

Newham Sixth Form College

Corporation

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2018

Present: Gail May (Chair), Joanne Dean, Katharine Young, Shawab Iqbal, Martin Oakeshott, Rayon Walters, Allison Locke, Miklos Sarosi, Eddie Playfair

In attendance: Ray Ferris (Vice Principal), Nick Christoforou (Director of Finance and Resources), Tracy Oko (Director of Student Services), Abena Rodman-Tay (Finance Manager), Paul Baglee (Clerk)

Apologies for absence were received from Jay Nair, Julia Shelton, Wendy Bower and Maisha Rafiq Raina.

1. Declarations of interest

The Principal declared an interested in the process for reviewing the pay, performance and development of senior postholders (min no. 25 refers) and he withdrew from the meeting for this item.

2. Presentation – preparation for Ofsted

Members received a presentation on preparing for an Ofsted inspection of the college.

Members were advised that the current three-year inspection cycle was due to change to a five-year cycle from September 2018 for colleges assessed as “good”. Under the current framework the College was expecting to be inspected by October 2018. This would be a short two-day inspection based on the presumption that the College remained “good”. Inspectors would seek to validate the College’s self-assessment, assess its capacity to improve and ensure that safeguarding was effective.

The inspection would be risk based. The College’s performance data, the implementation of previous inspection recommendations and the quality improvement action plan would be tested. In addition the likely lines of enquiry would focus on maths and English, value-added, stretch and challenge, British values & Prevent and links between members and curriculum areas.

Preparations would focus on developing position papers on the likely lines of enquiry, bringing forward self-assessment timelines and conducting briefings for staff and Corporation members.

Members’ questions (*responses in italics*)

- The Governance & Search Committee has agreed to start the governance self-assessment in August 2018. Does this fit into the College’s revised timelines? *Yes, that aligns to the College’s timetable.*

- How will members be assisted to prepare? *Inspectors need to triangulate data to reach judgements. Members will be provided with aide-memoirs on the lines of enquiry to highlight key performance data and commentaries.*

3. Student Union constitution

Members received and considered the revised the student union constitution.

Decision: members agreed to adopt the revised constitution subject to the minor amendments identified, the removal of paragraph 6.2 and the addition of “Do not” to the start of paragraph 9.1.1.

4. Budget 2018/19 and three year financial forecast

Members received and considered the 2018/19 budget plan and the three year financial forecast which was tabled at the meeting.

Members received an apology for the delay in the receiving the report. The 2018/19 budget setting process had proven to be exceptionally difficult. Balancing income reductions and first loan repayments against the need for capacity for an expected growth in student numbers added a new level of complexity that needed to be carefully managed. To provide the capacity for the anticipated rise in student numbers a deficit budget was proposed, with an undertaking to make further savings to achieve a balanced budget in year. Members were advised of the actions that the College had already taken to make savings of £700k, but this currently left a deficit of £112k.

Members noted that setting a single year deficit budget did not contravene the loan covenants. In this respect the end of year position was the relevant measure. If the College was in deficit for three consecutive years this would contravene the covenants. However, the three year forecast was based on a growth in student numbers that would help the budget return to balance. In 2018/19 the College’s financial health would remain as “good” and was set to return to “outstanding” in 2019/20.

Members’ questions *(response in italics)*

- Could the College receive in-year rather than lagged additional income for increased student numbers? *If the growth in student numbers was greater than 5%, can we make a case for in-year additional income for a maximum of 50 students, but we can’t rely on this.*
- How is the rest of the sector dealing with income reductions if their student numbers are not increasing? *There are a number of potential solutions – severe cuts and mergers; some further education colleges now have £100m turnovers.*

Members thanked the Finance Manager and the Director of Finance and Resources for their work in preparing the budget plan. They acknowledged that there was further work to do to achieve a balanced budget for 2018/19 and on that basis Members agreed to adopt the plan.

Decision: members agreed to adopt the 2018/19 budget and the three-year financial plan.

Action: the link member for finance to given an opportunity to comment and kept up to date with progress.

5. Management accounts

Members received and considered the management accounts to the period April 2018.

Members were advised that the College was on track to achieve an operating surplus of £581k before FRS102 pension charges. Members were also advised that the College was unable to capitalise the match-funded element of GLA grant for the feasibility studies of phase 2 of the campus masterplan. This would mean that these costs would need to be reflected in the income and expenses account. The costs could be subsequently capitalised if planning permission was received.

Decision: members agreed to accept the management accounts

6. Campus masterplan and estates update

Members received and considered an update report on the campus masterplan and estates

Members were advised that the dispute with the main contractor had not significantly moved forward since the last meeting. However, there had been major changes in the company and most of the staff involved in the project had left. A meeting would now take place with the new commercial director on 10 July 2018 and it was hoped they would take a more conciliatory approach.

