

# LONGLEY PARK SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

## MINUTES of the meeting of the CORPORATION

held on 1<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2016 at 5.00pm  
at the College, Horninglow Road, Sheffield

Present: Cath Orange (Chair)  
Jonathan Hall  
Fran Henshaw  
Alan Law  
Mo Nisbet (Principal)  
Ryan Pickorer  
Alastair Reid  
Steve Roberts  
Tina Sherriff  
Sophia Spooner  
Karen Squires  
Paul White

Advisors: John Flanagan (Rollits) - for Minute 5  
Tom Morrison (Rollits) - for Minute 5

In attendance: Dominic Harrex (Associate Principal (Resources)) - from Minute 5  
Donald McLean (Vice-Principal (Student Engagement))  
Sharon West (Clerk to the Corporation)

Apologies for absence were received from Margaret Ferris, Rebecca Hodgson, Chris Hunt, Peter Leppard and Josh Wilson.

**Action by**  
**Who      When**

### 1      **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 2      **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed Sophia Spooner to her first meeting as a Student Governor and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

### 3      **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 JULY 2016**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2016 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### 4      **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising which were not covered by the business on the agenda.

## 5 AREA REVIEW/ACADEMY CONVERSION

Governors considered the proposals for project governance and management which had been prepared by the Clerk in response to a recommendation from the Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee about the need for transparency in implementing the Area Review recommendations relating to the College and also the need for the Corporation to have ownership of the process. The proposals had been supported by the members of the Futures Working Group.

The proposals for the Joint Project Group had been shared with the Executive Principal of the Brigantia Learning Trust.

The Chair outlined the background to the Area Review process for the benefit of the Student Governors.

The Corporation supported the recommendation to create a new committee to focus on the implementation of the Area Review recommendations, with responsibility for managing the project, including oversight of due diligence, with support from the appointed external advisors, Rollits and RSM. The Committee would also lead on liaison with the Brigantia Learning Trust.

Governors accepted a suggestion from the Chair that the Committee should 'take instruction from' as well as 'advise' the Corporation. They also agreed that the Committee should just be called the Implementation Committee. Student and Parent Governor would be warmly welcomed. The Corporation **approved** the draft terms of reference and the Committee membership as amended.

Governors asked what period of consultation would be required with staff representatives on TUPE. The Principal explained that this would need to be determined and factored into the project's timeline. Consultation would be undertaken concurrently with other aspects of the project.

The Principal informed Governors of the process to be followed which had been detailed in the guidance on academy conversion issued by the Department for Education (DfE). The College's application would be initially assessed by the Regional Schools' Commissioner (RSC) and the Sixth Form Colleges' Commissioner (SFCC), and if considered to be a viable proposal given 'in principle' approval. It would then be passed to the Transaction Unit within the Education Funding Agency for detailed assessment, prior to agreement being sought from the Secretary of State.

Governors were advised that the Principal and Associate Principal (Resources) were both relatively assured on the

pension situation. Both organisations were financially strong and therefore the transition should be quite straightforward. Governors sought confirmation on what would be included in the due diligence process. Tom Morrison explained that currently the College was an independent organisation and therefore Governors would be asked to make a number of decisions along the way in order to transfer its business to Brigantia Learning Trust and for it to cease to exist as a corporate identity. Both organisations would carry out due diligence on each other. This was essential for the Corporation to establish if Brigantia Learning Trust would be a 'safe home' for the College's business and assets. He explained that he and John Flanagan had met with the Associate Principal (Resources) immediately prior to the meeting to look at various work streams, including legal, governance structures for the future, educational (in terms of sound practices and culture) and financial. As charity trusts Governors had to satisfy themselves that any action they were to approve fulfilled their responsibilities in terms of being based upon a reasoned and informed decision.

Governors were concerned about the possibility of ongoing liability. Tom explained the process for developing a transfer agreement and putting in place appropriate protection for Governors, including indemnities from Brigantia Learning Trust and due diligence.

Governors asked whether Charity Commission approval would need to be sought. Tom explained that as the College was an exempt charity its principal regulator was the Secretary of State for Education. The dissolution process would need to be run concurrently with other aspects of the project.

