

Askham Bryan College Corporation

Corporation Meeting

Minutes of the meeting held

Wednesday 8 October 2014 – 12.20pm – 4.45pm

Eamont Room, Newton Rigg College, Penrith, CA11 0AH

The meeting was preceded with an optional tour of the campus developments, namely the Frank Parkinson Building and Grizedale.

15. Ratification of Student Governor

Resolved: The appointment of Alex Rippon (SU President) as Student Governor was formally ratified. It was noted that Dean Temporal (SU Vice President) was not able to attend as it clashes with his course.

16. Attendees

Present: Jennifer Bartram (JB), Alan Bowe (AB) – (Newton Rigg Committee Chair), Ian Brown (IB), Andrew Cobb (AC), Alun Davies (AD) – (Corporation Vice Chair/Search Committee Chair), Jane Downes (JD), Philip Grant (PG) – Staff Governor, Peter McKenzie (PM) – (Audit Committee Chair), Liz Philip (EJP) – (Executive Principal), Alex Rippon (AR) – (Student Governor), Helen Swiers (HS), Ian Youdan (IY) – (Corporation Chair).

In attendance: Ian Harmer (Deputy Principal Finance and Resources), Wes Johnson (Campus Principal, Newton Rigg), Judith Clapham (JC) - (Clerk to the Corporation).

17. Apologies for absence: David Black (DB), Ian Snowden (IS) – Staff Governor, John Williams (JW).

18. Declarations of Interest

There were no changes to the standing declarations of interest as detailed below:

- IB, EJP and IY declared an interest as Directors of Askham Bryan College Company Limited.
- AB declared an interest with regard to property matters in relation to H&H Land and Property Ltd (Chartered Surveyors, Land Agents and Valuers).
- DB declared an interest as Managing Director of Paragon Veterinary Group who provide veterinary services to the college.
- IY declared an interest as a consultant to Brown & Co.
- AC declared an interest as Emeritus Professor of Plant Sciences, Harper Adams University and as being contracted to the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to scrutinise applications for Degree Awarding Powers.
- IY made a new declaration that his wife Judy Youdan is doing some voluntary dressage coaching for the College.

19. Minutes of the meeting held 27 August 2014

Resolved: Following an addition to Minute 8, eighth paragraph regarding other committees “at a governance level,” the minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by IY as Chair.

20. Matters arising from the minutes/action schedule

IY confirmed that he would now write to Dan Ramsden, last year’s Student Governor.

JD asked for further clarification on what would be required for the Safeguarding link role. JC passed over the letter written by JT outlining what she was looking for, for JD to consider. PG also expressed an interest, but it was thought someone independent would be preferable.

Governors were requested to complete their Safeguarding training.

EJP asked for clarification on the part of the meeting relating to the Newton Rigg Committee. It was confirmed that this was due to be discussed further by the Committee when they next meet.

EJP asked whether it would be useful to publish the dates for meetings for 15/16, but it was thought it should be reviewed in the new year to see how the new governance structure is working and also to prevent having to reschedule.

AC asked regarding the marketing position for next year with regard to capturing the HE market, for example, had it been decided to offer free laptops? It was noted that the lead in time with the setting of fees had already passed. It was thought that it would be useful for the Corporation to have a presentation from Jo Gibson the Head of Marketing. It was noted that there was an intention to have a TV ad and to produce an HE prospectus.

It was noted that there would be an Ofsted session at the Away Day, plus a Health and Safety session at the start of the December meeting.

21. Strategy and Management – presented by EJP Principal's Report and Strategic Plan Monitoring Princes Trust Programmes

Members agreed that minute 21, should be classified as confidential on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and reviewed in one year. The minutes and associated reports are therefore not available for circulation to the public, college staff or students (excluding senior post holders).

22. Finance and Resources Capital Update

Members agreed that minute 22, should be classified as confidential on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and reviewed in one year. The minutes and associated reports are therefore not available for circulation to the public, college staff or students (excluding senior post holders).

Latest Management Accounts to 31 July 2014

Consideration was given to the Financial Forecast report updating members on the latest forecast outturn position of the College following a review of the July management accounts and preparation for the Annual Financial Statements, giving a College Overview, details of College income and expenditure, with any variances and additional items of expenditure, plus capital charges, operating margins, balance sheet, cashflow forecast and bank covenants. It was noted the accounts are subject to revision due to a number of areas under review, as detailed in the report. Currently the expected outturn is a surplus of £456,000, with a financial health score from the SFA as Good. This was noted to be largely due to securing in year EFA funding with the outturn being significantly better than the budgeted deficit of £490k.

GA 13 Bribery Policy

Consideration was given to the Bribery Policy which Governors were asked to approve to comply with good governance practice.

Resolved: The Bribery Policy was approved.

23. Students, Quality and Standards

Maths and English

Consideration was given to the Maths and English Report, provided to determine the impact of compulsory inclusion of Maths and English for learners who have yet to achieve a grade C and provide an update on Maths and English structure and success.

