

Tuesday 22nd January 2019, 5.30pm

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Mr C Garvey, foundation governor
Fr G O'Shaughnessy, foundation governor
Ms S Jones, co-opted governor
Ms P Rowe, co-opted governor
Mr S Ebele, foundation governor
Miss C Ezekwe, foundation governor (from 6.46pm)
Mrs S Flannery, Principal
Mr G Thompson, Associate Principal

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr M Belfour, Foundation Governor, Vice Chair of Governors
Mrs E Lewis, Clerk to the Governors
Mr A Takyi, Director of Business Studies Faculty (items 1 – 4)

Ms Rowe was in the chair and opened the meeting at 5.32pm. It was quorate throughout

1. **Opening Prayer**
2. **Apologies:** Mr R Vianello, Mrs B Meier, Mrs K Taylor, Miss C Ezekwe (for late arrival)
3. **Welcome and introductions:** Mr M Belfour, Mr Takyi
4. **Mr Aaron Takyi, Head of Business Academy:** Mr Takyi introduced himself and gave an overview of the Business Studies Department. Mrs Flannery explained that the department had become a fifth faculty directed by Mr Takyi in recognition of the size of the department which had a cohort of 377 equating to about one third of the total student population. The committee acknowledged the benefit of Mr Takyi's experience as a practising examiner.
Mr Takyi explained the departmental staff structure and described the range of qualifications and courses being delivered at three levels. He analysed headline performance statistics for 2017 – 18 and outlined the priority improvement targets. Mr Takyi described the departmental aspirational ethos underpinning teaching and learning; the commitment to encouraging a growth mind-set; determination to driving achievement up and reflecting the college and British values. He discussed the techniques used to add value through tracking and monitoring including use of the *eStudentTracker* dashboard. It was noted that enrichment activities were a key motivator for students - the department offered a wide programme including Young Enterprise; revision conferences; alumni role models and interactive employability workshops.

Ms Rowe referenced the learner voice summary which would be discussed later on the agenda and discussed with Mr Takyi and Mr Thompson how feedback was used to inform improvement in the business studies department. Mr Takyi said he welcomed the opportunity to explore what was working well and what strategies were required to motivate and encourage students. He advised the committee that the introduction of A

Level student representatives had been successful in improving the effectiveness of student feedback.

Mr Garvey commended the involvement of former students as role models and applauded Mr Takyi's summary of the work of the Business faculty which supported governors' understanding of the curriculum.

Mr Ebele commented on the growth of the department and discussed with Mr Takyi what attracted students to the courses. Mr Takyi referred to the focus on retention and progress which began with a two week induction programme. He emphasised the importance of motivational rapport between students and staff.

Fr O'Shaughnessy recalled that students who took part in the focus group in July 2018 had described the value of feeling that someone was there for them which he felt reflected the ethos of the college.

Mrs Flannery said that the Business staff team had begun to stabilise after a period of several long term absences.

Mr Takyi was thanked for his presentation which the committee was agreed had been a valuable insight. Ms Rowe would be the link governor for the department.

Mr Takyi left the meeting at 6.10pm

5. **Election of Chair(s) / Vice Chair:** With the Clerk in the chair, the committee attended to the election of a chair which was due to have been held at the previous meeting. Ms Rowe was nominated and unanimously elected unopposed as Chair of the Committee. Mr Garvey was nominated and unanimously elected unopposed as Vice Chair of the Committee.

It was agreed that the term of office of both would be two years backdated to take effect from September 20th 2018.

6. **Declarations of Interests:** there were none
7. **Minutes of previous meeting, 20th September 2018:** The minutes had been previously circulated and also included in the papers for the meeting. They were agreed to be a true and accurate record and were duly signed by Ms Rowe.

7.1. **Matters Arising** there were none that were not covered by the items on the agenda

7.2. Actions to be reviewed:

- 7.2.1. **Self-Assessment – governance:** A collation of six responses had been included in the papers. The summary noted that attendance at full Board meetings, which had been a target for improvement, had averaged 68% compared with 56% the previous year.

