



Minutes of a meeting of the Governing Body held on Wednesday 14 October 2009 at 5.00pm in room 1F024/025, York College

Present: Hilary Bainbridge
Alison Birkinshaw
Jim Clark
Kevin Deadman
Elizabeth Fenn
Bruce Gilbert
Tom Hobman
David Jackson
David Marsh
Lynne Marston
Andy Mendus
Danny Morgan
John Short, Chair
Terry Wolf

In Attendance: Trevor Armer, Director of Finance
Richard Hinde, Clerk to the Governing Body
Glyn Jones, Assistant Principal: 16-19 A Level
Louise Lawrence-Crockford, Assistant Principal: Employer Engagement
Graeme Murdoch, Deputy Principal QA & Support
Bob Saynor, Assistant Principal: Lifelong Learning and HE
Anne Tyrrell, Deputy Principal Resources
Clare Wareing, Assistant Principal: 14-19 Vocational

The meeting started at 5.05pm.

Action

09.42 Apologies for Absence / Declarations of Interest

Apologies had been received from Peter Burrows, David Johnson, Andrew Lindsay, David Maughan Brown, Carol Runciman and Bill Woolley. Clare Wareing had been delayed and would be arriving shortly.

Governors were requested to make declarations of interest as they arose. None were made.

09.43 Minutes of Previous Meeting – 16 July 2009

The minutes and confidential minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

09.44 Matters Arising

a) Action Summary Sheet

The action summary sheet was considered and it was noted that all items had either been actioned or were in progress. The Chair

reported that he had sent a letter as agreed regarding Governors' concerns over the current CRB forms.

b) Any Other Matters

There were no other matters arising.

09.45 Principal's Report

The Principal presented her report providing an update on the College's 2008/09 success rates and recruitment to date. Key items outlined included:

- Significant improvements on 16-18 success rates;
- A lack of clarity to date on 19+ success rates(as a result of LSC interference with the data);
- Improvements in success rates in HE, Work Based learning and Train to Gain;
- The likelihood of achieving the College's 16-18, Train to Gain and HE recruitment targets in 2009-10;
- Some concerns about achieving Apprenticeship and 19+ enrolment targets (although the funding target might be achieved);
- A lack of clarity with regard to International recruitment because of the visa situation; and
- Other issues pertinent to the sector.

It was noted that speculation existed that Train to Gain might cease to exist, and/or that there could be a 20% reduction in such funding together with a significant reduction in adult funding. Concern was expressed in this regard but it was noted that the effects might be cushioned to a certain extent by the College's previous over-achievement, and its increased success rates.

Reference was made to the new Common Inspection Framework and the training on this to be provided to Members the following week. Discussion took place about further developments regarding the review of 14-19 provision in York. The Chair reported that letters had been sent to governors of schools in York and North Yorkshire and to Local Authority members inviting them to visit the College and meet its Principal and Governors. The responses to these invites were currently being collated. Discussion also took place about possible changes in government strategy if another party was elected at the next general election.

Consideration was given to specific examples of the College's success rates and it was noted that the College's results for 16-18 provision as a whole were now in the top ten percentile. The Governing Body wished to record its congratulations to the Principal and staff for these very significant achievements.

It was reported that 16-18 recruitment had increased significantly on the previous year, and the College had recruited two hundred

students more than target. Discussion took place about NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) students, and it was explained that funding was limited for this particular area of provision. Members acknowledged, however, that such provision was a key part of the College's own Mission.

The Governing Body resolved to note the report.

09.46 Learner Recruitment

The Deputy Principal Resources presented the report summarising the data on recruitment as at 5 October 2009.

It was reported that at this stage (excluding apprentices) there was an increase of over 118 16-18 learners compared with the same point last year, and the College was currently 210 learners ahead of its LSC year end target. The College was still anticipating more enrolments but was also in the process of cleansing the data, and enrolment figures for second year students could fall. Further recruitment was also anticipated throughout the year as part of the College's NEETs provision and part-time 16-18 students.

