

EASTLEIGH COLLEGE BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH 2015, 1700HRS, THE RED CARPET RESTAURANT

Present:

Paul Quigley (Chair)	Jonathan Sendell
Angela Cross-Durrant	John Course
Colin Davidovitz	Daniel Lowe
Shirley Nellthorpe	Sean Loveday
Helen Hills	Dr Jan Edrich
Julie Richmond	
Stephen Johnson	
Jan Edrich (Chief Executive and Principal)	
Kathryn Rankin	

In Attendance:

Katy Quinn, Deputy Chief Executive (Director of Teaching & Learning)
Rob Jarvis, Finance Director
Dr Chris Davis, Clerk to the Board

Item 5.iii only

Linsey Withers (Marketing Manager)

B.05.15 GOVERNORS' MEETING TIME WITHOUT SMT

See confidential addendum.

B.06.15 MEMBERSHIP & BOARD MATTERS

i Apologies

Apologies were received from Gail Thomas, Alex Parmley and Verona Hall.

ii Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interests made by those present, financial or otherwise, in any item on the agenda.

iii Minutes of the Meeting held on the 10 December 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2014 were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

iv Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the meeting on the 10 December 2014 or the meeting on the 28 January 2015.

v Attendance Register 2014

The Clerk made Governors aware of their level of attendance at the five Board meetings, which took place during 2014. The overall Board attendance was 80%, which corresponded to the Board's, agreed required level of attendance.

Governors noted the Attendance Register for Board meetings 2014.

vi Code Conduct

The Clerk informed Governors that there had been no changes to the Code of Conduct and that we were using the 12th Edition of the Code, published by Eversheds in January 2014.

vii De-Classification of Confidential Items

The Clerk informed Governors of the three confidential items from 2014, which could now be de-classified. Two items appeared on the minutes of the F&GP Committee meeting held on the 18 June 2014, F.12.14 and F.13.14 and one item from the Full Board meeting of the 2 July 2014, item B.21.14.

Governors approved the de-classification of confidential items from 2014.

viii Equality and Diversity (E&D) Reporting to Governors

The Clerk reported to Governors that the Audit committee had raised an issue over the reporting of E&D issues to Governors. It was felt and agreed by SMT that E&D should be raised as an agenda item at every Full Board meeting, but only brought to committee meetings as and when a specific E&D issue needed to be raised. The reporting of E&D would still appear in the Governors Monthly report.

Governors approved the changes to the reporting of Equality and Diversity on a one-year trial basis.

ix Appointment of a Vice Chair to the Board

Mr Quigley made Governors aware that a nomination for Vice Chair to the Board had been received and that Jonathan Sendell had agreed to be considered for the position. No other nomination had been received within the specified time and Governors were asked to give their approval for the appointment of Jonathan Sendell as Vice Chair to the Board.

Governors unanimously agreed to this appointment.

x Vice Chair of F&GP Committee

Mr Quigley advised the Board that Mr Stephen Johnson had offered his services as Vice Chair to the F&GP Committee.

Governors agreed that Mr Johnson would be appointed as Vice Chair to F&GP Committee.

xi Further 4 year Term of Office of Paul Sahota

The Board approved a further 4-year term of office for Mr Sahota.

xii 12 month appraisal for Warren Scarr

Mr Quigley informed Governors that Mr Scarr had been appointed as a Governor in March 2014, however due to a change personal circumstances he had requested a period of sabbatical for 6 months in May 2014. That sabbatical period has now expired and despite the best efforts of the Clerk to contact Mr Scarr, no communication has been received with regard to his intentions to return to the Board. Mr Quigley has carefully considered the situation and proposed that a termination of Board membership be implemented.

Governors approved a termination of Board membership for Mr Warren Scarr.

