

BARNSELEY COLLEGE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
HELD ON TUESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2016

PART I

PRESENT:

T Abbott	Governor (Student)
G Beever	Governor
N Bowen	Governor (Vice Chair)
S Brian	Governor
P Clarkson	Governor (Staff)
R Hooley	Governor (Staff)
S Perryman	Governor (Chair)
R Pourali	Governor
D Shepherd	Governor
S Turton	Governor
C Webb	Governor (Principal)

IN ATTENDANCE:

A J Oaks	Clerk to the Board	P Briscoe	VP Quality
Y Koursis	Deputy Principal	T Johnson	VP Corporate Services
D Harding	VP Curriculum	L Lawton	VP Finance
L Leek	Principal, SFC		

The Chair welcomed new staff Governors Peter Clarkson and Ross Hooley to their first formal meeting of the Board. Introductions were made.

On behalf of Ben Mansford, following his resignation from the Board in August, the Chair said that Ben apologised he was unable to attend the meeting, but wished everyone at the College and his fellow Governors good wishes for the future. The Board recorded its thanks to Mr Mansford and wished him well for the future.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

16.171 Apologies for absence were received from P Jagger, G McSkimming, C Partridge and R Dewar.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

16.172 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. G Beever, C Webb and Y Koursis declared interests as Directors of Wellspring Academy Trust, in relation to Agenda Item 17.

MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2016 (Part I)

16.174 The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2016 (Part I) were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

16.175 The Board received a list of actions arising from previous meetings. With regard to the Data dashboard, whilst access had been limited, all Governors had received devices and email

addresses to access Board reports and should now find the data dashboard more easily accessible.

- 16.176 **With regard to evaluating the Board's performance, the use of the Code of Good Governance** as a tool had been considered by the G&S Committee and would be discussed at Agenda item 7.
- 16.177 The Clerk reported that whilst the majority of governors had undertaken the ETF Prevent training module there were one or two governors still to complete it.

AUDIT COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 16.178 **In C Partridge's absence, S Turton presented the agreed but unconfirmed Minutes of the recent Audit Committee meeting, summarising business conducted and highlighting the recommendations made for Board approval.** Referring to the Annual Internal Audit Report she reported that the internal auditors had given extremely positive feedback on the **robustness of the College's internal control systems** in comparison to other colleges in the sector.

- RESOLVED 16.178.1 to approve the revised Terms of Reference
RESOLVED 16.178.2 to approve the revisions to the Whistleblowing Policy
RESOLVED 16.178.3 to approve the Annual Internal Audit Report 2015/16.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 16.179 **In R Dewar's absence, the Chair presented the agreed but unconfirmed Minutes of the recent F&R Committee meeting, summarising the business that had been conducted and highlighting recommendations made for Board approval.** The Chair stated that given recent reports in the media, he was extremely pleased that the College had produced a statement on its stance with regard to procurement in respect of the Modern Slavery Act, which was exemplary. The amendments to the Terms of Reference of the F&R Committee would ensure that the Committee was discharging its statutory responsibilities as set out within the Financial Memorandum and were therefore appropriate and timely revisions.

- RESOLVED 16.179.1 **to approve the College's Statement in compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015**
RESOLVED 16.179.2 to approve the level of current subcontracting.
RESOLVED 16.179.3 to approve the revisions to the Terms of Reference.

GOVERNANCE AND SEARCH COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- 16.180 The Chair referred to the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 September and summarised business conducted by the Committee, highlighting the various recommendations that had been made for Board approval. In terms of succession planning, the Committee had produced an aspirational list of potential Board members all of whom had been approached personally by the Chair, Vice Chair and Principal in the first instance. The Chair was pleased to report that all of the individuals had expressed a strong interest in becoming Board members and that their expertise would help build up a strong pool to draw upon going forwards, particularly in respect of the safeguarding and prevent strategy which was most important. Applications had duly been received for consideration by Committee members and interviews were due to take place on 1 November 2016.
- 16.181 The Committee had also reviewed committee membership, making recommendations to strengthen the Audit Committee, which D Shepherd endorsed. In terms of self-evaluation and Board Effectiveness, it was proposed to engage an external consultant to undertake some preliminary work and facilitate a session for the Board early in the new year. The Clerk confirmed that Dr Susan Pember had agreed to facilitate the session and a date had been proposed. Given arrangements already made for the Board to participate in a development

workshop on Equality and Diversity on 25 January, it was agreed that the Board effectiveness session should be held on the same afternoon. The Clerk referred to the Code of Good Governance which the Board had adopted and agreed to use as a tool for self-evaluation. With this in mind, the Clerk had drawn out the key underpinning statements of compliance in the Code, breaking them down into bite sized pieces to allow Governors to complete in preparation for the event. The first questionnaire was tabled for members to complete, with a view to further short questionnaires being circulated over the next two months.

R Pourali joined the meeting.

