

**Minutes of the City of Liverpool College Board meeting held on
17th March 2015 at 4.30pm**

Present:

Ms Elaine Bowker (Principal)
Dr Martin Carey
Ms Sue Carmichael
Ms Gemma Charters (Staff Governor)
Ms Clare Crowther
Mr John Denny
Ms Lydia Field
Mr Peter Grieve (Chair)
Ms Viv Lacey (Vice Chair)
Mr John Nolan (Staff Governor)
Councillor Nick Small
Dr Peter Tavernor

In Attendance:

Ms Angela Cox (Deputy Principal)
Mr David McIntyre (Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Resources)
Mr Simon Pierce (Vice Principal Curriculum)

Ms Christine Lenderyou (Clerk to the Board)

15.16 Confidential Item

Confidential minute held separately by the Clerk.

The staff and student governors joined the meeting at this point.

15.17 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Louise Barry, David Wilson and Charlotte Burns. Apologies for early departure had been received from John Nolan.

15.18 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting would be circulated after the meeting.

15.19 Actions from previous meeting.

The Clerk advised that there were no outstanding actions but the report would be circulated along with the minutes.

15.20 Performance Dashboard

The VPFCR said there had been additional movement in appraisals. The financial information would be discussed later in the meeting.

The Chair queried attendance and whether it was following the same trend as the previous year and also whether the most up to date information could be provided. The VPFCR said this was hindered by some register marks being input into the system retrospectively.

The VPC said monthly snapshots showed some improvements in English and maths and he would be reluctant to change the measuring point as it would distort being able to review progress. English and maths was being circulated via a Postmaster and there was an element of competition between Heads of Schools. There would continue to be increased focus on English and maths.

The Chair asked for an update regarding the Bradford factor as discussed at the previous meeting. The Principal said consultations had drawn to an end and it would be implemented imminently.

The number of BME staff had decreased year on year so governors questioned if there were any indications of why. The VPFCR explained that the area which the workforce was drawn from had widened. Although the demographics for BME people employed by the College was above the demographics for the City Region, there had been a slight decline. The Principal also highlighted that as a result of needing to manage finances, the College had lost more staff than it recruited so this also had an impact on figures. The Vice Chair asked whether the move away from Protocol had an impact. The VPFCR thought figures had only ever been compiled on permanent staff.

Governors agreed that the report was consistent with information received to date and adequately reported on a number of key measures.

15.21 Post Inspection Action Plan and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

The Deputy Principal referred to the summary sheet. Governors discussed the key information, including the following points:

- Retention was holding up well and slightly above target, but caution was urged in making predictions before Easter.
- Recognising and developing talent had progressed and a number of initiatives had been rolled out. English and maths remained a challenge.
- On track students were below targets but it was a snap shot and a review period would enable students to catch up.
- There was some work to do around stretch and challenge.
- City 6 would be covered in the update from the PQTFG.
- Work Based Learning was progressing well against the action plan although the overall success rate of 76% may not be met, but the most important measure was timely success and this looked as if it would be on target. The Principal explained the factors which meant overall success rates would be below target. The Deputy Principal had met with Ian Green (Head of WBL) and Paul Nightingale (Quality) around the steps required to address it.

Governors queried whether there was good practice in the sector regarding Work Based Learning that the College could learn from. The Deputy Principal advised that First 4 Skills and Gen2 had been visited, but there was good practice taking place within the College.

It was asked whether resource issues prevented apprentices to access the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). The Deputy Principal accepted there was some issues but in some areas, for example, pharmacy, employers had been supportive about providing access.

15.22 Performance and Quality Task and Finish Update – verbal update from Dr Tavernor, Chair

The Group had met immediately prior to the Board meeting and governors felt it had been a really useful meeting. City 6 had been reviewed and Dr Katie Spall, Assistant Principal had attended. [Part of minute removed for reasons of confidentiality either relating to commercial sensitivity or a third party/individual] . The Board were pleased that to hear that the inspection team which had carried out the “Mocksted” had commented that the right students were on the right courses as this validated the decision to add more rigour to the entry process.

The second presentation was from Peter Walsh, Head of School for Engineering and Logistics. The Group were following his area’s Quality Improvement Plan and the Group were satisfied that good progress was being made, even though a CTL was yet to be appointed. Mr Walsh had demonstrated a detailed knowledge of his staff and students and that he was well aware of the strategic importance of the area to the College and the city region. Governors had appreciated more investment were required and Mr Walsh was receptive to the challenge to gain commercial partnerships.

All indicators looked positive and compared extremely well nationally. Dr Tavernor extended an invitation to all governors to attend future meetings.

The Chair asked the Principal if she endorsed Dr Tavernor's summary. The Principal agreed and said City 6 did have a future but with conditions. Some outstanding practice had been observed. Most other staff had not been too far away. There would be some examination of which subjects should not continue. There would also be a further mock examination period. The Principal would bring a report to the Board when more information was available.

15.23 Finance

[Part of minute removed for reasons of confidentiality either relating to commercial sensitivity or a third party/individual]

Key points from the VPFCR's presentation were:

- The month 6 management accounts showed the an improved cash based operating surplus but it was behind where it had been budgeted and this was mainly to do with income not coming through (loans, apprentices and Higher Education). Non-pay expenditure had been reduced accordingly.
- The balance sheet was pretty much as expected.
- [Part of minute removed for reasons of confidentiality either relating to commercial sensitivity or a third party/individual]
- In terms of financial ratios, the performance ratio was a bit down as this reflected the year to date on income and expenditure.
- The mid-year re-forecast would reflect any changes as a result of the need to prepare for next year's cuts, although this would be limited by the need to stay within bank covenants. The VPFCR didn't want to bring the re-forecast to the Board without having factored in the transformation programme.