With 16-18 Apprentices, the College was currently 80 below target. The courses were still enrolling but the College had concerns about meeting the year-end targets. As in 2008/09, in the current economic climate there was evidence that employers were reluctant to take on Apprentices, which was leading to conversion from Apprenticeships to full-time FE programmes. This could change during the year if students found employers and subsequently switched between the two categories of funding.

With Adult Responsive 19+ provision (excluding apprenticeships), it was early days as many courses were still enrolling. The College was currently achieving 61% of its year-end target whereas at the same time last year it was achieving 65% of target.

The 19+ recruitment figures included 274 full-time students which was an increase of 44 compared to the same time last year. These students attracted a higher Standard Learner Number (SLN) value per learner which should mean the College's funding level would exceed the same time last year. The College was currently achieving 89% of its funding target in this regard.

(Clare Wareing joined the meeting at 5.30pm.)

Employer Responsive 19+ Apprenticeships were currently 46 below target, with the same concerns as for 16-18 Apprenticeships.

With Employer Responsive, FE Workplace NVQs and Train to Gain, it was again very early for meaningful judgements to be made but the College anticipated achieving its targets in 2009/10, whilst

acknowledging that there may be some switching between this category and Adult Responsive funding. Construction Skills were currently 46 below the same position last year.

HE Provision was currently above target and the College was currently in the process of calculating FTE (Full Time Equivalent) values to compare its overall position against target. It was reported that, nationally, the level of over-recruitment was between 8–10% and that it was anticipated that a 5% over-recruitment margin may be permitted. If the College did over-recruit then it would be required to put forward an action plan explaining how the excess would be reduced. The College was currently looking at possible alternative sources of funding other than HEFCE.

BS

International recruitment was currently below target, although it was stressed that the data only included those students the College definitely knew to be coming. Discussion then took place about the problems being faced by some prospective students in obtaining visas to study in the UK.

Consideration was then given to the actions proposed by the College to address any potential under recruitment. Progress in this regard would be reported at the next Governing Body meeting. It was also noted that the next report to the Governing Body would include elements relating to Standard Learner Numbers and funding.

AVT

The Principal explained that the College had undertaken to take on five Apprentices, and how Governors could encourage their contacts to also take on an Apprentice. It was explained that the Apprentice need not be a new recruit, but could be an existing employee without a level 2 or level 3 qualification, and whose training would not then cost the employer.

In relation to the variance rate between first and second year A Level students, the Assistant Principal 16-19 A-Level explained that investigation had shown that ninety-six A Level students had actually re-enrolled on either a vocational programme or another A/S level course, and had not left the College. The College's retention rate in this regard was 87.5%. The issue did, however, highlight the need to consider the quality of Information, Advice & Guidance provided to prospective students, particularly in the College's feeder schools.

GAM

The Governing Body resolved to note the report.

09.47 A Level Pass Rates 2008/09

The Assistant Principal 16-19 A Level presented the report on the College's A Level and AS Level success rates, which were again above national and City of York averages.

The following key strengths were identified:

- A-E achievement was 98.5% for all A-Level students. This was a rise of 0.9% from the previous year's 97.6% and well above the national average of 97.5% and the York average of 98.0%.
- A-E achievement at AS Level had risen to 90.2% from 89.5% in 2008

Key concerns identified were that high grades (A-B) in fifteen A2 subjects were below benchmark; and the fact that overall high grades had fallen in A2 from 45.5% to 44.5% and in AS from 35.5% to 32.1%.

Members also considered the ALPS data and the subject specific concerns for particular areas. Consideration was given to those areas where performance was not at the desired level, and to the proposed actions to bring about improvement. Progress in this regard would be reported at the next meeting.

GJ

It was noted that a key area to focus on for further improvement included a "Value Added" strategy to improve students' achievement of high grades.

Discussion took place about the availability of this data and comparison with other providers. It was explained that school sixth forms did not use the retention percentage when calculating their success rates (as FE colleges did) and this meant it was currently difficult to compare success rates between the two, with schools being over stated by comparison. It was anticipated that in future they would be brought in line.

A similar report on the College's vocational provision would be presented at the next Governing Body meeting after consideration by the Quality & Curriculum Committee.

CW

The Governing Body resolved to note the report.