B.07.15 GOVERNORS' MONTHLY REPORT – FEBRUARY 2015

i Financial Aspects

Mr Jarvis advised the Board that the College is forecasting a historic cost surplus of £319k, compared to a budgeted surplus of £364k, which now includes the recent approved traineeship growth request of £1.1m from the SFA. Mr Jarvis went on to say that at this time in the financial year he felt confident that the forecast was deliverable.

He went on to draw Governors' attention to the closing cash position, which is forecast to be £2.5m. He also drew Governor's attention to the budget figures in the forecast which appertain to purchase of fixed assets, capital grants received and loans received. He went on to say that these figures would change significantly, because the grant and loan are nearly all in place for the College's major re-development project.

Mr Jarvis reported on the profitability of the College which he said had improved

slightly as had the Net Current Assets position, which now stood at negative £169k. This figure needed further improvement by either making a surplus next year or spending less on routine capital expenditure, or ideally both.

Mr Jarvis gave the Board a funding up-date and commented on the College's two major funding allocations. The College has now received the EFA allocation, which is £200k better than last year because of the slight increase in Full Time learner numbers, whilst the SFA allocation is as expected significantly down by £2.1m. The SFA allocation this year now includes the £1.1m traineeship growth request, which gives a percentage difference overall of 9%.

Mr Jarvis went onto explain that apprenticeship and trainee delivery has been protected, together with Maths and English delivery. This means that the SFA has in real terms cut on everything else by 24%.

ii Safeguarding Update

Mrs Quinn updated Governors on the work being carried out to comply with new requirements for the FE sector in relation to Extremism and 'Prevent'.

iii Equality & Diversity Update

Mrs Quinn reported that a new Supported Learning Manager had been appointed and talks had already taken place to see how the profile of E&D could be raised and enhanced within the College.

B.08.15 TO RECEIVE

i Minutes of the Chairs Group Meeting 22 January 2015

Mr Quigley reported to the Board the two items discussed at the meeting, the Totton College proposed merger and the recruitment of a new Finance Director.

Governors received the minutes of the Chairs Group Meeting – 22 January 2015.

ii Minutes of the Standards Committee 25 February 2015

Mr Course drew Governors' attention to one or two items that he felt needed further explanation. The College Minimum Levels of Performance (MLPs) reports on areas with low success rates over a three-year period. The committee looks at the report twice a year beginning with progress made and then the final figures. He reported that the Deputy Chief Executive had increased the threshold from 75% to 86%, so that a lot more of the College's courses came under the committee's spotlight. He went on to say that this has increased the transparency of the minimum levels of performance, thereby increasing the focus by the committee and also that of the Divisions involved internally.

Mr Course brought to the Board's attention the area of Quality Management through the compliance team. The manager of the compliance team brought a report to the committee and gave a presentation on how the College deals with its partnership provision and maintaining the quality of partner delivery. He said the committee were very impressed and reassured by the thorough and robust way the compliance team undertook their reviews.

Mr Course made further comment on the report of the data sub-group committee. He felt that the minutes referred very much to the operation of the sub-group committee and he did not want this to distract from the immense amount of time and hard work that the four members of the sub-data group put into providing the Standards Committee with the appropriate data it needed to be able to monitor and challenge. He reiterated that the role of the data sub-group committee was to determine the data that needed to be brought to the Standards Committee for review.

Governors received the minutes of the Standards Committee – 25 February 2015.

iii Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee 4 March 2015

Mr Quigley outlined what had been discussed at the meeting and stated that he did not wish to elaborate at this stage, as the main topics covered would be considered later in the main body of the meeting.

Mr Quigley reported that he had signed off the latest schedule of partnership contract values, which reflects the recently approved £1.1m traineeship growth request.

Governors received the minutes of the F&GP Committee – 4 March 2015.

iv Minutes of the Audit Committee 11 March 2015

Mrs Rankin drew Governors' attention to information the committee had received over the way the LEPs are working and the way that the grant for the major redevelopment project has been secured.

