

Runshaw College Corporation Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday 28 September 2023, 5.30 – 7.30 pm

Corporation Board Members		Attendance							
		28.09.23							
Full Name	Position	Attended	Apologies	Attended	Apologies	Attended	Apologies	Attended	Apologies
Warren Middleton	Chair	✓							
Alison Watson-Bird	Vice Chair	✓							
Portia Bailey-Barrow	Independent Governor		A						
Robert Cobourne	Staff Governor	✓							
Simon Drew	Independent Governor		A						
Richard Evans	Independent Governor	✓							
Gary Hall	Independent Governor	✓							
Ali Kamel	Student Governor		A						
Joshi Jariwala	Independent Governor		X						
Martina Jay	Independent Governor		A						
Michael Lowe	Independent Governor	✓							
Alex Magowan	Staff Governor	✓							
Dominic Martinez	Independent Governor	✓							
Graham Murphy	Independent Governor	✓							
Ade Oladapo	Independent Governor	✓							
Clare Russell	Principal	✓							
Total attendance		69%							
Clerk									
Denise Williamson	Head of Governance	✓							
In Attendance									
Martin Rigby	Deputy Principal	✓							
Janet Ivill	Vice Principal	✓							
Andrea Neild	Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Support]	✓							

✓	Present
A	Apologies
X	Absent

Item	Agenda item
1.	Apologies for Absence
	Apologies for absence were received from Portia Bailey-Barrow, Simon Drew, Ali Kamel and Martina Jay. Joshi Jariwala was absent from the meeting.
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. No interests were declared.
3.	Minutes of the Meeting held on 6 July 2023
3.1	Corporation Board Minutes – 6 July 2023
	The minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on 6 July 2023 were reviewed and approved.
3.2	Action Log
	All actions remaining on the Action progress log had been completed with the exception of Action Number 11 relating to seeking further student feedback on the impact of counselling. This action has now been transferred to the Deputy Principal and remains in progress. Action: CB A1: Outstanding action to be transferred onto 2023/24 action log [Owner: Head of Governance].
4.	Governance Matters
4.1	Arrangements for the appointment of a new Chair of the Corporation Board
	The Head of Governance confirmed that the current Chair of the Corporation Board will be retiring at the end of December 2023 and advised governors of the arrangements in relation to the appointment of a new Chair. A role descriptor was also circulated. Action: CB A2: Governors to submit any nominations for the role of Chair to the Head of Governance by Tuesday, 3 October in advance of the Search & Governance meeting. [Owner: Corporation Board Members]
4.2	Updating of members' interests and declaration of eligibility
	The Head of Governance confirmed the arrangements in relation to the updating of members' interests and declaration of eligibility. Action: CB A3: Forms to be sent to Board members for completion by the deadline of end of October. [Owner: Head of Governance]

4.3	Updated meeting schedule
<p>The Head of Governance confirmed that a small number of amendments had been made to the meeting schedule for the 2023/24 academic year, a copy of which was circulated with the meeting papers.</p>	
4.4	External Board Review
<p>The Head of Governance confirmed that, following various discussions, it is proposed that the AOC be asked to carry out the External Board review in the Spring Term 2024.</p> <p>Decision: CB D1: The board agreed that the AOC be retained to carry out the EBR.</p> <p>Action: CB A4: AOC to be contacted to confirm appointment and to agree next steps [Owner: Head of Governance]</p>	
5.	Governor Training/External activity
<p>The Head of Governance asked for details of any training/external activity which had been carried out by governors since the last meeting. No training/events had taken place.</p>	
6.	Principal's report
6.1	2023 Recruitment summary – Sixth Form College and Adult College
<p>The Principal provided an initial update to the Board including information regarding the start of year staff presentation, the full day Teaching and Learning Conference and the induction events for new staff. The Principal also confirmed that the college had been successful in being awarded the Lancashire LGBT Quality Mark. Various changes that had been made over the summer were also outlined, including changes to the campus, as well as staffing changes, including the appointment of three new Assistant Principals.</p> <p>The Principal confirmed that enrolment had been very busy and that the number of new students enrolling was really positive and represented the highest number for three years. The progression of students between years one and two of two-year programmes had however been lower than anticipated, leading to a small overall shortfall vs. the census target. The Principal confirmed that a great deal of focus was now being given to the retention of both new and existing students and outlined the strategies in place to achieve this.</p> <p>Finally, the Principal provided the Board with an update in relation to the increase in funding, confirming that the 16 – 18 base rate had increased which was very positive news for the College. The Principal confirmed that the AOC were advising that this funding increase be directed towards supporting a staff pay award.</p> <p>Having noted the above and the accompanying report, the board queried the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Numbers – The balance between A Level and Vocational student numbers was discussed and the Deputy Principal confirmed that the split between the two had remained static over a number of years with approximately half of students studying A Levels with the remaining half studying for vocational qualifications. Governors asked if the shortfall vs the census target was a concern and the Principal responded that 	

