

Corporation Board Meeting

Wednesday 8 May 2024

Barnfield College - Boardroom

5pm – 7pm

MINUTES

Attendees:

Governors	Role:	Other Attendees	Role
Phil Thompson	General - Chair of Corporation	Gary Dixon	Deputy Principal West Herts
Gill Worgan	Principal & CEO	Emma Doree	Director of Student Experience
Guy Ainsley	External Governor	Cath Gunn	Principal of Barnfield College
Zoubair Aouam	Student Governor	Sarah Knowles	Deputy Principal
Phil Berry	External Governor	Eamonn McCarroll	Director of Finance
Tony Breslin	External Governor	Tammy Nuthall	Deputy Principal (Barnfield College)
Laura Dawson	External Governor	Amanda Washbrook	Deputy Principal
Wendy Donovan	External Governor	Anne-Marie Kinsella	Clerk to Corporation
Richard Lewis	External Governor		
Shaun Merton arr.17.52	Staff Governor		
Chris Nicholls	External Governor	Apologies	Role:
Martin Sidders	External Governor	Irina Kendix	External Governor
Jason Smith	External Governor	Stuart Ord	External Governor
Paul Thompson	External Governor		
David York	Staff Governor		
Aisha Yusuf arr. 17.11	Student Governor		

Ref Agenda Item

New Governors were welcomed to the Board and introductions were made.

0 OFSTED INSPECTION PRESENTATION

The College Leadership Group (CLG) gave a presentation on the outcome of the recent Ofsted Inspection.

It was noted by the Board that the grades were provisional and subject to moderation.

The College responded to the Board's questions on the intended actions for 'what the college could do better' going forward and asked what action the Board could take to further develop governance to ensure they add value to the College.

The Board congratulated the College on the inspection outcomes, thanked the CLG for the detailed feedback and asked them to pass on the Board's appreciation to all staff.

42/23 1. GENERAL BUSINESS

1.1. Apologies for absence and quoracy

Apologies were noted and accepted, and the meeting was quorate.

All reports had been circulated in advance of the meeting for the Board's consideration.

1.2. Declaration of pecuniary interests

There were no declarations.

1.3. Requests for urgent business

There were no requests for urgent business.

43/23 2. PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (13 March 2024)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record and approved for electronic signature.

2.2. Action from previous Corporation meeting

Ref	Summary of Actions	when
33/23/9	Deferred - Discuss, prioritise, and agree a plan of action to take place at the Corporation meeting on the 8 May 2024. Deferred	June 2024

2.3. Matters Arising not on the agenda.

There were no matters arising not on the agenda.

44/23 3. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

In summary, the majority of students are attending lessons regularly and targeted support is in place to support students where required. Student retention is steady, and most students are attending English and Maths lessons in line with their vocational lessons. Student behaviour is being managed well through a consistently firm and fair approach.

The Barnfield College Phase 2 capital project remains on track for completion in October 2024 and spend to date is in line with the approved budget. Mood boards for furniture, fixtures and equipment were available at the meeting for the Board to view.

The College is participating in research commissioned by the Further Education Commissioner's office to explore the contributory factors that underpin sustained strong financial health in colleges.

The College is leading work in Hertfordshire to improve provision for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

In response to Governors questions the Principal clarified the retention rate for adult learners, which is above the national average but could be negatively impacted by the movement of asylum seekers to different areas of the country by the government. It was confirmed that funding for adult learners was based on recruitment and not retention.

In terms of student behaviour & attitudes, the Board were assured that any student excluded was given support and guidance on next steps, the College works closely with external agencies to support excluded students to prevent them from becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training). The College is currently not required to report exclusions, however going forward this may be introduced across the sector in line with current arrangements in schools. The KPI relating to student exclusions will be further developed in line with emerging issues and any changes in external reporting requirements going forward.

The Board were asked for volunteers for an interview panel. The Director of Finance is retiring in December 2024 and the recruitment and selection process to secure a replacement will commence with immediate effect to accommodate potential notice periods of appointable candidates and to enable a handover with the College's current postholder.

The report was noted.

45/23 4 RESPONSIBILITY & ACCOUNTABILITY

4.1 **Finance Report** (confidential item - *please see part 2 minutes*)

46/23 5 REGULARITY COMPLIANCE

5.1 Accountability Statement

The completion and submission of the annual Accountability Statement is a requirement of funding and is used as a vehicle for meeting the Local Needs Duty introduced in December 2023. It sets out how the College is contributing to skills priorities outlined in Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs).

The annual Accountability Statement 2024 includes reference to all of the national and local skills priorities and also references the College's progress against the previous set of Accountability Statement targets included in last year's Statement (May 2023).

The Statement demonstrated that the College is responding appropriately to national, regional, and local skills priorities through the development of its curriculum and skills provision.

The College was judged to be making a Strong contribution to skills during the recent Ofsted inspection (May 2024).

Strong is the highest judgement grade for this area of work.

The Board commented that the activities outlined in the statement are embedded and that many new courses have been introduced to meet specific skills needs. It was noted that the virtual and immersive training referenced in last year’s statement is now in place for all learners. The Board was pleased with the significant progress made by the College in this aspect but suggested that the progress made could be more explicit in future statements to assist monitoring.

5.2 **Budget 2024-25** – Income Allocations & Key Observations - *(Confidential item – please part 2 minutes)*

47/23 6 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES & REVIEW

6.1 Learning walks

Two learning walks had been rescheduled due to Ofsted. Two further learning walks are planned for May. The Board were actively encouraged to arrange learning walks to fully understand the College and what it offers. The Board considered the benefits of training to help them interpret or assess the quality of education when visiting the College.

6.2 Update on Corporation Membership

The Board noted the membership, and the new governors thanked the Corporation and College for a thorough induction.

48/23 7 URGENT BUSINESS

None

49/23 8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12 June 2024, 5pm, Watford

Meeting closed: 6.50pm

Minutes approved by the Corporation on the 12 June 2024

Ref	Summary of Actions	when
43/23/2.2	Deferred – 33/23/9 - Discuss, prioritise, and agree a plan of action to take place at the Corporation meeting on the 12 June 2024	12 June 24

Ref	Summary of Decisions
	There were no decisions recorded.