

Central Sussex College

Minutes of a meeting of the Board held on 3rd November 2014

Present: Rachel Booles, Anahita Henry, Chris Maidment (Chair), Clive Nicholas, Ryan Sallows, James Sarmecanic, David Scott, Ramesh Shingadia, Sarah Wright.

In Attendance: Sam Brasier (from 8:00 pm) Roger Crossley (Clerk), Andy Forbes, Kim Morton, Clare Wallace and Dean Wynter, Tina Bailey (for minute 2014/15 – 23)

Chris Maidment opened the meeting at 5:00 pm.

2014-15/9 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Clive Behagg and Patrick McHale.

2014-15/10 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

2014-15/11 Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd September 2014

The minutes were agreed as a correct record of the last meeting of the Board. The minutes were signed by the Chair.

2014-15/12 Schedule of decisions

The Clerk introduced the schedule of decisions:

- i The appeal hearing decision regarding the refund of VAT for phase 3 of the Haywards Heath new build has not yet taken place. Kim Morton said that Baker Tilly were originally confident, but this is a frustration of time now and would report the outcome in due course.
- ii all other matters would be raised later in the agenda

Members noted the schedule.

2014-15/13 Appointment of Student members of the Board.

Chris Maidment told Members that a panel consisting of himself, Ryan Sallows and Sarah Wright had interviewed two students who had expressed an interest in joining the Board as the Student Members. The panel had formed the opinion that both of these students could discharge the duties of the office adequately and were therefore recommending to the Board that they be appointed as Members until 31st July 2015' subject to satisfactory references. This was agreed.

The panel further recommended that they be appointed to the Standards Committee, to attend the committee for the first time at the February meeting. This was agreed.

Roger Crossley would contact the students to inform them of the decision and make arrangements for induction.

2014-15/14 Appointment of a Clerk.

Chris Maidment told Members that the panel, set up at the September meeting to search for and interview candidates for the office of Clerk to the Corporation. Chris told Members that the panel was unanimous in recommending the appointment to start work in a month's time after her period of notice had expired and to take office as Clerk on 1st January 2015. Members agreed the appointment.

Kim Morton undertook to complete the arrangements for appointing and Roger Crossley agreed to look after the arrangements for induction.

2014-15/15 Consent Agenda

i Monitoring of Members' ethnicity etc

Proposals contained in papers presented under the consent agenda were agreed without discussion.

2014-15/16 Report on the recent inspection of the College by OfSTED

Sarah Wright gave a Power Point presentation on the recent inspection of the College by OfSTED.

2014-15/17 Recruitment to date

Kim Morton introduced the circulated paper. She drew Member attention to the recruitment for different banding categories of student funding.

Clive Nicholas asked whether the funding which the College would receive for the additional EFA students who had been recruited would be lagged or paid in-year. Kim told the meeting that this had not yet been decided and would depend on the number of students recruited and the timing of the recruitment, as it stood currently this would not be paid in year but positively influence lagged numbers for 2015/16. She said that the outcome would be reported to the Board in due course.

Members noted the report.

2014-15/18 Student Achievement 2013-14

Richard Hailstone introduced a tabled paper. He told Members that the paper showed headline data given to inspectors during the recent OfSTED inspection. He drew attention to the overall success rate, which showed an improving three-year trend.

Richard explained the method by which this information is derived and drew attention to the specific areas where success rates showed a three-year trend of improvement. He explained that despite these improvements, the College's overall achievement rates were below national average in some areas.

Richard led Members through the eighteen tables which showed the data from different perspectives. He gave comparative national averages against each table.

Clive Nicholas asked why the national averages to which Richard referred were not shown in the tables. Richard replied that the national average figures were not published until the spring and that the figures he was using were from 2012-13: he did not wish to mislead Members but undertook to give these figures when they were published. Sarah Wright said that because of the issues to which she had referred in her earlier report, data for 2011-12 and 2012-13 were unreliable. Only when accurate figures for a three-year trend were available could real comparisons be made.