The Principal advised Governors that the Senior Leadership Team was looking to do some joint quality assurance with Brigantia Learning Trust. The Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Quality) would lead on this. She would also act as the lead on educational due diligence. The Principal highlighted that the guidance appeared to indicate that post conversion the College's current benchmarking data would not be included in benchmarking reports or be judged on externally. This required further investigation. As this could be a potential risk, external support could be brought in. Governors agreed that the Implementation Committee should look into this matter in detail. They recognised that whilst the academy conversion/merger process was going on the College had to continue to focus on its journey and trajectory towards achieving 'outstanding'.

The Principal updated Governors on meetings relating to the academy conversion/merger process. There was a discussion

about the potential for other partners to join the Multi Academy Trust where that would bring benefits for the young people of the area and improve their learning experience.

Governors recorded their thanks to the Principal and other members of the Senior Leadership Team for all of their efforts.

## **6 PROGRESS AGAINST QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

The Principal talked Governors through the analysis of student outcomes for the annual self-assessment report and the supplement to the progress against Quality Improvement Plan and Strategic Priorities presented to the Curriculum and Quality Committee.

Governors acknowledged that it was difficult to assess achievement at A Level as there was a new suite of qualifications and no national benchmarks would be available until March 2017. They agreed that it would be worth revisiting this once the benchmarking information was available.

**MN**

**Mar '17**

The Principal circulated some additional analysis on the differential performance between different groups of students and highlighted that while there was apparent underperformance by some groups the difference was much less stark when considering main programmes. Overall there was a 9.1% disparity between achievement on main programmes and Skills for Life, although for some groups the disparity was as much as 15%. Further investigation identified that groups with multiple vulnerable factors achieved less well on Skills for Life. Skills for Life was therefore very much an issue and consideration needed to be given as to how it was managed for learners.

Governors questioned how this might impact on the College's inspection grading. The Principal clarified that the College's headline achievement was unchanged and the disparity on Skills for Life represented a small proportion in terms of its overall provision.

Governors recognised that they had set challenging targets for the Senior Leadership Team and were pleased that the Senior Leadership Team was working to achieve them.

## **7 CORPORATION SELF ASSESSMENT**

Working in small groups Governors were asked to consider the leadership and management criteria in the common inspection framework and make an assessment of how the College's leadership and management should be graded.

## Feedback

Group 1 assessed the grade to be 1.5 to 2. Negative aspects included (i) the use of jargon in reports to Governors, which they felt should be avoided; the Associate Principal (Resources) had been overstretched during the year due to staffing issues. On the positive side they felt that the Senior Leadership Team was exceptional. The group recommended that Ofsted gradings be used when reporting to Governors.

Group 2 assessed the grade to be 1.6. Attention should continue to be focused on student attendance, with incentives being offered. Student input should be sought on speakers brought into College to talk about different career opportunities and the opportunity to attend talks offered to all students.

Group 3 assessed the grade to be 1.5 to 2. Strengths were identified as ambition for learners, challenge of the Senior Leadership Team, safeguarding and Prevent. Areas to focus on were understanding of the wider labour market and pushing up performance at the top end.

Governors agreed to revisit the grades when it looked at the Self-Assessment Report at the meeting in December.

**Govs Dec '16**

## **8 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT 2015-16**

The Chair presented the Annual Governance Report, which had been scrutinised in detail by the Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee.

Governors acknowledged that in terms of ethnicity and disability the composition of the Corporation did not reflect the local community and supported the proposal to look at developing community links with the possibility of recruiting new Governors.

