



Board Meeting

Monday 7th December 2015

Minutes

Present:

Independent Members:

Cindy Berman
Lynn Blades
Ben Charles
Fernando Garcia
Delia Goldring
Peter Green
Peter Hammond
Clive Hazlehurst
Fenton Higgins
Milton McIntosh
Ian Phillips (Chair)
Hem Savla

Associate Members:

Shaz Saraf
Gloria Wells

Parent Member:

Sian Harris

Staff Members:

Jacquie Grice
Peter Murphy

Student Member:

Yousif Alawoad

Principal:

John Rubinstein

Clerk to the Governors:

Beth Yap

In Attendance:

Kit Grandison
Ian Hooper
Carol Kirkland
Rebecca Sharp
Peter Thompson

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4.	Principal's Report
5.	Strategic Item: Religious Dress at the College
6.	Financial Report
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Minute	Decision
1.3	<i>To appoint Peter Green and Fenton Higgins as Chair and Vice Chair of the Strategy Committee, which would rotate at each meeting.</i>
5.0	<i>To approve the dress policy, subject to a number of amendments, and agreeing that a copy of the final wording should be included in the minutes.</i>
6.1	<i>To approve the Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2015 and agreeing that these would be uploaded to the College website.</i>
6.2	<i>To approve the Management Accounts for the first two months of the financial year.</i>
8.0	<i>To approve plans to move the reception and install turnstiles at a maximum spend of £200k, requesting 50% from the CIF. However, it was also agreed that if this bid were unsuccessful the College would proceed with this work anyway. The Board agreed to delegate authority for project management to the Premises Working Party.</i>

The Board welcomed Sian Harris to her first Board Meeting and introductions were made.

1. Governance

1.1 Apologies for Absence

Annabelle Bhurton and Helen Pettifor.

1.2 Declaration of Interest

None.

1.3 Appoint of Chair and Vice Chair of the Strategy Committee

The Board agreed to appoint Peter Green and Fenton Higgins as Chair and Vice Chair of the Strategy Committee. These positions would rotate at each meeting of the Committee.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting of 19th October 2015 were approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

2.2 As no part of the minutes were deemed to be confidential, these would be published on the College website in their entirety.

BY to upload to web

3. Matters Arising

1.4 The Chair of Governors informed the Board that John Boyle, Chair of Blackpool Sixth Form College, will be attending the Annual Strategy & Training Event to share with governors his college's experiences of a multi-academy trust. The second part of the Annual Strategy & Training Event will be a training session on safeguarding and the Prevent agenda.

4.0 The Chair thanked Clive Hazlehurst, Delia Goldring, Fenton Higgins, Gloria Wells, Lynn Blades, Peter Green and Peter Hammond for generously interviewing students as part of the Oxbridge process.

4.0 The Chair also thanked Peter Green and his team for the successful 'CareerReady' day. In particular, the Board noted with gratitude the hard work of Karen Marriott, who made the event possible.

11.0 Governors were reminded to send a picture to Carol Kirkland so a governor's badge can be issued.

4. Principal's Report

In addition to his report, John Rubinstein informed the Board that the College Open Day was a big success with 4,284 prospectuses handed out. The Board noted that applications are slightly down on last year. This is likely to be because there has been a change to the College's entry grade requirements.

John explained that it has now been confirmed that there will be no change to the baseline funding rate for the next financial year but there are still several unknowns, which could impact the budget.

Governors noted that the government has now announced that sixth form colleges can academise but it looks as if this cannot be done as a stand-alone institution. Governors asked whether the College has begun discussions with local schools and explored the idea of a multi-academy trust. John explained that no conversations have taken place as the rules and guidance for academisation are not yet known, and the College only now has one partner school, with which collaboration is quite loose and there are very few likely partners in the local area.

Governors questioned what is involved in an area review and what this means for the Board. The Chair explained that the purpose of area reviews is to save money within the FE sector by creating "fewer, larger and more resilient institutions", by reviewing key data such as financial sustainability and student numbers. The Board will have to be flexible during this time, potentially meeting more frequently.

Becky Sharp notified the Board that this term focuses heavily on UCAS applications with around 930 offers received so far.

Carol Kirkland informed the Board that the College has had an accident that required RIDDOR notification and there has so far been no follow-up from the Health & Safety Executive.

Governors questioned how the work on the 3G pitch is developing and Carol explained that good progress is being made with lettings planned for January 2016. The Student Governor questioned whether the pitch would be available for students after school and were informed that this would be dependent on the lettings taken. In answer to questions from governors, Carol explained that there are no 'peak time' prices.

Governors questioned how staff feel about internal quality inspections. Peter Thompson explained that teachers are initially very nervous but grateful for feedback and responsive to new ideas.

