

Preston's College

Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 13th December 2018 at 5pm in the Board Room at Preston's College

Present:

Mr J Boydell (Chair)
Dr E Smith (Principal)
Ms J Jones
Ms L Mason
Mr M Driver
Mr J Taylor
Mr J Wilson
Ms K Williams
Mr J Jepson
Mr B Cooley
Mr D Patel
Ms J Garcia
Cllr R Boswell
Mr E Bassa

In attendance:

Mr B Riley (Acting Clerk to the Corporation)
Ms G Thornton (Head of Human Resources)
Mr S Nixon (Executive Director Resources)
Mr M Noblett (Vice Principal Curriculum Delivery & Planning)
Ms M Haworth (Vice Principal - Quality, Teaching, Learning and Learner Support)

Apologies:

Ms L Hornsby
Mr T Readett
Mr M Collard
Ms G Swales
Mr S Browne
Mr S Edwards

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone in attendance to the meeting.

Apologies for the meeting had been received from the individuals referred to above.

2. Meet with the Scholarship Students

All in attendance at the meeting were introduced to 20 of the 23 scholarship students at the College.

The students were then split into four groups and the individuals attending the meeting (who were also split into 4 groups) took turns alternating between the four groups of students, asking them questions and obtaining feedback from them on their experience at the College.

The students then left the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

No additional declarations were made.

4. Minutes of the previous Board and Committee meetings

The Board considered and noted the minutes of the following meetings:

- the previous Board meeting held on 18th October 2018;

- the Audit Committee meeting held on 14th November 2018; and
- the Resources Committee meeting held on 29th November 2018.

There were no further comments on the above minutes.

Resolved: the minutes from the previous Board meeting on 18th October 2018 were approved and signed by the Chair.

5. Matters Arising

No matters arising were noted.

6. Appointment of New Members

The Acting Clerk confirmed that:

- Ms Janine Garcia has been selected as the new academic staff member;
- two new student governors have been appointed to the Board through the Student Council – Ms Georgia Swales (Adult) and Mr Ben Cooley (16-18);
- having met with Mr Dipesh Patel, Mr James Jepson and Mr Stephen Edwards respectively, the Search and Governance Committee wishes to recommend that they join the Board;
- following the appointment of the above members, this will bring the total number of Board members to the maximum of 20;
- discussions with Ms Carleen Osbourne from the University of Derby re involvement as a Higher Education representative.

Resolved: that the Board approve:

- **the appointment of Ms Garcia, Ms Swales, Mr Cooley, Mr Patel, Mr Jepson and Mr Edwards to the Board; and**
- **Ms Osbourne becoming an observer of the HE Sub-Committee.**

7. Principal and Chief Executive's Report

The Principal and Chief Executive presented her regular report, focusing on:

- national policy (and alignment with the new education framework);
- the AoC Beacon Awards;
- the recent OFSTED inspection and post-OFSTED matters;
- mental health and well-being; and
- this term's governor newsletter "Board news" (copies of which were circulated to all in attendance at the meeting).

There was then a discussion by all in attendance about mental health and well-being, with various individuals providing their thoughts on what the College is doing right and what it can do more of. The designated Mental Health Awareness Week was very successful in raising awareness. It was agreed that while the support is very much there, it is somewhat reactive than pro-active currently and that is something the College is looking to address in the future. Various initiatives are in the process of being worked on so as to redress this balance. The Chair noted the importance of such initiatives.

Resolved: that the Principal and Chief Executive's Report is received and the contents noted.

8. Audit Committee Annual Report

Mr S Nixon presented the Annual Report of the Audit Committee to the Board, it being noted that it should be read in conjunction with the Annual Report of the Internal Auditor and the Management Letter of the Financial Statements Auditor (both of which have been provided).

The report sets out the work of the Audit Committee during the period 1 August 2017 to 31 July 2018 and how the work undertaken has led to the Audit Committee forming the opinion that the adequacy and effectiveness of the College's systems of internal control and its arrangements for control and governance processes and for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money) are all sufficient.

Mr S Nixon noted that the report contained a summary of activity over the course of the year and more particularly, the internal audit work (conducted by RSM) and the financial statements audit (conducted by KPMG). Both audits had confirmed a clean bill of health and could be accepted as a source of assurance by the Board when approving the accounts.