It was noted that from September 2014 any learner who has yet to achieve C's and is not studying towards them will not be included in the lagged number methodology. The consequence of this will impact on the 16/17 allocation. Based on 2012/13 College data against the new funding criteria, 48% of learners would not have met the new lagged learner funding criteria. The strategy for Maths and English and action plan as detailed in the paper was considered and thought in line to address the issues.

Annual Safeguarding Report/SCA6 Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Consideration was given to the Safeguarding Annual Report 2013/14 providing members with an update and the SCA6 Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Excerpt from 'Handbook for the Inspection of Further Education and Skills' – Ofsted August 2014. Governors acknowledged their responsibility in this area.

It was noted that there were 24 safeguarding cases reported in 2013/14 representing a 20% drop from the previous year. The College continues to see safeguarding as a priority.

Governors scrutinised the data provided and queried what some of it represented, eg centre % age and wondered whether reporting by size of the provision at each site and trend analysis over multiple years would help to put it in context. Getting consistent reporting and communication across sites was considered essential. It was noted that more work was being done on analysing what the data represents. It was queried whether there is any benchmarking data and regional variation. It was felt that the important thing is that it is reported and picked up and the appropriate action taken.

It was noted that the main changes to the policy were names.

Resolved: The Safeguarding Policy and Procedure were approved.

Annual Teaching and Learning Observations Report

Consideration was given to the Annual Report for the Observation of Teaching and Learning 2013/14. A total of 183 observations have been recorded for 2013/14, covering York, Newton Rigg and the centres and covering HE and FE with the results detailed in the paper by cross college, centre, section, learner type, theory/practical delivery, status of staff, plus Management of Underperformance in Teaching and Learning, General theme's for development, position and plans for 2014/15.

The general grade profile for good or better across College has increased by 2% to 78% in 2013/14. The Policy for the Observation of Teaching and Learning (SCA12) and Handbook were updated during 2013/14 with substantial input and consultation with UCU/JCC. The management of the performance of staff observed at grade 3 and 4 is a key aspect within the policy.

Governors felt this was an excellent paper. It was wondered whether with regard to HE, independent learning could be included.

EJP suggested that Governors went into a session as part of their Governor Departmental Briefings, not to do a lesson observation and grade it, but more as a walk through for 10-15 minutes, so they experience what a session is like and get a sense of how students learn, as there is no other way of doing so. Liz suggested they might like to leave a post it note with a positive comment. The idea is for it to be a positive experience, not a judgemental one.

Quality Assurance Calendar/QA1 Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy

Consideration was given to the Quality Assurance Calendar and Quality and Improvement Policy which were thought to be excellent. It was noted that the Quality Assurance Handbook which underpins the calendar is provided to every member of staff after approval by SMT and is used as the means to deliver the quality strategy consistently across all sites.

Governors queried how JT and team know there is compliance across all sites. It was noted that a Quality Manager has been provided for in the structure whose role it will be to check this compliance and look at standardisation.

Resolved: The Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy was approved.

24. Human Resources

HR Annual Report

Consideration was given to the HR Report providing an annual update to Governors on key HR data, addressing staff numbers employed, turnover, absence, training, key developments in HR over 2013/14 and key objectives for 2014/15, all as detailed in the report.

Members were interested in the turnover of staff % and what the figure represents, taking into account permanent, fixed term, variable. It was noted that the turnover of Colleges in general is going up and that due to growth at the College, 30% of staff are new. Governors felt that in a more stable time, 22% staff turnover would not be seen as good.

Concern was expressed at the training budget appearing low in comparison to the number of staff employed. It was noted that money is moved over to this budget once the position is known in May. Supporting and retaining good staff was thought by Governors to be important and therefore they would be interested in trend analysis.

Governors stated that they would appreciate some feedback on the staff survey.

There was a discussion regarding the work time lost. It was felt that there was a lot of good will from staff. It was noted that there is a strong absence policy with back to work interviews and absence scored on the Bradford Factor.

Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure

Consideration was given to the Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure. Governors picked up on the need to be trained and it was thought an HR session at the Away Day to look at their responsibilities for Senior Postholders would be advantageous.

Resolved: The Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure was approved.

HR19 Disciplinary Procedure for Senior Postholders

Consideration was given to the Disciplinary Procedure for Senior Postholders.

Resolved: The Disciplinary Procedure for Senior Postholders was approved.

It was noted that the above two policies had been reviewed as a result of a Lessons to be Learned exercise when they used to be combined, but as presented are now two separate documents.

25. Governance

Annual Cycle of Business

Consideration was given to the Annual Cycle of Business. It was noted that it is a working document and used as a basis for agendas for each meeting with documents going via SMT prior to coming to Governors.

Resolved: The Annual Cycle of Business was approved.

