

**MINUTES OF A BOARD MEETING HELD AT 5.00 P.M. ON MONDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2016**

<b>Present:</b>	Valerie Allen	External	
	Alan Bennett	External	(Chair)
	Jayne Caslin	Staff	
	Ben Hardy	Student	
	Sue Hopper	External	
	Tony McDermott	External	
	Neil McGrath	External	
	Mary Murphy	Principal	
	Peter O'Donnell	External	
	Wesley Rourke	External	
	Susan Smith	External	
	Melanie Simmonds	External	
	Denise Whitney	Staff	
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Thalia Bell	Deputy Principal	
	Alan Brown	Assistant Principal	
	Julie Holland	Deputy Principal (Finance & Resources)	
	Lesley Venables	Interim Clerk to the Governors	

**PART ONE**

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

283 Apologies for absence were received from Jordan Heatley (Student) and Tom McInerney (External).

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

284 Declarations of interest were received from Alan Bennett and Peter O'Donnell in respect of minutes 362 to 364.

**APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS**

285 The Interim Clerk reported that nomination and election processes had recently been undertaken for one new staff governor and one new student governor. A further campaign would take place early in the Autumn Term to recruit a second student governor from amongst the College's adult cohort.

286 Following a comprehensive recruitment programme, the Search Committee had recommended the appointment of two external governors. Both individuals had skills that would enhance the Board's overall profile and were felt to have the appropriate breadth and depth of experience.

- ## UPDATE ON STRATEGIC ISSUES

290 The Principal reported on progress against each of the College's key priorities on quality, efficiency and growth. In terms of quality, the likely outturn for value added and the number of learners achieving high grades continued to be positive.

293 **Resolved -** That the draft Annual Report for 2015/2016 be approved

295 Attached to the Plan was the most up-to-date version of the Q-E-G. The Board would receive an updated copy at the October meeting which would incorporate the published outturns for 2015/2016 and would be RAG-rated.

- |     |                   |   |   |
|-----|-------------------|---|---|
| 296 | <b>Resolved -</b> | 1 | That the Strategic Plan for 2016/2017 be approved                               |
|     |                   | 2 | That an updated Q-E-G be presented to the October Board meeting for information |

## CURRICULUM REPORT

297 The Board received the latest curriculum report, which had been discussed in detail at the recent Quality & Standards Committee meeting and would be reported on later by the Committee chair in her verbal update.

**QUALITY & STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING – 21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2016**

298 The Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee gave a verbal report on the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2016. This had included a presentation by the Programme Manager responsible for Safeguarding, a detailed curriculum report (covering enrolments in 2015/2016, retention, attendance, recruitment for 2016/2017 and success rates), curriculum changes.

299     Governors had scrutinised the College's performance against the targets in the  
Annual  
Report for 2015/2016 and had recommended to the Board for approval the relevant chapters  
of the Strategic Plan for 2016/2017.

300 The Deputy Principal had presented a revised performance ‘dashboard’ for discussion. This aimed to enable governors to monitor performance on the basis of 3 year trends and would provide information on success rates by level, in addition to the data included in the current version.

301 The Committee had received updates on E&D and Safeguarding. The latter included two case studies, which enabled governors to recognise the complexity of some of the issues dealt with by safeguarding officers and the high level of resources required for the College to fulfil its role in this area.

302 A number of policies were recommended for approval by the Board, copies of which had been provided to all governors.

303 Feedback on the outcomes of the Learner and Employer Surveys was provided and the Committee noted that satisfaction levels were high amongst both groups. The process would be further developed for 2016/2017 and consideration would be given to using more than one method to assess learner/employer views.

304 The Committee had evaluated its own performance against a number of criteria set out by the Interim Clerk and had graded itself as a '1' or 'outstanding'.

305 **Resolved -** That the following policies be approved:

- Equality & Diversity Policy & Codes of Practice
- Safeguarding Children

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
- Student Discipline

## **AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING – 20<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2016**

306 The Chair of the Audit Committee presented a verbal summary of the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

307 Extended assurance reports on Governance and Capital Projects had been received by the Committee, together with information on benchmarking of the College's financial statements data. The Committee had discussed the update on risk management activities.

308 The Extended Assurance Plan for 2016/2017 and Financial Statements Plan for 2015/2016, presented by KPMG, had both been scrutinised and were recommended for approval by the Board.

309 A number of policies had also been recommended for approval by the full Board.

- 310 **Resolved -**
- 1 That the Extended Assurance Plan for 2016/2017 and Financial Statements Plan for 2015/2016 be approved
  - 2 That, subject to some minor amendments, the following policies be approved:  
  
Anti-Bribery  
Anti-Fraud & Corruption  
Anti-Money Laundering  
Whistleblowing

## **FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING – 22<sup>ND</sup> JUNE 2016**

311 Governors were provided with a verbal report from the Committee Chair on the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016.

312 The Committee had received a progress report on the Capital Project at the Cronton Campus and other property-related matters. Information on Human Resources (including sickness absence, leavers and staff development), the management accounts to April 2016 and Health & Safety had been presented.

313 Governors had scrutinised the College's performance against the targets in the Annual Report for 2015/2016 and had recommended the relevant chapters of the Strategic Plan for 2016/2017 to the Board for approval.

