

Time 5.15pm

Venue Boardroom, Langdale Road, Leyland

Present Warren Middleton (Chairman), Yvonne Bradshaw, Jo Venn, Simon Partington (Principal), Joshi Jariwala, Jacqui Chatwood, Will Sutton, Andy Pratt, Eloise Frost, Pam Pye, Alison Watson-Bird, Stephen Gregson, Martina Jay Ella Lawrenson

In Attendance Clare Russell (Deputy Principal), Michelle Brabner (Deputy Principal), Janet Ivill (Director of Finance), Fatema Hussein (Clerk to the Corporation)

Meeting began 5.15pm

Meeting closed 7.40pm

Attendance 100%

1. Apologies for Absence

Stephen Gregson and Pam Pye were welcomed and introduced to the meeting.

There were no apologies to receive.

2. Declarations of Interest

Governors were invited to declare any direct, indirect, pecuniary, personal or prejudicial interest relating to any item on the agenda for the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of The Meeting Held on 13 May 2019

3.1 Approval of the Minutes (Part 1 and 2A)

Agreed: that the minutes are signed as a correct record and authorised for publication (Part 1)

3.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. Corporation Committee Meeting Minutes

The Board received reports from the Committee meetings and the following points were noted:

4.1 Search and Governance Committee Minutes 21 June 2019

- Governors were reminded to sign out of Convene and remove any downloaded files to comply with GDPR requirements
- Nineteen out of twenty two members had completed the Governor performance review questionnaire and the Committee had requested that reasons for non-completion were investigated
- Any members who had expressed an interest in undertaking the Chair or Vice-Chair role in future were requested to make themselves known to the Clerk
- The Committee had accepted the Clerk's recommendation that a governance impact statement was included as part of all Board and Committee minutes

4.2 Audit Committee Minutes 19 June 2019 Part 1

- The Committee had reviewed two internal audit reports and had been satisfied that management were addressing the recommendations that had been made
- It had been noted that eleven out of the thirteen recommendations from the Mazars investigation report had already been implemented by College
- The internal audit plan for the next academic year had been reviewed and approved and key areas of focus would include Safeguarding, student transport strategy and Apprenticeship compliance
- The Committee had requested that guidance on the College insolvency regime was shared with all Co-opted members
- There had been some updates to the Audit Code of Practice including the requirement for Boards to have a counter fraud strategy and this was to be discussed further at the next meeting
- The GDPR annual report had been presented and the Committee had requested that GDPR continued to be included on future Committee agendas

4.3 Standards and Curriculum Committee Minutes 21 June 2019

- The Committee had reviewed the action plans for the key issues subjects and was awaiting the results to assess the impact
- Some very insightful contributions had been made by the Student Governors to all of the Committee's meetings this year
- Student attendance and strategies to improve this had been discussed
- An update had been provided on the proposal for the Cardinal Newman specialist Maths School
- Results of the Learner and employer surveys had been discussed, and this was to be a key area of focus for the College next year

Governor Questions

Q. Was the Cardinal Newman Maths School unique to the area?

A. The Maths School was, but Lancaster University already had existing links with Blackburn and Blackpool and the Fylde College

Governors thanked the Deputy Principal Michelle Brabner and her team for their efforts in organising a very successful Vocational Awards evening.

4.4 Remuneration and Organisational Development Committee Minutes 24 June 2018

- The Committee had reviewed the succession planning report and had been pleased to note that over 70% of management posts had an identified successor
- A detailed discussion had been held in relation to the pensions lifetime / annual allowance limit and the Committee had requested that further research was undertaken on alternative options for consideration at the next meeting
- Legal advice would also be sought on any proposal that was being considered

4.5 Finance Committee Minutes 24 June 2018

- The monthly management accounts had been reviewed and the Committee had noted that all financial health indicators were on track to be met
- The budget for 2019/20 and two year financial plan had been considered and it was noted that it met both the road map and ABC (Activity Based Costing) targets
- Fees and Treasury management policies had been reviewed and approved
- It had been agreed that the risk register was made available on Convene for all Board and Co-opted members

