

# QUEEN ELIZABETH SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

## **Minutes of the meeting of the Board of the College Corporation Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

Present: Mr A Teague, Chair  
Mr I Clyde  
Mr T Fisher, Principal  
Mr S Heath  
Mrs J Hillyard  
Mr C Kipling  
Prof L Oglesby  
Mrs J Pan  
Mr S Regan  
Mr D Warman  
Mr A Wilson

Apologies Ms J Ashmore  
Mr A Brown  
Mr J Deane  
Mr K Sharma  
Mr C Wiper

In attendance Mrs T Amarawansa  
Mr M Baker  
Mr S Hargrove  
Mr L Job  
Mr I Waite  
Mr S Dowson, Clerk

### 107/18 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 108/18 Urgent business

Mr Fisher said there were two decisions relating to the proposed second floor extension to the sixties block he wished the Board to consider.

Mr Fisher explained that the decisions were needed now to meet imminent planning deadlines and to avoid any disruption to the college should the building project not be completed in time for the new academic year in September 2019.

### 109/18 Increased capital contribution

Mr Hargrove explained that the project managers, AA Projects, had recommended that an increased capital contribution from the college would improve the chances of receiving a grant from the Capital Improvement Fund (CIF).

The Finance and Resources Committee had already approved an increase from £151,000 to £220,000, which is 10% of the total £2.2 million cost, at their meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> November. AA Projects had subsequently recommended a contribution of between 15% and 20% of the total project cost, or between £330,000 and £440,000.

Mr Hargrove said that the college wished to seek the Board approval for the higher contribution of £440,000.

Mr Wilson **challenged** Mr Hargrove to explain why he thought the higher figure was required.

Mr Hargrove said that the original application, which included a £151,000 capital contribution from the college had, 'missed the mark' by [a score of] 1%. A 15% capital contribution could improve the score sufficiently but 20% should be more certain. £440,000 represented about 10% of the College's cash reserves and was very affordable.

Mr Fisher explained that the college would like to take advantage of any opportunity to improve their chances of securing CIF funding because the College was competing with many others for a limited CIF pot.

The Board **approved** increasing the College's capital contribution to the additional floor above the 60's building to £440,000.

110/18 Design fees 'at risk'.

Mr Fisher explained that in order to meet the planning deadlines and also to avoid possible disruption in September 2019 the College may have to commit £120,000 to design fees now, with no guarantee of either receiving the CIF grant or planning permission.

In reply to a question, Mr Hargrove said that planning permission would last for three years. The design and plans should last for at least five years.

Mr Fisher said that because of the potential future increase in student numbers there was a strong chance that the building work would go ahead anyway using college reserves if CIF funding was not received.

The Board **approved** the commitment of £120,000 now to develop the plans for the additional floor above the 60's building.

111/18 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018 were **agreed** by the Board and **approved** for signing by the Chair.

112/18 Matters arising

There were no matters arising

## 113/18 Governor Training – Subject Quality Review

Mrs Amarawansa led the Governor training. Mrs Amarawansa explained that the new procedure for Subject Quality Reviews would use triangulation methods including.

- A series of **Lesson Observations** for 10 to 15 minutes across each department
- Reviewing **student voice** qualitative feedback
- Reviewing the **assessment process** including student files, schemes of work and evidence of planning
- Reviewing **PDBW** (personal development, behaviour and welfare) procedures

Mrs Amarawansa expanded further;

### Lesson observations

- Lesson observations will be ungraded
- Observations will be in the style of a learning walk
- Strengths and areas for development across the department will be identified

### Student Voice

- Approximately 10 students [per department] will be selected at random
- Students will be asked 10 questions on the following themes; support, feedback on assessments, confidence with exam technique, what they like and how the department can be improved.

### Assessment process

- Ten student files will be selected at random to investigate student handbooks, marking and feedback, rewritten improved answers, student self-evaluation, progress made over time, assessment based on past papers, standardisation of marking and the balance between learning and assessment.

Mrs Amarawansa acknowledged that there would not be many past exam papers for the new A levels.

### PDBW Procedures

- The course leader may present the Scheme of Work and evidence of planning which includes employability skills, equality and diversity, British values, independent learning, good attendance, safeguarding and enrichment opportunities.