The Corporation:

- (a) accepted the existing composition for the Academic Year 2016-17 or until the composition needed to be amended;
- (b) noted the attendance information contained in Appendix 2 and the associated commentary;
- (c) re-affirmed the Attendance Policy for 2016-17;
- (d) approved the Committee Terms of Reference;
- (e) confirmed the committee structure with the addition of the Implementation Committee;
- (f) confirmed the membership of Corporation committees;
- (g) noted the calendar of meetings for the 2016-17 academic year;
- (h) approved the revised Standing Orders;

- (i) approved the process for updating the Register of Interests and Declaration of Eligibility remains on an annual cycle, managed by the Clerk to the Corporation;
- (j) agreed that Governors should continue to receive termly progress reports on the Performance Indicators throughout 2016-17;
- (k) agreed that the management information sent to Governors was relevant and appropriate to their needs and should continue to be sent to them on a regular basis;
- (l) noted the development activity undertaken in 2015-16;
- (m) agreed that the content of the annual report was appropriate and should continue to be presented to the first meeting of the academic year.

## **9 DATA DASHBOARD**

The Principal reported on the work being undertaken by the Management Information Systems team to develop a data dashboard in the cedar student monitoring system and how this could best be utilised for Governors.

## **10 REPORTS/RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEES**

### **(a) Audit Committee**

Governors considered the Minutes from the meetings of the Audit Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> July and 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016. The Associate Principal (Resources) highlighted the recommendations that had been made by the Committee.

The Corporation **approved** the (i) Internal Audit Strategy and Operational Plan and (ii) the Strategic Risk Register.

### **(b) Curriculum & Quality Committee**

Governors received and noted the Minutes of the meeting of the Curriculum & Quality Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

### **(c) Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee**

Governors considered the Minutes of the meeting of the Search, Governance & Remuneration Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016 and the recommendations that had been made by the Committee.

The Corporation **approved** (i) the re-appointment of Alastair Reid and Karen Squires for a further term until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017; (ii) the scheme of delegation; (iii) that DBS checks should only be undertaken for particular roles in which Governors would have unsupervised access to young people and vulnerable adults e.g. student mentoring.

The Senior Post Holders withdrew from the meeting.

The Chair reported on the performance reviews of the Principal, Vice-Principal (Student Engagement), Vice-Principal (Curriculum & Quality), Associate Principal (Resources) and the Clerk. Governors agreed that the senior post holders had performed well over the previous year. The Governing Body **approved** the award of one increment on the relevant pay spine for the Principal, two Vice-Principals, Associate Principal (Resources) and the Clerk, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2016.

The Senior Post Holders re-joined the meeting.

#### **(d) Resources Committee**

Governors considered the Minutes of the meeting of the Resources Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

The Associate Principal (Resources) advised Governors that at day 42 there were 1,070 students enrolled, of which 15 were 19+ and funded by the Skills Funding Agency. The target for Education Funding Agency funded students had therefore not been achieved resulting in a lower level of funding for the following year. Governors received assurance that this had been built into modelling for financial plans going forward.

Governors were pleased to note that the year-end position was in line with the forecast.

The Chair noted that the percentage of teaching staff on part-time contracts was higher than that on full-time contracts, and asked that this be monitored as it could cause potential management issues.

**SLT      Ongoing**

## **11      UPDATES**

### **(a) Safeguarding**

The Vice-Principal (Student Engagement) informed Governors that there had been 50 disclosures since the beginning of term. This number was in line with previous years. There had however been a slight increase in the number experiencing mental health issues. There had also been a slight increase in the number of students self-referring and making use of the drop-in sessions.

Supervision arrangements had been put in place for the Safeguarding Team. Work was continuing on developing guidance for schools as the information contained in safeguarding files varied enormously. A policy on external speakers and service level agreements with external agencies were also being prepared.

## **(b) Risk Management Headlines**

Governors considered the report from the Associate Principal (Resources). They discussed the three strategic priorities and were pleased to receive confirmation that student retention on the new A Levels was positive. The funding for high needs students had been finalised with the City Council and was above that included in the budget.

The College's application for transition funding had been approved by the Education Funding Agency.

## **(c) Health and Safety**

The Associate Principal (Resources) confirmed that there were no issues that needed to be brought to the attention of Governors.

## **12 EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MEETING**

The Chair sought Governors' views on the effectiveness of the meeting. Governors agreed that the business of the meeting had been covered effectively and would have a positive impact for learners. All Governors had been able to participate and contribute during the meeting.

## **13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016 at 5.00pm.

The meeting ended at 6.55pm.

Signed: ..... (Chair)

Date: .....