

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 2 FEBRUARY 2015

Present Governors:

Joanna Bailey (Principal), Mitchell Agar, John Carson, Margaret Hirst (Chair), Samantha Hockney, Alan Holborn, John Monkhouse, Rachel Pearson, Sue Reay and Michael Smith.

Number of members present 10 – the meeting was quorate throughout.

Also Present:

Rachel Angus (Vice Principal), Sarah Langstaff (Finance Manager) and Vicki Barber (Clerk)

The meeting was held at Stockton Sixth Form College in the LRC and started at 17:25

135.1 PRESENTATION; CHANGES TO THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS PAYMENT (PSP)

The Principal and Chair had attended the Sixth Form College Association's Workshop in October 2014, to be informed on proposed changes to the teachers' pay structure and to PSP.

The Principal advised the board that the new scheme closely reflects the way pay is managed in the school sector and that pay is linked to performance at all points of the scale and progress up the pay spine will be conditional upon performance. The proposed system would see teaching staff being appraised on a new system from September 2015 with the new proposed pay system coming into effect September 2016.

Governors were advised that each sixth form college must take the decision whether to adopt the proposed reforms which would mean an increased cost to Stockton Sixth Form College of £12k.

In response to a query regarding staff conduct the Principal advised there was a Corporation approved Staff Code of Conduct Policy with expressed rules for staff behaviour and guidelines so that they do not bring the college into disrepute.

The board thanked the Principal for the presentation.

135.2 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Marilyn Collins, Diane Griffiths, Catherine Marshall and Amanda Wright.

Alan Holborn was welcomed as newly nominated Staff Governor.

135.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded that they should declare any interests relevant to the business on the agenda as and when necessary.

There were no declarations of interest made.

135.4 MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2014

The minutes of the last meeting held on 15 December 2014 was approved as a true and correct record and was signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising:

Maths and English Strategy Training: The Principal advised that the college's Strategy Coordinator would be supporting the School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) in Stockton on Tees, in gaining their GCSE Maths and English qualifications.

Collaborative Partnership: Members were advised no further meetings had taken place since the last Corporation meeting and that the working party would be meeting again on Wednesday, 11 February 2015.

Nursery Project: It had been voted at the previous Corporation meeting on 15 December 2014 that the Board would not consider an offer, on the sale of college land below £100k; the lowest market valuation received. Following the meeting the Principal had advised the developer and was informed that he was not willing to increase on his offer of £80k. Punch Robson Solicitors had advised they would be willing to speak to the college's External Auditors to reconsider the market value of the land.

However, a Governor had scrutinised the letter and plans from the developer and had forwarded concerns regarding; boundaries on the plan being misleading, parking arrangements, shared connections with drainage and exit arrangements from the college site to the Clerk, Principal and Chair. These were discussed in detail and the board unanimously agreed that the project should no longer proceed and requested that the Principal advise the developer in writing.

The report was noted.

POLICY/PROCEDURE REVIEW

135.5 DATA PROTECTION POLICY

The college's Data Protection Policy had been distributed to members for review.

In response to a query regarding how many information requests the college received, the Vice Principal advised only one had been received during 2013/14 and the £10 cost had not been incurred. The charge would be likely to be introduced should the college receive an increased number of requests for information.

RESOLVED to approve the Data Protection Policy

EFFECTIVENESS/RESPONSIVENESS

135.6 SUCCESS RATES

Mock week had been conducted during week beginning 12 January 2015, the results had been analysed and a report was forwarded to members on Friday, 31 January 2015.

The report had been rag rated showing governors in red, subjects with cause for concern. The Vice Principal advised reasons for the poor outcomes in red subjects was currently being investigated by staff and she would be advised in due course. Members were advised that some teachers would argue that their subjects are a developing course and it would take to the end of the academic year to develop the student, to be competent to achieve an improved result at the exam.

In response to a query regarding the disappointing results in Physics the Vice Principal advised following investigations, strategies would be considered and actions agreed with teaching staff.

The Vice Principal advised one concern was that students misinterpret exam questions and confirmed that a lot more work would be carried out to combat this. Mock week had however, raised the fact that students were not gaining the required grades.

Concerns were raised regarding subjects graded green at AS and red at A2. In response to a question regarding how much influence the mock results had on university referencing the Vice Principal advised it would have none as the applications had been completed prior to Mock Week.

Governors highlighted the importance of the Mock Week process, in that it enabled teaching staff to have action plans in place in preparation for summer exams.

In response to a question the Vice Principal advised this was the second time the college had conducted the Mock Week activity. It was requested that some comparisons could be made between the results in January 2014 and January 2015; also advising how the summer exam 2014 results fared in comparison to the mock week results.

ACTION a report would be brought to the next Corporation meeting advising on the January 2014 results in comparison to January 2015 results and also advising how the 2014 summer exam results had improved compared to January 2014 mock week.

