

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Governors held on **12 July 2018**.

**Present:** Bob Harrison (chair), Clive Macdonald, Jill Westerman (principal), Mike Bramhall, Anne Shiels, Seb Schmoller, Frank Lord, Tim Thornton (from Min B18/56 onwards), Liz Stanley, Neil James (with the exception of Min B18/79), Catharyn Lawrence (with the exception of Min B18/79), Kate Fleming and Ken Richardson.

**In attendance:** The vice principal (with the exception of Min B18/79), the treasurer/head of finance (with the exception of Min B18/79), the head of estates and facilities (with the exception of Min B18/79) and the clerk to the governors.

**Apologies:** John Edwards and Sarah Tyler.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS AND GOVERNANCE**

### **B18/41 PRESENTATION – FOREST SCHOOLS**

The Board received a presentation from students who had been involved in the college's first forest school programme which included background to the programme, why they had attended and feedback regarding their experience.

### **B18/42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

With respect to:

- their role as trustees Clive Macdonald, John Edwards and Jill Westerman declared a non-financial interest in items which related to the Wentworth Castle and Stainborough Park Heritage Trust. In relation to item 21 Wentworth Castle Gardens and Parkland it was noted that the item was for information and was in relation to the potential successor organisation rather than the current trust.
- his role as Deputy Vice-Chancellor Prof Tim Thornton declared a non-financial interest in items relating to HE and the college's relationship with the University of Huddersfield;
- his role of chair of the Barnsley Metropolitan Council Audit Committee Cllr Ken Richardson declared a non-financial interest in items which related to BMBC.

**B18/43** It was agreed that no decisions to be taken would be affected by these interests and it was not considered necessary for anyone to withdraw from the meeting.

### **B18/44 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2018 were approved as an accurate record (a signed copy is filed in the minute book).

### **B18/45 MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE MATTERS**

**(A copy of document 4i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board considered and approved a range of governance matters.

- Resolved:**
- i That Ann Corrigan be appointed as a member of the Board of governors in the category interest and experience for a four-year term of office from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2022.**
  - ii That Colin Forrest be appointed as a member of the Board of governors in the category interest and experience for a four-year term of office from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2022.**
  - iii That Catharyn Lawrence be appointed as staff governor (academic/academic related) for a four year term of office from 12 July 2018 to 11 July 2022.**

- iv That a targeted campaign to improve the Board's diversity be undertaken in the Autumn term.
- v That Neil James be appointed as a member of the Policy and Finance Committee.
- vi That Sarah Tyler be appointed as a member of the Audit Committee.
- vii That Colin Forrest be appointed as a member of the Quality Committee.
- viii That Ann Corrigan be appointed as a member of the Audit Committee.

## ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL

### **B18/46** THE PRINCIPAL'S PRESENTATION

The Board received a presentation from the principal entitled 'The Northern College Journey' which reviewed the past ten years and looked forward to future challenges and opportunities.

### **B18/47** THE PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

**(A copy of document 5i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board considered the principal's report and particularly noted:

- student achievement, achievement against funding targets and recruitment for 2018/19;
- potential partnership opportunities relating to the gardens and parklands;
- new provision including the Free Thinking Programme;
- changes at JISC and the potential implications for the college;
- an update on work with the IALs.

### **B18/48** The Board particularly welcomed and explored:

- the confirmation received in March 2018 that the College would continue to receive national rather than devolved funding until the end of the financial year in 2021;
- notification that the additional growth fund of £238,000 received from the ESFA for 2017/18 would be consolidated into 2018/19.

### **B18/49** The Board explored the notification received by the College that the amount allocated to it for level three loans had been reduced to a much lower level, noting that:

- this had been a cross sector technical exercise but that for the College it had been based on what was a year of low recruitment;
- it could potentially be problematic in terms of the college's aim to grow level three provision;
- the level three loan pot was however substantially underspent nationally and it was likely to be fairly straightforward to apply for growth, meaning that the cap would therefore be unlikely to inhibit the college's ambitions.

**Resolved: i That the report be noted.**

### **B18/50** INTEGRATED PERFORMANCE REPORT

**(A copy of document 6i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board considered the **Integrated Performance Report to 31 May 2017** and noted that all areas were rated green with the exception of:

- achievement rates which were rated amber, it was reported that this was due to timing issues and there were no concerns regarding actual performance;
- average class size which was just below the 12% target at 11.1%;
- the no-show rate which had further improved to 12% against a target of 10%;
- BME participation rate which was slightly below an ambitious 20% target at 17%;
- gas consumption which was slightly above target;
- HE Income which was below target as previously reported;

- project income which was below target due to growth funding;
- external, catering and bar income which had been impacted by the loss of the annual GLI conference as previously reported;
- payroll as % of income which had slipped over the 60% target to 60.3%.

