

Wakefield College Corporation

Board of Governors

Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 July 2016

1 Present: Robert Allcock, Matthew Butler, David Caddies, Paul Campbell (Chair), Jason Malloy, Andrew McConnell, Ian Parsons, Jane Walton, Andy Wallhead, Andrew Watts, Sam Wright

Clerk to the Corporation

In attendance: Deputy Principal, Assistant Principal Quality and Performance

Apologies: Debbie Moss, Michele Phillips, Ruth Pickford

Paul Campbell welcomed new Student Governors Robert Allcock (President of the Students' Union) and Matthew Butler to the meeting. Introductions were made.

Resolved

That the election of Robert Allcock and Matthew Butler as Student Governors for a one year term of office ending 30 June 2017 be noted.

2 Declarations of Interest

2.1 Governors noted the following interests:

- (i) College staff (including Staff Governors) in relation to any advice given on the on the Update on Area Review;
- (ii) College officers, Staff and Student Governors on the confidential item on the Proposed Principalship Restructure. The Chair commented that the Staff and Student Governors would be requested to withdraw from the meeting under the provisions of clauses 5(d) and 9(b) respectively of Instrument 14:

Resolved

That the Staff and Student Governors withdraw from the meeting for the consideration of the Proposed Principalship Restructure in accordance with clauses 5(d) and 9(b) respectively of Instrument 14.

3 Minutes of the Meeting Held on 24 May 2016

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2016 be approved.

4 Matters Arising

Ian Parsons joined the meeting during this item.

- 4.1 On minute 4.2 (Matters Arising – Date of Next Scheduled Meeting), the Clerk to the Corporation tabled a schedule of Core Strategic Items to be considered in 2016/17 based on suggestions by Governors and management, and welcomed feedback.
- 4.2 On minute 5 (Higher Education Review), the Principal reported that the outcome was now known and that the College had “met UK expectations” in all areas. She advised that the outcome was confidential until the report was published on 21 July.
- 4.3 On minute 12.3 (Strategic Planning), it was reported that the College’s staff survey, developed by York College, had just closed. It was noted that, although it would not be possible to compare directly with the results of the previous Best Companies surveys, themes or trends should be able to be mapped.

5 Minutes of the Committees of the Board:

(i) Audit Committee, 28 June 2016

Resolved

That the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 28 June 2016 be noted.

(ii) Search Committee, 5 July 2016

Jane Walton reported that three Governor candidates had been interviewed the previous week, one of which had been recommended for appointment. She outlined the strengths and areas for development of the recommended candidate.

Resolved

That Emma Elvin be appointed as an External Governor for a four year term of office, with a one year probation period.

That the minutes of the Search Committee meeting held on Tuesday 5 July 2016 be noted.

6 Core Strategic Item – Strategic Plan

(i) Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan

- 6.1 The Assistant Principal Quality and Performance gave a brief presentation which covered the following points:
 - (i) that the College’s draft Strategic Plan had been developed during a period of uncertainty with the Skills White Paper only published following the release of the Strategic Plan;
 - (ii) the three year context of the Strategic Plan, which included:

- Skills White Paper;
 - British exit from the European Union (Brexit);
 - inspection;
 - devolution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB);
 - apprenticeship reform;
 - Advanced Skills and Innovation Centre (ASIC);
 - economic upturn/downturn;
- (iii) the College's intentions:
- focus on the core business – getting the teaching and learning right;
 - make ASIC a success;
 - exit the Thornes Park Campus, and review provision at the Crofton Sixth Form Centre;
 - continue to align the curriculum to priorities;
 - seek growth in all areas possible;
 - position itself to respond to the Skills White Paper;
 - work with the local authority to implement a devolved AEB;
- (iv) how the College would measure its progress (KPIs) against each of its strategic objectives.

6.2 Governors' considered the following questions:

1. *What, if anything, is missing?*

- (i) whether the curriculum on offer would seek to balance employers' needs with student demand. It was noted that student demand needed to be through informed choice and this needed to start at school via Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG).

2. *What, if anything, would Governors like more information about?*

- (i) whether the College's "Culture for Learning", which had been outlined to the College's academic staff, should be understood by Governors. It was agreed that Governors should receive a presentation on this;
- (ii) how the College formed links with employers: It was noted that there were many ways in which the College linked with employers including at curriculum levels, employer groups and breakfasts.

3. *To what extent does the Plan give Governors confidence about the College's direction of travel?*

- (i) that in aligning its curriculum with the needs of the district and the Leeds City Region, the College was not only meeting its strategic objectives but was being recognised for doing so;
- (ii) that the College could benefit from devolved funding for economic development and inclusion focussed on deprived communities;
- (iii) that the College's strategic direction was clear and appropriate.

Resolved

That the Strategic Plan 2016-19 be approved.

