

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS REMOVED

Meeting of the Governing Board – Wednesday 14 December 2016



Present:

David Meakin – Chair
Phillip Turner
Paul Ragnall
Guy Thomas
Lyn Bradley
David Brown
Kelly Forrest

Clelia Sudderick
Ken Phillips
Hugh Bramwell
Paul Henderson
Aidan Worsley
Michael Floyd

In attendance:

Karen Buchanan
Alison Cameron Brandwood
Pauline Lucarz
Colin Crowther
Simon Jordan
Joe Clarke

Apologies for absence:

Wendy Higgin
Richard Thorley
Louise Robinson
Jim Sutcliffe
Anne Kelly

Welcome and Introductions to Student Governors and Membership Report

- 1 The two Student Governors were introduced to members of the Board, Joe Clarke from the College's Sixth Form and Susan Marshall who is representative from our HE cohort. Jo Clarke stayed to observe the meeting. Their appointments were formally approved in the Membership Report issued to the Board at the commencement of the meeting. This was proposed by Paul Ragnall seconded by Lyn Bradley.
- 2 The Clerk advised members of the proposal to appoint Louise Robinson who is to replace Chris Plumb from Saffron. It is intended Louise will undertake 12 months on the Curriculum and Standards Committee before having her committee re-allocated. The Chair advised members of the interview process undertaken indicating he felt Louise would make a good contribution to the College Board. Her appointment was approved, this was proposed by Ken Phillips and seconded by Michael Floyd.
- 3 The Chair also thanked Alison Cameron Brandwood for her contribution both in the Sixth Form and with the HE provision, with the College having seen success rates and enrolments improve during the period. Members appreciated her clarity at Board meetings as well as the additional events that Alison has attended and developed. Best wishes were given for her future career development.

Declaration of Interest

- 4 Hugh Bramwell declared an interest in the last agenda (item 14) and absented himself at that point along with staff and students who were present. No other declarations of interest were registered.

Draft Minutes of the Board meeting held on 5 October 2016

- 5 The draft minutes of the Board meeting held on 5 October were accepted as an accurate record, proposed by Kelly Forrest and seconded by Philip Turner.

Matters arising from the Minutes

- 6 Paragraph 5: The Strategic Planning card had been issued at the Governors' Strategic Residential
- 7 Paragraph 21, the Shadow Board meeting had taken place on the revised date.
- 8 Paragraph 23: Governors attended the area review meeting.
- 9 Paragraph 32: Simon Jordan advised that the Company we are working with are undergoing Skills Funding Agency (SFA) checks, approval is due this week, following which a formal request will be made to the SFA so that we can sub contract with the company.
- 10 Paragraph 46: Hugh Bramwell indicated that in relation to the Area Review meetings that the 6pm meeting on 26 January will not take place. The remaining area review meeting at 3pm will be attended by David Brown.
- 11 Paragraph 57/58: this has been concluded and a paper confirming the position appears on the agenda.

Minutes of the Committees

Academic Board – 19 October 2016

- 12 Hugh Bramwell advised of the two items discussed; the Staff Survey and Safeguarding, Prevent and Promoting British Values. During the same day the Area Review process was taking place and visitors also attended the College, it was therefore noted that there were more apologies and substitutions than is normal. Actions highlighted in the report will be taken forward to the next meeting of the Academic Board. The minutes were noted.
- 13 Feedback from the Area Review team was outlined, this was extremely positive and everyone was thanked for their contribution.

Draft Search and Governance Committee – 19 October 2016

- 14 David Brown advised that filling of outstanding vacancies is taking place and a meeting of the Committee will take place at the Strategic Residential on the 21 January. On the agenda will be the filling of vacancies from members of the ACCROSS board who have the relevant skills set. Ken Phillips was also thanked for agreeing to extend his term of office. The minutes were noted.

Draft Human Resources Committee – 19 October 2016

- 15 Philip Turner referred to the Pay Award paper and requested an update. Karen Buchanan indicated that the Trade Unions have not requested any further meetings. The minutes were noted.

Student Council – 10 November 2016

- 16 Alison Cameron Brandwood advised that the Student Council meeting was well attended and was very engaging. The agenda included the choosing of “hoodies” which always stimulates discussion as well as gaining feedback on new student seating arrangements, which have been increased. The next two areas to be considered will be the Refectory and the Active Learning Zones in the New Year. The minutes were noted.

Draft Curriculum and Standards Committee – 23 November 2016

- 20 Ken Phillips highlighted the current enrolment position which is very positive and the amount of work being undertaken to retain our strong position was noted with the work with schools being key to achieving this. He referred to the HE Joint Honours programme and development of a Joint Honours degree on technology indicating that a lot of work will have gone into this.
- 21 He advised that there is a requirement for students with a deficit in English and maths having to make good that deficit and that this is quite a challenge for teaching staff. A presentation on this topic will take place at a future meeting of the Committee. The Chair asked that this be actioned.

Action: K Buchanan

- 22 David Meakin informed that Ken has stepped down from his role on the Lancashire Schools Forum, and whilst the Clerk had been requested to contact Nelson & Colne about this vacancy, this action has been superseded by correspondence from Lancashire County Council.

