

LEEDS CITY COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD ON MONDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2016

Present

Colin Booth	Chief Executive and Principal
Emily Chapman	Student Elected Governor
Robert Clunas	Staff Elected Governor
Cherry Fricker (Vice Chair)	Governor
Becky Hewitt	Governor
Gerald Jennings	Governor
Shaid Mahmood (Chair)	Governor
Christine Smith	Governor
Tina Turnbull (Vice Chair)	Governor

The quorum for the meeting was seven Board members

In Attendance

Brian Archer	Commercial Director
Jason Challender	Director of Physical Resources – item 8 only
Lydia Devenny	Chief Financial Officer
Janet Faulkner	Director of HE and Professional Studies – item 9 only
Gerry Godley	Principal and MD, Leeds College of Music
Melanie Halstead	Clerk to the Board
Bill Jones	Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning
Jane Pither	Deputy Principal Corporate Services
Huw Roberts	Director of Human Resources
Gemma Simmons	Director of Curriculum Innovation – item 10 only
Palvinder Singh	Vice Principal Growth and Development

The meeting was held at the Printworks Campus and started at 5pm

MEETING ADMINISTRATION

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Adam Beaumont and Libby Raper (governors) and Andrew Whitaker (Executive Principal, White Rose Academies Trust).

2. Determination of Observers/Attendees at the Meeting

The Board agreed attendees/observers at the meeting as per the above attendance list.

3. Declaration of Interests in any Agenda Items

The Chair reminded governors of the requirement to declare their interest in any agenda items. In relation to agenda item 8b, the Board was reminded that both Cherry Fricker and Colin Booth served as Directors of Leeds College of Music.

4. Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on 17 October 2016

RESOLVED (B 55/16):

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 17 October 2016 (Parts I and II) be approved and signed by the Chair subject to an addition to make clear that the property

strategy staff consultation referenced on page 2 of the Part I minutes related to the Quarry Hill project.

BOARD MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS

5a. Key Statutory Areas

Health & Safety and RIDDOR

The Deputy Principal Corporate Services reported that there had been 16 accidents across the college since the previous Board meeting; all resulted in minor injuries and there had been no RIDDOR events. The most significant incident was the assault of a staff member at Beeston. The link governor for Health & Safety emphasised the need for risk assessments to be carried out following the changes in security staffing arrangements; the Deputy Principal Corporate Services confirmed that this was being followed up. The link governor also stressed the need for staff to be released from core duties for First Aider and Fire Warden training. The Director of HR and the Deputy Principal Corporate Services undertook to progress this issue.

The Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning provided an update on the planned change in leadership at the Printworks Campus following the recent HSE inspection. The link governor advised that he had also agreed to meet with a group of staff at Printworks in his capacity as a UCU representative.

Safeguarding and Prevent

The link governor for Safeguarding and Prevent reported that two Safer College Police members of staff were now working across the college. It was also reported that the online safeguarding training module had been updated; this training was a mandatory module for all staff. The link governor confirmed that there were no significant risks to bring to the Board's attention.

SEND

It was reported that the college had received confirmation of high needs student numbers for 2017/18, representing a significant step forward compared to previous years when it had been difficult to identify learners prior to September. The link governor also advised that a new learning support team was now in place.

Equality & Diversity

The link governor for Equality & Diversity reported that he had recently met with the National Centre for Diversity, a national organisation based in Leeds, to discuss the Investors in Diversity and Leaders in Diversity awards. It was suggested that the college consider achieving such awards.

5b. Task & Finish Groups

English and Maths

The Chair of the Task & Finish Group advised that the group was scheduled to meet again on 18 November; feedback would therefore be provided at the next Board meeting.

Property Strategy

The Chair of the Task & Finish Group advised that good progress continued to be made on the Printworks Phase 3 project, albeit construction costs were slightly over budget. A separate report appeared later on the agenda in relation to the Quarry Hill project.

STRATEGY AND POLICY

6. Group Strategy

The Chief Executive/Principal delivered a presentation setting out proposals on some strategic choices, the timescale for refresh of the group mission, values and purpose, and the process for annual update of the group's key strategic document (the Development Plan). The following key points were discussed:

Where do we want to be?