5. Issues from Data Dashboard

The Board reviewed the dashboard which was used to monitor key College performance indicators, and the following points were noted:

- Year 1 attendance on the Level 3 vocational programme was a concern
- The introduction of the three-day timetable meant that any absence had a proportionally bigger impact on attendance rates
- Attendance on the adult and H.E. programmes was higher than last year and this may be as a result of the introduction of the Pastoral mentor system
- Two year retention on the A level programme was currently 92% compared to 86% for the sixth form College sector
- More students with lower predicted grades may have progressed to the second year of the A level programme
- Retention on the Vocational programme was a concern and measures that had been put into place to address this had not had the desired impact
- Five subjects on the key issues register were not on track to meet year end targets but achievement would be better than last year
- Some key issues on the Health and Social Care qualification had been addressed but would not impact on this year's results

Governor Questions

Q. Could the variance in attendance rates be due to the nature of the student cohort in each particular year?

A. There was more variability in cohorts on the pre-advanced programme, but this was still a concern for the College

6. Principal's Report

The Principal's report to the Board covered the following topics; notable achievements, political news, community and employer links, curriculum matters, Finance and HR.

The following points were highlighted from the report:

- 5450 applications had been received for September 2019 and this was the same number as last year
- Runshaw students had received a record number of offers for Oxbridge (25)
- The learner satisfaction survey had confirmed that satisfaction levels were still high but not as much as in previous years
- This would be a key area of focus for the College next year
- A number of initiatives to make learners aware of the College's expectations in relation to attendance, conduct and effort would be implemented at the beginning of the academic year
- There were many positive recommendations for the F.E. sector in the recently published Augar report
- A very extensive range of enrichment activities had been undertaken by students in the last few weeks
- The external environment continued to present many challenges for the College
- This year would see the first cohort to have taken full linear A levels and this may have an impact on high grades

Governor Questions

Q. Would there be any further opportunities to apply for grant funding from the LEP?

A. It would depend on how successful the current bids that had been submitted were as the LEP had a specific amount that could be accessed. Funding for capital expenditure may be available in the future if the recommendations in the Augar report were implemented

7. Review and Approval of 2019-20 Strategic Plan

The Principal explained that a consultation on the strategic plan had taken place with Governors, staff, students and other external stakeholders. Three high level goals had been agreed and any high risks within the risk register had a strategic goal aligned to them.

Governor Questions

Q. Why were the recruitment targets lower than last year and were contingency plans in place to address any shortfalls?

A. College was taking a cautious approach and was not expecting a high level of internal progression

Q. Had management checked whether the plan may need to be amended in light of the Augar report and the new inspection framework?

A. The new Ofsted framework had been taken into account in the development of the plan. It was unclear at this stage whether any of the Augar recommendations would be implemented

Q. Did the vision statement need reviewing in view of all the changes that were taking place in the sector?

The Board agreed that the vision statement was considered at the next strategic planning meeting

ACTION:

Clerk / Strategic Planning agenda

RESOLVED:

The Board reviewed and approved the Strategic Plan 2019/20

8. Monitoring Reports

8.1 Finance Report to 31 May 2019

The Board received the Financial Report for the ten months ending 31 May 2019 with the Director of Finance highlighting that:

- College was on track to meet the year end surplus target and meet the Good financial health criteria
- Cash flow was expected to be between £3.8million and £4million at the financial year end and this would keep the current ratio at Good

9. Financial Planning

9.1 Review and Approval of 2018/19 Budget

The Director of Finance presented the Budget and Financial Plan 2019/2021 and the following points were noted:

- The proposed budget had been reviewed by the Finance Committee and met the financial road map and ABC targets
- An allowance for contingency had been included
- College was now required to submit a two year cash flow projection to the ESFA
- There were some significant risks in the financial forecast for 2020-21 and this included; increased contributions to the Teachers pension scheme and whether this would be funded by the DfE, and a drop in 16-18 and H.E recruitment numbers
- No significant capital projects had been planned at this stage
- Sensitivity analysis had highlighted that there were some tipping points which could put the College into “Requires Improvement” financial health

Governor Questions

Q. Did the College receive any benchmarking data on the sector?

A. ESFA published this information, but it was two years old by the time it was received in College

Q. How would an increase in interest rates impact on the College?

A. College had fixed the interest rate on all borrowings for the duration of the loan

RESOLVED:

The Board reviewed and approved the 2019/2020 Budget

9.2 Review and Approval of Two Year Financial Forecast/Commentary 2019- 21

The Board reviewed the two- year financial forecast and commentary and it was noted this had been considered in detail by the Finance Committee and recommended for approval.

