



Approved by the Corporation:
Signed by the Chair
Date

Bradford College

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION AWAY DAY HELD: Thursday 10 March 2016

Present:

Richard Wightman (Chair)	Governor
Angela Cawthra	Governor
Terry Davis	Governor
Eve Gregory	Governor
Robert Holden	Governor (Staff)
Nasreen Karim	Governor
Dave Mann	Governor
Cath Orange	Governor
Karl Oxford	Governor
Dave Mann	Governor
Ramindar Singh	Governor
Cllr Dale Smith	Governor
Andy Welsh	Governor (Group Chief Executive Officer) (GCEO) (from 1440)

The quorum was six Governors

In Attendance:

Joanna Green	Clerk to the Corporation (Clerk)
David Harwood	Principal
John Kenyon	Vice Principal
Liz Knowles	Assistant Clerk
Ian Marwood	Sentio Partners LLP (for item 7 only)
Gareth Osborne	Group Chief Operating Officer (GCOO)
Richard Thomas	Provost

The meeting was held in the Bradford College Boardroom commencing 1300 and closing 1800.

The meeting was chaired by Richard Wightman as Chair Elect.

1. Apologies and disclosures of interest

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Paul Ashton and Debbie Rolls due to business travel overseas, and from (non-Governor) Group Finance Director, David Hambleton ("GFD"), who had been called away urgently at short notice. Apologies for lateness were received from Group Chief Executive Officer, Andy Welsh ("GCEO") as he was attending the Local Authority Post-16 Review Steering Group meeting.

The Clerk confirmed the meeting was quorate.

- 1.2 There were no disclosures of interest and members were reminded to declare their interests as and when necessary during the discussions.

2. Safeguarding Update Report

- 2.1 It was **AGREED** that the Safeguarding Action Plan should be deferred to a later date, to allow for input from the Principal. Governors **NOTED** that the Group Chief Executive Officer and his Executive team are responsible for the content of reports. They **AGREED** that the advice of the Safeguarding Team is invaluable and that it deserves the strongest support from the Corporation, the Clerk and the Executive, to facilitate and ensure the highest standard of reporting and dialogue.

RESOLVED:

- i. To defer discussion on this item until a future meeting.*

Clerk to fix

3. Review of Risk Tolerance

- 3.1 As GFD was not available to lead on this Item as planned and GCEO had not yet arrived, Governors **AGREED** to start by considering the Principal's proposals in respect of the Further Education provision.

4. Determination and Review of the Educational Character and Mission of the College: Strategic Discussion

- 4.1 David Harwood, the Principal, referred Governors to various documents which he had shared at the previous meeting. He explained that they set out his proposals about the educational character and mission of the College, which take account of the opportunities and risks emerging from the current landscape, in particular the Government's plans for an apprenticeship levy and its pledge to support three million apprenticeships by 2020.
- 4.2 The Principal said, and Governors **AGREED**, that the ultimate ambition is for the College to be Outstanding in everything it does and to grow in terms of market share and quality. This, Governors **ACKNOWLEDGED**, will not just happen; the Corporation must confront questions about mission, purpose and scope and must act strategically, taking account of local needs. The Principal said the session is an opportunity to do this and, in particular, to explore what the College can and should do to ensure that when it next has an Ofsted Inspection, it can be certain of being "Ofsted ready" at leadership level.
- 4.3 The Principal took Governors through a slide presentation which outlined his proposals in more detail, along with the reasoning behind them. He suggested that there may be an opportunity to develop a sixth form college centre as part of the College Group, alongside a Bradford Technical and Vocational College and the various strands of employer engagement. He said demand for Further Education places is expected to grow significantly over the next 18 months, which is a key opportunity.
- 4.4 Governors discussed the proposals in small break-out groups and then as a full body. GCEO joined the meeting at 1440 in time to take part in the full body discussion. It was **AGREED** that current priorities for the College are: to build capacity for growth, to ensure alignment to the Common Inspection Framework and to secure commercial growth alongside business development.

