



**MINUTES OF THE TRC
FULL CORPORATION MEETING**

THURSDAY 15 DECEMBER 2016

PRESENT

Mr P Jagger MBE (Chair); Mr R Gray; Dr P R Williams; Mrs A Todd; Mr T Mulroy; Mr T Grice; Mr R Leith; Ms B Reynolds

In Attendance:

Mr M Patterson, Vice Principal Finance & Resources; Mr T Dowling, Vice Principal Teaching & Learning; Mrs S Martin, Clerk

APOLOGIES

16.120 Apologies were received from Ms M Allen; Mr M Chaudhary; Ms J Collier; Mr J Ellis; Mr S Kirk and Cllr D Roche

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

16.121 Members were reminded of the need to declare any interests and reserved the right to declare an interest at any stage of the meeting. There were no declarations made.

MINUTES

16.122 The Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 December 2016 were agreed as a true and accurate record and were signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING

16.123 The Corporation received a list of actions arising from previous meetings and members noted that items were either complete or ongoing.

ANNUAL COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT

16.124 The SAR was presented to the Corporation for approval. The Principal provided an overview of the report explaining that, whilst the overall effectiveness of the college is judged to be 'good' based on performance during the previous three years, due to a dip in some of the outcomes for 2016, the following areas have been self-assessed as requiring improvement on the basis of 2015-16 results:

- Effectiveness of leadership and management
- Quality of teaching, Learning and assessment
- Outcomes for learners

The Principal confirmed these were the final, externally validated grades and also drew attention to the departmental grades. He particularly drew attention to the -0.15 for A-Level value added as in need of improvement.

Members discussed the report, noting any areas for improvement highlighted by the Principal. In response to concerns raised by members, the Principal provided details of the ongoing issues regarding Religious Studies and reassured members that all departments have action plans in place to produce improvement.

RESOLVED 16.124 to approve the Self-Assessment report 2016/17

GOVERNANCE AND SEARCH COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2016

16.125 The draft, unconfirmed minutes of the Governance and Search Committee were presented to the Corporation and recommendations noted.

The Chair referred to item 16.21 of the draft committee minutes (17 October 2016) in which a request to amend the wording of the previous minutes (21 June 2016) had been agreed. The Chair stated that the amendment sought to achieve an outcome that is not in accordance with the practice for appointing Foundation members to the Corporation. The Chair acknowledged that ongoing discussions on the matter need to be fully resolved but, at present, actual practice is that the Foundation make a nomination for any new member as and when required which then have to be approved by the Corporation. The Chair made a request for any documentation available that the Foundation can present to prove otherwise. Furthermore, the Chair explained that such alteration to the minutes of 21 June 2016 provide an inaccurate representation of what was actually agreed during that meeting.

In view of the above the Chair requested one of the following resolutions to be agreed:

- To return the minutes to the Governance and Search Committee for further discussion and amendment.
- To agree the amendment as incorrect with immediate effect.

Speaking as a foundation member, Mr T Grice stated that the Foundation do hold the view that they have the right of appointment for new Foundation members, with the endorsement of as opposed to approval of the Corporation.

RESOLVED 16.125 to return the Governance and Search Committee minutes to the Committee for further discussion and amendment.

Mrs A Todd arrived at 6pm during this item.

Code of Governance compliance document

16.126 Compliance with the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges had been reviewed by the committee and a document prepared to provide a narrative overview of TRC's compliance with the code. The committee had noted the required actions to be undertaken by the Clerk as a result of the review and recommended the document for approval at a meeting of the full corporation.

RESOLVED 16.126 to approve the document as an overview of TRC's compliance with the Code of Governance for English Colleges.

Governor attendance target 2016/17

16.127 The Committee had reviewed governor attendance for 2015/16 and recommended the target for 2016/17 be set at 80%.

The Chair suggested that whilst the target for 2016/17 should remain at 80%, a more aspirational target should be considered for 2017/18.

RESOLVED 16.127 that the attendance target for 2016/17 be set at 80%

STUDENT GOVERNOR APPOINTMENTS

16.128 The Clerk confirmed there were five applications for the two student governor vacancies and all were invited for interview. The interviews were undertaken by Karen Robinson, Administration Manager – Staff and Student Support along with Sue Martin, Clerk to the Corporation. Three of the students attended their interview and after successful interviews two were selected for recommendation:

- Ms Bryony Reynolds
- Mr Ricky Leith

Both students are in their first year of studies with the potential to be in post until July 2018.

Members of the Governance and Search Committee were informed of the outcome but due to there being no planned committee meeting until February 2017 it was agreed that the recommendation for approval should be included on the agenda for the December Corporation meeting.

