

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Corporation held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2013, 5.45pm,  
The Conference Room, Prior Pursglove College**

**Present:** Dr P Gavens (Chair), Mr M Bell, Mrs J Burton, Miss R Bramley, Mrs C Craster, Mr C Groves, Mr M Harvey, Mr J Kay, Dr G Lofthouse, Mr K Mitchell, Mr J Parkins, Dr M Simpson, Cllr P Spencer, Mrs L White

**In Attendance:** Mrs E Grove (Clerk), Mr R Grierson (Vice Principal), Mr T Stephenson (Assistant Principal, Finance)

Meeting quorate

94% attendance

1) **Apologies for Absence**

Mr M Loftus

2) **New Governor Appointments**

The proposal from the Search and Governance Committee was discussed. It was agreed to appoint Mrs White as a Parent Governor for a period of four years.

The appointment of Mr Dodds and Mr Downs as Foundation or Independent Governors for a period of four years each was discussed. It was agreed that they should be appointed as independent governors in the first instance. Should the Foundation put them forward as its nominees at its meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> November, they should then fill the Foundation Governor vacancies so releasing the two Independent governor places. Mr Downs was appointed to the Finance Committee.

The appointment of Mrs Crombie as an Independent Governor for four years with membership of the Personnel and Remuneration Committee was considered and agreed.

It was further agreed that committee membership for Mrs White and Mr Dodds should be determined during their induction.

Mrs White joined the meeting at 5.50pm and was welcomed by Dr Gavens.

3) **Minutes of the Meeting of Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2013**

The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record.

4) **Matters Arising and Progress on outstanding action points**

4.1) Matters Arising: Governors asked when they would have access to the portal and emails. Mrs Grove explained that the site had been established and that some governors had been asked to trial its use. Access would be given to all governors over the next two weeks. **Action.** Governors also asked to be given access to the WiFi network so that they could pick up documents within college. **Action**

4.2) Progress on outstanding action points: Progress was discussed.

5) **Student Union Report**

Miss Bramley took governors through the report. The success of the Pirate Day as part of new student induction was noted. Governors asked if delays with the building construction were causing any problems for students. Miss Bramley advised that there were no significant issues for students. Mr Parkins told governors about the SU campaign in relation to A level reform. Governors asked for this to be an item on a future agenda as they were particularly keen to hear student views on the matter. **Action.**

6) **Principal's Report/Examination Results**

Mrs Burton took governors through a slide presentation which included the latest enrolment figures. It was noted that the first census date was due and that numbers were still subject to minor change. The lower number of enrolments was discussed.

Mrs Burton was questioned about the actions being taken to address the under enrolment. The potential impact on future years funding was discussed. It was noted that Foundation Learning and Adult recruitment continued throughout the year. Retention was higher than at this time last year, particularly at AS level. This was attributed to the new enrolment system and the even greater focus on ensuring that students were happy with their courses.

The document 'Governors' Guide to Understanding our Results 2013', which had been circulated in advance of the meeting was discussed.

The downward trend in results was noted and considerable disappointment expressed. Mrs Burton was questioned about the reasons. Governors understood that it was a complex picture and they recognised that the new management structure and new systems needed time to bed in. The additional pressure of staff reductions had also had an impact.

Mrs Burton took governors through the strategies that had been put in place over the past year. The impact of these was discussed. It was noted that some had not been successful and Mrs Burton was challenged as to why this was the case. It was recognised that the impact of the more rigorous performance management system, increased training in teaching and learning, and robust Faculty Quality Improvement Plans (FQIPs) would not be seen immediately.

Governors questioned Mrs Burton about staff morale. The impact of an additional two hours of teaching per week and the support being put in place was considered.

Mr Grierson gave a slide presentation showing the results in more detail. These were discussed. The outstanding BTEC results were discussed.

The analysis of G scores was explained and discussed. Governors questioned Mr Grierson about the numbers of students enrolled on BTECs. They queried the impact on student progression to university and a debate followed.