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- 4.5 Governors further **AGREED** that the following principles should underpin any structural or mission change:
1. The College should aim to be both a second chance institution and a centre of academic excellence; the two things are not seen as mutually exclusive.
 2. The College is committed to supporting employability. The design of the curriculum and the structure of the business should transparently aim at promoting employability and delivering realistic and achievable outcomes for learners in terms of employment. Curriculum design should be informed by quality intelligence about the likely future demand for skills within the geographical area learners will travel to work in.
 3. The Corporation renews its commitment to the strategic goal of placing students and potential students at the heart of everything it does. In furtherance of this, both the curriculum and the mode of delivery must take account of such considerations as some parents' preference for post-16 education environments that are more like a school than a large college.
 4. As part of its mission, the College must seek to turn the tide on poor secondary education outcomes in the Bradford District. Poor outcomes in maths and English GCSE are a particular strategic priority due to the entry and exit requirements for apprenticeships, an area in which the College wishes to grow its provision.
 5. If there is to be a sixth form centre and, separately, a technical and vocational college, there must be a clearly articulated rationale for the split and a clear message about what each is aiming at in terms of outcomes e.g. "routes into further educational opportunities" versus "routes into employment".
 6. Currently, many learners undertake programmes which combine A levels and vocational qualifications and Governors have heard many times of the benefits of such programmes. Any redesign of the curriculum and/or structure of the business should preserve the opportunity to combine A levels and vocational qualifications where learners wish.
 7. The College should not lose sight of the fact that it is a mixed economy college and the impact of any proposed changes on the Higher Education provision and/or the relationship between the two must be carefully considered as part of any planned programme of change. When designing and promoting its Further Education provision, the College should think and talk about whole career pathways and the option of taking a route through to Level 7 and ensure that there are clear routes and pathways to support students with those aspirations.
 8. All decision-making must be informed by an assessment of risk and a financial impact. If management considers that necessary change at the right pace is not affordable, discussions must take place around that as a matter of priority.
 9. Maintaining a dynamic and sustainable college is critically important; the Corporation considers that it should be moving towards being a self-sustainable college and is committed to diversifying the College's income sources as necessary to achieve that self-sustainability. Any planned programme of change should start from the position that, for the foreseeable future, one of the main areas of growth in income in Colleges

will likely be apprenticeships, boosted by the introduction of Further Education loans and the apprenticeship levy.

1448 Karl Oxford left the meeting

- 4.6 The Principal thanked Governors for their careful consideration of his proposals and assured them that as it develops its plans for the provision, the Executive will take account of the principles they have articulated.
- 4.7 Vice Principal, John Kenyon, acknowledged the Corporation's ambitions for growth and observed that it is necessary to adopt an effective strategy to deliver and manage growth; hence the Executive's proposals envisage and plan for incremental growth.
- 4.8 The Principal acknowledged the Corporation's commitment to supporting employability and identified that his proposals envisage an employer-engagement arm operating within the overall Further Education structure, linked to the business development unit. Gareth Osborne, Group Chief Operating Officer ("GCOO"), said there is a sales team already in place with a good mix of skills. City Training Services and Beacon Recruitment have excellent success rates in terms of sales but there is room for improvement across the Group, particularly in the College itself.

1455 Karl Oxford rejoined the meeting.

- 4.10 The meeting discussed the specific ambition to grow apprenticeships and how the funding will work. GCEO said instead of coming directly to the College, funding will go to the employer and then to the College in the form of a voucher, which the college will redeem. Employers looking to engage apprentices will find training providers via a dedicated website.

1500 John Kenyon left the meeting

- 4.11 A Governor counselled that the importance of College alumni as a resource for employer engagement should not be overlooked. He said from his experience of being a director on the board of City Training Services it has become clear to him that the College must increase the level of engagement it has with local employers and the Corporation must commit to supporting that goal. This was **AGREED**.
- 4.12 The Principal assured Governors that he is firmly committed to getting the model right in order to deliver the strategic outcomes the College is aiming at. He said it would not be acceptable to him for the College to fail to align its Further Education Provision with the Common Inspection Framework; for it to sit back and miss opportunities for growth, or to miss opportunities to maximise business development and grow its commercial arm to diversify its income streams.
- 4.13 GCOO said in terms of restructuring and other costs, the expectation is that the exercise should be cost neutral and any new roles will be filled internally. GCEO cautioned that the main driver for change is not making savings but achieving long-term sustainability.
- 4.14 There being no further questions or comments, it was **AGREED** to commend the Principal on his proposals and instruct him and the Executive to proceed to implement those, subject to the various principles Governors had articulated.

