although this may change with the new framework to be introduced in September 2019.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report

Bd/18/087 2017/18 FORECAST OVERALL AND TIMELY ACHIEVEMENT

The Deputy Principal & Deputy Chief Executive distributed to Governors a hard copy of the final information on 2017/18 Achievement Rates. Governors were informed that the final ILR will be sent off this week.

Governors were provided with the following headline achievement rates for 2017/18 (combined Sunderland & HSFC):

- All Ages: 88.1% (Best case 88.2%)
- 16-18: 86.6% (National Average 81.5%)
- 19+: 89.6% (National Average 86.9%)
- Apprenticeships: Currently 68.2% (Best case 73.1%, Expected 72%) (National Average 59.4%)

Governors were informed that A Level achievement rates have declined, however significant work is being carried out and action plans, curriculum reviews and quality interventions are in place. The Deputy Principal concluded that overall this is a very strong set of achievement rates. The Board congratulated the team.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the information provided

Bd/18/088 ENROLMENT AGAINST TARGET REPORT

The Deputy Principal and Deputy Chief Executive presented the report, which has previously been considered at the Curriculum & Quality Committee, and reminded Governors that there had been expected further demographic decline in numbers of this year's cohort.

The target for 16-18 enrolments had been 3770 and currently there are 3953 students who have enrolled, so this is above target.

Recruitment across faculties is quite different and this has been impacted by the new style GCSE and the more academic nature of the Key Stage 4 curriculum. Some of the areas have recruited very well, however one of the areas that has recruited below target is Digital, Creative and Business. The target had been 784, but actual numbers recruited were 718. This has been particularly affected by numbers enrolling to Creative courses and is being impacted by the pre-16 curriculum in Schools. Strategies are being implemented in an endeavour to protect the future of the creative arts curriculum.

There are slightly higher numbers enrolling at Sunderland Sixth Form which is very positive, given the level of competition.

Adult enrolment is on track and to date is 2687, against a whole year target of 6680, this is higher than at this point last year.

Higher Education is disappointing and the overall number of students has decreased (from at this point last year) from 573 to 458. Plans are in place.

Paul McEldon asked if the revised marketing strategy has had an impact on enrolments. The Principal confirmed that we are beginning to see an improvement with the number of applications and conversions, but that it is too early for it to impact this year's 16-18 recruitment.

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources informed Governors that although the numbers for enrolment are positive compared to previous years, this will lead to a funding reduction in the allocation for next year.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report

Bd/18/089 PARTNERSHIPS AND SUBCONTRACTING STRATEGY INC. CONTRACTS OVER THRESHOLD

The Executive Director for Employer Engagement presented a report, which has previously been considered at the Resources and Capital Projects Committee. Governors are asked to note and approve the high value contract to Zenith People, this developing partnership will support the continued growth of our Engineering provision.

Ms June Cramman queried what Quality Due Diligence had been carried out. The Executive Director confirmed that the team have carried out observations and the performance of Zenith People will be monitored until we are reassured of the quality. Ms Cramman suggested that more input is provided to support and develop. Governors approved the high value contract to Zenith People.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report
- ii) Approved the high value contract to Zenith People

Bd/18/090 BUDGETARY CONTROL STATEMENTS

The Director of Finance presented the report, which has previously been considered at the Resources and Capital Projects Committee. Appendix 1 shows a group operating surplus of £5,529,000, including an adjustment of £1,109k for defined benefit pension obligations (previously FRS17) and technical adjustments related to the accelerated write downs for Hylton and St Peters and the Fair Value Adjustment, in relation to the merger with Hartlepool. The operating position net of all these adjustments, is a deficit of £605k, including additional depreciation of £143k for Hartlepool.

Actual Education Funding Agency (EFA) learners enrolled on the ILR at 12 September 2018 are approximately 4,123, equating to 92.4% of the learner number target as contained within the EFA funding agreement and College financial plan. In funding terms, the College is currently at 92.4% of these respective figures. It should be noted that any shortfall against funding targets in 2017/18 will not result in a clawback of funding in-year, however it has

resulted in a lower funded student number in 2018/19 to 4,150 learners and a funding cut of £1.5m.

In terms of 19+ provision, the College is forecasting to reach 99.5% of the funding target, which will result in no clawback of funding.

It was noted that the College is managing cash-flow tightly, but the bank are supportive of an overdraft facility if required between December and April to alleviate this.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the report

(Staff and Student Governors left the meeting)

Bd/18/091 ESTATES & FINANCE REPORT

(Redacted)

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the verbal update

(Staff and Student Governors re-joined the meeting)

Bd/18/092 APPROVED MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES

Governors had received the approved minutes of the Audit Committee from 19th June, the Curriculum & Quality Committee from 11th June and the Resources & Capital Projects Committee from 16th June 2018.

The Board:

- i) Received and noted the minutes for information.