[Part of minute removed for reasons of confidentiality either relating to commercial sensitivity or a third party/individual]

Governors were in agreement that they were able to take assurance from the comprehensive presentation that the key metrics were being monitored closely in order to ensure the College's financial position remained sound.

Dr Tavernor and Mr Nolan left the meeting at this point.

15.24 Strategic Plan

The Principal explained that the strategy incorporated the comments from the strategic planning event. It encompassed skills, employability and a fantastic student experience. The mission and values were also incorporated. A one year operation plan would follow each year until 2020. The enablers would deliver the plan.

Governors asked for clarification on how progress would be monitored. The Principal said the KPIs would be broken down further in the operational plan and it would be clear which senior post holder was responsible for each part. This would be held against the senior post holder targets and inform the Board business cycle.

In response to a question about audience the Principal said it was a bold document which should encourage staff as it showed the future of the organisation. It would be shown to the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) but there was a balance between commercial sensitivity and giving the core information to people. The Principal said an executive summary might be required. Councillor Small said it was important that this strategic plan was on people's agenda and it stood out from the rest of the strategic plans within the city region. The Clerk commented that it was completely different to plans nationally.

The various strands of the College's activity would be elaborated on within the one year plans.

The Board were satisfied that the plan encapsulated the priorities and values discussed at previous meetings and the strategic planning day and so approved the strategic plan.

15.25 Financial Regulations

The VPFCR outlined the changes; most were to do with changes of terminology.

The Board approved the update to the financial regulations.

15.26 Merseyside Pension Fund Annual Review of Discretionary Elements

The Association of Colleges (AoC) had produced some suggestions on wording so these had been adopted but didn't fundamentally change the discretionary arrangements.

The Board approved the revisions.

15.27 Health and Safety Update (Autumn term)

There had been one reportable incident. The person involved had come back to work on 25th January so three days less than anticipated. [Part of minute removed for reasons of confidentiality either relating to commercial sensitivity or a third party/individual] The Chair requested that the process was changed so that the Principal was aware immediately of any reportable incidents and that the Board had oversight quicker. The Clerk advised that the report had been deferred from the previous meeting and accepted Mr Wilson's comment that any reportable incident should be the first item on a Board agenda. The Chair said that it should be with the highest authority within an organisation by the end of the day it occurred regardless of the cause.

The Chair also challenged that the statistics needed to reduce and this may be related to staff accessing the training materials referred to in the report. The VPFCR confirmed that regular training and risk assessments had taken place and in response to a further question advised that bank staff were included in any training.

Regarding the student statistics, governors questioned the relatively high numbers of incidents in Clarence Street and the Arts Centre. The Principal advised dancers at the Arts Centre suffered injuries and the volume of students at Clarence Street would see a higher number of incidents.

The Chair said he would like follow up information on the reportable incident and would also speak to the Health and Safety manager around the report generally. **Action: DMcl/PG**

15.28 Safe College Update (Autumn term)

Some work was being carried out around the Prevent agenda. Developments with the new Common Inspection Framework were also being followed.

The number of referrals seemed to be stabilising and some additional support from the city council had been secured via the Clinical Commission Group although this was short term initially. The Principal highlighted that with the Prevent agenda, she was notified when the Special Investigations Unit was monitoring students.

Ms Carmichael, the Link governor for Safeguarding, was able to provide assurance to the Board that she had confidence in the process which were in place and that she maintained regular contact with the team responsible for safeguarding.

15.29 Indicative Funding Allocations 2015/16

The allocation from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) had been received, but not from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) which also included the loans facility.

A £4.5m reduction was anticipated for 16-18 due to reduced numbers and the loss of the transitional protection. A £2.6m reduction was anticipated for adult learners. Governors queried

whether those figures were absolute. The VPFCR advised that the figures were not yet confirmed but they would not be significantly different. Governors had discussed the implications under the confidential item earlier in the meeting.

The Board noted the report.

Mr Wilson left the meeting at this point.

15.30 Principal's Report

Ofsted had been expected but the link inspector was ill so this had been pushed back.

The Principal drew governors' attention to the "BRIT school" and recent conversations with the Mayor and the Council, explaining that it was important to have a local offer and would be called "The Creative".

All other aspects of the report were self-explanatory.

[Part of minute removed for reasons of confidentiality either relating to commercial sensitivity or a third party/individual]

The Board commented positively on the frequent updates regarding coverage.

15.31 Verbal Update from the Audit Committee

The Chair of Audit Committee explained that the reports received at the recent meeting had been fairly positive raising no significant issues.

Tony Cobain would be returning to Audit Committee to provide cover while Ms Field was on maternity leave.

15.32 Any Other Business

Ms Field was wished a happy period of maternity leave and asked to keep the Board informed of any news.

15.33 Confidentiality of Items

The transformation programme (agenda item 4) would remain confidential for the time being as would all commercially sensitive information.

15.34 Date of next meeting

The next Board meeting would take place 19th May 2015.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm

