

Time: 5.15pm

Venue: Runshaw College (Virtual Meeting held via MS Teams)

Present: Warren Middleton (Chairman), Yvonne Bradshaw, Jo Venn, Andrew Pratt, Clare Russell (Principal), Joshi Jariwala, Alison Watson-Bird, Portia Bailey, Graham Murphy, Jessica Gill, Jacqui Chatwood, Robert Cobourne, Safaa Hafiz, Pam Pye

In Attendance Martin Rigby (Deputy Principal), Zoe Smallman (Deputy Principal), Janet Ivill (Director of Finance), Fatema Hussein (Head of Governance)

Meeting began 5.15pm

Meeting closed 7.30pm

Attendance 93%

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and accepted from Martina Jay.

Portia Bailey and Graham Murphy were welcomed and introduced to the Board.

It was noted that this was Andrew Pratt's last meeting and the Chair thanked him for his contribution and the valuable insight that he had provided to the work of the Board.

Andrew informed members that the Principal had met with faith leaders last week, and the feedback had been overwhelmingly positive, with all present agreeing that Clare Russell had been outstanding.

The Principal thanked Andrew Pratt for arranging the meeting which would help to further strengthen relationships with this stakeholder group.

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.

Portia Bailey declared in interest in Item 6 – F.E. White Paper

3. Minutes of The Meeting Held on 7th December 2020

3.1 Approval of the Minutes Part 1

Agreed that: the minutes are signed as a correct record and authorised for publication

3.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes

The action progress log was reviewed, and the following update provided:

- Almost all Governors had completed the Keeping Children Safe in Education quiz and any that were still outstanding would be followed up by the Head of Governance
- College was reviewing the placement of additional signage around the campus and an update would be provided at the next meeting

In response to a question about the A Level and GCSE exam results for students that had sat them in the Autumn term, the Deputy Principal Zoe Smallman reported that:

- A small number of students had taken the exams and the results had gone up for the majority
- There had been 140 GCSE resits in November with 34.8% of students achieving a grade 9-4 in Maths and 61.9% in English

A Governor suggested that it would be useful to have a more detailed breakdown of the data for review by the Standards & Curriculum Committee.

ACTION:

Zoe Smallman to provide a breakdown of the data for the June Committee meeting

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 5th February 2021

- The Governors dashboard had been revised and feedback on the changes was being requested from members at this meeting
- The Committee had made two recommendations for appointment to the Board and the Search & Governance Committee
- The Governor link programme had been reviewed and an update would be provided later in the meeting
- A discussion had taken place on the E&D profile of the Board and the Committee was looking to diversify where Board vacancies were advertised
- A discussion on succession planning was to be held at the next meeting

4.2 Standards and Curriculum Committee Minutes 5th February 2021

- The Committee had noted that GCSE English and Maths attendance was very good with students engaging well during the online lessons
- Staff and Student governor feedback had been received on blended learning and curriculum delivery
- A discussion had taken place regarding the key issues subjects and what additional measures could be put in place to ensure that sufficient progress was being made
- The Vice-Chair and Chair of Standards & Curriculum had viewed recordings of live online lessons and feedback would be shared at the next Committee meeting
- The Equality & Diversity annual report had been reviewed and it was noted that there had been an increased focus on supporting student mental health and wellbeing

4.3 Audit Committee Minutes 11th March 2021 Part 1

- The Committee had received a presentation on cyber security and two further projects had been identified as a result of the recent external review

- The Audit Committee was to have oversight of the cyber security action plan and monitor progress
- Recommendations from the F.E. Commissioner diagnostic visit were to be tracked by the Committee as part of the Audit monitoring report
- The internal audit plan for next year had been discussed and had taken into account the key strategic issues facing the College in the next 12 months
- A revised risk register was to be presented to the Committee for consideration at the next meeting

4.4 Organisational Development Committee Minutes Part 1 – 15th March 2021

- Following the establishment of a separate Remuneration Committee, it had been proposed that the name of the Committee was amended to People & Organisational Development
- The Committee had discussed and noted the College's commitment to staff health and well-being
- The Equality & Diversity annual report had been reviewed and the Committee had requested that the scope was broadened to incorporate inclusion
- It had been noted that the gender pay gap report would be published by 31 March even though the deadline had been extended by the Government
- College did have a gender pay gap, but this was partly as a result of the number of females in part-time jobs and manual roles

4.5 Finance Committee Minutes 15th March 2021

- The January management accounts had been reviewed and all key performance indicators were on track to be met
- The Committee was not expecting any breaches in bank covenants
- Catering and transport income was being closely monitored
- Apprenticeship income was better than forecast as the Board had taken a very cautious approach when setting the 2020/21 budget
- The Estates strategy and long-term financial forecasts had been reviewed and further information requested for the June Committee meeting
- The revised format for the risk register had been noted