- Growth - it was agreed that national growth was not a priority at the present time. In that context it was noted that growth expectations over the next ten years needed to be articulated in order to identify the point at which the group would exhaust the Leeds market.
- Ofsted Outstanding (plus other kite marks) – the Chief Executive/Principal advised that many colleges had taken the decision not to expend time and effort to become outstanding (as judged by Ofsted). However, it was his view that the college should strive for this as there was nothing in the Common Inspection Framework descriptor of outstanding that we would not wish for our students. Governors also emphasised the importance of also demonstrating the college's commitment to the communities of Leeds and how it really adds value to students' lives, particularly those from disadvantaged communities.
- Supporting a large multi academy trust and a wider partnership of schools – the Chief Executive/Principal advised that a lot of colleges had withdrawn their sponsorship of academies but recommended that the college should invest in supporting the whole infrastructure in Leeds. Governors went on to discuss the potential advantages and disadvantages of this approach, following which it was agreed to remain open in this respect.
- Strong financial performance – 5% to 12% EBITDA to support continuous investment – it was noted that this needed to be closer to 12% to support the property strategy. A discussion took place around the impact on the college's financial health grade as calculated by the SFA. Governors noted that 12% EBITDA would result in a financial health grade of outstanding but this would change to satisfactory following reinvestment in the property strategy, simply down to the way in which this is calculated by the SFA. In response to a question from governors, the Chief Financial Officer confirmed that there would be no negative impact as long as the college retained a satisfactory financial health grade.
- Transformation to 21st Century Teaching and Learning using new technologies and a range of new teaching roles – governors suggested that this needed to be linked to the growth predictions.
- Full degree awarding powers for both Leeds College of Music and Leeds City College higher education courses – the Chief Executive/Principal highlighted this as an important strategic target and explained the benefits from a financial context.

Grow Market Share?

- EFA funded students – the importance of reversing the decline in market share was acknowledged.
- Apprentices – a low share of a growing market at present, necessitating a clear strategy and aggressive stance.
- Grant funded adults – the Chief Executive/Principal advised that the college needed to start thinking strategically about how the grant is spent and how to maximise the grant for the city region and the group.

Grow via acquisition?

- White Rose Academies Trust – the priority was to improve quality and therefore a partnership approach rather than expansion of the Trust was supported in the short term.
- Acquire a training provider to complement the commercial division – following discussion and recognising the college's strong ambition relating to apprenticeships, it was agreed to keep this option open pending further debate.

Mission, Values and Purpose Refresh

The timescales proposed in the Chief Executive/Principal's presentation were agreed by governors, with the suggestion that agreement of a Vision be added to the process.

Annual Development Plan

The process and timescale for the Board to discuss and approve the annual Development Plan was agreed subject to consideration of the draft financial plan at Board level being brought forward from June. It was noted that the 2016/17 Development Plan appeared later on the agenda for this meeting.

In conclusion, the following first priorities were agreed:

- Staff culture of high aspiration and expectations
- Strong financial performance
- Improving quality (at a rapid pace)

A discussion followed regarding how to define the staff culture being sought and how the change would be measured. Becky Hewitt (governor) undertook to provide support on this piece of work, having done a lot of research on the topic.

Arising from the discussion, governors asked that early thought be given to the programme for the January 2017 strategic seminar. The Chief Executive/Principal undertook to present a draft programme at the next Board meeting.

7. Marketing

(a) Strategic Branding Review

The Vice Principal Growth and Development introduced a paper detailing a proposed strategic branding review. The purpose of the review was to collect stakeholder intelligence which would inform the values and purpose that sit behind each brand identity, building up to Leeds City College and the group. Governors queried whether the reverse brief previously requested by the Board had been commissioned. The Vice Principal advised that in compiling the brief he had consulted with the Chartered Institute of Marketing and a branding expert. In light of the timescales involved, it was agreed that the Vice Principal proceed to meet with consultants later that week as planned and to feed back to the relevant link governors following these meetings. Should these meetings prove successful, initial feedback would be provided to governors at the January seminar.

(b) Potential BBC Documentary

The Board received a paper on the potential involvement of the college in an 'Educating Yorkshire' type documentary. Following discussion, it was felt that the paper lacked the necessary reassurance for governors and views around the Board, whilst mixed, in the main did not support pursuing the project. The primary objections were essentially around the reputational risk for the college presented by a lack of editorial content on the part of the college and the timing of the request given the existing challenges for the college and the potential distraction to senior management on improving group performance significantly.

8. Property Strategy

(a) Property Update

(Shaid Mahmood declared an interest in this item of business in his capacity as a senior officer of Leeds City Council)

The Chief Executive/Principal presented an update against current major capital projects at the delivery or planning stage. The Printworks project (delivery stage) had been discussed earlier in the meeting so governors now focused on the Quarry Hill project (planning stage).

It was reported that the Quarry Hill project would be considered for planning permission at a meeting scheduled for 17 November. The Chief Executive/Principal also reported that LEP funding for the project had been approved in principle at a Skills Capital meeting held on 9 November, subject to final approval at a meeting in early December. A discussion took place around the necessary college asset disposals and governors queried whether there were any risks in relation to the timescale of such disposals. The Deputy Principal Corporate Services confirmed that there was no risk in this respect as there was an opportunity to agree with the LEP a cash flow facility in advance of realising receipts from the sale of assets.

The college's property solicitors (Eversheds) had agreed a conditional contract for the purchase of the land at Quarry Hill with the vendor through their solicitors. The contract enabled the college to buy the site with full vacant possession, subject to satisfying a number of conditions. These conditions were outlined to governors by way of a written report. In addition, Leeds City Council's solicitors had agreed a licence to assign the lease on Quarry Hill. The licence permitted the current tenant to assign the long lease on the site to the college.