It was agreed that the process of reviewing the effectiveness of governance was a target for development. It was resolved that self-assessment should start earlier in the calendar year to align with the college process which began in the latter part of the summer term. It was recommended that each committee should undertake a practical activity to evaluate its impact early in the final meeting of the academic year during which there would be consideration / identification of what the next priorities for focus might be. A forward looking discussion honing in on a task or area which would build understanding and support constructive challenge.

Mr Garvey said that over the previous five years or so governors had developed their understanding and knowledge of key performance indicators such as college finances, student recruitment and value added progress and were now

much better equipped to assess where the college was.

Skills Audit: The committee noted a summary of ten returns presented as a RAG rated collation of the skills areas of members of the governing body. This was confirmed to show a good spread and range of skills, knowledge and experience across the governing body. Governors had highlighted a need for HR expertise in the self-assessment survey. The skills of two new foundation governors had not been included but were noted to include law; business & life coaching; youth engagement; marketing and the management of a significant corporate budget.

7.2.2. **Governors Training plan for 2018 – 19.** It was agreed that training and preparation to support the roll out of the link governor initiative was required.

ACTION: Clerk to work with senior management team to compile a protocol to underpin training.

8. Quality Improvement and Outcomes:

- 8.1. SCIF¹ project: Mr Thompson explained that most of the quality improvement was being done via the SCIF project which would feed into the Quality Improvement Plan (QUIP). He recapped the objectives and methodology of the project and reported activity and progress against the three key work streams set out in the “SCIF Progress” document which had been included in the papers for the meeting.

Ms Rowe endorsed the value and range of the project. Mr Ebele confirmed that the activities were in-line with the bid. Ms Rowe acknowledged that the majority of the money had to be spent by the end of March and clarified the timeframe for testing the success of the activities. Mr Thompson explained that whilst the outcomes measured by exam results would be seen from the summer exam results the next measure point would be the Easter internal end of term exams when the impact would start to be evident. He confirmed that reporting on outcomes was a requirement of the funding and may be taken into account if further bids were made to the fund.

Mr Ebele sought further understanding of the “HOW2” staff development resources. Mr Thompson described the diagnostic, electronic resource / tool and the range of topics available and specifically how step by step guides would be used to support development / improvement linked to feedback to a teacher following a lesson observation.

Fr O’Shaughnessy reflected on the impact on attendance and punctuality arising from the new timetable and asked whether there was any evidence of improvement as a result of investment in an Attendance Officer as part of this project. Mr Thompson explained that the new Attendance Officer had only taken up his post at the beginning of the current term and the direct impact would be evaluated in due course. In conjunction with the role the texting facility would also be evaluated. He commented that there had not been the usual dip in attendance since Christmas. Mr Belfour asked whether the appointment of an Attendance Officer would continue once the funding for the post ended in October and was assured that this would be appraised. Mrs Flannery discussed the challenge of motivating BTEC students to attend lessons that were of value and engage with teaching. Mr Garvey reflected on how EMA had, in the past, been a factor in achieving a higher level of attendance and it was acknowledged that the percentage of students in receipt of the current bursary allowance was lower.

¹ Strategic College Improvement Fund

[Miss Ezekwe joined the meeting at 6.46pm]

8.2. Quality Improvement Plan 2018 – 19 (QUIP): Mr Thompson introduced the progress monitoring report which had been included in the papers for the meeting and explained how the outcomes related to the SCIF project. The plan was ordered under the four key priorities and was RAG rated. Progress was reviewed against each identified risk.

2.3: (Amber risk; amber progress). The committee was advised by Mr Thompson on changes to the curriculum in light of T level reform. He outlined the pilot being undertaken in the college. He described the scheme of extended 9-week work experience and challenges of finding placements with willing and suitable employers. The committee was advised of the appointment of a work placement co-ordinator. It would be likely that some reciprocal placements with other institutions would be arranged.