measures would be put in place to address any shortfall in anticipated funding, however this would be offset by the increase in the 16 – 18 base rate. The Principal advised that any financial impact would not be felt until the next academic year which would ensure sufficient time to ensure appropriate mitigations are in place.

- Retention – A board member asked if retention was a sector wide issue and a query was raised in relation to the reasons why students had left the College. The Deputy Principal responded that retention was similar to previous years and that retention generally is an issue within the sector. He confirmed that activity was underway to confirm the reasons why students had left the College. The Principal confirmed that the date on which learners qualify for funding is 18 October, following which further modelling work will be undertaken. The Deputy Principal reinforced the importance of the work being carried out in relation to ensuring that the quality of provision being delivered by the College is excellent in order to ensure students are retained and achieve their potential.
- Staff turnover – A query was raised in relation to staff retention and whether this was typical. The Principal advised that c. 30 new staff had joined the College at the start of the academic year which was very similar to the position in previous years.
- Staff salaries – The board asked if benchmarking information was used to establish salary levels and the Principal confirmed that this was the case.

Action: CB A5: Draft budget showing the impact of the proposed pay award to be shared with the Finance Committee [Owner: Vice Principal].

7.	Summary of student achievement for the 2022/23 academic year
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The Deputy Principal presented a summary of the Summer 2023 examination results, including those for A Levels, vocational qualifications, and GCSEs.

The Deputy Principal confirmed that the results for A level qualifications were mixed and that, whilst some subjects are secured very good results, others had been identified as a concern. He also confirmed that results for Vocational qualifications, as well as GCSE's were positive.

Following an extensive discussion, and having noted the reports provided, the committee queried the following:

- Variation in A Level results – The board asked for further information about the actions being taken in response to the variation in A Level results. The Deputy Principal responded that significant work was being undertaken focusing in a variety of areas including setting high expectations, the quality of teaching and learning and staff CPD. The Chair of the Standards & Curriculum Committee also outlined the discussions which had taken place at the committee meeting and confirmed that robust plans were in place to drive in-year improvement where necessary with a focus on establishing lead indicators of progress to provide assurance.
- Impact of Safeguarding concerns – The board queried the extent to which the rise in Safeguarding referrals had impacted on learner achievement. The Deputy Principal confirmed that, in some cases, safeguarding concerns had led to fewer learners being

able to remain at College but that robust processes were in place to enable learners to return where appropriate.

- Learner destinations – The committee queried the destination of students and asked for an update on learner destinations to be provided to the board.

Action: CB A6: An update on learner destinations to be provided to the Board when completed. [Owner: Deputy Principal]

Action: CB A7: Regular updates to be provided to Corporation Board by the Standards & Curriculum Committee in relation to progress against Quality objectives [Owner: Standards & Curriculum Committee Chair/Head of Governance].

8. College SAR and QIP Process

The Head of Governance provided a summary of the College self-assessment process, as well as the process for developing Quality Improvement plans for the current academic year. The approach being taken to the self-assessment of the effectiveness of governance was also outlined prior to the SAR meeting with governors the following week. Governors were reminded to complete the individual self-assessment questionnaire to inform the overall outcome.

9. Safeguarding Annual Report and KSCIE Update for Governors

9.1 Safeguarding Presentation and Annual Report incorporating proposal for Governor training

Andrea Neild, new Assistant Principal for Student Experience and Support was introduced to the Board. The Assistant Principal provided an overview of the arrangements in place at the College in relation to Safeguarding which she confirmed had been shared with parents as part of the recent parent welcome event. The Safeguarding Annual Report for the 2022/23 academic year was also shared with the board. The Assistant Principal highlighted the increase in the number of Safeguarding concerns which she confirmed was a national trend. The number of safeguarding concerns identified in the current academic year had also increased.

In relation to Governor training, it was confirmed that the ETF have developed a suite of Governor Training modules, including modules focused on Safeguarding and Prevent, which are in the process of being transferred to a new platform. Once this transfer is complete, the intention is that Governors be asked to complete these training modules.