- 23 David Brown requested he be added as attending the meeting. The minutes were noted.

Draft Audit Committee – 30 November 2016

- 24 Paul Ragnall advised that both the Internal and External audit reports were positive and that the financial health of the College was good, bordering on outstanding. In terms of benchmarking it was noted that the College reports favourably. The External auditors felt it important that the Board is aware that they will be responsible for the ACCROSS accounts post-merger but because of the excellent financial regime in Burnley College they have confidence they will be adequately managed. It was proposed that the Auditors be appointed for a further year.
- 25 Guy Thomas asked for clarification on whether we are responsible for signing the accounts. Colin Crowther indicated that the ACCROSS accounts will run to 30 April, and if the board dissolves they will not be there to sign the accounts, as a result they will have to move somewhere. Guy questioned that the Burnley College Board would have legal responsibility for this. Colin Crowther informed

that the clarity will come as we proceed towards merger. Hugh Bramwell outlined the Newcastle under Lyme position with the Board (which was a continuing board) signing off the accounts of the College they were merging with.

- 26 David Meakin referred to a merger in the Health Service he had been involved with where this was also the case. It was agreed to keep a watching brief on the position. The minutes were noted.

Draft Finance Committee – 7 December 2016

- 27 Guy Thomas confirmed that the College was ahead of the plan for October and that the forecast is in line with the original budget. Our financial health is “Good” with the College being at the top end of this. This was pleasing to note especially given the issues taken on board with pension liabilities, which all FE colleges are facing. It was noted that the Accounts feature on the agenda and the minutes were noted by those present.

Audit Committee Annual Report to the Governing Board 2015/16

- 28 Paul Ragnall referred to the need to strengthen the Committee which had been mentioned earlier in the meeting. The content was then summarised with the overall conclusions being that the College continues to offer value for money.
- 29 The Board accepted and approved the contents of the Annual report, and the appointment of RSM as College Auditors proposed by Ken Phillips and seconded by David Brown.

Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2015/16

- 30 Hugh Bramwell asked Colin Crowther to summarise the content. Colin advised that the Finance Committee have made some presentational changes which have been incorporated. He indicated that our Financial Health was identified as “Good”, and that a detailed submission has been made to the Skills Funding Agency. The College are on the cusp of “Outstanding” and our Finance record indicates we have tipped over into this category. From a national perspective 45 percent of Colleges planned for a deficit during the year and 39 colleges planned to be “Outstanding”. Should we achieve “Outstanding”, this puts the College into the top 10 to 15% of colleges nationally.
- 31 David Brown referred to the £1M cash at bank target and asked if we would be reviewing this should a merger go ahead. Colin Crowther advised that in any recast of the balance sheet it would be worth checking our financial objectives but that this objective is likely to be ok to continue with.
- 32 The Board considered and approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements of the College for the year ended 31 July 2016, proposed by Philip Turner and seconded by Clelia Sudderick.

College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2015/16

- 33 Karen Buchanan advised that this is a formal document that is placed on the Skills Funding Agency hub by Christmas, whilst this is not a legal requirement it is good practice to do so. This will also be placed on the Ofsted site following a request by them. It was noted that the SAR summarises where we expect to be against the Ofsted framework with the College strengthening areas from feedback received last year to make the document clearer.
- 34 The most significant impact on the results have been Maths and English. An explanation was given of the number of students required to undertake these additional (2,700) qualifications. The success target is 86% but the College achieved 85%, however if we take maths and English out the College would be at 90% (1% higher than last year). It was emphasised that a lot of effort is being directed by the College into this area.
- 35 The College have a recruitment process which results in growing our own specialists in the maths and English area, resulting in Apprentice Lecturers. Members were advised that the College have allocated 2 hours maths and English tuition with a qualified teacher and with a vocational teacher in attendance. Students then have a further two hours of bringing the lesson already attended to life in their own curriculum area. Full details will be outlined at the Strategic Residential and it was indicated that this is the most difficult area in the SAR.

- 36 Joe Clarke asked about Schools having more ownership of this so that students know they have to do this additional work in College if they don't obtain the grades. Karen Buchanan stated she would raise this at a meeting with the School Heads. David Brown asked if students knew of this additional work before applying to the College and Joe Clarke said they did not know.

Action: K Buchanan

- 37 Aidan Worsley referred to the transition process and suggested placing some of our staff in schools to support them. He acknowledged that the scale of this is enormous. Paul Henderson commented that in some cases schools are just allowing their problems to be passed on.

- 38 Lyn Bradley referred to our tutors who attend Park High School, where they have identified a shortfall in technology, and that other schools should follow this approach. It was acknowledged that a presentation will be provided on Maths and English in the future to members. Karen Buchanan referred to College interview nights indicating she will ensure that the presentation for the interview evening also includes this information as well as ensuring we will go into schools to inform students of this requirement. The content of the SAR was found to be useful by Governors.