Ms Jones asked whether there were specific things to be done and suggested that governors in corporate organisations may be able to help if they were clear on what was needed to provide placements. Mrs Flannery observed some of the reservations large corporates had expressed about participating including safety and lack of technical experience along with the extended length of the placements.

Fr O'Shaughnessy enquired about the impact for tutors monitoring the progress of their students. *iPad* tablets would be provided for students to help communication / liaison with their teachers to support the monitoring of progress. Ms Jones suggested tapping in to corporate social responsibility by emphasising the social value of the placements. Miss Ezekwe said it might accord with the social mobility angle of corporate responsibility. Ms Jones would explore whether a connection she had with a charity and the corporation of London might yield opportunity.

Mr Thompson reported that Ms Rowe had introduced the college to link opportunities for work experience with the Sir Robert McAlpine construction company at the Battersea Power Station site although they had been unaware of the T Level programme.

In response to Ms Rowe, Mr Thompson explained how the students involved in the pilot and confirmed that there would be an interview process with the company / institution providing the work experience.

There would be a further report at the next meeting of the committee.

2.4: (Red risk; amber progress): Mrs Flannery reported on the re-booting of the marketing strategy. She explained how the delayed Open Day had provided an opportunity to secure the services of a digital marketing company and described the features of the campaign which were beginning to have an impact on recruitment of student applicants. She announced that a high level marketing manager had been engaged who would work with the acting manager one day a week to revitalise the campaign and marketing plan. Mrs Flannery reported that the recruitment challenge nevertheless remained serious due to the current demographic downturn. Mr Ebele asked what range of feedback was being obtained for the various campaigns and Mrs Flannery confirmed that analytics were being reviewed during conference calls with the digital company. Mr Ebele asked whether the responses were giving any insight in to the sentiments of prospective applicants. Mrs Flannery was confident that the digital marketing company had a good handle on what is working and gave an example of how the level of hits on particular short film clips showed which ones were popular.

Mr Thompson added that the digital innovation strategy would play a part in ensuring the College remains an attractive proposition for prospective students.

The progress report on key risks / priorities from the QUIP 2018 – 19 was accepted.

- 8.3. London Sixth Form Partnership (LSFP): Mr Thompson introduced a report included in the papers for the meeting which recorded busy engagement in ongoing partnership undertakings across the various teaching and cross-college support groups to date. He described the impact of the activities on standards across the college. Ms Rowe and the Clerk were regularly attendees of the Governance Group, the second meeting of the current year was due to take place later in the week. Mrs Town, Teaching Staff Governor, had also participated in the governance group. The current focus was on self-assessment of the effectiveness of governance.
- Miss Ezekwe wondered whether the LSFP might support the finding of work placements being sought for the T Level students, mindful of the considerable commuting distances between colleges.
9. **Student Experience / Learner Voice Survey:** Learner Voice had been deferred from previous meeting. Mr Thompson introduced the summary report which had been included in the papers for the meeting. He affirmed that the Learner Voice survey was a useful and informative exercise used to inform course planning for the following year. The overall summary and responses were explained and discussed noting improvements, strengths and weaknesses and the correlation with exam outcomes. Mr Thompson described how subject feedback was followed up through the Heads of Faculty and gave examples of actions that had been taken.
- Mr Garvey noted the extent of the survey and the meaningful number of students who had responded.
- Ms Rowe enquired about the frequency of seeking views and heard that the Learner Voice survey took place at the end of course / end of year. Other methods of gathering feedback were noted to be a student centred survey in December using more open questions generated by the students; a “you said, we did” review to which departments would respond and focus groups. The use of student representatives to feed back in their departments was being successfully developed in many areas.
10. **Digital learning Innovation Strategy:** A paper “SFX’s Digital Innovation Vision Proposal (Overview for Staff) had been included in the papers for the meeting. At the meeting of the full Governing Body on 6th December 2018, Mr Ebele had requested more information and governors had asked the committee to review the strategy. Mr Thompson introduced the strategy which was being developed in response to an assessment that the embedding of digital innovation in teaching and learning needed revitalising to include and embrace mobile technologies; improve accessibility, mobility and engagement of staff and students with technology in classrooms.
- Mr Thompson outlined the proposal to use the Apple Distinguished School (ADS) framework as the basis of the digital innovation vision for the college. The two year roll out would widen the use of *iPad* tablet devices across the college over two years until all students had the use of one with which to use particular “apps”. He explained that the digital innovation strategy is a listed activity under target 2, improvement of student attendance and punctuality, of the SCIF progress workflow plan and the fund would provide some of the funding. He explained and described the association with Apple and how more platforms would be opened up beyond and access broadened beyond those of Google Classroom.
- Mrs Flannery described the beneficial impact on the work load of teaching staff and described how the digital technology had been successfully implemented in other