09.48 Student Union President's Report

The Student Union President presented the report which included consideration of further Student Union elections; the creation of additional revenue streams; increased sales of Student Union cards; and Student Union officer training. The Chair also reported that he had met with Mr Hobman to discuss how Governors could gain a better view of student activities within the College. It was suggested that methods could include Governor attendance at the termly Student Council meetings, and meeting students during Link Governor visits.

The Governing Body resolved to note the report and agreed that the dates of future Student Council meetings should be circulated to Governors and arrangements made for some Governors to attend.

Clerk/
TH

09.49 Finance & General Purposes Committee

a) Minutes of Meeting on 1 October 2009

The Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee presented the minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting, which were noted by the Governing Body. Specific attention was drawn to the report on College marketing activities; the review of College insurance cover; and discussion on significant future challenges for the sector.

b)i) Draft 2008/09 Management Accounts

The Director of Finance presented the report summarising the 6 October 2009 draft of the College's 2008/09 management accounts, which it was noted reflected changes arising from the audit of the College's 2008/09 Financial Statements by KPMG.

The draft year end management accounts indicated an underlying surplus for the year of £1,295,000. This was £272,000 better than was anticipated in the June Year End Forecast. If confirmed by KPMG, this financial performance would be consistent with the achievement of both Financial Health Category "A" and "Outstanding" financial health under Framework For Excellence. It was stressed, however, that the position was subject to change as it was possible that additional income attributable to the period could still be received.

The Governing Body resolved to note the report.

b)ii) Draft 2008/09 Management Accounts: Financial Analysis

The Director of Finance presented the report providing analysis of the College's financial performance in 2008/09, which was considered by members.

It was reported that, before the impact of FRS pension cost movements, the College's draft 2008/09 financial statements indicated that the College's financial performance in 2008/09 had exceeded that forecast in the College's 2008/09 Budget, 2008/09 Mid-Year Forecast and the 2008/09 June Year-End Forecast. They also indicated that the College had achieved all of its key strategic financial objectives for 2008/09; and had exceeded the financial performance assumed for 2008/09 in the New College Final Capital Bid.

They further indicated that the College was compliant with the financial covenants associated with the New College Project loan at 31 July 2009. Members also considered the ten year trend analysis

on four key financial indicators that had been provided to show the long-term trend in the College's finances over the last ten years. The College was said to be in a strong position financially, particularly when compared to many other colleges in the sector.

Once the College's financial statements had been finalised by KPMG, the College's final financial performance would be confirmed to the Governing Body at its meeting on 9 December 2009.

The Governing Body resolved to note the report.

(David Marsh left the meeting at 6.20pm.)

09.50 Employer & Skills Committee

a) Minutes of Meeting on 8 October 2009

The Principal presented the minutes of the meeting, which were noted by the Governing Body.

09.51 Governance Issues

a) Search & Governance Committee: Minutes of Meeting on 21 September 2009

The Chair of the Search & Governance Committee presented the minutes of the meeting, which were noted by the Governing Body. Specific consideration was given to the governance website; Governor Curriculum Links; and future consideration of the Remuneration Committee. The Chair of the Self Assessment Working Group explained the proposed new process for governance self assessment, and Members were reminded of the Governing Body self assessment meeting the following week.

b) Governing Body Schedule of Business 2009/10

The Clerk presented the proposed schedule of business for the Governing Body for 2009/10, which was considered by Members.

The Governing Body resolved to approve the Governing Body schedule of business for 2009/10.

c) Committee Terms of Reference

The Clerk presented the proposed Terms of Reference for the Search & Governance, Finance & General Purposes, and Employer & Skills Committees which had been recommended by those respective Committees for approval by the Governing Body.

The Governing Body resolved to approve the Terms of Reference for the Search & Governance Committee; the Finance & General Purposes Committee; and the Employer & Skills Committee, to be uploaded on the governance website.

Clerk

09.52 Any Other Business

None.

09.53 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 9 December 2009 at 5.00pm.

The meeting closed at 6.40pm.

Richard Hinde
Clerk to the Governing Body

Signed (Chair):.....

Name:.....

Date:.....