Decision: Members reaffirmed the strategy set out in the report for resolving the dispute and that the Director of Finance and Resources should have the delegated authority to reach agreement up to the value of the monies set aside (and recorded in the statutory accounts) for this purpose.

Action: the link member for finance to be advised of this position

Members were also advised that the first element of the consultant's work on phase 2 was now complete and an options report would be presented to the next meeting of the Corporation.

Action: options report on phase 2 of the Campus Masterplan to be presented to the next meeting.

Members noted that tenders for the Learner Services Hub had been requested. Works were due to start in the third week in July for completion in late August or early September.

7. Principal's report

a) Student recruitment update

Members were advised that the College's enrolment target was 2361. To date 2503 applicants had been received and 1180 offers had been made both figures higher than last year. The summer induction sessions had been held and attendance was up by 50% on 2017.

b) Draft development plan 2018/19

Members received and noted the draft development plan for 2018/19. This reflected the previously agreed targets in the three-year strategic plan and would be refined on the basis of 2017/18 outcomes.

Action: Prevent and British Value targets to be shown in the summary version of the plan.

c) Thank you

As this was Eddie Playfair's final meeting before he retired as Principal he thanked the members and senior colleagues for their support over the last 10 years. He considered that he was fortunate to work with a highly dedicated Corporation who were committed to the College's values.

Members thanked Eddie for this substantial contribution to the development of the College and for positively affecting the lives of some many young people. They considered that it was a pleasure to serve on the Corporation as they were made to feel so welcome and that there was a true sense of partnership working. Members looked forward to Eddie's continued involvement in the sector and hoped that they would stay connected. Members presented Eddie with a gift to mark his retirement.

8. Development plan 2017/18 update

Members received and accepted the 2017/18 development plan update report.

Decision: members agreed consideration should be given to merging the update report with the data dashboard to reduce repetition.

9. Quality improvement plan update

Members received and noted an update report on the quality improvement action plan.

Members were advised that attendance at maths and English GCSE classes had improved, but that it was still below the College average. Exam attendance also improved this year. Further work was being undertaken to improve Level 2 performance which remained below target.

10. Lesson observation annual report

Members received and accepted the annual report on lesson observations.

Members were advised that 85% of lessons were evaluated as good or better. This was a slight decrease (1%) on 2016/17. However, it was noted the introduction of non-graded observations, which were well received by staff, meant that there the 2017/18 outcomes were not directly comparable to 2016/17.

Members' questions (*responses in italics*)

How will non-graded observations help us understand the quality of teaching and learning? *The pilot non-graded observations have been successful in focusing on developmental areas for individual teachers. We will consider how best to report overall progress – this could highlighting the strengths in teaching areas.*

Action: College to considered how lesson observation outcomes to be reported in the future

11. Annual report on complaints

Members received and accepted the annual report on complaints.

Members were advised that 13 complaints were received in 2017/18, of which five were upheld. This represented a significant decrease from 2018/19 when 23 complaints were received.

Members' question (*response in italics*)

If a complaint is upheld will this be picked up in the departmental self-assessment process? *Yes, complaints are treated as a factor in self-assessment.*

12. Data dashboard: Term 3

Members received and accepted the summer term data dashboard. They noted that some of Term 3 was not yet available.

Members were also provided attendance benchmarking data from an AoC survey conducted in February 2018. This assessed attendance for all students and for English and maths classes specifically. The data showed that the College was above the average on both measures: 92% compared to 88% for all students and 85% compared to 81% for English and maths.

Members were advised that the staff survey had now been carried out and the results would be reported to the October 2018 meeting. The survey was conducted by an external organisation, but the results would not provide benchmarked data against similar organisations.

Members' questions (*response in italics*)

Could benchmarks be applied for all measures? *Other than attainment, benchmark data would not be available for all measures.*

What does "Solvency: Adjusted Current Ratio" (9.1) mean? This is a standard ESFA measure. *We'll ensure that a clear explanation is provided in the glossary in future editions.*

Action: staff survey outcomes to be reported to the next meeting.

Action: final year 1 data dashboard to be presented to the next meeting.

Action: data dashboard to be reviewed for 2018/19, with the aim to keep the reporting fields simple.

13. Review of courses requiring improvement

Members received and noted an update report on courses requiring improvement.

Members were advised that eight of the 12 courses remained on track to improve. English and maths GCSEs were predicted to improve, but not reach the target. Level 2 science was not track to improve and consideration would be given on whether this course should be offered in 2018/19.

14. Travel, tourism and sport update

Members received and considered an update report on travel, tourism and sport.