RESOLVED:

Principal

- i. That the Executive shall commence work on the implementation of the proposals outlined by the Principal in his report, on the proviso that any changes implemented must not without the Corporation's approval conflict with either the five year strategic plan or the principles set out at minute 4.5 above.*
- ii. That the Executive shall report to the Corporation progress against the implementation of the proposals, with reference to the Strategic Plan and the principles set out at minute 4.5 above.*
- iii. To commend the Principal on his report and to receive it.*

5. Group Chief Executive's Report

Declarations of Interest were made by Terry Davis, Eve Gregory, Dale Smith, Andy Welsh and Richard Wightman, each having a conflicting interest in the outcomes of the review of Post 16 educational provision in the District, either through their direct connection with the Local Authority undertaking the review (Terry Davis and Dale Smith) or as trustees of the Bradford College Education Trust which operates two school sixth forms and a Studio School (Eve Gregory, Andy Welsh, Richard Wightman).

GCEO spoke to his report, commenting as follows:

Post 16 Review

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1544 Ramindar Singh left the meeting

1545 Khan Muzzamil Nawaz joined the meeting

ATA

5.4 GCEO said the situation now requires a meeting of the External Affairs Committee to be convened as soon as possible and this was **AGREED**.

RESOVLED:

- i. **To instruct the Clerk to convene a meeting of the External Affairs Committee to resolve the issue around the ATA** Clerk

1550 Raminder Singh rejoined the meeting

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

GCEO

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Age UK

5.7 GCEO updated Governors on the situation with Age UK Ltd. He said he is still seeking feedback as to why the College was unsuccessful in its bid for the 300 Yorkshire and Humberside Apprenticeships but he is pleased to report that it will be taking on the 214 16-18 year old students studying sports qualifications outside Yorkshire at £200,000 turnover for this year and £400,000 next year.

1610 Karl Oxford left the meeting

6. Review of Risk Tolerance and Principles

6.1 It was noted that GFD had planned to lead this Item. In his absence, Independent Governor and Audit Committee member, Dave Mann, introduced the topic and referred to the previous meeting's discussion about the content of the Risk Management Policy. It was **ACKNOWLEDGED** that with so many new additions to the Corporation's membership, it is appropriate to revisit the risk tolerance of the body as well as the principles which underpin the College's risk management framework.

6.2 Governors referred to the College's Risk Management Policy and to the International Organization for Standardization publication *ISO/DIS 31000*

(2009) *Risk management — Principles and guidelines on implementation*. Discussing both, they **AGREED** that the key questions they wished to address in respect of risk management once GFD returns are as follows:

