

MINUTES
FURNESS COLLEGE BOARD
6th JULY 2017



Present:	John Butler	Chair
	Trish Kidd	Vice Chair
	Jan Fielding	External Governor
	Don Logan	External Governor
	David Schofield	External Governor
	Caroline Vernon	External Governor
	John Sidney	External Governor
	Julie Barton	External Governor
	Andrew Wren	Principal/Chief Executive
	Roz Stewart	Support Staff Governor
	Lorraine Falle	HE Student Governor
In Attendance:	Mark Nicholson	Deputy Principal; Curriculum & Quality
	Jo Anson	Director of Higher Education
	Karen Johnson	Acting Clerk

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND WELCOME

B/16/362 Apologies for absence were received from, Chris Dodwell, Ian Sinker, Tracy Irwin (External Governors), Dylan Hughes, Chloe Limitsios (FE Student Governors), John Smith (Deputy Principal Finance & Resources).

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

B/16/363 The Chair reminded Governors of the requirement to declare their interests in any agenda items. Governors with a declared interest may or may not take part in discussions but will be unable to vote on any question with respect to it and will not be counted in the quorum present at the meeting in relation to a resolution on which he/she is not entitled to vote. The Board reserves the right to ask the member with a declared interest to leave the room for the discussion relating to the interest.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY and HEALTH & SAFETY

B/16/364 The Chair reminded Governors of the College's commitment to equality and diversity and inclusiveness, and the need to consider these issues along with health and safety in all Corporation business.

MINUTES OF THE FURNESS COLLEGE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 6 APRIL 2017

B/16/375 The minutes of the previous Board meeting held on 6 April 2017, including all confidential items, were agreed as a true and accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION POINTS

B/16/376 The Chair had reviewed the actions from the previous meeting and there was one action point around the merger of Newcastle College and Carlisle College, which the Principal confirmed had been dealt with.

PRINCIPAL'S UPDATE

B/16/377 The Principal's Update had been circulated previously.
The Principal provided a commentary on the report, including an overview of developments and ongoing business.

Restructure and staffing

The Principal updated on the restructure which has been ongoing this year, and also the changes in senior management as a result of staff retirements and moving to new employment outside of the College.

An outline of the remaining posts to be filled was shared with the group, along with the process in place to fill these.

The Chair asked for thanks to be passed on behalf of the Board for Jane Ridyard's service to the College over the past 21 years.

The proposed management structure was shared with the Board which takes into account the changes outlined above.

Leadership and Management Charter

The Charter was shared with the Board and outlines the expectations for all staff relating to the leadership and management of the College.

Aspiring Managers and Aspiring Leaders Programme

The Principal updated on the new initiative which will provide staff with opportunities to develop themselves through a formal but largely internally delivered programme which will expose them to situations which they may not be exposed to in their current role. This will help to develop talent management within the College.

Learner numbers

The current position is that the college is very close to target, although HE is below target the income for HE is on target.

Maths & English

Current indications are that the target will not be reached but there will be an improvement on last year's performance and will be at least national benchmarks.

Applications for next academic year and Curriculum developments

Applications for next year are 18% higher compared to last year. This is as a result of increased marketing activity and the addition of A Level D&T which is popular but was not previously offered.

Art & Design provision has been moved from Channelside to Rating Lane and rebranded as a Centre of Excellence for Art & Design.

RoATP

The Principal confirmed that the College had been confirmed as having been successful and is now on the register. There were no detrimental outcomes due to the delay and the College had received its' funding allocation as expected.

BAE Systems

The Principal advised that the College has tendered for three separate areas of work for BAE Systems, the outcome will not be known until late Summer, one area is craft which the college delivers at present but in addition to this tenders have also been submitted two areas of delivery currently delivered elsewhere by the business.

Joint Venture

The consultation is now complete and the outcome is that a formal, but loose, federation will be drawn up between the four colleges which does not impact on the structure of the college in any way or dilutes the authority within the College board. The Principal asked if the Board were happy with this approach or would they prefer a more formal update at the October board.

The Chair raised that he had been very much involved in this process and asked the Board for their opinion. The Principal advised that this recommendation meets with the outcomes of the area review and provided further detail as to what this would mean for the College.

- B/16/378 The recommendation to have a formal, but loose, merger was proposed and **agreed** by the Board.

CandoFM

The Deputy Principal C&Q is currently undertaking a review of the radio station with a focus on the impact that the radio station has on learners

- B/16/379 The Board **accepted** the Principal's Update Report.

Roz Stewart, staff governor, left the meeting.

HEFCE ANNUAL PROVIDER REVIEW & TEF OUTCOMES

- B/16/380 The Director of Higher Education referred governors to the previously circulated update of the HEFCE Annual Provider Review and TEF outcomes.