Members were pleased to learn that travel, tourism and sport courses remained on track to improve. If the results were realised the self-assessment grade would improve to “good”.

15. Self-assessment

Members received and considered a report on extending formal self-assessment processes to non-curriculum areas.

Decision: members agreed that self-assessment and grading should be extended to non-curriculum areas and that the College should establish the means of achieving this by exploring the proposals set out in the report.

16. Corporation compliance calendar 2018/19

Members received and considered the Corporation compliance calendar 2018/19.

Decision: the calendar should be accepted and consideration of the educational character and mission of the college should be scheduled for November 2018.

Action: the brand and reputation link to work with the Assistant Principal Student Support and the Principal to determine how the views of stakeholders on the college’s reputation could be established.

Action: progress to be made on updating the members’ section of the website.

17. Careers strategy

Members received and received and considered the College’s careers strategy.

Members were advised that the strategy set out how the College would achieve its statutory responsibilities. They were advised that effective work on careers guidance was already been undertaken. The Matrix accreditation was in place. The College aimed to achieve a quality standard in careers by December 2019 and to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks by September 2020. Members noted that they would be kept up to date on progress through annual reporting and reports from the employment and enterprise strategy link member.

Members’ questions (*response in italics*)

- What support is available to help with strategy implementation? *We are a member of the Newham Careers Cluster and the Post 16 Careers Forum. We have also purchased external advice and guidance (through a former Matrix assessor) to help develop our internal processes and a Careers Strategy steering group is being established.*
- Can the Gatsby Benchmarks be added as an appendix? *Yes, we can add these as an appendix.*
- How can we use the strength of our advice and guidance as a unique selling point for the College? *We are developing an alumni network and this should help demonstrate the strength of our provision.*

Members thanked the Assistant Principal Student Services for her work on the strategy.

Decision: members agreed that the Careers Strategy should be accepted

Action: the Gatsby Standards to be appended to the strategy.

18. Safeguarding and child protection policy

Members received and considered the updated safeguarding and child protection policy.

Members were advised that minor amendments had been made and agreed with the Chair. It was noted that the policy might need further revision in the autumn term when new statutory guidance was published.

Decision: members agreed to adopt the revised safeguarding policy, subject to minor amendments.

19. Link member reports

Members received and considered a report on link members. They were advised that Terry Paul had resigned as a Member and as the safeguarding link. A report from the health & safety link was tabled at the meeting.

Decision: the health and safety link report should be re-circulated with the papers for the next meeting.

Decision: Rayon Walters was appointed as the safeguarding link.

20. Agenda items for the next meeting

Decision: review of the data dashboard (members to be asked for their views in advance)

Decision: presentation on marketing to boost student recruitment

21. Report of internal audit visit

Decision: on the recommendation of the audit and scrutiny committee, the following internal audit reports were accepted:

- Business continuity planning
- Commercial income and diversification
- GDPR preparedness

22. Review of risk register and risk annual timeline

Decision: on the recommendation of the audit and scrutiny committee the following risk reporting cycle was accepted:

September committee – draft annual risk report and proposed risk register

October Corporation - annual risk report and proposed risk register

November committee – risk register update

February committee – risk register update

June committee – risk register update and policy review (two year cycle – 2019)

July Corporation – policy review (two year cycle - 2019)

23. Review of audit and scrutiny committee terms of reference

Decision: on the recommendation of the audit and scrutiny committee, revised terms of reference for the committee were accepted

24. Review of governance and search committee terms of reference

Decision: on the recommendation of the governance and search committee, revised terms for reference for the committee were accepted, subject to amendments to paragraph 3.4 and 3.6 to reflect that activities related to the Corporation.

25. Process for reviewing the pay and performance of senior postholders

The Principal and college staff withdrew for this item.

Decision: on the recommendation of the governance and search committee, revised process for reviewing the pay, performance and development of senior postholders be adopted and that Miklos Sarosi should fulfil the “other governor” role with the Chair at stage 4 of the process in 2018/19.

26. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2018

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2018 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising:

a) **Decision tracker** (appendix 1)

Members received an update on progress with the decisions and actions agreed at the last meeting.

27. Minutes of the meeting of the governance and search committee held on 21 May 2018

The governors received and noted the minutes of the governance and search committee held on 21 May 2018.

28. Minutes of the audit and scrutiny committee held on 6 June 2018

The governors received and noted the minutes of the audit and scrutiny committee held on 6 June 2018.

29. Meeting dates 2018/19

Autumn Wednesday 10 October 2018 Monday 3 December 2018

Spring Wednesday 13 February 2019 Monday 25 March 2019

Summer Wednesday 22 May 2019 Monday 1 July 2019

All meetings start at 6.30pm