5. Principal's Report

The Principal's report to the Board covered the following topics; external and political developments, teaching, learning and assessment, in-year performance indicators, employability and work-related learning, health, safety and well-being

The following points were highlighted from the report:

- Students had been reporting high levels of satisfaction with online learning and engaged well with enrichment strategies
- The Senior leadership team had been focussing on a high number of exceptional projects including the setting up of the Covid Test Centre, the development of the Estates strategy and stakeholder engagement
- All students were expected to be fully back on campus after the Easter break
- 19 offers had been received so far for Oxbridge and 17 for Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary sciences
- 400 industry placements had been secured this year and this was above target
- An online conference had been held with the Apprenticeships team and had been positively received

- Kathryn Fletcher MP had met with a group of Apprentices as part of National Apprenticeship week and had provided some very positive feedback from her meeting
- Many members of the catering team had been re-deployed to work in the Covid testing centre
- Covid testing would be undertaken at home for staff and students after this week
- Some further improvements to cyber security had been made with the introduction of multi-factor authentication
- The recent College Improvement day had been dedicated to self-care and well-being
- AOC had begun to provide leadership development sessions for managers
- The target for 16-18 applications for September 2021 had been exceeded
- Over 2,000 people had visited the online open event
- A meeting was to be held to discuss how College could benefit from the funding that had been received as part of the Leyland town deal

Governor Questions

Q. Were the work placements virtual or in person?

A. The vast majority were virtual but the number of in person placements may increase once restrictions are eased

Q. What had been the impact on students undertaking the IT T level?

A. The impact had been minimal as a lot of the work experience in IT could be undertaken remotely. Students also had the option to defer by a year

Q. Did College have a working relationship with the LEP and Chamber of Commerce?

A. A meeting had been held with the LEP this morning and the draft strategic priorities shared. The LEP was very supportive of the College's plans. The Lancashire Principal's group had met with the Chairs of the two Lancashire Chambers of Commerce to discuss the F.E. White paper proposals

5.1 Re-opening of the College Campus

- The return to campus had been phased and based on students' learning programmes.
- The 10 key control measures had been updated, both in the risk assessment and in signage all around the College sites
- All staff were trained about the control measures via a video presentation from the Principal
- Face coverings were now mandatory in all indoor areas of the campus and compliance had been excellent.
- At-home testing was now available for the households/bubbles of all staff and students
- The College test site was operating extremely well, with over 3,600 tests having been undertaken so far
- There had been two positive cases, one student and one staff

Estates Strategy

The Principal thanked Governors for their input to the development of the Estates strategy. It was noted that following the extra-ordinary Board meeting, the bids would be submitted within the required timescales.

In response to a question about whether there would sufficient office space on the Leyland campus if a single site strategy was adopted, the Principal advised that many staff who were currently located at the Chorley campus had expressed an interest to work remotely. The plans were dependent on the outcome of the bids and management would be taking office space into consideration.

The Board thanked the Principal for a very comprehensive and insightful report.

6. F.E. White Paper – Overview & Implications

Governors were referred to the Executive summary and the Principal advised that:

- The senior leadership team would be discussing the implications of the White paper later this week
- It would also be included on the agenda for the April strategy meeting
- The key areas of focus for the College were the proposals around higher level technical qualifications, accessible and flexible learning and College Business Centres
- A bid had been submitted for the digital bootcamps and also a Lancashire Institute of Technology and College was awaiting the outcome of these

The Head of Governance advised that the White paper also included proposals for levelling up standards in Governance and this included:

- Setting expectations re composition/expertise of corporation boards, including participation of employers
- The requirement to have an Independent external voice on recruitment panels when recruiting to Principal / CEO posts
- A requirement for corporations to have three-yearly external governance reviews and to conduct annual governance self-assessments
- Promoting the role and status of governance professionals
- DfE would be working with the sector to develop a board/governor competency framework

The Search & Governance Committee would consider the governance proposals in further detail at its next meeting, and it was hoped that additional information on this was available before the next meeting of the Committee.

7. Revised Governor Dashboard

The Principal explained that the dashboard had been streamlined and feedback was requested from Governors on whether the revised format provided all the information that they required.

It was noted that the library function in Convene would be used to provide additional data to support the information contained in the dashboard.

A Governor suggested that some information on people and staffing was included and that internal and external stakeholder feedback was separated.

ACTION:

Principal to arrange for dashboard to be updated

8. Finance Monitoring Reports

8.1 Finance Report to 28th February 2021

The Board received the finance report for the month ending 28th February 2021 with the following points highlighted by the Director of Finance:

- College was on track to meet the year-end operating surplus targets
- Confirmation of funding for the additional costs of the Teachers' Pension scheme had been received and this would help to offset some of the risks
- Setting up the Covid test centre had cost the College £75,000 to £100,000

- College would be reimbursed £14 for each test that had been undertaken but this would not cover all the costs that had been incurred

9. Safeguarding / Prevent Update

The Deputy Principal Zoe Smallman presented the report and the following points were noted:

- The overall number of referrals had increased slightly compared to the same time last year
- The number of referrals for Year 1 A Level students had been lower and measures had been put in place to raise awareness amongst this group
- The majority of referrals during the lockdown period had been related to mental health and this was in line with the national picture

A Governor stated that it was important for College to closely monitor if any particular safeguarding issues were emerging now that students had returned back to campus.