HEFCE Annual Provider Review

The Director (HE) summarised the range of data within the report and clarified the process which sits behind this which is used by HEFCE in the decision making process which is risk based.

The Director advised that the college has very good progress to employment, retention is very good, NSS satisfaction is high, the status of the College in general is also taken into account during this review. All of these factors have a positive impact on the outcomes of the annual review.

TEF Outcomes

This element is not compulsory but in view of the above aspects the College had submitted an application. Institutions can be awarded Gold, Silver or Bronze rating and the College had been awarded a Silver rating which is the highest rating in Cumbria.

- B/16/381 The Board discussed and **noted** the outcomes of the annual provider review and TEF.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

- B/16/382 The Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality referred Governors to the report previously circulated.

The focus of work throughout the year has been around English & maths, the Director of Young People's Learning had taken the lead on improvements this year.

In addition, there had been an increased focus on retention this year with any areas falling below target level having been subject to scrutiny and intervention.

- B/16/383 The Board discussed and **accepted** the Performance Monitoring Report.

OFSTED DASHBOARD 16-19 LEARNERS

B/16/384 The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality updated Governors on the recent publication of a tool which Ofsted use as part of their risk assessment process when deciding whether an inspection is required outside of normal timescales.

Governors were advised of what areas of performance the dashboard covers, typically these are:

Value added (progress), Retention, Maths & English progress, Student destinations and Tech level attainment (level 3)

Overall judgements are published on the dashboard and the college has had 6 strengths published with no weaknesses.

Analysis of data within the report was displayed and the College has been able to demonstrate progress improvement over a period of time (3 years) for all learners, disadvantaged learners and on disadvantaged learners. English and maths progress – slightly below the national average - based on last year's results, however, for this academic year interventions have been in place and it is expected that this position will improve.

B/16/385 The Board received, discussed and noted the update from the DP C&Q.

B/16/386 Governors queried how the College can demonstrate the progress made in English & maths and what interventions have been put in place to continuously improve this position. Governors were advised of the interventions which had been implemented this year including improved progress monitoring which allows progress to be identified for learners who are perhaps performing at the same grade overall but making improvements within this grade profile.

QUALITY STRATEGY

B/16/387 The Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality presented the updated Quality Strategy which sets out the College's approach to Quality for the next academic year and advised that this had been approved by the Learner Experience Committee and also the Senior Leadership Team of the College.

Questions were raised that at the Learner Committee meeting queries had been raised regarding staff satisfaction and staff succession planning for example, because these can have a positive impact on the student experience. The Principal's update had covered some aspects of this and the Board were also reminded that the fuller aspects of HR and staffing are reported to and scrutinised by the Finance & Resources Committee.

B/16/388 The Board received and **approved** the Quality Strategy for the academic year 2017/18

NOTIFICATION FROM THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY REGARDING THE IMPORTANCE OF STRONG FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

B/16/389 The Principal referred Governors to a letter which had been received from the ESFA which was to remind Corporations that this letter had been circulated to all Colleges with a requirement for this to be shared with the Board to emphasise expectations of financial monitoring and scrutiny by the Board. An outline of these expectations was detailed within the letter. The reasoning behind this is that the majority of Colleges who have failed financially were as a result of a lack of financial monitoring and scrutiny by the Board and Committees. The Principal advised that having internal audits is no longer a requirement but the College had taken the decision to continue with these to provide additional scrutiny and assurance.

B/16/390 Governors received and noted the letter from the ESFA and questioned whether there needed to be a formal response to this from the Board and were advised that this is not a requirement.

MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

B/16/391 In the absence of the Deputy Principal Finance & Resources the Principal presented the management accounts. Key points were raised as follows:

- Headline figure operating surplus is forecast of £55k
- Forecast for year end operating surplus is now £79k
- This is an improvement from that outlined at the April board meeting
- Depreciation changes for Rating Lane capital have been taken into account, as well as increased pension provision.
- Pay expenditure is lower than target
- Strength of the college's balance sheet and financial outlook will result in a rating of Outstanding financial health using the ESFA tool

Questions were asked around the lower numbers of 16-18 within the budget and queried whether this would impact on the College's financial position given that indications are that applications are higher than expected. The Principal advised that the College had planned for this post-merger but overall the position would remain strong due to the weightings of the students' concerned dependent upon the course they are studying.

The Principal assured the Board that the College would continue to enrol learners past the point of funding because this would have a positive impact on funding the following year.

B/16/392 The Board received and discussed the Management Accounts.

BUDGET 2017-18 APPROVAL

B/16/393 In the absence of the Deputy Principal Finance & Resources, the Principal presented the Budget for 2017-18 for formal approval by the Board. The Budget had been recommended for approval by the Finance & Resources at their meeting on 29.6.17.