Mr Jarvis said that he would give Governors an up-date in a later agenda item.

Mrs Rankin went on to inform Governors that the Internal Audit Report, visit two 2014/15, gave work placements a limited assurance audit opinion. She went on to report on the four findings relating to work placements, which the visit highlighted; firstly to do with health and safety checks, secondly over health and safety questionnaires, thirdly parental consent forms and student agreement forms and lastly discrepancies over Disclosure and Barring Service checks. She went on to say that the College had provided very robust management action plans in response to the audit opinion and the auditors were now confident that the risks would be mitigated in the future. She also explained that the limited assurance issues would be followed up during next year's first visit.

Mrs Rankin reported that the committee discussed the biggest risk to the College identified by the Risk Register, that of funding changes and changes in Government/SFA/EFA policy, resulting in a major funding reduction.

Governors received the minutes of the Audit Committee – 11 March 2015.

v Student Governors' Strategic Issues (LOOP System)

Mr Lowe gave Governors an overview of the 'student voice' gathering process that already exists within the College. He said that the introduction of the LOOP system is supplementary to existing methods of gathering student feedback, with a view of improving the learner experience and informing others about the College.

Training has taken place focusing on four criteria areas; Teaching and Learning, Facilities, Careers and Employment and well-being. The feedback is gathered through constructive feedback and scored via a star rating 1-5. This rating score and feedback is then available for viewing via websites and other media sites.

Mr Lowe reported that students who had taken part in the training programme were more positive than expected. There is more faith in using the new system, rather than the old 'box' filling question areas, however once the number of students taking part increases, the success of the new system can be better measured.

The Student Executive believes that the best place for this LOOP programme to be used is during tutor group sessions. There was a feeling that LOOP will allow the College to address the student's views in a transparent way, further demonstrating the College's interest in student opinion.

Mr Quigley thanked Mr Lowe for his concise and accurate report and asked for any developments regarding the use of the LOOP system to be fed back to Governors at the July Board meeting.

ACTION KQ/ChD

Governors received the Student Governors' Strategic Issues (LOOP System).

vi Totton College up-date

See confidential addendum.

B.09.15 TO REVIEW

i Standards Committee Terms of Reference (deferred from December 2014)

Mr Course advised Governors that small changes had been made to the Terms of Reference, the Chief Executive's title had now been changed to Chief Executive and Principal and that the Committee's terms of reference would be altered to reflect this change.

Dr Edrich informed Governors that the College has plans to suspend the Investors in People accreditation due to cost and pursue an alternative external benchmark.

Mr Course made Governors aware that the College intends to pursue Investors in Diversity accreditation in 2015.

Miss Nellthorpe reported that College House was once again pursuing the kitemark of Customer Service Excellence in May of this year.

Mr Course queried point 1.4 with the Clerk and asked how the committee actually received from the Quality Board proposed targets for retention and achievement. The Clerk responded by saying that he had been in discussion with the Deputy Chief Executive with a view to finding a means of delivering the data in the correct format. This then needed to be clarified in the committee's terms of reference.

ACTION: ChD

Governors approved the amended Standards Committee Operation and Terms of Reference.

ii Business Plan and Strategic Milestones 2015- 2017

Dr Edrich explained that at the last Board meeting in December 2014 she was asked to add milestones. She went on to say that all these milestones presented already sit in other strategies but this was an overarching College top-level document.

Mr Quigley reminded Governors that this document would be used by the SMT as a working document and by the Board to measure the performance of the SMT as time progresses.

Governors reviewed the Business Plan and Strategic Milestones 2015- 2017.

* Miss Withers (Marketing Manager) joined the meeting.

iii Marketing Strategy

Miss Withers explained that the Strategy considers multiple factors specifically looking at different markets, which the College serves and the different "touch points" that the College interacts with. The document also evaluates the influences specifically for school leavers and the different messages that need to be delivered. There will be a complete redevelopment of the College's website which takes into account the influences already highlighted, those of parents and businesses. It is hoped that the website will go live in June 2015.

