



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

THURSDAY 8 DECEMBER 2016

Report: Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 13 October 2016
Author: Clerk
Action: Approve
Status: Open

Present: Robin Mackie (Chair)
Judith Doyle (Principal)
Christine Jones
Sally Hancox
Darren Heathcote
Josh Everest
David Mitchell
John McElroy
Chris Macklin
Ewan Fenwick-Donaldson

In attendance: Emma Moody (Clerk)
Suzanne Clark (Minutes)
Chris Toon
Nadine Hudspeth
John Gray
Mark Thompson
Ivan Jepson

1983 Chair's welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Emily Cox, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Nick Hurn, Ian Renwick, John Holt and Mark Taylor.

The Chair asked Committee members to declare any interests they may have in items on the agenda. Members were reminded to declare any conflicts that arose during the meeting.

1984 Minutes of the meeting dated 7 July 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7 July 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

1985 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that were not covered on the agenda.

1986 Area Review Update

THIS ITEM IS CONFIDENTIAL AND NOT FOR PUBLICATION

The presentation was noted.

1987 Strategic Update

The Principal delivered a presentation to share with the Board the draft Strategic Plan.

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The Strategic Plan was approved.

1988 Governance

The Clerk to the Corporation presented a report in relation to governance objectives and self-assessment.

The exercise was split into two parts.

1. The Board members were asked to revisit the exercise completed at the Strategy Day in April 2015 and to consider a plan for the development of the Board which would support the Executive Team in delivery of the Strategic Plan. Governors were asked to reflect on the results from the previous exercise considering whether items identified at that time were still relevant, had been achieved, should be modified or had not been achieved to ensure that the Board have a list of governance objectives going forward.

In terms of comparing the College to its competitors, the Principal suggested an annual report could be prepared using College data to show how the College compared to other organisations. This was felt to be useful by members.

A member asked whether governance priorities/objectives could mirror the language used in the strategic plan. The Chair agreed that this would be a good approach and asked that this is followed up by the Principal and the Clerk.

2. The Board was then asked to focus on determining what the governance priorities should be for the next 12-18 months. The Clerk had drawn up a list of examples to be used as a starting point, but this was not intended to be exhaustive. Governors were then asked in turn to identify two priorities which they felt should be included in the "governance plan" for the continued development of the Board. A list of the priorities identified is included in Annex A. The Clerk advised that the Governance sub-group will now review these priorities and will feedback suggestions on how these priorities may be achieved and how they will be measured.

The Clerk commented that that if more time is to be given at meetings to consideration of broader strategic issues, then more attention needs to be given to reporting to ensure matters are reported by exception, recognising that issues are looked at in more detail by committees.

Action: Priorities to be shared with Governors following consideration by the Governance Sub-group and a plan to be presented for approval by Governors at the December meeting.

Governor re-appointments

The Clerk advised that both Emily Cox and Sally Hancox were due for re-election in July 2016.

The Governors approved the re-election of both Emily Cox and Sally Hancox such appointments to take effect from July 2016.

Voting by proxy and attendance at meetings

The Clerk reminded Governors that they were able to vote by proxy if they were unable to attend meetings. The Clerk also advised that if physical attendance was not possible members could dial into meetings or attend by video conference, and encouraged Governors to use these two methods to ensure meetings were quorate and attendance was good. The Clerk reminded Governors that they were responsible for the oversight of the College, regardless of attendance at meetings and, therefore, it was in their interests to ensure they attended meetings.

1989 Prevent Awareness Training

It was agreed that this item would be deferred until December 2016.

1990 Internal Audit Plan 2016/17

The report was presented by the Chair of the Audit Committee on behalf of the Deputy Principal: Operations / Finance Director.

The Board was advised that the plan has previously been approved by the Audit Committee and gave an overview of the plan. It was confirmed that the Information Governance section of the plan will include a review of Corporate Governance arrangements.

A member asked why Contracts & Partnerships was not included in the plan as it is indicated within section 3 that it should be an annual review. The Principal responded that Contracts & Partnerships was no longer a college department and it was confirmed that PWC will be asked to amend this in their presentation of the report. The member also asked whether Business, Innovation and Development would benefit from having some time spent on it given the current landscape. The Principal commented that that this was also linked to the old structure and it is a department which no longer exists in the College. The Board was advised that business development is woven into the plan albeit the terminology used is different. It was agreed that these were matters of presentation and PWC will be asked to update this. The Chair of the Audit Committee responded that there are 9 days remaining in the plan which could be used to pick up any areas of particular relevance that arose throughout the year.

The plan was approved but its presentation needs to be aligned to the College's new structure.

1991 Provisional Financial Out-turn 2015/16

The report was presented by the Chair of the Corporation on behalf of the Deputy Principal: Operations / Finance Director.

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The report was noted.

1992 Chair's review of business

The Chair thanked the Principal, Executive Team and the staff team for their diligence during the recent recruitment phase. The Deputy Principal confirmed that the College was on track to achieve its target by January. The Chair commented that he was very encouraged to see members of the Executive Team in reception during start up greeting students and advised the Board that he is aware of exciting work taking place in terms of

business development. It was acknowledged that the College is going through challenging times but initiatives are being developed in the People Committee to support this. There has been very strong performance from Corporate Services building a very strong position. The College is in an extremely strong position going into the new academic year. The College is very agile and will continue to build on this.

1993 Any other business

There was none.

1994 Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 8 December 2016 at 4.00pm followed by Christmas Dinner in Enfields.

Appendix A

Governance priorities for the next 12-18 months

- Allocation of time for strategic thinking / horizon scanning at each Board meeting
- Better understanding of relevance of data presented
- Differentiator – shaping the future
- Exerting influence
- Governors are representative of the College
- Governors give talks to students about their industry experience to support the College's employment edge agenda.
- Governors to be on the front foot in terms of sector and regional developments
- Governors to be well-informed of changing landscape
- Governors to introduce Gateshead College as provider of choice to their business links
- Governors to regularly assess their own contribution and effectiveness at meetings
- Governors to take mid and long term view on strategic issues arising at meetings
- How do governors keep abreast of legal or charitable requirements
- Improve focus at meetings, remove tendency for duplication and use time more effectively
- Improve knowledge through training (and refresher training)
- Increased visibility in sector by Governors
- Increasing participation at meetings
- Making time at meetings to reflect on strategy
- Sector Development
- Use of jargon – understanding of terms used when presenting data