

Venue: Runshaw College

Present: Warren Middleton (Chair), Alison Watson- Bird, Clare Russell (Principal), Alex Magowan, Simon Drew, Michael Lowe, Graham Murphy, Gary Hall, Robert Cobourne, Martina Jay, Ade Oladapo, Ali Kamel, Richard Evans

In Attendance Martin Rigby (Deputy Principal), Zoe Smallman (Deputy Principal), Janet Ivill (Vice Principal – Finance and Facilities)
Catherine Duro (Interim Head of Governance)

Meeting began 5.15pm

Meeting closed 7.06pm

Attendance 81%

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Portia Bailey Barrow, Dominic Martinez and Joshi Jariwala.

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.

3. Minutes of The Meeting Held on 30 March 2023

3.1 Approval of the Minutes Part 1

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

3.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes

A question was asked about what was being done to support student resilience. It was advised that comprehensive plans were in place to give students skills for the new year. Extra support was being offered around exam anxiety this term.

The Action Progress Log was reviewed. It was noted that one action had been postponed from March to May. This was agreeable to governors.

Mazars are doing a disaster recovery audit, to evidence ability to recover if there was any system issue.

Action – Disaster Recovery audit plan to be shared. (VP F&F)

The Buttermere construction contract was confirmed to be with Collinson Construction Ltd, with no parent guarantee. It was confirmed that they have seen this contract through and are having collateral warranties put in place so we can go to subcontractors directly.

All other actions were on track or complete.

4. Corporation Committee Meeting Minutes

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

4.1 Standards and Curriculum Committee Minutes 5th May 2023

- The main item was the review of quality (ROQ). High level of transparency, which heralded out with the old process and dawn of new quality reporting era.
- Reporting will look at a risk-based approach, with a live QIP for in year monitoring and changes
- Good news in the apprenticeship, KPI board is green across all elements.

Work to do on what the reporting process will be back to the board. The committee have seen a route map and a start of the process, reports need to be useful and timely to management and governors not just extra admin.

Quick wins are getting staff on board. The head of quality has been honest and frank with middle managers, putting students at the heart of the process. Middle managers are on board, see the need to change, and were being equipped with the tools needed to own the change, and progress with momentum.

5. STRATEGIC UPDATES

5.1 Principal's Report

The Principal gave a mid-term verbal report to the Board. Further detail will be reported at the end of term. Significant work since the previous reports has all been focussed on quality.

Significant improvements through understanding from new ROQ and QIP. Will not be outstanding in all areas this year, but understand the issues and actions are in place.

The Principal advised that there had been; proposed amendments to job descriptions to clarify management responsibilities, a revised set of expectations as to what shall be in every taught lesson and training for managers to address areas of underperformance

Externally facing the college had hosted some great events, including a T-Level showcase and an employer showcase hosted in the new Silverdale student hub, which was a fantastic facility demonstrating the best of the college offer. Employer's feedback that they do not need to advertise anywhere else, are recruiting all the apprentices they need from Runshaw. Employer networks working well, informing curriculum. TLC and the LEP are working closely with regarding the LSIP and IOT. Immersion Visit from DFE to understand what life is like in a college was interesting for both parties.

As part of a group of seven principals, a letter had been drafted, lobbying against level 3 reforms, lobbying for a more staged and managed approach. Have visited the local MP to discuss this matter.

The Principal shared with the board reasons for supporting colleagues being Ofsted inspectors, these were understood and supported.

It was confirmed that all operations were now at Leyland and the sale of the Chorley campus was nearing completion.

Other building projects were progressing well.

Strong performances from performing arts students, had been enjoyed.

School leaver applications were at the highest level they had ever been.

It was to be formally noted, that the assistant principals had been appointed, and the senior team would be complete in August, for the first time.

Governor Questions

Q1. It was asked if there was any intention to run a mock Ofsted inspection.

A1. Not at the present time. Want to fill the gaps we know about first, then have external eyes to see what gaps remain, probably not in the next 6 months. All agreed with that approach.

Q2. What CPD is required for teachers?

A2. The new teaching and learning pathways have been well received. ROQ could identify development pathways, as stage 1, bespoke and tailored with teachers, in the plan to roll it out for support staff.

Q3. How are you managing student needs following lockdown?

A3. Through developing staff to be able to support them. Student needs are ever changing, and staff have skills and ability to respond to these.

Q4. Student applications have improved in from local heartlands, are these for vocational courses or A level?

Probably 50-50, nothing to impact curriculum planning. A manageable level of growth, in line with forecasts and local population growth.

Indue course will be able to ask enrolled students why they have chosen us. We know one reason is that students applying now have been able to access sampling taster days, which was missing during lockdown.

5.2 Accountability Statement

The draft accountability statement was presented, responding to one of the three new duties which had been discussed at the strategy day in January.

The Board understood that the data was nothing new, just repackaged as required.

Questions were invited on the document.

There was a discussion around the opportunity to include further detail around how the college had brought benefit to the local skills agenda, working with employers, stakeholders and apprentices to address the skills gap.

Resolved, that the Chair signs the Accountability Statement as a true and fair representation. Approved as a first draft, subject to further work to add narrative around the local successes addressing the skills gap, before the final deadline. **(Action)**

5.3 Strategic Plan 2023/24 – final draft

The final draft of the strategic plan, for the 3rd year of a three-year plan, was shared with the Board members. With the same objectives and six key priorities the focus following the strategic away day in January had been to review the vision statements and identify what we need to do better.

Following feedback from governor away day, and college strategic advisory committee, (which included one representative from every team in the college), the priorities had been reviewed.