Governors agreed that the Strategy was a vast improvement and very informative. There was an enquiry regarding the possibility of the College making inroads into developing partnerships with large external organisations along similar lines of our nearest competitors.

Dr Edrich responded by stating that the College had recently produced an Employer Engagement Strategy, which sets out to improve the College's communication and to

look at sponsorship and strategic partnerships with large employers. At this point she was able to hand around to Governors letters from local businesses who had written to the LEP supporting our recent bid for redevelopment. She went on to say that we are engaging with the local Chamber of Commerce, Hampshire County Council and Eastleigh Borough Council who have renewed energy in terms of economic development within the area. Dr Edrich said that the first tangible signs of these strong business partnerships would be visible with completion of the new Advanced Technology Block with new equipment and sponsorship.

Miss Withers reported that it had been decided that the College logo strapline 'Learning for Success' would be phased out. Instead different career focused straplines will be used for each individual campaign.

Governors asked for regular up-dates on the progress being made with the Marketing Strategy.

ACTION: LW

There was further discussion over the messages that needed to be embedded in the strategy. There was a need to dilute the theory that A Levels were the only way to gain useful employment or University education by using our students to dispel this myth. This could be done by encouraging students who already have A levels which don't automatically get them into University but clearly demonstrate that they have the ability to study and learn, enabling them to get into vocational professions as well as allowing for academic precursors.

It was agreed that this was a working document.

Mr Quigley thanked Miss Withers for her vastly improved strategy and asked her for regular and timely up-dates on the progress being made with the Marketing Strategy.

Governors reviewed the Marketing Strategy.

Miss Withers retired from the meeting.

B.10.15 TO APPROVE

i Tuition Fee Framework 2015/16

Mr Jarvis said that the report had already been approved by the F&GP Committee and was being recommended to the Board. He went onto to explain the purpose of the report, which was to seek approval for the basis on which tuition fees will be reviewed for 2015/16. He went onto explain the context in which the tuition fee income was being proposed, the latest CPI figures show an annual inflation rate of 0.3%, the lowest rate of inflation for more than a decade, and there were likely to be ongoing reductions of SFA funding. The College is in a very competitive market and although the College raised its fees by 2% last year, it did not have a negative effect on recruitment. The general feeling of the SMT is that another increase of 2% should be incorporated for 2015/16.

Governors approved the Tuition Fee Framework 2015/16.

ii Financial Regulations & Procedures

Mr Jarvis reported that the document had also been approved by the F&GP Committee at their last meeting. He went on to make governors aware of several changes that he proposed to make to the procedure. The first change is the Euro Tendering Regulation limits have been amended and that sterling equivalents have been deleted from the College's Financial regulations because of the current volatility of the exchange rate. The second amendment refers to the increase of the Deputy Chief Executive (Teaching & Learning)'s authorisation limit from £25,000 to £50,000. The third change reduces the Finance Director's authorisation limit from £125,000 to £50,000. This was in light of the recruitment of a new Finance Director and would be

reviewed at a later date. Finally there was a proposed change to the limit to which Directors may authorise temporary variations to staff employment contracts; there was a proposal for this to be deleted.

Governors approved the Financial Regulations & Procedures.

iii Major Redevelopment Project – update

See confidential addendum.

B.11.15 Date of the next two meetings:

Wednesday 29 April 2015, 1600 hrs

Board and Training Event – College Curriculum

Wednesday 1 July 2015, 1700 hrs

Governors' Monthly Report – financial, safeguarding & E&D up-dates

Approve revenue and capital budgets

Approve three year financial forecasts

College Charter

ILT Strategy monitoring report

Student Governors' Strategic Issues (LOOP up-date)

Strategic Plan up-date

Probationary Period Procedure (if changes to SPHs)

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1840 hrs.