institutions.

Mr Thompson linked the proposal to the “good” inspection² judgement of Teaching, Learning and Assessment stressing that the strategy would be a supporting factor in further improvement towards outstanding.

Ms Rowe noted that the structure introduced two new associated staff roles. Mr Belford enquired how the *iPads* would be tracked. Mr Thompson explained how this would be the responsibility of the procurement company to manage. The committee discussed how access on the devices would be restricted and controlled.

Noting the implementation timeline, Ms Rowe said that the committee looked forward to hearing about progress with the project.

11. Governance:

11.1. Review of and determination of review cycle for “Arrangements for obtaining the views of staff and students on the preservation and development of the educational character and mission of the institution and the oversight of its activities” – published as required under article 5 (2) (b): The published document (included in the papers for the meeting) had been extensively reviewed in March 2018 but a review cycle had not been agreed.

It was agreed that a formal review every two years would be appropriate and would, therefore, take place in 2020.

At the suggestion of Mr Ebele, it was agreed that the current statement should have a check-over in the interim year.

ACTION: The statement would be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the committee for a check-over. The Clerk to update the statement to show it would be formally reviewed every two years

12. **Effectiveness of committee:** Ms Rowe led a review of meeting, reflecting on the good turnout and participation. The agenda items and discussions had supported the focus on teaching and learning.

It was agreed that another focus group session between governors and students would be valuable and the next cohort would be drawn from those following a BTEC / UAL course.

ACTION: The Clerk to liaise with Mrs Flannery to set up a session to be held between this meeting and the next.

13. **Risk Management:** The committee discussed whether any new risks or modifications to risks on the register had been identified during the course of the meeting. Funding and recruitment being at the top of the register, strategies put in place to boost student applications were reviewed. Miss Ezekwe asked how much traction might be expected to be seen compared to the traditional methods of marketing the college. It was accepted that it was too early in the campaign to assess the impact but it would be closely monitored for impact.

14. Any Other Business:

14.1. Mr Garvey endorsed the effectiveness of the meeting. He requested an update from Mrs Flannery and Mr Thompson on academic progress at the next meeting of the full Governing Body.

Mrs Flannery said that Mr Bouchaara, Head of House and Head of Economics, was prepared to attend the next full Board meeting to give a presentation on his engagement with the City in the context of developing employability and preparing students for the workplace.

ACTION: Clerk for agenda of full Board meeting on 19th March 2019.

² OfSTED inspection (January 2018)

14.2. Mrs Flannery recommended that the summer term agenda should include a discussion on the new inspection framework which had a shift towards the quality of education.

15. **Date of next meeting:** Wednesday 22nd May 2019

The meeting ended at 7.35pm

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____

Membership:

Ms P Rowe, Chair

Mr C Garvey, Vice-Chair

Mrs S Flannery

Mr G Thompson

Ms C Ezekwe

Mr R Vianello

Fr G O'Shaughnessy

Mr S Ebele

Mrs K Taylor

Mrs B Meier

Ms S Jones