Mrs Amarawansa explained the rationale behind the new approach;

- To encourage teaching staff to be experimental in their lessons in order to improve grades
- To support subject areas better by recognising the importance of planning and assessment in achieving good student progress

Mrs Amarawansa explained the Subject Quality Review process and listed the departments to be included in 2018-2019

Mr Heath **challenged** Mrs Amarawansa to explain how the new SQR scheme could be used by Governors and in particular the Curriculum and Standards Committee without any evidence of scoring or metrics.

Mr Fisher replied that there was already enough hard evidence in the form of, for example, exam results and value added. The new SQR process would make best use of both qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Mr Teague **challenged** Mr Fisher to explain how it would be possible to demonstrate that things had improved year on year.

Mr Fisher replied that if the SQR system was successful the hard evidence such as exam results and value added should improve. Also it would be possible to look back and compare the previous SQR assessment each time the cycle was completed.

Prof Oglesby **challenged** Mr Fisher to explain how a judgement could be made in one or two fifteen minute lesson observations and could the observations go beyond 15 minutes if necessary.

Mr Fisher replied that it would not be practical to routinely extend lesson observations beyond 15 minutes because of limited staff resources to carry out the observations. He stated that it was possible to make clear judgements in 15 minutes. Lesson observations were only one part of the new comprehensive SQR system which gave a much greater breadth of vision including student voice, a review of the assessment process and PDBW procedures.

It was **agreed** that once completed the SQR forms for each department would be circulated to all Governors and not just the Curriculum and Standards Committee.

The Board **approved** the proposed SQR procedure.

#### 114/18 Whole College Self-Assessment (WCSA) Report 2018 (draft)

Mr Fisher explained that the aim was to get the WCSA report to Governors as early as possible. Some of the external data had only just been received and any delay was entirely due to this and in no way reflected on Mr Waite who had been exemplary in his handling of his new responsibilities.

Mr Waite said he thought the WCSA Report fairly represented the College. Mr Waite explained that the College had not yet graded itself (Page 2 of the report) because even though an independent external assessment had recently suggested the College should consider a grading of outstanding there were some areas where the college thinks they sit somewhere between outstanding and good.

Professor Oglesby suggested it would be useful to have an external assessment to confirm the college's opinion that Governance is, 'very good'. Mr Fisher agreed and suggested either paying an external assessor, as the College did prior to the last inspection, or arranging for a less formal assessment by colleagues.

Mr Clyde **challenged** Mr Waite to explain why L2 outcomes were 'good' whereas the Student Voice was not as good as those for L3 courses.

Mr Waite explained that the L2 students were mostly Maths and English resits, which students have to do. None of the L2 students had applied to do L2 resits they had to do them. Many of the students are already frustrated by maths and English and there is already a history of struggle. The teachers are pushing hard to ensure the best chance of success and so there is a quite different relationship between student and teacher when compared to A levels.

Mr Job suggested that it would be interesting to seek students' views on their L2 experience after they had passed Maths and English and begun their A level courses.

Mr Waite said it was a tribute to the staff that taught in these circumstances that the L2 results were so good.

The Board **agreed** with Mr Teague's reminder that the Subject Quality Reviews must feed into the WCSA report.

The Board **accepted** the Whole College Self-Assessment Report.

115/18 Whole College Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2018-19: Actions

Mr Job explained that the QIP included an Attendance Action Plan, which had been requested at the previous meeting.

Mr Fisher stressed that the QIP was not a static document and additional actions were constantly added as new areas for improvement were identified.

In answer to a question about a gender pay gap Mr Fisher reassured Governors that there were no cases of male and female staff being paid a different rate for the same job.

The College was continually trying to ensure that there were the same opportunities for male and female staff.

The Board **approved** the Whole College Quality Improvement Plan.

116/18 Strategic Update – Letters from MPs and SFCA updates

Mr Fisher reassured Governors that he continued to maintain pressure on our political representative and leaders over funding.