Governors questioned Mr Grierson about an apparent discrepancy in the BTEC analysis. He explained that the ICT results were not included because they are technically not BTEC qualifications. Governors asked Mr Grierson to redo the report to clarify this area of confusion, and for it to be circulated. **Action.**

Governors asked for a report on the progression of students doing BTECs to be provided as soon as possible and in future years. **Action**

Discussion moved on to the strategies being put in place to improve results. A more rigorous Initial Advice and Guidance (IAG) system had been introduced and stricter entry criteria were being applied on some courses. Students with low G scores had been guided on to BTEC courses which were more suited to their prior achievements.

The impact of the new initial assessment system and the data drawn from it was outlined and discussed.

Students were speaking favourably about the new pastoral system.

The ALPs scores were discussed. Mrs Burton and Mr Grierson were challenged about the strategies that would be needed to return the college to a 45% achievement in high grades.

Debate returned to the equivalence of A levels and BTECS, how many subjects a student could study and progression routes. Governors asked if students with a lower G score could still take four subjects. It was confirmed that they could if it was in their best interests. Further discussion ensued.

Governors confirmed that the college supported widening participation and wished to continue in this direction but it was essential that students followed the most suitable course for them to be able to succeed.

Governors asked for some work to be undertaken on G scores in previous years to try and establish trends for future years' reporting and to discover the extent to which the profile of students entering the college had changed over recent years. **Action.**

Governors questioned Mrs Burton about the external perception of the college and what was being done to inform people about the changes to the college's approach to

enrolment. Mrs Burton advised that she had spoken with School Heads and they understood the methodology.

Further discussion took place. Governors stressed the need to improve results including the number of higher grades with greater stretch and challenge. Mr Grierson informed governors that all students had an Individualised Learning Plan (ILP) available online. Each Faculty had a rigorous training plan in place. It was agreed that these should be taken to the Standards and Strategy Committee and reported back to Corporation.

**Action**

Miss Bramley and Mr Parkins left the meeting at 7.30pm

Governors asked for a summary of key actions being undertaken to improve results to be drawn up including strategies to increase the number of higher grades **Action**

Dr Gavens reminded governors that the College self-assessment validation was taking place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October. A number of governors were taking part and if any more wished to do so they were asked to let Mrs Grove know. **Action**

Dr Gavens also drew attention to the series of governor development events which had been drawn up in response to the recent training and development survey and with the specific aim of extending governors knowledge about the exam results and strategies for improvement, teaching and learning, the curriculum, and the key issues facing Faculties and how they are being addressed. Governors were asked to let Mrs Grove know which of the events they could attend. **Action**

7) **Reports from Committees/Chairs**

7.1) Standards and Strategy, Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013: Dr Simpson spoke to the report. He outlined the discussion which had taken place in respect of Headline Targets for 2013-14. It was agreed that the underlying principle was that headline targets should at least meet the national average. The proposed 2013-14 targets were approved.

7.2) Finance, Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2013

Dr Gavens spoke to the report and advised that the July and August Monthly Reports had been discussed by the committee. The reports were taken as read. The September Report was tabled. Mr Stephenson reported that there were no significant matters to bring to the attention of governors. Dr Gavens asked governors to bring any issues back to the next meeting.

7.3) Search and Governance, Monday 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013: Mr Groves spoke to the report, outlining the results of the new governor and development surveys.

7.4) Buildings and Estates, Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013: Dr Lofthouse spoke to the report and provided an update on progress with the Student Services Capital Project. The reasons for the delay in completion were outlined.

8) **Capital Projects**

The matter had been covered under agenda item 7.4 above.

9) **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

This was confirmed as Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2013, 6.00pm with a 5.00 pm governor development session on 'lesson observations and what makes a lesson grade 1'.

10) **Publication of Documents**

10.1) Review of 2012-13 Confidential Documents: The proposals on publication as set out in the accompanying were document were accepted.

10.2) Publication of Meeting Documents: It was agreed to publish all documents except those in draft ie the exam results, and the Monthly Reports which are published alongside the annual accounts.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.