Feedback that committee had gathered from their teams was shared with the board. There were two clear messages, more work was needed on the estate and more work around quality, we are clear around these, shared priorities. It was agreed positive that there were no surprises, but worthwhile triangulation and recognition of the issues.

A need for greater internal communication had been recognised as many were not aware of the work on partnerships and communities, many staff did not know colleagues undertook this work regularly.

Final draft plan very similar to that which came from January meeting, but now fine-tuned following consultation. A college improvement day on 30th June will review them again. Will come back to board in July for approval. Questions were invited at this stage.

Governor Questions

What happens to the objectives? They form an action plan which is monitored.

5.4 Estates Strategy – draft for 2023/24

Presented, framing where we are heading, as an introduction at this stage. Need to improve the estate, with minimal growth in student numbers. Priorities shared, to attract all students for optimal facilities. Architects were looking at the art of the possible, working on the student journey through the college. Also working with a consultant, who focus on curriculum needs and space planning for estate utilisations.

Architects first presentation shared for initial comment, also seeking feedback from heads of school. The plan is still evolving.

Quick wins are more straightforward, without the need for planning permission etc. but still could not be done tomorrow.

Governors first impressions were welcomed.

Governor Questions

Did we liaise with students? Are we developing what they want, for example Wi-Fi? Yes! Nice outside space sounds great to us, but do students want this? A sheltered outside space was raised at the last student council meeting, so yes is a requested facility. Corridors and flow of students would need to be considered, does get crowded now.

How does this fit with the estate's strategy from 2 years ago? We have done a lot of building, and sold a campus since then, so this is to consider all those changes and advise on the next stage.

Coming into year 3 of a 3-year strategic plan. How does the estates strategy fit into this? The estate strategy should fit and enable the curriculum strategy, ensure it supports student numbers projected for the coming 10 years.

How does this work with sustainability requirements, should be at the forefront of all developments that take place? Is not detailed as a priority with the 'quick win' projects. Need

to raise the profile in the strategy. The plan will work around improving the service yard to an energy centre, replacing the utilities with sustainable alternatives. Sustainability does not come through as well as it should, it is reported a long-term strategy, almost as an afterthought.

Funding for developments was questioned. Over £1m of available funding was detailed, which can be spent on premises enhancements, and needs to be sent in the next 18 months.

Action: ensure sustainability is a clear focus of the estate's strategy.

6 Safeguarding & Prevent Update

Key observations were detailed in the report. Key message is that numbers are going up year on year, 17.7% increase, continues to be mental health and home issues. Slightly fewer leavers.

Six referrals into Prevent but only one went through to channel.

To address questions about resource, we have increased designated safeguarding provision. Two people can triage safeguarding concerns, leaving the head of safeguarding for more serious issues. Now have some male counsellors too, which some students may prefer.

Moving to a safeguarding record system, widely used in education, will streamline safeguarding records, to be more effective, less time-consuming and easier to align with school incoming information. Can foresee issues if we know about them and prevent further issues arising.

In mental health, mental wealth is included in the strategic plan, equipping people proactively with strategies, to safeguard own mental health. An extended induction, to support learning skills and confidence; student mindset, to address the covid legacy, which will hopefully all impact positively on mental health, through being proactive and using wider strategies.

Governor Questions

How effective are interventions, are we surveying students, getting feedback, are the interventions helping, what is beneath the numbers.

For students who access the counselling fill out anonymous feedback forms. That is very strong.

Anecdotally we have a lot of students say that the well-being hub is supportive. Fewer leavers are a measure of positive impact. We could do more, is a valid point and we will seek more student feedback.
(Action)

7. Finance Monitoring Reports

Finance Report to 31 March 2023

A generally positive position, no high-risk concerns.

Finance committee to receive a report on the impact on the delayed sale.

Still hoping the sale will complete before end of July, and in this financial year, as forecast.

Tender for the bus contract, final stage was a presentation today, with presentations from four suppliers. Not about the lowest bidder, but the student experience of coming to college. The value of the contract will need corporation seal, so will go finance committee for recommendation, alongside the budget for July Board.

Large spend on estates and health and safety. Silverdale refurbishment. The loss on the sale is matched by the capital grant.

New auditors will need to engage early if the sale will not go through this year.

8. Governance Dashboard

Many items had already been discussed during the meeting. Largely positive 1 page view of the college. Applications and retention both positive. Outcomes good or outstanding, pushing for more to move into outstanding.

Only concerns to flag, are student attendance which is below the rate of this time last year. Student feedback, anecdotally is illuminating areas for development, which triangulates well into the work in the review of quality. Nothing new to report.

Governor Questions

- Q.** Nothing is certain or predictable in current times. Is there any acid test or measure of how many applications will convert to enrolments?
- A.** We model based on historic trends; these have stood up even during uncertain times. Lag funding gives us a grace period. Is not high risk, but we are not being complacent and taking every action possible to secure conversions. Every student has been interviewed; all have met a member of Runshaw staff before signing to apply. New student days and enrolment are the days when we will get a more accurate perspective.

9. Risk Register (*High Risks*)

Governors have touched on the top five risks though course of meeting, which is positive, including IT infrastructure, recruitment, quality, physical security, and compliance with funding regulations. Higher risk with tuition funds which has been a bumpy road but being managed. Will be a funding audit to provide external assurance.

10. Governance Impact Statement

- More timely quality reporting, with formats appropriate to committee and board, for next year
- Including local element and college benefits to the local skills gap in the accountability statement
- Focus on sustainability in the Estate Strategy
- Impact on students of safeguarding mental wealth proactive skills development
- Early review of strategic plan for progression
- Student input requested into estates and facility plan

11. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 6th July 2023 at 5.15pm