Government statements about funding continue to be, 'deeply misleading but not untrue'. For example extra funding has been made available for T Levels, but T levels are not yet being taught other than in a small number of pilot institutions. Money had been made available to the Tees Valley but there were, as yet, no plan as to how this money would be distributed. Mr Fisher would ensure the Tees Valley Mayor, who was responsible for allocating the money, was aware of the College and the important contribution it makes to the Tees Valley.

Mr Fisher explained that empirical evidence existed to confirm there is a genuine shortfall in funding. If no more money is made available to Sixth Form Colleges following the 2019 Spending Review then it would be necessary to, 'change the way we do things'.

The Board **accepted** the Strategic Update

#### 117/18 Safeguarding Report

Mr Job explained that the Safeguarding Report was a very important part of what the College did. The College had recently been visited by Joanna Conway, the Local Authority officer responsible for Safeguarding in Education. Mrs Conway had looked at the Single Central Record and the new Voyager System and said she was impressed by what she saw.

Mr Job outlined the training and support given to the different groups identified in the Safeguarding Report. It was reassuring to note that well-ordered lessons make an important contribution to mental stability.

Mr Job explained that many of the incidents in the report are historical and related to things that happened before the students came to QE. Also some students appeared under more than one category. The highest number of entries relate to mental health, which will be a session at the next Staff Development Evening at the end of the month.

In answer to a question, Mr Job said that safeguarding issues are shared with colleagues but Child Protection matters remain confidential.

The Board **accepted** the Safeguarding Report.

#### 119/19 Equality and Diversity Report

Mr Baker said the report aimed to identify gaps in performance for different groups of students. There were good gaps and bad gaps but ultimately there was no bad news. On average, students are making at least the progress expected of them.

Two points were highlighted.

- Disadvantaged students are still doing well but not quite as well as last year.
- Boys are outperforming girls again this year and had performed better at high grades

Mr Baker said that it was pleasing to see that measures taken to improve boys' performance compared to girls had worked. It was now important to ensure that the gap did not widen either way.

Mr Kipling emphasised the importance of identifying groups of students in the Equality and Diversity report when carrying out the Student Voice element of the Subject Quality Review.

The Board **accepted** the Equality and Diversity Report

120/18 Staff Development Report

Mrs Amarawansa explained that the report focused on this academic year. Overall the aim of staff development was to maximise the student learning experience at QE and to help students to improve.

Including support staff in collective staff development in future will help the support staff to appreciate the very wide range of work undertaken by different members of the teaching staff and vice versa.

The Board **accepted** the Staff Development Report

121/18 College Policies – update

Governors were encouraged to access and read the online College Policies and to contact the SMG with any suggestions, comments and/or changes.

122/18 Search and Review Committee Minutes (draft) Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Mr Warman outlined the work of the Search and Review Committee. The Board **accepted** the draft Search and Review committee minutes.

123/18 Finance and Resources Committee Minutes (draft) Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018.

Mr Wilson outlined the work of the Finance and Resources Committee. Mr Wilson reminded the Board that the decisions taken in Urgent Business superseded the draft minutes. The Board **accepted** the draft Finance and Resources committee minutes.

124/18 Audit Committee Minutes (draft) Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Mr Teague congratulated Mr Hargrove on the clean bill of health recorded in the Audit. The Board **accepted** the draft Audit Committee minutes.

125/18 Finance Report to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Mr Hargrove explained that the ESFA's grading of 'good' for the College's financial budget for 2018-19 was due to very small rounding differences. He was confident that the outcome for the year would be 'outstanding' if this year's budget surplus is achieved.

Early figures indicated that the current forecast outturn was on budget despite the pay award being as yet unknown.

The Board **accepted** the Finance Report to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

126/18 Governor Dashboard

Mr Hargrove highlighted the attendance figures to the end of October 2018 and the updated anticipated funded student numbers for the next academic year.

127/18 Governor Quality Improvement Plan and Governor 1:1 Reviews – update

The Clerk thanked all Governors for their contribution over the past year. The Governors 1:1 reviews had confirmed how much Governors appreciated and enjoyed the opportunity of meeting staff and students during Learning Walks. The Clerk asked Governors to consider using the time freed up by removing the May Governors meeting from the annual calendar to find an opportunity to visit the College.

128/18 Confidentiality

There were no confidential items.

129/18 Date of next meeting

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019