Meeting Minutes and Recommendations

Consideration was given to the summary of recommendations and minutes from the following meetings, which Governors were asked to approve and adopt:

Audit Committee 24 September 2014 inc Risk Register

- That the Hub and Spoke and Follow Up Reports be accepted.
- That the Rolling Implementation Plan of Audit Recommendations be accepted.
- That the Risk Map be accepted.

It was felt that the Risk Map should come to each meeting of the Corporation to show what the risks are and for them to be challenged on an ongoing basis so Governors know where the assurance comes from and how risk is embedded and evidence provided. It was noted that there is a proposal for the map to be summarised for future Corporation Meetings from 2015. It was noted that the map has been linked to the Strategic Plan and the next stage is for the plan to be linked to the map. It was noted that a session on risk was planned for the Away Day.

It was suggested that it would be useful to have a colour key included on the map.

Search Committee 1 October 2014 inc Annual Appointments to Committees

- The Corporation/Committee Members list be approved as the Annual Appointments to Committees which includes:
Reducing the Finance and General Purposes Committee members from seven to five to take into account the introduction of the Quality and Standards Committee with the appointment of Chair to be discussed at the first meeting of the financial year.
Reducing the number of the Audit Committee to five.
- Change the name of the Committee to Search and Governance Committee.
- Advertisement be drawn up to seek new Governors to the Corporation as outlined above.
- Succession Planning to be discussed at the Away Days.

Resolved: The above recommendations were proposed for approval and adoption, all agreed.

26. Confidential items

Resolved: It was felt that minutes 21 and 22 should be classified as confidential on the grounds of commercial sensitivity and reviewed in one year. The minutes and associated reports are therefore not available for circulation to the public, college staff or students (excluding senior post holders).

27. Any other business

None

Date of next meeting

Resolved: Away Day 11-12 November 2014, Inn on the Lake plus Wednesday 15 December 2014 at 3.00pm, ABC, York

Action Schedule

Date Action Raised	Minute No	Action required	Action by	By when
Current				
8/10/14	20	Complete Safeguarding Training	All	09/01/15
8/10/14	20	Corporation/Committee Meeting Schedule for 15/16 to be reviewed in the new year	JC	25/02/15
8/10/14	20	Arrange for Jo Gibson to present the Marketing Strategy to Governors	JC	25/02/15
8/10/14	23	Send the Maths and English Strategy to Governors	JC	ASAP
8/10/14	24	Governors to receive feedback on the staff survey	AT	When ready
Pending				
27/08/14	5	Write to Dan Ramsden	IY	ASAP
27/08/14	5	Governors to consider whether they would like to take on the role of Safeguarding Link Governor	All	8/10/14
27/08/14	6	Add Safeguarding and political issues to the training plan for Governors to be implemented at the Away Days	JC	
27/08/14	8	Review the number of times Committees are meeting to ensure the structure is fit for purpose	All	Jan '15
27/08/14	8	Look into the different options for sending papers electronically and present a paper to the Governance Working Party	JC	
27/08/14	8	Consider further how student and staff views can be captured by Corporation	Governance Working Party	Their next meeting
27/08/14	10	Arrange Departmental Briefings visits	Governors and Clerk	31/10/14
27/08/14	11	Prepare a session for the November Strategic Away Day on the Strategic Risk Map and Corporation Risk Appetite	PM & AC	Strategic Away Day
07/05/14	51	Consider reviewing the HE fee and researching why students chose ABC.	AN	As appropriate
07/05/14	53	Share video from TLA Day at a Governors Meeting.	JT	Autumn Term
19/03/14	34, 41 & 45	Review the election process, succession planning, Governor Self Assessment, away days and Governance in the North East	Governance Working Party	July 2014
11/12/13	26	Organise online Safeguarding Training for new Governors	JC	End of Summer Term

11/12/13	26	Record whether complaints are from separate individuals or individuals making multiple complaints, plus recording compliments	JT	When next report due
09/10/13	16	Annual report on Health and Safety Cycle and legal framework	JC to organise	Once new H&S arrangements are in place
22/05/13	Pre meet	Health and Safety to be discussed by Audit Committee	JC to organise	Once new H&S arrangements are in place
22/05/13	Pre meet	Check status of Incident/Accident Policy	JC	Once new H&S arrangements are in place
Cleared				
16/07/14	60	Search Committee to consider the vacancy on the Corporation and Audit Committee	Search	Next Meeting
16/07/14	64	To write to thank Michael and Dan, the Student Governors	IY	ASAP
16/07/14	64	EJP and IH to review large social/staff space in the College	EJP & IH	ASAP
16/07/04	64	Consideration to be given to collapsing the timetable for whole days for sporting events	EJP	ASAP
16/07/14	66	Implement the changes to the Financial Regulations and ensure they are tidied up and reports appear at F&GP as detailed in the minute	IH	ASAP
16/07/14	68	Follow up the legality with regard to Data Protection of the telecommunications clause in the new contract	AT	ASAP

I certify that this is a true and accurate record of the meeting held 8 October 2014 and agree to them being made public on the Askham Bryan website.

Signed
Chair

Date