Risk Management

- 6.3 Governors indicated that they were content with the Risk Register and Management Plan 2016/17 and noted that it had previously been considered by the Audit Committee, which resulted in a request for the inclusion of a risk to the College in continuing to commit to the Living Wage Foundation living wage. The impact of Brexit had also been discussed, but as the nature of associated risks were not clear, no specific reference had been made on the risk register.

Resolved

That the Risk Register and Management Plan for 2016/17 be approved.

That the Internal Audit Plan 2016/17 be approved.

(i) Budget 2016/17

May Finance Report and Forecast

- 6.4 The Deputy Principal reported that the latest June figures supported those arising from the May Report, that a surplus of £558k was forecast for 2015/16.
- 6.5 Governors were content with the report as presented.

Budget 2016/17 and Financial Plan

- 6.6 The Deputy Principal reported the following points:
- (i) that the budget was predicated on maintaining 16-18 numbers, growing apprenticeships, growing higher education and controlling staff costs;
 - (ii) the College's financial plan had been generated from the bottom up, so that staffing levels could be reconciled back to the curriculum. Group sizes and class sizes had all been reviewed;
 - (iii) the revised financial plan format driven by new reporting standards, now included a Statement of Comprehensive Income. This resulted in a restatement of the result for 2015/16 (£558k as above) to a deficit of £230k. The budgeted position for 2016/17 under the new reporting rules showed a deficit of £503k. Under the previous method of presentation, this would have been a surplus of £350k. The main reason for these variances was the requirement now to include actuarial losses relating to pension schemes on the face of the main income statement;
 - (iv) the College's financial health over the period of the plan was outstanding;
 - (v) the College's financial objectives. Some £250k had been added to incremental costs and, together with increased employer contributions to national insurance, staffing costs at the start of the year were expected to be 71.5% reducing to 70% by year end;
 - (vi) the College needed to make full use of the Advanced Learning Loan Facility, as this had not been fully utilised to date. If the College was successful in achieving its plan, it would exceed its allocation;
 - (vii) cash balances would decrease during construction of the ASIC, and increase thereafter.

- 6.7 Governors noted the prior scrutiny that had been given to the College's financial plan up to 2020 as part of the area review process. The Chair indicated that the Board's thanks should go to the Deputy Principal and his team for ensuring the ongoing strong financial management of the College. Governors noted that the area review process had provided a good opportunity to benchmark the College and had shown it to be comparatively strong.

Resolved

That the checklist for the financial plan commentary be noted.

That the budget 2016/17 be approved.

That the financial objectives be approved.

That the financial plan be approved.

7 Student Update

- 7.1 Robert Allcock and Matthew Butler outlined the following points:

- (i) that they were both looking to sustain the work of the previous Student Governors;
- (ii) that the Students' Union would seek to improve its engagement with the wider student body;
- (iii) that students did not appear to be able to respond to College electronic surveys from outside of the College. This would be investigated.

8 Performance Dashboard

- 8.1 The Principal reported the following points:

- (i) attendance for the year was 84%, which compared with a target of 95% and 86% achieved in the previous year;
- (ii) that success rate data presented was incomplete at this stage of the year;
- (iii) success rates were predicted to increase:
 - 16-18 success rates: L1 88% (76% in 2014/15), L2 86% (73%), L3 87% (81%);
 - 19+ success rates: L1 92% (88% in 2014/15), L2 87% (76%), L3 84% (83%);
 - apprenticeship success rate was predicted to increase, but remain below benchmark;
- (iv) destination data was misleading in that it was not complete in respect of the current year's cohort.

- 8.2 Governors considered the following issues:

- (i) whether there were any trends in relation to complaints. It was noted that no trends had been identified;
- (ii) that forecast success rate improvements would be very positive, if accurate.

9 Update on Area Review

9.1 The Chair reported the following points:

- (i) the timeline to conclude the West Yorkshire Area Review process;
- (ii) that the Board had been requested to formally respond to the Steering Group's recommendations as they relate to Wakefield College.

He also offered a personal view of the area review process, which included some regret that the College had not been able to take advantage of the opportunities afforded to it arising from the area review.

9.2 Governors considered the following issues:

- (i) that the area review had been helpful in allowing the College to benchmark itself against other colleges in West Yorkshire and that Wakefield College compared very favourably in terms of its financial status;
- (ii) the planned meeting between the principals of Calderdale College, Kirklees College and Wakefield College together with the FE Commissioner to see whether there were any opportunities to work together more closely. It was noted that the meeting had taken place but that no progress had been made;
- (iii) whether there were opportunities for Wakefield College to work with neighbouring colleges on a voluntary basis, in a more considered manner, once the area review process had concluded. Sam Wright indicated that colleges were already working together under the banner of the West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges, but that she would consider all opportunities as they arose;
- (iv) whether the College could access any of the restructuring fund for WYCC work. This was not known but would be investigated.