- B18/51** The Board explored:
- class size and particularly whether this had been adversely affected by the College seeking to achieve 103% of its funding allocation and draw down the available growth funding, it was reported that this was unlikely to have had a significant negative impact and the challenges regarding student attendance remained the same as previously discussed;
  - the BME participation rate noting that whilst at 17% it was below the very challenging 20% target, achievement to date was in line with the 2016/17 target which had been 16%. It was reported that there had been a very pleasing increase in BME participation on some course areas and the 20% target would be reviewed for 2018/19;
  - sickness absence noting that some data was missing from the report due to current staff resource issues;
  - community learning income noting that the underperformance currently reported was due to the additional payment received and the final outturn was predicted to reach 98%;
  - payroll as a percentage of income, particularly in light of the ESFA benchmarks which showed that the college's performance was very positive in relation to sector benchmarks.
- B18/52** The Board considered and noted the **management accounts to 31 May 2018**.
- B18/53** The Board particularly explored the debtors report, seeking and receiving assurance that payments were being received in line with expectations.
- B18/54** The Board considered the **three-year carbon footprint trend analysis report** and noted:
- the range of capital investments that had been made since 2008 to improve energy efficiency;
  - the substantial resulting savings made – 33% reduction in the college's carbon footprint which equated to 286 tonnes of CO2 emissions per annum and around £56K saved per annum.
- B18/55** The Board welcomed the significant achievements made.
- Resolved:**    **i    That the report be noted.**
- B18/56**    **DRAFT FORECAST OUTTURN FOR 2017/18 AND TWO YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN TO 2020**  
**(A copy of document 7i is filed in the minute book)**  
The Board considered the draft **forecast outturn for 2017/18 and two-year financial plan to 2020** noting that:
- the plan had been considered and shaped by the Policy and Finance Committee on three separate occasions;
  - the College was required to submit the plan to the ESFA by 31 July 2018;
  - the key areas for consideration related to:
    - assumptions relating to pay awards;
    - inclusion of a non-ESFA income target;
    - planned approach to the cap on loans;
    - the payroll as a percentage of income target.
- B18/57** The Board explored the assumptions regarding pay awards and supported the proposals to increase the percentage budgeted for based on affordability and recent national pay agreements.
- B18/58** The Board explored the payroll as a percentage of income target particularly taking into account sector benchmarks, current performance and strategic objectives. The Board supported the proposal that the 60% target be retained with performance closely monitored, acknowledging that the target may be exceeded from time to time on a planned basis in the short term as a result of

deliberate investment for growth.

**B18/59** The Board considered and approved the inclusion of a non-ESFA income target of 15%. It was agreed that the use of a raw percentage target could however be misleading as the income of the College fluctuated and that an annual cash sum should be agreed which was then converted into a percentage.

**B18/60** The Board agreed that the income generation projections were realistic and based on a clear rationale and that it was important to include ambition in the plan in terms of income generation and diversification.

**Resolved: i That the forecast outturn for 2017/18 and two year financial plan to 2020 be approved for submission to the ESFA.**

**B18/61** **STRATEGIES FOR APPROVAL**

**(A copy of document 8i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board considered the **curriculum, HE and digital strategies** noting that all three had been considered by a relevant committee. The Board particularly explored:

- cross referencing - agreeing that the inclusion of systematic cross referencing between the three strategies was required;
- performance monitoring – agreeing that high level KPIs should be developed for each strategy for monitoring by the Board on a periodic basis.

**Resolved: i That systematic cross referencing between the curriculum, HE and digital strategies be undertaken.**

**ii That high level KPIs be developed for the curriculum, HE and digital strategies.**

**iii That with the inclusion of the systematic cross referencing and high level KPIs the curriculum, HE and digital strategies be approved.**

**iv That the curriculum, HE and digital strategies be periodically monitored by the Board of Governors or relevant committee.**

**B18/62** **QDP STAFF SURVEY REPORT**

**(A copy of document 9i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board considered the QDP staff satisfaction survey results for 2018 and noted that:

- the response rate had increased slightly (49%) up from 45% in 2017;
- the College responses were above the sector average in all of the measured areas;
- the College was significantly above (more than 20 percentage points) in 25 areas (compared with 44 areas in 2017);
- the 5 lowest rating scores related to brochures and leaflets, staff training and development and awareness of the college strategic plan.

**B18/63** It was reported that:

- the lower scores in the staff development areas were due to a number of resource issues and the programme being weaker than usual during 2017/18, it was noted that this was being addressed for 2018/19;
- it was the college's intention to revise the question regarding brochures and leaflets to help gather more useful and detailed information and that marketing had been identified as an area for development in the college.

