

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 9 JUNE 2014**

**Present Governors:**

Joanna Bailey (Principal), John Carson, Marilyn Collins, Margaret Hirst (Chair), Samantha Hockney, Alan Holborn, Jonathan Mankin, John Monkhouse, Sue Reay, Toks Sangowawa and Mitchell Agar

*Number of members present 11 – the meeting was quorate throughout.*

**Also Present:**

Rachel Angus (Vice Principal), Bev Shepherd (Finance Manager), Dr Ron Hill (Governance Consultant) and Vicki Barber (Clerk)

*The meeting was held at Stockton Sixth Form College in D017 and started at 17:30*

The Chair welcomed new governors Samantha Hockney, Staff Governor and Marilyn Collins, Independent Governor to the Board.

**130.1 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Diane Griffiths, Catherine Marshall, Sue Symington and Elizabeth Pearson.

**130.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**130.3 COLLABORATIVE WORKING PARTNERSHIPS**

The board were advised that despite best efforts made, a meeting with Hartlepool Sixth Form College was yet to be arranged.

The Principal informed the board that Northern Education Trust had completed due diligence, however no feedback from this had been received. Issues had been raised by Northern Education at SSFC's Ofsted celebration, regarding whether Sixth Form Colleges were able to convert to academy status. The Principal confirmed she would explore further working arrangements with Northern Education Trust, within a less formal merger.

The Principal's and Chairs of SSFC and Prior Pursglove Sixth Form College had met on two occasions to discuss cost saving collaborative partnerships, predominantly in back office functions. Two further meetings would be arranged before the end of this academic year to further consider shared work.

**RESOLVED** that the Principal would provide further feedback at the next Corporation meeting.

**130.4 MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING HELD ON 28 APRIL 2014**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 28 April 2014 were approved as a true and correct record, and signed by the Chair.

### Matters Arising:

- 3G Football Pitch  
Following Stockton Town Football Club securing grant funding they had met with all prospective partners. The three partners (Stockton Sixth Form College, The Grangefield Academy and Our Lady and St Bede RC School) expressed concerns regarding the project; one advising the location was unsuitable, another partner unwilling to contribute funds to the project due to their land being used and SSFC were concerned about the availability timetable once it had been build.

There had also been concerns raised by local residents regarding light and noise pollution. Stockton Football Club had advised they would continue with their planning application and if successful would explore securing the financial commitment from prospective partners.

- Block B Rental  
An organisation had visited SSFC to view Block B and the college had provided them with a price for rental. It had been indicated that they may wish to rent additional space in the college.
- Land Sale  
The businessperson interested in the land purchase was still in talks with the College and the project was ongoing.

In response to a query the Finance Manager advised the reduction in transport costs for next academic year had been incorporated into the cost savings item (130.9).

**RESOLVED** to note the update and look forward to receiving further feedback at the next Corporation meeting

## EFFECTIVENESS/RESPONSIVENESS

### 130.5 CORPORATE REPORT

In response to a query the Principal advised governors that 9 members of staff had volunteered to take part in Action Research projects throughout the year, this involved the member of staff formulating a piece of work, testing it and reporting back to staff.

In response to a question regarding limited numbers of students applying to study French, the Principal reminded members that the Board had requested Senior Management consider at what point a subject was viable. Governors were advised that 7 applicants had applied to study AS French and after applying the conversion rate this would mean enrolment of 3 students, applying the conversion rate to AS students studying French would mean only 1 student would study A2 French. The Corporation were advised other avenues for French provision were currently being explored.

In response to a query regarding recruitment of teaching staff the Principal advised all vacancies had now been filled.

In response to a question regarding class sizes the Principal advised members that the average class sizes in sixth form colleges was 18 students, maximum number at AS level 24 and maximum number at A2 level 20. The Board were advised that any class with less than 12 students in would be co taught.

Concerns were raised about whether co taught lessons would reduce the quality of teaching and learning. The Principal advised the aim was to deliver a good quality and value for money and this would be continually monitored. The Board were advised that during a student forum it was highlighted classes can be too small making group discussions difficult and of benefits to classes with different age ranges.

## **130.6 LEARNER DATA REPORT**

The report advised governors of the latest data indicators of student performance in attendance, retention and predicted grades for 2013/14.

In response to a question the Vice Principal advised that a minority of students can make a great impact on attendance.

## **130.7 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The Quality Improvement Plan had been distributed to governors and in response to a question the Vice Principal advised the staff situation within Chemistry was under restructure, a permanent teacher had been appointed, good feedback about the subject had been received from students and AS predictions were improved from last year.

In response to a query regarding key messages coming from focus groups the Vice Principal informed various issues had been shared with staff, one being more competitive and faster paced lessons.

In response to a question the Principal advised a successful candidate had been appointed for the position of Maths Strategy Co-ordinator.

The Board were advised that 9 members of staff had now been trained as external examiners.

