

Minutes of the Board meeting
held on 7th November 2013 at 4.30pm

Present:

Ms Louise Barry
Ms Sue Carmichael
Mr Tony Cobain
Ms Clare Crowther
Mr Peter Grieve
Ms Vivienne Lacey
Professor Gerald Pillay
Mr Ian Pollitt
Councillor Nick Small
Ms Vivienne Tyler (Chair)

External Governors

Ms Elaine Bowker

Principal

Mr John Nolan

Staff Governor – Business Support

Ms Martha Harris

Staff Governor – Teaching

In Attendance:

Ms Christine Lenderyou

Clerk to the Board

13.190 Welcome

The Chair welcomed governors to the extraordinary Board meeting and thanked them for attending at short notice.

13.191 Apologies

Mr Denny, Ms Dove and Mr Wilson had sent apologies. Mr Hayes had resigned as a student governor.

13.192 Ofsted Monitoring Visit

Governors were given sight of the Ofsted's draft monitoring visit report but it was emphasised the report would not be publicly available until 20th November and the Principal had requested one or two minor corrections. It was clarified that a judgement of "significant" could only be made if the College was able to demonstrate the impact made by changes; this was always going to be difficult due to the point in the academic year that the monitoring visit took place. While governors were disappointed that no areas were rated as showing "significant progress" they were reassured by the accompanying text's strong endorsement of the College's drive to improve performance and the underlying action taken and were confident that the measures taken would have demonstrable impact in the future. The area which had received a judgement of "insufficient progress" was raised. The Principal was confident that the measures put in place would deliver improvement for 13/14, and the link inspector had confirmed that this area of the College in particular felt like a different institution.

13.193 FE Commissioner

The College had received verbal notification from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) that the College would be referred to the FE Commissioner.

Some clarification had been given at the Case Conference on 4 November by Mike Bell (Director of Strategic Interventions) from the SFA. The FE Commissioner would have a remit to look at any area of the College. As the process was new, there were few examples available of what the College could expect and there was no clear framework available to refer to as yet. The key question that would be

addressed by the Commissioner was whether the executive and non-executive leadership of the College had the competence and capacity to turn the College around.

Governors were extremely disappointed to receive this news as they had monitored the College's position closely and had confidence in the measures taken by the Executive team, which had been quality assured by external experts, Malcolm Cooper Associates. However, the Board and College remained completely supportive of the drive to improve standards in education and were committed to working in an open and honest manner with any agencies as required.

The Principal would keep the Board informed of developments.

13.194 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would take place on 3rd December 2013 at 4.30pm