**B18/64** The Board explored the response rate in more detail, agreeing that it was lower than they would like, and the potential reasons for this and agreed that the College should consider exploring digital options for data collection and options for re-engaging staff who had completed the form in its current format over a significant number of years.

- i That the College explore digital options for data collection in the staff satisfaction survey.

**B18/65** **RISK MANAGEMENT AND ASURANCES – FULL RISK REGISTER**

**(A copy of document 10i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board considered the risk register - key strategic risks.

**Resolved:** i That the risk register be noted.

**B18/66** **POLICIES FOR APPROVAL**

**(A copy of document 11i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board considered and approved the following policies which had been considered by the Policy and Finance Committee and were recommended for approval:

- equality and diversity;
- gender reassignment;
- relocation;
- grievance.

**B18/67** The Board sought and received assurance that all the policies had been through an appropriate consultation process.

**B18/68** The Board also noted that

- at its meeting in May 2018 the Policy and Finance Committee had explored the broad approach to the purpose and use of policies in the College and in particular whether they should be focused purely around compliance and legislative issues or whether they could be used to set a tone for driving forward change and development.
- the committee had asked the leadership team to consider the approach in more detail and feedback at a future meeting.

**Resolved:** i That the equality and diversity, gender reassignment, relocation and grievance policies be approved.

## ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

**B18/69** **MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME 2019 – 2024**

**(A copy of document 12i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board received a report which provided information regarding the likely priorities for planned maintenance in the next 3+ years and a headline interim report from the recent building condition survey of the main house. It was noted that the full report would be considered by the Policy and Finance Committee.

**B18/70** **QUALITY REPORT**

**(A copy of document 13i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board received and noted the quality report.

**B18/71** **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

**(A copy of document 14i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board received and noted minutes from the following meetings:

- Policy and Finance Committee – 8 February 2018
- Policy and Finance Committee – 17 May 2018
- Audit Committee – 26 February 2018

**B18/72** **ESFA FINANCIAL HEALTH LETTER AND DASHBOARD**

**(A copy of document 15i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board received and noted the ESFA financial health letter and dashboard dated 14 March 2018 which confirmed:

- the College's financial health grade for 2016/17 as outstanding;

- the colCege's underlying financial health grade as outstanding;
- that they had not identified any significant financial control concerns from their review.

**B18/73** **INFORMATION FROM THE SECTOR****(A copy of document 16i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board received and noted information from the sector which included:

- AoC Policy Update March to June 2018;
- AoC The Post 18 education and funding review 2030 and beyond: a further and higher education system fit for the future - consultation paper – May 2018;
- Further Education Commissioner - Letter to Chairs and Principals of Further Education and Sixth Form College Corporations – June 2018;
- ESFA – Letter - Devolution of the Adult Education Budget 2019 to 2020 – March 2018.

**B18/74** **DATA PROTECTION****(A copy of document 17i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board received a report which provided an update with regards to the actions being taken by the College to ensure compliance with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 by 25 May 2018.

**B18/75** **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES PROGRESS REPORT****(A copy of document 18i is filed in the minute book)**

The Board received and noted the strategic objectives 2017/18 progress report.

**CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS****B18/76** **WENTWORTH CASTLE GARDENS AND PARKLAND****(A copy of document 21i is filed in the minute book)**

A separate confidential minute was recorded.

**B18/77** **PARTNER PRESENTATION**

A separate confidential minute was recorded.

**B18/78** **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Board approved the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2018 and 4 April 2018 (a signed copy is filed in the confidential minute book).

**B18/79** **PAY AWARD PROPOSALS****(A copy of document 20i is filed in the minute book)**

A separate confidential minute was recorded.

**OTHER BUSINESS****B18/80** It was reported that it was the last meeting to be attended by Seb Schmoller prior to him stepping down from the Board. The Board formally thanked him for his contribution to the college.**B18/81** The Board noted that it was the last meeting of Steve Croall prior to his retirement from the college. The Board formally thanked Steve for his significant contribution to the success of the college, particularly in relation to the College estate and carbon footprint.**B18/82** The Board noted that it was the last meeting of Jill Westerman prior to her retirement from the college. The Board formally thanked Jill for her magnificent contribution to the success of the College and wished her all the very best for her retirement.**B18/83** It was reported that the college's new principal Yultan Mellor would take up the post on 20 August 2018 and that Denise Pozorski would be acting as interim principal from 1 August to 19 August 2018. The Board thanked Denise for agreeing to take on this role.

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

**B18/84** The next meeting of the Board of governors will take place on **Thursday 12 July 2018** at 11.00am.

<b>Signed</b>		<b>Date</b>	
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