135.7 INTERNAL INSPECTION OUTCOMES

The board had been advised at a previous meeting of the new system of internal inspections which was put in place for the academic year 2014-15.

Governors had received a report advising of the outcomes of the lesson observations that had taken place during term 1, under the new internal inspection process.

The Vice Principal advised members that the first subjects to receive an internal inspection were those that had been rag rated 'red', following the results in August 2014. Subjects were rated as red if they hit the following criteria:

3% or more below benchmark for retention, achievement or success or 3% or more below benchmark for high grades and value added is 6 or below.

Subjects were graded on the Ofsted grading system of 1 being Outstanding, 2 Good, 3 Requires Improvement and 4 Inadequate.

In a response to a query regarding a member of staff receiving a grade 3 in their lesson observation, the Vice Principal advised the member of staff would have been re-observed and where necessary an action plan would have been put in place.

In response to a question regarding whether teachers have targets set, following a poor lesson observation grading, the Vice Principal advised there would be a post inspection action plan put in place and Progress Leaders would discuss with the teacher.

In response to a query the Vice Principal informed members that there would not be a further Internal Inspection completed on these subjects this academic year. However, any underperforming member of staff would be subject to further interventions.

In response to a question asking whether there was an appeals process in place the Vice Principal advised there wasn't.

The report was noted.

135.8 NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES

A report had been distributed to governors informing them of the Special Educational Needs Reform as a result of the Children and Families Act 2014.

In response to a question the Vice Principal advised Stockton Sixth Form College currently had one student with special educational needs and possibly two enrolling next academic year.

In response to a query the Vice Principal informed members that occasionally training is required for members of staff on the disability however, it would depend on the student in question.

The report was noted.

135.9 CHANGES TO THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS PAYMENT (PSP) FOR TEACHERS

In response to the presentation at the beginning of the meeting governors were requested to approve the proposed changes to the professional standards payment for teachers at a cost of £12k to the college.

In response to a question regarding cost of living pay increases the Principal advised if an increase was awarded this would be paid additionally to an increment increase.

In response to a member's reservation around an increased staff turnover, the Principal advised schools would be just as rigorous and when considering the colleges profile the staff turnover was very low, with many staff being significantly experienced in years.

RESOLVED to adopt the proposed reforms.

135.10 ESTATES UPDATE

A report had been distributed to all members advising them of all developments of the college estate.

In response to a query regarding Building Condition Improvement Funds the Principal advised the college would be advised shortly on whether it had been successful in securing further funding.

To note the report.

135.11 TARGET A* STUDENTS

A report had been distributed to governors advising them of how the college seeks to support students who target an A* grade.

Governors noted the report and it was requested that further guidance was included on the flyer.

A mentoring service would be provided by the School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) as a favour to the College, for the work its Maths and English strategy coordinator was doing with their students.

FINANCIAL HEALTH

135.12 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS DECEMBER 2014

Governors expressed their thanks for the newly formatted management accounts, which provided them with more and clearer information.

The Finance Manager summarised the accounts.

A query was raised regarding the Building Conditional Improvement Funding and the Finance Manager advised it must be spent by the end of March 2015.

The report was noted.

135.13 INCOME & BUDGET REVIEW 2014/15

A budget review had been distributed to members advising them of the 2014/16 financial plan in line with current student numbers.

The report was noted.

GOVERNANCE

135.14 A report on governance had been distributed to governors.

The Corporation welcomed Alan Holborn, Staff Governor as a reappointed member of the board.

All training events had been confirmed with members individually and governors noted the two meetings that had been rescheduled.

The report was noted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

135.15 Proposed Outsource of the College's Cleaning Service

At the Corporation meeting held on 10 November 2014 governors approved as part of the plan to reach break-even in 2015/16, consideration would be given to outsourcing the College's cleaning providers. The board were advised that the college would go out to tender and once three tenders were received, consideration would be given as to whether there was any financial benefit to the college.

A paper had been distributed to governors advising them of the tender process which had concluded on 23 January 2015 and Governors were provided with a report informing them of SSFC's current cleaning costs compared to that of the three companies who provided tenders.

NA Consultancy Limited had carried out the tender process analysing in detail the services, costs and providing a scoring system for the three companies.

It highlighted potential cost savings of up to £16k.

Governors discussed the report in detail and KGB Cleaning and Support Services Limited was graded with the highest scored. Governors were recommended to approve awarding the cleaning contract to KGB cleaning services for the next 3-5 years.

In response to a question the Principal advised current college employees would be employed by the provider and with increased training and machinery available, should provide an improved service.

In response to a query regarding materials the Principal advised the costs included all cleaning materials required.

The Principal advised a five year agreement would be put in place with a clause enabling the college to break away from KGB after 3 years if it was not satisfied with the service.

RESOLVED to approve KGB Cleaning and Support Services from 1 April 2015.

Approved by the Corporation:

----- Margaret Hirst, Chair of the Corporation

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