KPMG will issue a clean audit opinion subject to approval of the draft accounts tonight (next item on the agenda) and RSM have confirmed that the College has an adequate system of control in place which can be relied upon.

Resolved: that the Annual Report of the Audit Committee be accepted as a source of assurance.

9. Financial Statements

Mr S Nixon reported on the final draft of the financial statements (a copy of which had been provided to all in attendance), which represents the summary of trading performance for the year ended 31 July 2018.

The Board were informed that the external audit is now complete, and the external auditors (KPMG) have issued a management letter indicating that an unqualified opinion will be given when the draft financial statements are signed. A copy of their report had been provided for information.

Mr Nixon talked through the key points identified by KPMG in their report.

It was noted that the letter of representation provided will be signed off alongside the accounts once approved.

Resolved:

- **to approve the financial statements for 2017/18 and authorise the Chair and Principal to sign the statements on behalf of the Board; and**
- **to authorise the Chair to sign the letter of representation on behalf of the Board.**

10. Self Assessment Report

Ms M Haworth presented her report to the Board. It was noted that, for the 2017/18 year, the key items included:

- maintaining and improving outcomes; and
- improving teaching and learning.

The next item to be progressed is the post-OFSTED inspection action plan, which is currently being worked on. It is intended that this will be prepared with input from the Quality and Standards Committee in order to drive excellence in learning and to help the College maintain its "good" rating with OFSTED and seek to improve further towards an "outstanding" rating. It was also noted that the intention is for there to be a greater focus on the involvement of learners at all levels moving forward, to help drive improvement.

Grades within the Self Assessment Report have been discussed with the College's Executive Leadership Team to ensure that grading is objective and accurate against KPI performance.

Resolved: the Board endorses the Self Assessment Report and its indicated grades.

11. Five year plan update

The Principal noted that the College has been continuing to work on its five year plan (which is still in development) with reference to the KPI's/milestones agreed by Board back in July.

The Principal took the Board through her report which provided an update on the following areas:

- Financial Plan
- Estates
- Curriculum Plan
- Quality Plan
- OFSTED inspection outcome and post OFSTED action plan
- The KPIs/milestones to be contained in the 5 year plan.

Mr M Noblett reported to the Board on curriculum planning. Ms M Haworth noted activities post OFSTED inspection.

The Principal noted that the College's association with the University of Derby will continue to evolve over time as well and that more details of the years 2 – 5 KPI's / milestones will be provided at the Strategic Planning Event which takes place on 31st January 2019.

Resolved: to note the report

12. Period 3 Management Accounts

Mr S Nixon reported to the Board on the period 3 management accounts (a copy of which had been provided).

Resolved: to note the period 3 financial position.

13. Performance against KPI's

Mr S Nixon reported on performance against a range of KPI's and went through the key points highlighted in his report.

Mr M Noblett and Ms M Haworth also provided some further input on these two areas for improvement.

Resolved: current performance against KPI's noted.

14. Banking authorised signatories

Mr S Nixon noted that:

- it has been proposed that Mr M Noblett and Ms M Haworth are added to the banking mandate of the College to provide further cover where required; and
- certain individuals have left the College and as such they should be removed from the banking mandate.

The paperwork to achieve the above had been provided, which needed to be signed by the Chair.

Mr S Nixon also requested that the Chair and the Acting Clerk sign a copy of the Agenda item to confirm approval of the changes to the banking mandate (so that this can be provided to the bank if required, ahead of the formal minutes of this meeting being prepared post meeting).

Resolved:

- to approve the changes to the banking mandate referred to above;
- to authorise the Chair to sign the appropriate paperwork to revise the banking mandate as referred to above; and
- for the Chair and the Acting Clerk to sign a copy of the Agenda item, confirming approval by the meeting of the changes to the banking mandate referred to above, ahead of the formal minutes of the Board meeting being prepared.

15. Feedback on group session with the Scholarship Students

All in attendance provided their feedback on the earlier group session with the Scholarship Students, which everyone had agreed had been extremely useful. The Board considered the key issues which had emerged from the session.

Action: all in attendance were asked to provide any further, specific feedback from the session to Rebecca Paley over email, who would compile these comments and circulate to all in due course.

16. Date of next meeting

The Board noted that the next Board Meeting was scheduled to take place on 21st March 2019.

17. Close

The Chair passed on his thanks and Christmas wishes to the Board and the meeting closed at 7.05pm.