Governors asked whether the College operates with performance-related pay. Ian Hooper explained that the pay scales do not link with the appraisal process but will do from the next academic year, as there is a national change to the pay scheme.

Governors asked what the process is if the College receives a complaint

regarding the quality of a particular member of staff. Ian Hooper explained a Head of Department or a member of SLT would investigate this. If there is a serious concern then the College will undertake a capability review. John Rubinstein notified governors that there are very few complaints but SLT are becoming more proactive and responsive in this area and identifying areas for improvement.

The Board noted that the College Council has elected two new student governors who will begin their term of office in January 2016.

Governors requested that the quality section is moved further up the Principal's report to remind governors of its importance.

JR to amend.

5. Strategic/Training Item: Dress at College

John Rubinstein informed governors that this item follows from the *Religion at Woodhouse College* policy, which was discussed and approved at the July Board Meeting. The Board noted that the College has widely consulted staff, parents and students on these issues.

After some discussion, the Board agreed that the policy should be:

- Students should wear clothing that is practical and suitable for studying at College. Students should not dress in a manner which is extreme or distracting to others, a health and safety hazard, a potential security risk or a significant barrier to effective communication.
- Staff are free to choose what they wear as long as this is modest, inoffensive and in keeping with the professional ethos of the College. Staff should not wear clothing that presents a health & safety risk, makes identification difficult, or which might impair communication.

Governors questioned who would decide whether an item of clothing presents a security or health & safety issue. John responded that the issue of security would be a decision for management and the policy would allow a teacher to inform the student that their dress is inappropriate for a particular environment, such as a chemistry lab.

Governors agreed that this should be included in the staff code of conduct, which would also be added to recruitment packs sent to potential candidates as part of the application process .

Therefore the Governing Body agreed to approve the policy, subject to a number of amendments, and agreed that a copy of the final wording should be included in these minutes.

6. Financial Reports

6.1 Year-End Accounts 2014-15

Hem Savla was pleased to confirm that it was a very good, clean audit report from the Financial Statements Auditors. There were no matters of material concern and the Board could be assured that the College had sound systems and procedures in place.

Therefore the Board approved the Financial Statements for the year

ending 31 July 2015 and agreed that these would be uploaded to the College website.

Governors questioned the content of the Report in terms of the value of comparative data whose significance seemed obscure. It was generally agreed that requiring governors to read material of little apparent value was undesirable. It was agreed to ask the auditors to reconsider the layout and content of these elements with a view to making it more helpful to governors.

6.2 Management Accounts 2015-16

The Chair reminded members that the Finance & Operations Committee had reviewed the accounts for the first two months of the year in detail.

The Board noted that support staff have been allocated a 0.9% pay increase, whilst teaching staff are still in negotiations.

Therefore, the Board agreed to approve the Management Accounts for the first two months of the financial year.

7. Reports from Committees

7.1 Finance & Operations Committee

The minutes of the Finance & Operations Committee of 2nd November 2015 were noted.

7.2 Strategy Committee

The minutes of the Strategy Committee of 9th November 2015 were noted and the Board discussed the purpose of creating a separate charity to allow corporate donations and agreed that this should be pursued.

7.3 Audit Committee

The minutes of the Audit Committee of 23rd November were noted. The Board discussed College network outages noting that these are rare and rectified as soon as possible.

8. CIF Bid 2016

Carol Kirkland informed the Board that she is drafting a bid to the EFA, which is open to all sixth form colleges and academies. Carol explained that a similar bid was unsuccessfully submitted last year, but the criteria have now changed to include safeguarding.

Carol explained that this bid proposes to install turnstiles in the student and visitor entrances. The second part of the bid is to move the reception area and main office to the ground floor of the building.

The Board reviewed the proposed costings of this, noting that these had increased since discussions with the Finance & Operations Committee due to a number of additions, such as line marking for parking bays and an additional external turnstile. This creates a final proposed cost of around £190k.

Carol informed the Board that if the bid is unsuccessful this work could be done in three separate tranches over a course of several years. Governors agreed that the new reception should be of a high quality, as this is the first impression visitors receive of the College.

Governors were informed that the outcome of the bid would be known in March 2016 and asked if there were any risks in waiting until then. John explained that the College has mitigated any risks by employing a student security supervisor who monitors those entering the college.

It was agreed to cancel the meeting of the Finance & Operations Committee on the 18th January 2016 and the Premises Working Party would meet on this date instead.

9. Risk Management

The Board scrutinised the risks for which it had responsibility and were satisfied with the commentary made for each risk.

10. AOB

Finally, the Chair and Board thanked Yousif Alawoad and Annabelle Bhurton for their service and wished them all the best in the future.

11. Dates of Next Meetings

11th January 2016 Annual Strategy & Training Event

21st March 2016 BOARD

4th July 2016 BOARD

The meeting concluded at 8:53pm