RESOLVED (B 56/16):

- (a) To authorise signing of the conditional contract for the purchase of the land at Quarry Hill.
- (b) To authorise signing under seal of the licence to assign relating to the lease on Quarry Hill.
- (c) That the detailed project budget be presented for approval at the December Board meeting.

(b) LCoM – Award of Skyline Library Contract

The LCoM Board of Directors had agreed the Skyline building as the site of a new Music Library to open in June 2017. In accordance with the group financial regulations, a paper was presented seeking Board approval to award a main contract for the construction of the new Skyline Library.

RESOLVED (B 57/16):

To approve the award of the main building contract for the Skyline Library to the proposed contractor up to a maximum of £931,581 (£1,117,897 inclusive of VAT).

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND SCRUTINY

9. HE Annual Review 2015/16

The Director of HE and Professional Studies presented a summary of the Higher Education Annual Review. The report included performance statistics from both Leeds City College (LCC) and Leeds College of Music (LCoM). The following key points were discussed:

Foundation Degree Awarding Powers (FDAP)

It was noted that the review team would return for two days on 17 and 18 November to meet with a range of staff and students. It was expected that their report would be submitted to the May 2017 Advisory Committee on Degree Awarding Powers.

Higher Education Review

The colleges (LCC and LCoM) underwent a successful review. However, the review had highlighted the need for LCC and LCoM to work more closely and to harmonise policies where possible. This was being addressed.

Higher Education Academy CPD Scheme

LCC had been successful in obtaining accreditation by the Higher Education Academy for its Higher Education Continuous Professional Development (CPD) scheme. This would enable the college to recognise HE staff as Fellows of the Higher Education Academy.

University Centre (at Leeds City College)

Work had been undertaken over the summer to transform College House into the University Centre. Feedback from students had been very positive, particularly in relation to the new study and social spaces.

Change of Validating Partner for Leeds City College

During 2015/16 Leeds City College had successfully achieved Institutional Validation by the Open University. The Open University link staff had been very impressed with the college's quality processes and documentation and had asked to use them as exemplars of good practice for other colleges.

Review of 2015/16 Performance

Governors considered a range of performance data including retention, achievement and success rates (three year trend data against targets and benchmarks) and national student survey (NSS) results. It was reported that the NSS results for LCC had been negatively affected by the results from two courses; the Director of HE and Professional Studies confirmed that both had been placed in 'special measures' and would receive intense scrutiny and support in 2016/17.

Recruitment

Governors were pleased to note that recruitment had increased, with both institutions exceeding targets. The focus for 2016/17 was to promote degree apprenticeships.

10. In-Year Retention – Classroom Based Provision

In 2015/16 the college had improved its retention and was now in line with the average for the sector. The Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning reported that each college and department had been set targets for 2016/17 to improve this further (to 92%). The starting point for retention in 2016/17 was reported to be 99.4% for FE across the group, the small number of withdrawals being almost entirely down to those on two year programmes. There was no significant difference in retention at this stage between LCC, Keighley or LCoM. It was acknowledged that this was a strong starting point from which the colleges could further improve their outcome measures.

The Director of Curriculum Innovation presented to governors a brief overview of the five new accountability headline measures introduced by the DfE. It was noted that these placed greater emphases on progress and progression alongside achievement. The Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning reminded governors that ensuring students make progress from their starting points was a key recommendation from the college's 2016 Ofsted inspection and it was noted that these new measures were in line with that. It was noted that the Director of Curriculum Innovation would be developing some in-year measures for reporting to the Board as part of its overview of performance against the key accountability measures.

The circulated report identified a number of key risks and governors asked that the next paper outlines what is being done to mitigate those risks.

11. HR Annual Report 2015/16 and Staff Survey Outcomes 2016

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

12. Development Plan 2016/17

The Board considered the draft Development Plan for 2016/17. The Chief Executive/Principal reminded governors that the annual Development Plan represents the highest level document across the group that details the strategic aims and priorities and high level operational targets. The action plans and targets included had been carefully chosen to ensure that all parts of the group move quickly towards outstanding quality and strong financial performance. It was also noted that the Development Plan was the result of a detailed planning process that should ensure that all board level strategic action plans are delivered and that key high level quality targets and financial targets for 2016/17 are met or exceeded.

RESOLVED (B 58/16):
To approve the Development Plan for 2016/17.

13. LCC Commercial

The Chair of the LCC Commercial Sub-Committee provided feedback from a good inaugural meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 3 November.

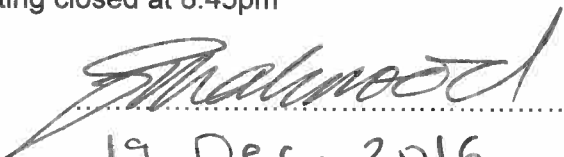
FOR INFORMATION

The following papers were presented to governors for information:

- Monthly Finance Report 2016/17
- WRAT – Feedback from Board Meetings held 20 October and 3 November 2016
- Rolling list of actions/matters arising as at November 2016.

There were no questions/concerns arising from these information papers.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed :  (Chair)
Date : 19 Dec. 2016