Decision: CB D2: The board agreed that the ETF training modules be adopted and that the Safeguarding and Prevent modules would be completed by governors when they become available

Action: CB A8: Governors to be signposted to complete Safeguarding and Prevent modules when available [Owner: Head of Governance].

Having noted the above, and the accompanying report, the board queried the following:

- Learner Voice – the board asked how the Learner voice was being heard and the Deputy Principal confirmed that two surveys were carried out last year focused on student safety and wellbeing, the outcome of which was followed up, particularly in relation to

addressing any concerns. The Assistant Principal advised that a Student Union is in the process of being set up which will also enhance opportunities in relation to Learner Voice.

- Types of Safeguarding concerns – the board asked if there were any specific trends in relation to safeguarding concerns. The Assistant Principal confirmed that concerns prompted by issues at home had increased, as had issues related to mental health. The importance of working with external agencies was reinforced.
- Reporting Data – the board identified that it would be useful to have percentages included in the report in addition to learner numbers.

Action: CB A9: Percentages to be included in future Safeguarding reports in addition to student numbers [Owner: Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Support]

- Compliance with mandatory training – the board queried the minority of staff who had not yet completed the mandatory training. The Assistant Principal confirmed that work was underway to address this as a priority.

9.2 Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance 2023

The Assistant Principal [Student Experience & Support] provided an overview of the updated current Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance, confirming the actions taken in response to the changes that had been introduced in September 2023

10 Finance update

10.1 Year End Management Accounts

The Vice Principal [Finance and Facilities] presented the Management Accounts as at 31 July 2023 confirming that the College's financial health is outstanding in terms of ESFA indicators.

The Vice Principal highlighted particularly the work that had been carried out on campus during the year for the benefit of learners.

The Vice Principal confirmed that the audit of the Financial statements would be carried out in mid-October.

Having received the management accounts and noted the content, the board queried the following:

- Statement relating to pension fund balance – the board queried whether this would result in a reduction in contributions in the future. The Vice Principal advised that this would not be the case as a pension asset could not be recognised on the balance sheet.
- Tuition Fund – the board queried the plan in place to ensure the effective use of the Tuition Fund during the current academic year. The Deputy Principal confirmed that a robust plan was in place including a five-week mindset and study skills programme which had been timetabled.

- Loans – A query regarding loans was raised and the Vice Principal confirmed that these were fixed until 2030.

11. Risk Register

The Vice Principal [Finance and Facilities] provided an overview of the Risk Register which includes five key risks with details of associated mitigations.

Having received the paper and discussed the content, the board queried the following:

- Impact of Safeguarding concerns – the board suggested that there be a reference to the increase in safeguarding concerns as part of the risk related to Support for Students given the increase in demand for this service.

Action: CB A10: Reference to be made to the impact of Safeguarding concerns as part of the risk related to Support for Students [Owner: Vice Principal]

- Disaster Recovery Internal Audit – the board asked if the internal audit had been carried out. The Vice Principal confirmed that the audit had taken place and that the final report was due shortly and would go to the Audit Committee.
- Student Numbers – the board asked that a risk be added to the register in relation to student numbers.

Action: CB A11: Risk to be added to the risk register in relation to student numbers [Owner: Vice Principal]

12. Policies for approval

The following policies were presented for approval:

12.1 Prevent Policy

An overview of the policy, including a summary of the changes made, was presented by the Assistant Principal [Student Experience and Support].

Action: CB A12: The references to DSLs in the policy to be changed to the Team of DDSLs for consistency [Owner: Assistant Principal – Student Experience & Support]

Decision: CB D3: The Prevent policy was approved with the above amendment.

12.2 Freedom of Expression Policy

An overview of the policy, including a summary of the changes, was presented by the Assistant Principal [Student Experience and Support].

Decision: CD D4: The Freedom of Expression policy was approved.

13. Governance Impact Statement

The committee identified the following in terms of impact:

- Approval of External Board Review provider
- Additions to risk register/simplification of format
- Individual feedback to inform self-assessment of governance
- Continued oversight of Quality of Education indicators.

14. Confidentiality

None identified

15. Date of next meeting

Thursday, 7 December 2023 at 5.30 pm

AOB

Action: CB A13: The Board asked for confirmation of the date of the A Level Awards Evening
[Owner: Deputy Principal]

DRAFT