Having undertaken the welcome and introductions earlier in the meeting, members were asked to approve the recommendation to appoint Ms B Reynolds and Mr R Leith as the new student governors.

RESOLVED: 16.128 to approve the appointment of Ms B Reynolds and Mr R Leith as student governors.

HIGH GRADES – FOLLOW UP REPORT

16.129 As requested by members during a previous meeting, the Principal provided a detailed report on high grade performance following on from the 2016 exam results. This included the following:

- Four year trend analysis alongside the sixth form college average for AS Level, A2 Level, BTEC Cert and BTEC SD.
- AS Level Four year trend analysis of actual vs expected high grade performance showing a value added of +2.9 for 2015/16.
- AS Level performance by prior attainment showing that students in each prior attainment band have been securing the % high grades expected and more.
- This was compared against the A-Level results with explanation that the most able students generally secure the high grades expected. But students in each prior attainment band below a GCSE average of 6.4 have not been securing the % high grades expected, with the impact of this then showing on value added performance.

The Principal provided a thorough explanation of the report content and explained that, as a result of the work undertaken, the TRC Stretch and Challenge Policy had been produced. This policy considers 'What is inhibiting our students from achieving more?' and is focused on 7 key issues, looking at the theory behind each of them before considering practice at TRC in relation to each issue.

The policy then considers a variety of working practices to help provide stretch and challenge e.g. teaching and learning strategies and the language needed to foster ambition, along with a self-reflection tool for building challenge into lessons.

The VP T&L added that stretch and challenge should be applied throughout college and isn't concerned solely with the achievement of high grades and that the next staff training day will focus on how to develop independent learning amongst students, including the further development of independent learning materials with teacher follow up to ensure students continue learning outside of the classroom.

The key points discussed are as follows:

- Ms B Reynolds suggested that some difficulty may arise in subjects that are unfamiliar to students i.e. those they have not studied at GCSE, along with the realisation of an increased level of expectation at A-Level which may be a demotivating factor that impacts on individual outcomes. The Chair acknowledged that this was an important point whilst recognising that it was likely to be an issue that arises each year.
- Mr R Leith raised concern about examples of teacher absence and the impact this may have on outcomes. The Principal agreed that this can have an impact, explaining that cover for lessons is provided wherever possible – and always in the case of an extended absence- and work should always be set in any case of absence. The Chair requested that the Principal follow up particular concerns raised.
- Looking at the contextual value-added charts Mr T Grice questioned the statistical significance of the data when converting a low percentage of those that have failed in a particular prior attainment band into actual student numbers where this may only be a couple of students. The Principal explained that although the actual numbers may be low, it is significant as these are not the students you would normally expect to fail. The Chair commented that in driving for improvement, it is important that the statistics are recognised.
- Referring to some of the courses identified within the report that haven't met the high grade outcomes expected in 2016, Mr R Gray expressed his concern that some of these were ones where this had been the case for more than one year. The Principal suggested this may have something to do with the general national focus on STEM subjects encouraging some students to choose science subjects that may not be their first strength. Mr R Gray felt that more consideration should be given to this at the point of entry to TRC to focus on the strengths of each student when applying for courses. The Principal pointed out that we had successively put up our A level Science entry requirements from CC in Science and C in Maths to BB and B, but that some colleges were additionally specifying GCSE average points scores and that this was something we might need to employ more.

VALUE ADDED DATA

16.130 The value-added data provided and explained by the Principal came from three sources:

- The Nick Allen Six Dimensions Data reports (A/AS and BTEC) which give contextualised performance on several measures including success rates and high grades.
- ALIS – visual information on value added data for students who complete the course in those schools and colleges subscribing to ALIS.

- Level 3 Value-added data – the official data comprising the results of all students who completed their courses at schools and colleges in England.

The Chair questioned whether there was stability within the staffing structure to improve on the negative value added scores during 2016/17. The Principal confirmed that there is stability at present in all subjects except for **one** where there is currently long-term staff absence. The Principal commented further on the -1.07 score for Music, explaining that the course has a small number of students and consequently this can have a disproportionate impact on the statistics. More detail was then provided about the problems faced and the measures in place for improvement.

Mr R Leith stated that during induction there could be a tendency for various well-intentioned reasons to encourage individuals to enrol onto subjects that may not in fact be the most suitable for them, suggesting that this could have an impact on the value added score because they don't achieve their full potential. The Principal agreed that chosen subjects do have to be the best fit for individual students - e.g. advice given on the basis of university entry requirements for a desired degree course identified by the student always needed to be backed up by that student's interest and ability in the relevant subject.