## **FINANCIAL HEALTH**

### **130.8 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS APRIL 2014**

The management accounts for April 2014 had been distributed to the Corporation.

A query was raised regarding to income generated renting out Block B and the Finance Manager advised the income generated would be approximately £25k per annum.

**RESOLVED** that the Finance Manager would advise all members of the ratio formula set by EFA.

### **130.9 COST SAVINGS ACHIEVED TO DATE**

The board requested a breakdown of cost savings to date for 2014/15. Continual work was being carried out on cost savings and an up to date paper was tabled [1] at the meeting.

In response to a query regarding site caretakers the Finance Manager advised the college had made the caretaker role redundant but continued to employ a Site Manager.

In response to a question regarding the budget going forward into 2015/16 the Finance Manager advised the Senior Management Team were still working on this and it would be brought to the next Corporation meeting (7 July 2014), for board approval.

The Principal advised governors that Sixth Form Colleges were seen to be viable at 1200 students and even when Stockton Sixth Form College became breakeven it would still be carrying costs. Collaborative partnerships made a lot of sense and the college must consider all of its options. The Board were advised that Ofsted had not seen quality erosion during their inspection.

The Corporation were advised student applications for September 2014 were increased by 11% on last year, there had been over 700 applications submitted. A great deal of work had been completed by the college into conversion rate around the transitional period from application to enrolment. There was evidence that there had been an increase in student uptake for the college's transition event, re-vamped and badged as Intro Week.

The Board were advised about a business event that had taken place which had created the capacity to make interventions with local partner schools.

The Corporation thanked the Finance Manager for the forecasts.

**RESOLVED** to note the cost savings achieved to date.

#### **130.10 FEEDBACK FROM THE FE COMMISSIONER**

The Principal had been invited to be a member on a quality and performance group. The group had received feedback from David Collins, FE Commissioner who had been monitoring and assessing the progress in FE Colleges between September 2013 and February 2014. The Principal advised governors of the feedback she had received from the FE Commissioner.

**RESOLVE** that a copy of the FE Commissioner's final report would be distributed to all Corporation members once published.

#### **130.11 POLICIES/STRATEGIES/PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW**

##### **1. Staff Grievance**

The Staff Grievance policy had been distributed to members with no recommended changes. The governors reviewed the policy and it was requested that on page 2, item 2.1 (b) Head of Department was replaced with supervisor.

**RESOLVED** to approve Staff Grievance Policy with the requested amendment.

##### **2. Collective Disputes**

The Collective Disputes Procedure had been distributed to all members with the recommendation to delete this policy. The Principal advised the Corporation that the policy had been discussed with trade union representatives as it was no longer accurate and they were satisfied with the policy being deleted.

**RESOLVED** that the Collective Disputes Procedure would be deleted

##### **3. Ill Health Retirement**

The Ill Health Retirement Policy had been distributed to governors with the recommendation that this policy will be deleted. The Board were advised that ill health retirement was difficult to achieve as the Pensions Agency have a strict criteria and most applications are declined.

A new Absence Policy was currently being written and it was proposed that ill health retirement would be incorporated into this policy.

**RESOLVED** that the Ill Health Retirement Policy would be deleted and a statement regarding ill health retirement would be included in the Absence Policy that would be brought to Corporation for approval at the next meeting (7 July 2014)

##### **4. Staff Capability Policy**

The Staff Capability Policy had been distributed to governors with amendments highlighted. The policy had been amended in line with the new management restructure and strengthened around the informal stage of the process.

**RESOLVED** to approve the Staff Capability Policy and recommended amendments.

**5. Staff Disciplinary Policy**

The Staff Disciplinary Policy had been distributed to governors with amendments highlighted. Amendments had been made in line with the new management restructure. It was requested that the policy is amended where it refers to the Principal as her, to his/her to become generic.

RESOLVED to approve the Staff Disciplinary Policy and recommended changes.

**6. Safeguarding Policy**

The Safeguarding Policy had been distributed to governors with no recommended changes.

RESOLVED to approve the Safeguarding Policy.

**7. Child Protection Policy**

The Child Protection Policy had been distributed to governors with no recommended changes.

RESOLVED to approve the Child Protection Policy.

**8. Smoking Strategy**

The college's Smoking Strategy had been distributed to governors with amendments highlighted. The strategy had been amended to include e-cigarettes and a new designated smoking area.

RESOLVED to approve the Smoking Strategy with recommended changes.

**130.12 DIARY ITEMS**

Members were advised of two forthcoming events and were invited to attend.

- Stockton Sixth Form College Summer Fayre – Saturday, 21 June 2014
- ACE Awards Evening – Tuesday, 24 June 2014 at 18:30

**130.13 DATE & TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Corporation will be held on Monday, 7 July 2014.

**What has been the impact of the meeting on students and learning at Stockton Sixth Form College?**

- Combined (co taught) classes benefit and impact on the student experience positively.

**How well have the reports contributed?**

- Request that all reports have page numbers.

Approved by the Corporation:

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

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