314 The Three Year Financial Forecast had been recommended for approval by the Board and was featured later on the agenda. The Deputy Principal had presented the Financial Plan in the new format required under Financial Reporting Standard 102.

315 The Chair of the Board had received a letter by the SFA, asking him to ensure that the Board fulfilled its statutory responsibilities when approving the Financial Forecast. A copy of the letter and the accompanying checklist had been circulated to all governors as part of the agenda for this meeting.

316 Updated policies on Environmental Sustainability, Procurement and Treasury

Management had been recommended for approval by the Board, together with revised Financial Regulations for 2016/2017.

317 The Committee had received a report on performance against partnership provision contracts for 2015/2016, including information on the College's quality monitoring processes and the rationale for using partner organisations.

318 Governors had evaluated its own performance against a number of criteria set out by the Clerk and had graded itself as a '1' or 'outstanding'.

- 319 **Resolved -**
- 1 That the Financial Regulations for 2016/2017 be approved
  - 2 That policies on Environmental Sustainability, Procurement and Treasury Management be approved
  - 3 That a report on progress with the planning application on the Runcorn Campus be made to the Board's October meeting

### **THREE YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST 2016/2017 TO 2018/2019**

320 The Deputy Principal presented the Three Year Financial Forecast for 2016/2017 to 2018/2019, which included generating a surplus in each year. A prudent number of additional 16-18 learners had been projected in each year of the Forecast, which was felt to be achievable. Adult funding had been reduced by 25% in each year.

321 The number of apprenticeships offered at 19+ would remain static and the amount of loans undertaken by the adult cohort had been slightly increased.

322 Compared to the performance of other colleges in the North West all financial ratios included in the management accounts had either been met or exceeded.

323 Governors noted that a pay contingency had been included in the Budget for 2016/2017 to take account of any pay award and increases in pension and national insurance contributions. There was also a percentage for efficiency savings across the College.

- 324 **Resolved -**
- 1 That the Three Year Financial Forecast for 2016/2017 to 2018/2019 be approved, including the Budget for 2016/2017
  - 2 That the Board confirm that it had considered its statutory obligations when approving the Three Year Financial Forecast, as outlined in the letter recently received from the SFA

### **SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING – 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2016**

325 The Chair of the Search Committee presented a summary of the minutes of the meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

326 Committee members had met with two prospective governors and had recommended both candidates for appointment to the Board.

327 A report on current levels of governor attendance against the agreed target of 85% was received. All committees had met the target with the exception of the Audit Committee. Priority would be given for governor reviews to be undertaken with those individuals where attendance had been below the target. The Interim Clerk would report back to the Committee on any issues.

328 It was suggested that a revised target of 80% should be introduced from 2016/2017 as this aligned more closely to average performance indicators in the further education sector.

329 The Interim Clerk would shortly be arranging individual governor performance reviews and a skills audit would be carried out prior to the end of the academic year.

330 A training plan, timetable of business and list of meetings for 2016/2017 were discussed and recommended for approval by the Board.

331 The Committee had received an extended assurance report from the College's Auditors on compliance against the Code of Good Governance and would be monitoring progress against each of the recommendations.

332 The Committee had graded itself as '1' or 'outstanding' in its self-evaluation for 2015/2016.

333 It was recommended that the Committee's title be changed to the 'Search & Governance Committee', as this reflected more accurately the range of issues for which it was responsible.

334 The Board received a set of revised Standing Orders which had been amended in line with current practices, job titles and any relevant regulations.

- 335 **Resolved -**
- 1 That the target for governor attendance be amended to 80% from 2016/2017
  - 2 That the Chair and the Interim Clerk be given delegated authority to determine the schedule of committee memberships for 2016/2017, following the necessary consultations with individual governors.
  - 3 That the following items be approved:  
  
Governor Training Plan for 2016/2017  
Timetable of Business for 2016/2017  
Standing Orders
  - 4 That the Committee's title be amended to 'Search & Governance' with immediate effect

## MINUTES

- 336     **Resolved -**     That, with clarification of the wording of one sentence, the minutes of the meetings held on 21<sup>st</sup> March and 25<sup>th</sup> April be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair

## **MATTERS ARISING**

337     Governors received a verbal update on matters arising from the previous minutes. It was noted that all of these issues were either in progress, had been completed or were featured on the agenda.

## **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

**Alan Bennett and Peter O'Donnell left the meeting for this item. Wesley Rourke was appointed as Chair for this item only.**

338     The Interim Clerk explained that, as this was the final meeting of the academic year, it was necessary to appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair for 2016/2017.

- 339     **Resolved -**
- 1            That Alan Bennett be appointed as Chair of the Board for a one-year term of office, commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016
  - 2            That Wesley Rourke be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Board for a one-year term of office, commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016
  - 3            That Peter O'Donnell be appointed as a co-opted non-governor on the Finance & General Purposes Committee for a one-year term of office, commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016

## **RETIREMENT OF GOVERNORS**

340     On behalf of the Board the Chair thanked Peter O'Donnell for his service and contribution as a governor and as Vice-Chair of the Board for the past few years. Governors also thanked Ben Hardy, one of the student governors, who had made a significant contribution to the work of the Quality & Standards Committee.

## **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

341     Governors received for information a schedule of committee and Board meetings for 2016/2017.