EQUALITY SCHEME AND ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT

16.131 The VP T&L summarised the key points in the report as follows:

- The student population continued to contain a majority of female students (59%).
- 79% of students are of white ethnicity compared with 82% the previous year, continuing the increase in minority ethnic population for the fourth consecutive year. As a result of this changing student profile, this has been recognised within the action plan.
- There has been a small increase over the past three years in the proportion of students within the college who have a learning difficulty.
- Female success rates are now 1.3% ahead of male, the biggest gap in three years.
- The success rates of Pakistani heritage students are again ahead of that of the college overall and in line with those of white students.
- Students with a specific learning difficulty have the highest success rates of all categories.
- Ex-Ecclesfield students are the most successful in 2015/16 with the highest success rates and the most significant high grade performance with ex-Oakwood students second in both categories.
- A-level value added scores for 2016 show lower value-added scores overall for Pakistani heritage students than for white students whilst comparison between male and female students identifies lower value added outcomes for females. These issues are being tackled as part of the whole stretch and challenge approach.
- Student discipline data shows an unusual increase in the number of incidents recorded during 2015/16. Data so far for 2016/17 shows a return to the figures normally expected.

The actions and progress within the Equality and Diversity Quality Improvement Plan were discussed with a particular focus on work to be undertaken with an external agency to develop awareness of how external factors are affecting students in college e.g. the relationship between Muslim and non-Muslim students.

Members noted the good progress being made with the action plan and thanked all staff involved in the development of such a thorough report.

RETENTION UPDATE

16.132 The Principal gave an update on student retention. The figures show the drop-out from the October census data to 1 December equals the lowest recorded since this format was introduced in 2004-5, at -0.6% (last year it was -1.2%). Retention of all cohort groups in this period improved on last year's respective figures.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

16.133 The Principal presented the report on performance management of teaching staff, reflecting whether learner outcomes – based on retention, achievement, high grades and value-added – in the member of staff's classes were significantly above average (green), around average (amber) or significantly below average (red). The update provided a comparison with last year's proportions of these different categories.

The figures for 2015-16 compared with 2014-15 (in brackets) are Green 38% (52%), Amber 30% (36%) and Red 33% (12%). The Principal's report explained that the shift in proportions reflects the fall in high grades and value-added in 2016 results as discussed. In all instances of 'red data' appraisals contain developmental points and targets for improved student outcomes.

The report was noted.

COMPLAINTS REPORT

16.134 The summary report presented gave details of formal complaints made between January – December 2016. Two of the three complaints had been dealt with to the satisfaction of the complainant with a third complaint still ongoing but with positive progress being made.

The report was noted.

TLA STRATEGY UPDATE

16.135 The Corporation received the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Improvement Strategy 2016-18 for consideration. The VP T&L explained that, as previously, the strategy has five key priorities aiming to improve teaching, learning and assessment at TRC and progress can be seen via the RAG rating. This shows that most actions are underway but it is, as yet, too early to have any actions completed. Actions in red have insufficient evidence at this point to show any progress. Mr T Grice queried the level of staff involvement with the TLA Strategy and it was confirmed that the priorities are the focus of twilight teacher development sessions and this are reflected in the meetings with Heads of Departments.

The Chair thanked the VP T&L for the report and spoke of the need for increased Corporation involvement via the learning walk programme. The Clerk and Principal were asked to establish the procedure for governor access to the programme following the departure of the VP T&L from January 2017.

The report was noted.

GOVERNOR DBS CHECKS

16.136 Following a request for clarification at a previous meeting, the Clerk confirmed that whilst enhanced DBS checks are mandatory for governors in maintained schools, academy trustees and free schools, there is no such requirement in place for sixth form college governors. However, as good practice, the current arrangement at TRC is to undertake a DBS check, or see a copy of an existing DBS check for all new governors. Furthermore there is no

requirement to renew DBS checks on a periodic basis and the decision whether or not to do so lies with the governing body of each institution.

The Principal explained that DBS renewals aren't undertaken for staff members but any incidents occurring since completion of the DBS check would be reported directly to the college. It is not clear whether the same action would apply to governors. It was agreed that the Principal contact the LADO for clarification and report back at a future meeting before a decision can be made regarding periodic renewal of governor DBS checks.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

16.137 The next meeting was confirmed to be held on Monday 27th March at 5.30 pm with the away day to take place on Monday 23rd January at 10.00am. However, the Chair asked members to note that additional meeting dates are likely to be added during the spring term.

In closing the meeting, the Chair acknowledged the imminent departure of Mr Tony Dowling as the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning by offering many thanks on behalf of the Corporation for Tony's commitment and valuable contributions to the college and the board over the years along with their very best wishes for the future.

The Chair thanked all members for their contributions throughout the year and wished everyone a merry Christmas and happy new year.

The meeting closed at 7:30pm and remained quorate

Signed _____  _____

Date _____ 30.01.17 _____