16.182 The final recommendation made by the G&S Committee focused on the piece of work currently being undertaken by management to review the Mission, vision and values. It was proposed a working group of governors be established to work with management in the period running up to the strategic seminar, at which time the Board would debate the proposals taking into account the outcomes of consultation, particularly stakeholder views.

RESOLVED 16.182.1 That S Brian be appointed to the Audit Committee, relinquishing his membership of the Finance & Resources Committee;

RESOLVED 16.182.2 that P Clarkson be appointed to the Audit Committee

RESOLVED 16.182.3 That S Perryman be appointed to the F&R Committee

RESOLVED 16.182.4 That an external consultant be engaged to undertake an evaluation of the **Board's effectiveness**.

RESOLVED 16.182.5 that a working group comprising D Shepherd, S Turton, C Webb, N Bowen, Ross Hooley and Tom Abbott be established to take **forward a review of the College's Mission, Vision and values**.

EVALUATION OF OUTCOMES AGAINST THE 2015/16 DEVELOPMENT PLAN

16.183 The Board received a report from the Principal summarising outcomes in respect of the strategic priorities within the 2015/16 Development Plan. In terms of the FE Effectiveness targets, a comprehensive report had been provided showing the position at the year end. The Principal stated that the report demonstrated an extremely strong financial outturn and improved quality performance due to exceptional operational control, and was committed to continuing the drive **to maintain the College's outstanding status and become a World Class Tertiary College**. In response to questions from members, the Principal stated that maths and English would continue to be a strategic area of focus, particularly GCSE, 19+ and Apprenticeships, to improve success rates, in addition to growth in HE. It was noted that whilst the income target had not been met it had been a challenging target and was nevertheless an excellent outturn.

16.184 Governors commented on the content of the report, which summarised in detail the outcomes against all targets within the Development Plan and master target file, observing that the information was presented in such a format that it did not sufficiently highlight the strong outturn or trends which would assist the Board to assess performance year on year. The Principal acknowledged the comments, and whilst accepting that some targets had not been achieved, the college's **performance placed it in** the top ten of Colleges in the country, and in the top 2% of colleges in terms of its financial performance and cash generation. He explained that the targets had been deliberately set to stretch and challenge and to drive performance.

16.185 Further observations were made with regard to the content of the report and national benchmarks in the context of the data available to governors through the Data Dashboard. The VP Quality responded, explaining that the data dashboard provided key headlines and allowed interrogation of all underpinning data in as much detail as Governors required. The Principal referred to the new Master Target file, a copy of which had been circulated to all

Board members, advising governors that management were considering how to rationalise the metrics and produce a simpler document that aligned all KPIs. Governors agreed that it was appropriate for targets to be challenging and recognised that targets had to be set well in advance of national benchmarking data becoming available for comparison purposes. To conclude discussion, it was agreed that link governors would continue to monitor progress against strategic targets through timely link visits and provide feedback to the Board at relevant meetings. The Clerk confirmed that the first round of visits had been arranged in good time for feedback to take place at the December Board, with further visits planned prior to the strategic seminar.

The Report was noted and received.

RECRUITMENT UPDATE

16.186 The Board received an overview of the recruitment position of Learner Responsive 16-18, adult and HE for 2016/17, which had previously been discussed in detail by the F&R Committee at its meeting on 6 October. The Deputy Principal reported that recruitment figures had fallen as predicted, to 4246, with an outturn expected of 4160. He added that due to the lagged funding model there would be no in-year clawback and that the recruitment pattern for 2017/18 would ensure an EFA contract allocation of £250k above the number projected in the three year plan.

16.187 In **response to governors' questions**, the Deputy Principal outlined plans to improve progression to HE, through widening participation and promoting an improved marketing presence. The DP explained that part of the HE development was to review the portfolio and where appropriate offer various pathways to HE. The Vice Principal believed further **work could be done to raise the profile of the college's performance further, and reiterated** previous comments regarding working more closely with all secondary schools to access as many opportunities as possible, to add value. The Deputy Principal undertook to follow this proposal up. The Chairman thanked the Deputy Principal for an informative and key report.

The report was noted and received.

ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT

16.188 The Board received the annual report on Safeguarding, which summarised **the college's** approach to safeguarding its learners, staff and visitors over the last year and provided **assurance of the College's commitment to ensuring** compliance with legislation and regulatory requirements. A marked increase in disclosures was reported, details of which were provided for governors, indicating the number in each category and by department. Whilst the number had increased, the most **recent survey showed that 99% of students 'felt safe' at the College, which was significantly higher than the sector average.**

16.189 Further to initial comments from the Chair, discussion took place with regard to the increase in referrals, particularly in certain categories. The VP Quality explained that many of the referrals were historical and did not take place in the College, but that it was interesting to note that many were linked to areas where previously funding had been made available to various external agencies who would have addressed such issues. In addition, whilst the total number appeared high, this did not represent the actual number of students, as often several issues were raised by one student, and this could also be reflected in more than one department. He added that safeguarding procedures in college were such that students felt very comfortable and safe in their environment to be able to raise personal issues.