The Principal advised that provision had been made within the budget for the £50k loan which the 6th Form College had pre-merger, Furness College had not been made aware of this as part of discussions with funding agencies or the due diligence process. The College had specifically asked for assurances around pre existing loans as part of the merger process and had been assured that there were none. However, to be prudent a contingency has been made within the budget should there be a requirement for this to be repaid at some point in the future.

The Principal referred the Board to the Governor checklist which provides the Board with the clarity around the scrutiny required by Board when approving the budget and to assure them that the budget has been set appropriately.

The budget predicts a slight decrease in income on the previous year which is due to capital grants, however, the underlying position is an increased operating position. Each cost area was discussed in turn with any changes outlined by the Principal.

The aim of the budget is to minimise debt by the repayment of our short term loan but to start to build up our cash reserves.

B/16/394 Resolved: The Board received and approved the Budget for 2016/17.

LEARNER EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

B/16/395 The Vice Chair of the Committee reported on the work undertaken at the recent meeting held on 15 June 2017 and advised that there had been a very informative update at the Committee from the Director of YPL around the interventions which had taken place this year to improve the position on English & maths. In addition the Committee had discussed attendance issues in some areas and the intervention and scrutiny which had taken place in year to improve this.

B/16/396 The Board received and discussed the Learner Experience Committee Update.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE UPDATE

B/16/397 The Vice Chair of the Committee reported on the work undertaken at the recent meeting held on and a summary report was circulated. The Board were updated on the recommendation to approve the continuation of the contracts with CTC and RV Projects for the next academic year. The outcome of the continuation of this college is that there is no risk to the college.

The Board agreed to continue the sub contract arrangements for a further year.

A comprehensive update had been given to the Committee from the HR Manager around the restructure process which had taken place this year with the aim of having a restructured organisation for the merged college by the end of this academic year and also to provide the opportunity to have all staff (with the exception of teaching staff) on the same terms and conditions.

The Committee had also received the outline budget for 2017-18 and recommended this for approval by Board.

B/16/398 The Board received and discussed the Finance & Resources Committee update

AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

B/16/399 The Chair of the Committee reported on the work undertaken at the recent meeting held on and a summary report was circulated with the key points arising from the meeting, this included an update to the Committee from Internal Auditors on the three internal audits which had taken place over the previous term. There were no areas of concern and any recommendations noted are being taken forward by the College and progress will be monitored by the internal auditors.

The Committee had also received the termly Risk Register Update and were updated on any changes to the risk register and also progress against any actions. The SchemA risk register overview was attached for Board members information and further scrutiny.

B/16/400 The Board received and discussed the Audit & Risk Assurance Committee update

CYCLE OF BUSINESS AND CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2017/18

B/16/401 The Acting Clerk informed the Board that the meeting schedule and associated business activities had been kept largely similar to that of the current academic year, although some amendments had been made to incorporate in year suggestions regarding additions to the Cycle of Business.

The schedule of meetings was to the same timescales with the exception of the Finance & Resources Committee which had been agreed by the Committee to be held on a Tuesday evening, rather than a Thursday, so allow for associated reports to be circulated in time for Board.

B/16/402 The Board received and approved the Cycle of Business and Calendar of Meetings for the 2017/18 academic year.

GOVERNOR DEVELOPMENT SESSION

B/16/403 The Board were reminded that there is traditionally a governor development session early in the academic year, for this year there are a number of updates which will require a longer session and it is proposed to hold the development session on a Saturday to allow for greater attendance from Board members but at a mutually convenient date.

B/16/404 The Board received and agreed with the proposal and suggested that the Clerk facilitates a suitable date as early as possible in the academic year. It was further suggested that should a Saturday not be suitable then perhaps a four hour evening session be offered as an alternative.

Action: Clerk to offer suggested dates with a view to setting up as soon as possible in the Autumn Term

APPROVAL OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR THE 2017-18 ACADEMIC YEAR.

B/16/405 In line with the schedule of business the Chair and Vice Chair are traditionally agreed at the last meeting of the academic year. The Chair and Vice Chair raised that they were happy to continue for a further term should there be no further nominations.

The Chair and Vice Chair left the meeting.

B/16/406 There were no further nominations from members of the Board for Chair or Vice Chair and it was approved by the Board for John Butler to continue as Chair for a further year and Trish Kidd to continue as Chair for a further 12 months.

The Chair and Vice Chair rejoined the meeting.

B/16/407 The Chair advised that succession planning would be a focus for the next Search and Governance meeting, perhaps with the possibility of having a shadow Vice Chair to facilitate this.

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

B/16/408 No additional items to the scheduled business were requested.

CONFIDENTIALITY

B/16/409 No items of confidentiality were raised.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

B/16/410 5pm, Thursday 5th October 2017

MINUTES APPROVED

Signed _____ John Butler, Chair

Date _____ Subject to Amendments / No Amendments