The Safeguarding Governor Jo Venn stated she had attended the recent Safeguarding Steering group meeting and had been assured that College had the necessary systems in place to monitor this.

10. Task & Finish Group Meeting Notes

Members received and noted the minutes of the Task & Finish group meetings.

Stakeholder Engagement

The following update was provided by the Chair of the Stakeholder Engagement Task & Finish group:

- The Principal and Director of School & Employer Relations had undertaken a lot of work on stakeholder engagement
- A stakeholder mapping document and engagement plan was now in place
- College had been very pro-active in engaging with employers and the LEP / Chamber of Commerce
- The Board needed to consider how Governors could contribute to supporting and brokering links with key stakeholder groups

A Governor suggested that the Chat function on Teams could be used to support the College with employer engagement as it would provide a channel whereby Governors could quickly respond to any requests for information in relation to particular employers.

RESOLVED:

The Board agreed that the use of the Teams chat function was explored further

ACTION:

Principal

Governor Link Programme

The Chair of the Search & Governance Committee reported that purpose of the link scheme had been reviewed and amended to 3 key aims; Assurance, Induction and Support. Examples of the different link activities that could be undertaken in each area would be included as part of the link programme briefing document for Governors.

11. Risk Register (*High Risks*)

Members were informed that as a result of the recommendations from the F.E. Commissioner diagnostic visit, the risk register was to be revised to enable the Board to focus on the key strategic risks. The Audit Committee was to review the updated risk register at its next meeting and provide some input and feedback.

12. Board & Committee Appointments

12.1 To Approve the appointment of Michael Lowe to the Corporation Board

The Chair advised that Michael Lowe had been a Co-opted member of the Audit Committee since May 2019. In accordance with the Audit Code of Practice, the majority of Audit members had to be Governors.

He had discussed the Governor role with Michael and felt that he had the relevant skills set and experience to add value to the work of the Board.

RESOLVED:

The Board approved the appointment of Michael Lowe to the Corporation Board

12.2 To Approve the appointment of Martyn Lylyk as a Co-opted Member of the Search & Governance Committee

The Chair of the Search & Governance Committee reported that she had discussed the Co-opted member role with Martyn and felt that he could be a useful asset to the committee and was keen to join it.

Martyn would fill the vacancy created by resignation of Stephen Gregson.

RESOLVED:

The Board approved the appointment of Martyn Lylyk

13. Policies for Approval

13.1 Prevent

Members were informed that there had been some updates to contact details and an appendix had been added to take account of Covid.

A Governor stated that it was important for College to remain vigilant and continue to engage with faith groups as the threat from young people being drawn into extremism had not gone away.

RESOLVED:

The Board approved the Prevent policy.

13.2 Security

It was noted that no changes were proposed but the policy was due an annual review.

RESOLVED:

The Board approved the Security policy.

13.3 Governor Expenses

The Head of Governance explained that one minor change was being proposed to the policy.

RESOLVED:

The Board approved the Governor expenses policy.

14. 2021 / 2022 Governor Meetings Schedule

The meetings schedule for the next academic year was received and noted.

The Chair requested that members contacted the Head of Governance if there was an issue with any of the meeting dates.

15. Governance Impact Statement

- Governor triangulation / feedback re Principal's meeting with faith leaders
- Discussion re implications of the F.E. White paper on curriculum intent and governance
- Discussion and suggestion re Governor support for stakeholder engagement
- Governor triangulation / observations re online lessons
- Governor input re the strategic direction of the College and development of estates strategy
- Revisions to the Governor links programme
- Governor feedback re revisions to the dashboard
- Suggestion to use Teams chat function to support employer engagement
- Approval of policies ensures that Governors are fulfilling their statutory duties

16. Reserved Business Minutes

16.1 Corporation Meeting Minutes Part 2 – 7th December 2020

Agreed: that the minutes are approved as a correct record

16.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

16.3 Standards & Curriculum Committee – 5th February 2021

16.4 Audit Committee Minutes 11th March 2021 Part 2

16.5 Remuneration Committee Minutes Part 2 – 15th March 2021

The reserved business minutes from the above Committee meetings were received and noted.

16.6 Matters Arising from the Committee Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

17. Principal and Senior Postholder Mid-Year Reviews

17.1 Deputy Principals Mid-Year Review

17.2 Principal Mid-Year Review

17.3 Head of Governance Mid-Year Review

Items 17.1 to 17.3 were discussed as part of reserved business.

18. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 19th April 2021 at 5pm (Strategic Planning Meeting)