16.190 Further to questions from Governors with regard to trends and emerging patterns of concern, the Board was assured by the VPs report which demonstrated the dedication and commitment of staff in following up each of the referrals. In respect of the slight anomaly identified in one department where there had been 15 referrals related to hate crime, the VP Quality undertook to investigate this further and report back at the next meeting.

The Board was noted and received.

ANNUAL REPORT – SEN

- 16.191 The Board received the annual report on SEN, which summarised the approach taken by the College in fulfilling its statutory duties under the related legislation. The VP presented the report, stating that the College was the second highest in the sector in terms of number of high needs learners and maintained an excellent relationship with its external partners. The report demonstrated that learners with SEN were happy and achieved well at the College. S Turton had undertaken a recent link visit and was able to provide additional assurance to the Board that the College was meeting its statutory obligations in this regard. At her visits she had discussed the outcome of the mock inspection, additional support and training for staff, and how the legislation affected the learners. She had also met the LA Commissioning Manager to gain an insight into the process which had been helpful.

The Report was noted and received.

ANNUAL REPORT – HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 16.192 The Board received the annual report on Health and Safety which summarised performance and progress across the college in the last year. The F&R Committee had received regular reports on H&S at each of its meetings. The VP Corporate Services presented the paper, reporting that the number of accidents in 2015/16 had fallen from 96 to 75, with RIDDOR related accidents reducing from 12 to 8. Whilst the number of student related accidents had fallen, the number of staff related accidents had risen slightly. The College continued to be vigilant, and as a result of the continued focus by the VP and Head of H&S on the Construction department in particular, the VP believed there had been a significant improvement in the H&S culture generally, with responses from the management teams and staff being exceptional in terms of prevention.
- 16.193 The VP continued to summarise the report covering risk assessment processes, staff training, and H&S Committee business. Vice Chair P Jagger had recently made a link visit to H&S and his feedback to the Chair and Principal had been very positive and highly complementary of the work being undertaken by the department. Further discussion centred around the rapid changes that were brought about to address the issues identified in the Construction department the previous year. Governors had been impressed with **management's response** in dealing with matters and asked that their thanks be conveyed to staff. P Clarkson commented that as a new governor he was impressed with the level of detail in the report and particularly welcomed the stress survey for staff. Following questions related to this area and more particularly the impact on students, the VP explained that the Student Services and safeguarding departments would address any such issues, and that an important part of the target setting process was to ensure staff had effective and sufficient support available to them in order to achieve their personal targets.
- 16.194 The Board received a proposed amendment to the Health and Safety Policy, details of which had been circulated to members in advance. The VP explained the rationale behind the changes, which were accepted by the Board. The Chair stated that he was greatly assured by the report and from the Vice Chair P Jagger's **feedback**, to conclude that the Board was fulfilling its statutory requirements in this area. Further to a question regarding Governor liability, the Clerk explained that governor liability insurance was in place and that she would seek to confirm the level.

RESOLVED 16.195 to approve the Health and Safety Policy.

ANNUAL STRATEGIC SEMINAR

- 16.196 The Board received a draft programme for the strategic seminar for consideration. The Deputy Principal summarised the three themes for the event, which would set the context flowing into the area of shaping the future on the second day. It was proposed to invite two

external speakers, one to provide a national context and the second a local and regional context. Observations were made with regard to the format and timing of specific items, particularly whether sufficient time had been set aside to determine the strategic priorities on the second day, a process which most governors were now very familiar with.

It was suggested that more time be allocated to this task to allow governors to contribute to refining the headline strategic priorities as this was an area where they would add most value. The Chair agreed that this was a valid point and **being mindful of Governors' personal commitments** at the weekend, proposed the Deputy Principal refine the programme to ensure this could be facilitated within the time frame set aside for the event.

16.197 In terms of external speakers, the biographies of five key sector individuals were put forward for consideration and it was agreed to invite two key individuals who would be best placed to discuss government policy, devolution and the skills agenda. The Deputy Principal undertook to liaise with the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.

ANNUAL REPORT – COMPLAINTS

16.198 The Board noted and received the Annual Report on Complaints, which highlighted a reduction in the number of complaints overall compared to the previous year. A detailed summary of complaints by department, type, gender and ethnicity had been provided for information. No significant issues were raised.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

16.199 The Report was noted and received.

WELLSPRING ACADEMY TRUST

16.200 The Report was noted and received.

GOVERNOR FEEDBACK – LINK VISITS

16.201 R Pourali had attended a recent E&D Strategy Group meeting. She provided a comprehensive report on work being undertaken by the College, reporting that she had been interested to understand the actions being taken by management to close the gaps in Apprenticeship outcomes between BME and white ethnicities.

16.202 Two further statutory related link visits had taken place which had been reported earlier in the meeting.

End of Part I

L Leek, T Johnson, P Briscoe left the meeting.

Signed _____ Chair

Date _____