- 1 Does the Risk Scoring Matrix (page 12 of the Risk Management Policy) categorise risks in accordance with the Corporation's present tolerance to risk? In particular, are the stated impact and likelihood thresholds still appropriate?
 - 2 Is the Risk Management Policy an integral part of organisational processes and decision-making?
 - 3 Which risks should be monitored by the Corporation and how often? Should Governor have continuous access to the whole of the risk register to inform their monitoring and decision-making?
 - 4 Should there be an agreed threshold for escalating issues up the management chain and up to the Corporation, based on the risk score?
 - 5 Is the College's approach to risk management sufficiently learner focused? Should the Student Outcomes category be split into two or more categories to distinguish an impact on student success rates from an impact on other outcomes for students, such as employability or progression?
 - 6 Are there any gaps in the Risk Register?
- 6.3 It was **AGREED** that a date should be fixed to look at risk management and the Risk Scoring Matrix and to answer the questions identified above.
- 6.4 In response to a question, the Clerk advised that risk monitoring is not the responsibility of the Audit Committee. She said although the Audit Committee undertakes some risk monitoring as a way of checking the robustness of the risk management framework, its remit is to advise the Corporation on whether the risk framework is effective, i.e. delivering what it is supposed to deliver. GCEO interjected that the Executive reviews the risk register once a month.
- 6.5 After discussion, it was **AGREED** that the Corporation must receive more risk information both within reports and also in a separate risk report at Corporation meetings, with a ten minute timeslot reserved to look at new risks and those that have moved up the priority list. A Governor queried why the practice of presenting a risk report at every meeting had been dropped off and the Clerk explained that it hadn't, but whereas a report used to come to every meeting, at that time there were only six meetings per year; this year there have been twice as many meetings and reporting has been every other meeting. Additionally, the format of the report has changed; since the previous risk officer left the College, Governors have not received a colour coded report. Now that the role has been filled, it is an opportune time for the Corporation to review its approach to risk management.

1640 Khan Muzzamil Nawaz left the meeting

- 6.6 Governors **AGREED** that, as appropriate, risk scoring information should be embedded in reports, with details of the inherent risk score, the controls and the residual score to aide prioritisation, time management and decision-making. It was further **AGREED** that the Clerk should redesign the template report to ensure that risk information is presented appropriately in reports to Corporation.

RESOLVED

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| i. | <i>To amend the Corporation Reporting Policy to provide that, where appropriate, risk scoring information must be included in the risk section of reports; the Clerk to amend the template report to ensure that risk information is presented appropriately in reports to the Corporation.</i> | Clerk |
| ii. | <i>To amend the Calendar of Business to require that a risk report is brought to each meeting of the Corporation, with ten minutes reserved to review it.</i> | Clerk |
| iii. | <i>That a date should be fixed for a discussion about risk management policy, in particular to address the questions listed at 6.2 in the minutes above.</i> | Clerk |
| iv. | <i>To thank Dave Mann for leading a constructive discussion.</i> | |
- 7. Performance ambitions: The approach to target setting and population of the Further Education Dashboard**
- 7.1 The Principal explained how the data underpinning management's calculation of its recommended targets could be accessed by clicking on interactive buttons in the FE data dashboard, which led to pages of trend and other benchmarking data. While Governors **ACKNOWLEDGED** that it was too late in the year to consider making any material changes to the targets, they commended the Principal on his work, **AGREEING** that the data contained in the dashboard makes the rationale for the various targets very clear and that it will be a useful tool for measuring, monitoring and target setting, as well as for communicating targets.
- 7.2 A Governor suggested that including actual recruitment numbers on the dashboard would be useful as high student numbers impact on staffing and resources and needs to be budgeted for. Another Governor suggested that at certain times of the year, the Corporation might wish to see certain types of information – for example conversion rates of enquiries to enrolment might be useful. She said going back to the Risk Register, if there was an area where the College was slipping and the Risk Register showed it up, it would be helpful to be able to identify the issue quite quickly on the dashboard.
- 7.3 The Principal said he would take the suggestions under consideration and thanked Governors for their input. He said it is important that the Corporation adopt the dashboard and use it, so that if Ofsted asks how Governors challenge the Executive, it can be used as evidence of regular monitoring. There are a number of reports that come to Corporation regularly, for example on recruitment and retention, and the dashboard may obviate the need for those separate reports, unless an issue arises.

RESOLVED:

- i. To receive the report and commend the Principal on his work.***

1730 Ian Marwood joined the meeting

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

9. Planning for the April Away Day

The Clerk said that the proposal for the April Away Day was to focus on Higher Education. The Provost suggested he could give an overview of the landscape of Higher Education at the moment and present a notional draft plan for growth. Governors **AGREED** that it would be useful to have a general introduction to Higher Education at Bradford College and how it fits into the overall strategy; also that the Heads of Faculty should be invited to attend. The Provost said he would also give an update on the College's application for Taught Degree Awarding Powers and include an item on employability.

10. There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions and the meeting concluded at 1800.