Resolved

That the extract from the "Area Review Summary Report – West Yorkshire" on the recommendations agreed by the Steering Group as they relate to Wakefield College be accepted.

10 Carbon Management Plan

10.1 The Deputy Principal reported the following:

- (i) that the Carbon Management Plan impacted across all areas of College activity, including travel policy and procurement strategy;
- (ii) that during the previous Plan (2010-2015), the College's carbon footprint had reduced by 37% against the baseline year 2009/10;
- (iii) that the planned reduction in the carbon footprint during the next Plan (2015-2020) was a further 10%, with the target linked to the size of the property footprint;
- (iv) key areas to be addressed included central control of heating and ventilation, space utilisation, the efficient operation of the property and how the College managers travel options for staff, students and business use. A priority would be to implement a procurement strategy for goods, services and

equipment and facilities that included whole life costs as part of any procurement assessment.

Resolved

That the Carbon Management Plan be approved.

11 Overview of Teaching, Learning and Assessment at Wakefield College 2015/16

11.1 The Assistant Principal Quality and Performance reported the following:

- (i) that the report provided an early overview of teaching and learning and that more complete details would be available at a later date;
- (ii) the College had operated a system of unannounced, ungraded lesson observations, something that Ofsted had only recently started to promote;
- (iii) 178 lessons were observed against a total of 243 in the previous year;
- (iv) of the 19 re-observations taken in year, 10 staff had improved and six had left the College;
- (v) overall results were that 82% of lessons were judged to be good or better.

11.2 Governors commented that the performance had dipped in some areas (e.g. Business School and Games Design) and asked whether this would impact on success rates. It was noted that such dips in success rates were not forecast.

12 Annual Review of Governance Arrangements

12.1 The Clerk to the Corporation reported the following points:

- (i) one change to the Corporation's Standing Orders was proposed in relation to the length of term of office for the Chair and Vice Chair. Where currently it was set as two years, it was proposed that this be amended to "up to two years" to allow greater flexibility in succession planning;
- (ii) recommended changes to the Audit Committee terms of reference were not substantive and related mainly to the terminology of the financial statements auditor and regularity auditor, which are now referred to as the external auditor and reporting accountant in the Joint Audit Code of Practice;
- (iii) no changes were recommended to the terms of reference of the Remuneration Committee and the Search Committee.

Resolved

That the proposed changes to the Corporation's governance arrangements be approved.

13 Briefing Papers:

13.1 Property Development Update

Resolved

That the Property Development Update be noted.

13.2 **Security Strategy**

Governors were referred to the specific section on Governor responsibilities. In response to a query on how Governors would monitor the implementation of the Strategy, it was suggested that this could be reviewed later in the year.

Resolved

That the Security Strategy be noted.

13.3 **Governor Attendance 2015/16**

Resolved

That Governor attendance 2015/16 report be noted (currently 88%).

13.4 **Use of the Seal of the Corporation**

Resolved

That the Use of the Seal of the Corporation between 18 May 2016 and 5 July 2016 be noted.

14 Feedback from Governors Attending External or Development Sessions

14.1 It was noted that Paul Campbell and Sam Wright had attended the West Yorkshire Area Review Steering Group 5 meeting on 17 June to consider the draft recommendations. It was also noted that Jane Walton and Andrew Watts had attended the Governor Briefing Session that immediately followed the Steering Group 5 meeting.

15 Review of Effectiveness of Meeting and Identification of Emerging Risk

15.1 It was noted that the key risks facing the College were outlined in the Risk Register 2016/17, which included the Skills White Paper, while the impact of Brexit was not yet known.

15.2 The Chair asked that in the absence of the Michele Phillips, the minutes record the thanks of the Board for her contribution and commitment to the College over the past eight years as she would be standing down at the end of her second term of office at the end of July.

16 Date of Next Scheduled Meeting – Tuesday 18 October 2016

Signed Date.....

Future Core Strategic Items

This takes into account Governor feedback on the draft schedule.

Item	Date
18 October 2016	English and Maths Strategy (incl. Improving Attendance)
13 December 2016	Self Assessment Report
7 February 2017	Pay and Benefits Strategy
28 March 2017	Employer Engagement Strategy
23 May 2017	tbc
11 July 2017	Budget / Financial Plan / Strategic Plan / Risk Management

Also:

Governors' Development Session (1 November 2016) – Ofsted Inspection

Governors' Workshop (1 February 2017) – Apprenticeships

17 Proposed Principalship Restructure

The Staff Governors, Student Governors and College officers withdrew from the meeting before consideration of this item.

17.1 This item is confidential as it contains information about current members of staff.