The Board also noted the concerns highlighted by the Director of Finance in relation to a possible drop in income for 2020-21.

RESOLVED:

The Board approved the Two Year Financial Plan 2019/2021.

Governors thanked the Director of Finance for the work that had been undertaken on preparing the draft budget and financial forecast and agreed that it was very comprehensive.

10. Governance Matters

10.1 Chair Performance Review Report June 2019

The Chairman withdrew from the meeting.

The results of the Chair's evaluation survey were reviewed and it was noted that the results and comments on the Chairman's performance were very positive. Some of the satisfaction scores had dropped from "very satisfied" to "satisfied" but Governors agreed that this was in line with expectations as the Chairman had only been in post since January 2019.

Governors thanked the Chairman for his work and contribution to the effective running of the Board.

10.2 Search Committee Recommendations

The Chair of the Search Committee reported that a number of proposals to further strengthen Board effectiveness had been put forward by the Clerk following her successful completion of the ICSA Advanced Certificate in Corporate Governance qualification.

RESOLVED:

The Board reviewed and approved the following recommendations from the Search Committee:

- An external evaluation of the Board to be undertaken every three years
- Senior Postholders should not take on more than two additional Governor roles in Schools/ Colleges
- An action progress log for monitoring Board and Committee actions to be circulated with the meeting papers
- A stand-alone Remuneration Committee to be established to discuss Senior Postholder remuneration of which the Principal was not a member
- A Governance impact statement was included as part of all Board and Committee minutes

10.3 F.E. Commissioner Letter

The Clerk reported that the letter and recommendations from the Commissioner had been considered by the Search & Governance Committee who were proposing that monthly management accounts were circulated to all Board and Co-opted members.

It was also noted that the Committee had reviewed the guidance from the former F.E. Commissioner David Collins on the ten characteristics of a well-run college and had agreed that evidence of how Runshaw met these requirements was included in the Governance SAR.

RESOLVED:

The Board agreed that monthly management accounts were circulated to all Board and Co-opted members

ACTION:

Director of Finance / Clerk to upload to Convene

10.4 To approve the re-appointment of Martina Jay to the Corporation Board

Martina Jay withdrew from the meeting.

RESOLVED:

The Board considered and approved the re-appointment of Martina Jay to the Corporation Board

10.5 To approve the appointment of David Grimes as a Co-opted Member of the Standards & Curriculum Committee

RESOLVED:

The Board considered and approved the appointment of David Grimes as a Co-opted member of the Standards & Curriculum Committee

10.6 To approve the appointment of Stephen Haycocks as a Co-opted Member of the Standards & Curriculum Committee

RESOLVED:

The Board considered and approved the appointment of Stephen Haycocks as a Co-opted member of the Standards & Curriculum Committee

10.7 Search Committee Membership

Stephen Gregson withdrew from the meeting.

RESOLVED:

The Board considered and approved the appointment of Stephen Gregson as a member of the Search & Governance Committee

11. Student Governor Presentation

The Student Governors delivered a presentation to the Board on the student experience at Runshaw. The presentation focussed on teaching and learning, pastoral support and provision of extra-curricular activities. The following points were noted:

What was good about Runshaw

- Outstanding teaching and learning provision for learners
- Extensive range of enrichment activities which were very popular with students
- Excellent pastoral support via the pastoral mentor programme
- Students felt very safe and secure within the College environment
- The College excelled in preparing students for progression onto University and work

The following suggestions were made in relation to areas for further improvement:

- More regular testing and realistic mock exams to be undertaken in essay related subjects
- Further support for students on the UCAS university application process

- Additional support for student well-being, specifically for Year 1 students between January and April
- Greater promotion of the Student Governor role possibly via the Principal's speech at College open events

Governor Questions

Q. Would it benefit Year 1 students to hold group sessions to discuss issues relevant to them during the January to April period?