Bd/18/093 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Potential New Governor Appointment

The Chair and Principal informed Governors that they have met with a potential new Governor, Catherine Magog, who is an Auditor at Hartlepool Council. She is keen to join the Audit Committee. Governors approved the recommendation for Catherine Magog to join the Board and agreed that she is invited to the next Board Meeting.

The Board:

- i) Approved the recommendation for Catherine Magog to join the Board and she is to be invited to the next Board Meeting

Welcome to Katie Booth, new Student Governor

The Chair welcomed Katie Booth, new student governor for Sunderland, onto the Board.

Tribute to Ms Ann Hodgson

Ms Ann Hodgson was thanked by the Board for her role as College Governor over a twelve year period. The Chair and Principal paid tribute to her involvement in College as her tenure comes to an end.

Lead Governor Report on SEN

Mr Tom Crompton distributed to Governors his Lead Governor Report on SEN and highlighted the following and points for further clarification:

- Good provision was in place within the Bede SEN suite of rooms.
- Exemplary use made of a speech therapist who is integrated into the team, creating significant added value.
- The teaching observed was relevant to the students who were actively engaged
- Physical restrictions of an old building impacts to some degree on current delivery - storage is a problem that needs addressing, the sensory area would benefit from further investment, as numbers increase and curriculum develops to meet local priorities i.e. increase in Autistic Spectrum Conditions, space will need to be prioritised .
- The department would benefit enormously from a dedicated resource (perhaps a secondment) to plan work experience and placements with supportive employers. Otherwise this may be an obstacle to achieving Ofsted outstanding.
- It was excellent to see SEN provision centrally positioned in the main College.
- The provision of a mini bus with a wheelchair lift needs investigating as it may well be needed to support more vocational experiences outside of the College.
- The SEN team is very good, committed and convincing. With support, some further resource and a higher profile it should be capable of achieving outstanding in the future.

The Assistant Principal Student and Customer Experience stated that as the College reviews its transports arrangements, it is looking to ensure mini buses are disabled friendly, however it is important to note that as part of the student development, activities support the development of travel training.

The Board: iii) Noted the report and points for further clarification
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(Staff & Student Governors left the meeting)

Bd/18/094 RECOMMENDATIONS OF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

(i) Transition Board Membership and ToR

The Chair provided Governors with details on the recommendations from the Governance Committee for proposed terms of reference, membership and frequency of meetings for a newly constituted Transition Board which will operate until April 2019. Governors discussed and approved the establishment of a Transition Board to oversee the merger between Sunderland College and Northumberland College; approved that the Transition Board shall not constitute a Joint Committee for the purposes of section 166 Education and Inspections Act 2006; approved specific powers only, delegated to the Transition Board as set out in the attached Terms of Reference; approved Sunderland College membership of

the Transition Board; approved the frequency of Transition Board meetings until April 2019; noted the Merger Project Management Committee Terms of Reference.

The Board:

- i) Approved the establishment of a Transition Board to oversee the merger between Sunderland College and Northumberland College
- ii) Approved that the Transition Board shall not constitute a Joint Committee for the purposes of Section 166 Education and Inspections Act 2006
- iii) Approved specific powers only, delegated to the Transition Board as set out in the attached Terms of Reference
- iv) Approved Sunderland College membership of the Transition Board
- v) Approved the frequency of Transition Board meetings until April 2019
- vi) Noted the Merger Project Management Committee Terms of Reference

(Staff members left the meeting)

(ii) Appointment of Northumberland College Principal

Discussions on this item were recorded separately in the confidential minutes.

(The Principal and minute taker re-joined the meeting)

(iii) Governance Merger

The Chair presented the report, previously considered at the Governance Committee which sets out a Governance model for Sunderland College post-merger and the steps it should take in order to ensure Governance structures and post are in place and ready to operate after March 2019.

(The Chair excused himself from the meeting)

A robust discussion was held regarding the continuation of Sunderland College Chair as the Regional Board Chair post-merger. The Principal confirmed the legal context does not prevent continuation. All Governors indicated full support for the Sunderland College Chair.

(The Chair re-joined the meeting)

Discussions were held regarding the proposed Governance structure. Mr Tom Crompton raised that future consideration of an Advisory Board at Hartlepool Sixth Form College should be considered. The Chair confirmed the importance that we don't lose sight of Hartlepool. It was noted that the Corporation needs to see the revised Instruments and Articles including Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference in readiness for merger. This is to come back to the Corporation of Sunderland prior to the Transition Board.

The Board:

- i) Approved the proposed Governance structure for implementation post-merger with Northumberland College
- ii) Note the draft committee membership numbers ahead of a revised Instrument and Articles of Association
- iii) Approved the recommended recruitment and selection process and timescales for Governors onto the merged boards and committees post-merger, ensuring a full skills audit at Sunderland and Northumberland
- iv) Noted the continuation of Sunderland College Chair as the Regional Board Chair

Bd/18/095 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Noted

Meeting closed at 9.00pm