Chris Maidment summarised the decision made: there was an urgent need to produce clean data from which three-year trends could be derived. This should be a priority, alongside the production of measurable targets for improvements in success rates which members could use to judge the effectiveness of action taken to secure improvement.

Members noted the report.

2014-15/19 Report on marketing

Andy Forbes introduced the circulated paper. He reminded Members of his priorities on appointment.

Andy told Members that he felt he had succeeded in his moves to centralise functions and in prioritising profit not turnover and that the other targets had moved a long way in the right direction. He gave examples of how each of the improvements he listed had an impact on the bottom line.

Andy drew attention to the figures for apprentice starts and the improving year on year trends. However, he warned, there would have to be significant improvement in apprentice recruitment if the College were to achieve the funding allocation for Apprenticeships in 2014/15, particularly for Adult Apprentices.

In answer to a question, Andy said that the sales team targets employers rather than individuals and explained the factors in the College's approach which employers find important.

Members noted the report

(Sam Brasier joined the meeting at 8:00 pm)

2014-15/20 Publication of Minutes etc on the College website

Roger Crossley introduced the circulated paper. He told Member that a recent audit report had suggested that the minutes of committees and all circulated papers should be shown on the College website in the interests of transparency. He outlined the legal position (that all items listed by the Information Commissioner as requiring 'publication' need to be available to the public on request but need not necessarily be on the website). He drew attention to the College's Publication Scheme which, he said, needs updating and revision. He would work with Kim Morton on this.

There was discussion on the pros and cons of acceding to the auditor's suggestion. A consensus emerged that the current practice of placing Board agendas and minutes on the website (with items deemed confidential by the Board suitably redacted) should continue.

2014-15/21 Finance report to 30th September 2014

Sam Brasier gave a Power Point presentation on the year end- accounts for 2013-14 and the finance report to 30th September 2014.

Sam then presented the figures for the estimates of income and expenditure for 2014-15. These had been accepted by the Board in July 2014 subject to revision in the autumn. A range of options had been given which depended on achieving the estimated funding income and reducing expenditure. Sam outlined the risks attached to achieving the budget forecast and reminded Members of the two budget options presented in July.

They noted the report.

2014-15/22 Asset realisation

Kim Morton gave a Power Point presentation on progress with realising surplus College assets.

After reminding Members of the key influences and drivers behind the project to realise the full value of the College's surplus assets, she outlined progress.

After discussion, Members noted the report.

(Tina Bailey joined the meeting to present the Health and Safety report)

2014-15/23 Health and Safety report

Tina Bailey introduced the report using a Power Point presentation.

There was discussion on the reduction of three year trend incident and accident information and in days of absence by staff.

Members noted the report.

(Tina Bailey left the meeting)

2014-15/24 Safeguarding position statement and improvement plan

Kim Morton introduced the circulated paper. She said that the papers had been presented to OfSTED inspectors during inspection. Safeguarding had been judged to be grade 2 (good).

Members noted the report.

2014-15/25 Audit Committee report

David Scott introduced the circulated paper. He told Members that management actions had been confirmed on the majority of the reports but some needed further discussion, such as the issue of publication of minutes on the website (minute 2014-15/20 above refers). Other issues to be confirmed include:

- the search for additional Members with recent FE experience at a senior level in FE
- the seeking of references for newer Members.

The Clerk told Members that searches through various organisations which specialising in finding school governors etc had failed to provide potential candidates but that the search would continue. The Clerk would be writing to each new Member within the next two weeks to ask her/him to confirm the name of the two referees s/he wished him to use.

Andrew Forbes introduced discussion on the risk register. He said that Audit Committee minute 2014-15/07 summarised the current position.

Members noted the report.

2014-15/26 Confidential Business.

The Clerk advised that the minutes and papers relating to the report on the OfSTED inspection, the finance report and the report on asset realisation should be kept

confidential. This was agreed.

The meeting ended at 9:00 pm.

signed Chris Maidment (Chair) Date