A. Additional one to one sessions with pastoral mentors could be offered and College events such as the careers fair could be held during this time to maintain the vibrant atmosphere

Q. Was student anxiety high during this period?

A. It was certainly higher for Year 2 students due to the mock exams being undertaken at that time

The Board thanked the Student Governors for an excellent and very insightful presentation.

It was noted that this was Eloise Frost's last meeting and Governors thanked her for her very useful contributions in her student Governor role and wished her well for the future.

Joshi Jariwala left the meeting at this point.

12. Complaints Annual Report

The Principal presented the report and explained that:

- There had been a reduction in the number of complaints this year, and in particular from neighbours
- The time taken to reach a resolution had also reduced
- Complaints from neighbours may have decreased due to less use of Worden park by students this year
- Reckless driving on the Worden car park had been the main cause of complaint from neighbours

13. Safeguarding / Prevent Update

The Board received the report with the following points highlighted by the Deputy Principal Clare Russell:

- The overall number of referrals had fallen to 390 compared to 457 at this time last year
- There had however been an increased number of referrals on the A Level programme
- Monitoring via Smoothwall had resulted in an increase in the number of Prevent referrals
- There had been no high risk categories of guest speakers at the College
- College was to sign up to the AOC Mental health charter and a mental health action plan was being developed

The Safeguarding Governor had attended the recent Safeguarding steering group meeting and reported that:

- The Mazars incident report and action plan had been discussed
- Mental health awareness week had been very well received by students
- The introduction of pastoral mentors in the adult college may have helped to reduce the number of safeguarding referrals
- Consideration was being given to making mental health awareness training mandatory for all staff

A Governor suggested that College may want to investigate the possibility of utilising the Lancashire NHS Trust bus that was on tour around various sites to further raise awareness of mental health and well-being amongst learners and staff

14. Risk Register – High Risks & Key Movements

The risk register was reviewed and it was noted that the risk of inadequate recruitment for 16-18 programmes had been raised to high.

The Chair requested that Board members were informed of any concerns that emerged in relation to recruitment during the enrolment period.

15. Fees Policy

The Director of Finance reported that minor changes had been made to the policy and these were mostly in relation to clarification of the process for determining Adult F.E. fees and widening of scope for payment by instalment.

Governor Questions

Q. Did College ever make a repayment of fees back to the student?

A. College did not refund any fees although pro-rata refunds for H.E. courses were made in line with the UCLAN policy

RESOLVED:

The Board approved the Fees Policy

16. Meeting Evaluation Form

Members were requested to complete the meeting evaluation form online.

Governor Impact Statement

- Student Governor Presentation - suggestions from student governors will help to further improve the learner experience
- Review and approval of the budget will ensure the College remains solvent and in good financial health
- Suggestion re mental health will help to increase awareness amongst students and staff
- Review of membership and appointment of new members will widen the range of skills and experience on the Board and Committees
- Circulation of monthly management accounts to all Board members will ensure that all Governors monitor College finances
- Implementation of recommendations put forward by the Clerk will contribute to Board effectiveness

17. Reserved Business Minutes

17.1 Corporation Meeting Minutes Part 2B – 13 May 2019

Agreed: that the minutes are signed as a correct record

17.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Discussed under reserved business.

17.3 Audit Committee Part 2B 19 June 2019

Governors noted the minutes from the Committee meeting.

17.4 Standards & Curriculum 21 June 2019

Governors noted the minutes from the Committee meeting.

17.5 Any other Reserved Business Matters

Discussed under reserved business.

18. Date of Next Meeting

Board
Tuesday 24 September 2019 at 5.15pm

Governors SAR Meeting
Tuesday 1 October 2019 at 8.00am