Corporate Performance 2016/17

- 39 Hugh Bramwell referred to the documents highlighting the first three pages and providing an explanation of the format used. Goal 7 was explained as the appraisal format has been changed, as a result the College will only be reported once at the end of the year. This figure will be more robust than the interim figures previously provided.
- 40 The Qualification summary by Gender/Ethnicity and Age was referred to. There has been a drop in both the Bangladeshi female and white female statistics with the College contemplating on whether there is a requirement to write something to explain the position. The College are currently establishing whether the maths and English results are responsible for this drop, however there is no mention at the current time until the analysis has been completed.
- 41 Karen Buchanan advised that national rates referred to in the paper are for 2014/15 data and there is an expectation that rates will drop for 2015/16. There is an expectation from the AoC of a 6 to 8% drop nationally. The report will be updated and should be available for the January Strategic Residential. The content was noted.

January Strategic Residential 2017

- 42 The Clerk issued a draft agenda for the meeting to aid discussion. The Chair introduced the item informing members of the requirement to determine the content of their strategic discussions. Options were then put forward by members as follows:
- a strategic approach to our national and international student profile.
 - Higher Education and the forthcoming changes with a focus on how Burnley will deal with these changes.
 - the new apprenticeship regime and the introduction of the Levy with information on how this is playing out in the local area.
 - the Merger experience with the option of guest speakers from the Board of Newcastle under Lyme or alternatively requesting John Smith to liaise with that College presenting his findings at the Strategic Residential
- 43 Following discussion it was determined that prioritisation will be given to the Merger and Apprenticeships with potentially using the Strategic Planning meeting to consider the HE changes which will allow time for them to unfold nationally.

Updates from a) Area Review meetings attended and b) Merger meetings held with Across

- 44 David Meakin advised that the 3rd meeting has taken place of the Lancashire Group with the 4th one scheduled in January. The final one will take place in February. All colleges have provided presentations on how they see their future and joint papers have been provided on how we might develop going forward. The Area Review team are happy with how matters are progressing and are supportive of the merger, as are the combined authorities and the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership.
- 45 In summarising, Nelson & Colne have taken on the Adult Learning College and have been given the go ahead to proceed. Blackburn will stay on its own as a college. Prestons' College are looking at merger with UCLan. Elsewhere there is little change taking place. The impression gained is that this is how the Area Review team's final report will be presented, and it is believed the report will be published on time. Thomas Whitham will remain with Lancashire County Council.
- 46 An outline of the merger discussions with ACCROSS had taken place throughout the meeting, with the next Shadow Board to take place on 23 January where it will approve the bid to the Transactions Unit. Following this there is likely to be an increase in frequency of the Shadow Board meetings. It was suggested that under a confidential heading it would be useful to circulate minutes to Governing Board members as and when they are published to keep all Board members informed. Governors indicated that this would be helpful.

Action: D Meakin/P E Lucarz

- 47 Following a query it was confirmed that the Transactions Unit are the group that hold the funding not the Area Review team and that the College has a position it wishes to maintain in negotiations with them.

Health and Safety Report 2015/16 and In Year Update for 2016/17

- 48 Colin Crowther identified there was one accident referred to the Health and Safety Executive, which related to a student who cut his thumb and had to be taken to hospital, although this was a minor injury.
- 49 A three year strategic plan and annual training plan has been developed. Governors were thanked for their involvement in Health and Safety and in the lead provided by Paul Ragnall on their behalf. Governors were reminded that there had been two health and safety presentations during the year.
- 50 40 Managers have undertaken the IOSH Managing Safety 4 day training programme in College. Governor training is scheduled for the March period and this will last approximately 30 minutes. Liaison is taking place with ACCROSS on Health and Safety who are being made aware of the developments we have undertaken over the last 18 months so that they can take advantage of them.
- 51 The report was noted and the annual health and safety report was accepted, proposed by Michael Floyd and seconded by Paul Ragnall.

Governors Strategic Planning Overview Document

- 52 Hugh Bramwell introduced the document which was then opened for comments or questions. Lyn Bradley asked if the UTC would run for another year. Karen Buchanan advised that whilst the building is almost empty Blessed Trinity is running the academic side with some practical construction and engineering taking place which Blessed Trinity have asked the College to run. The DoE are looking to sell the building, with UCLan and other bodies expressing an interest. The Council are supportive of UCLan owning the building as they would use it as a STEM centre for use by primary school through to university students, however the DoE are likely to sell to the highest bidder.
- 53 Of the 37 youngsters attending the UTC the College have been impressed with their attitude. Blessed Trinity have asked the College if we will supply other teachers where they face shortages. As a result of the collaboration some of the 37 pupils intend to enrol at the College.
- 54 David Meakin referred to the Winter Wonderland event which was excellent and he thanked those Governors who were able to attend indicating the site plan ran better than in previous years. The Governing Board passed on their thanks to the staff for the time they have put into the event.

Appointment of Principal Designate

- 55 Pauline Lucarz introduced the report which for transparency notified of the appointment of the Principal Designate. Governors noted the decision.
- 56 Student Governors were thanked for their efforts and contributions during the year.

Approved by Chair, David Meakin

Signed:

Date: