

## Priestley College

Minutes of the Priestley College Governing Body Meeting  
held at 4.30pm on Thursday, 4 February 2016 in the Conference Room (P1.16)

Mr James Kewin (Deputy Chief Executive of the Sixth Form Colleges Association) gave a presentation on the Area Based Review process (see summary at the end of the minutes).

### Present

Mr R Haslam	Chair
Mr A Cannell	
Mr M W Grant	Principal
Mr G Hill	
Mrs K Hope	Staff Member
Mr D Hudson	
Mr J Monaghan	
Mr D Mowat	
Mr A Osborne	
Ms H Roach	Student Member
Mr M D Salmon	Staff Member
Ms K Simcock	
Mrs S Yates	
Mrs C Owen	Clerk to the Governing Body

<b>Also in attendance:</b>	Mrs J McCann	Vice Principal (Resources)
	Mr D McGuire	Director of Finance
	Mrs C Blinkhorn	PA to the Principalship

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr P Dyke, Mr B Jackson-Spruce, Mr Farquharson and Mr G Contos, Vice Principal (Curriculum & Standards)

### 2. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 December 2015

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair

### 4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not on the agenda

### 5. Area Based Review

The Principal thanked governors for the strong show of support through their attendance at the briefing at Reaseheath on 1 February. He asked Governors to share their reflections with each other. The overall view was that colleges, in a strong position as Priestley, would not be forced down a particular route.

Questions raised during the recent visit by John Boyle and Neil Hopkins were reported:

- What and who drives Priestley?
- How was the Strategic Plan created and how had governors contributed to the development of the plan
- Why and how are you going to become an Academy?

- How whatever action is chosen, how would this improve provision for young people in Warrington?

Governors noted the involvement of the College President in the meeting and the questions she raised. She suggested that the focus of the ABR was finance based and not on outcomes for students.

Governors received the draft site report and a confidential briefing paper providing a position statement on colleges involved in the AR. The Site Report, once finalised will be sent to 6th Form Commissioner. They noted the following detail about the College's position:

- Strongest financial position in area
- 3rd highest provider for 16-18 full time learners
- 13/14 Success rates highest not but for one other 6<sup>th</sup> Form College
- Inspection grades place other Colleges in a very weak position
- staffing costs as % of income is high
- operating costs as % of income is low

## 6. Multi Academy Trust

Conversion to academy status was published during week beginning 18 January. Applications have to be made during ABR process. The final guidance and the application process is expected by the end of the month.

The financial implications including VAT requirements were the basis of a detailed discussion.

The Principal reported on the vision for the Warrington Challenge Trust which had been driven by the dip in GCSE results in 2013 across the town. He presented the vision for a cross phase MAT, with a central delivery team requiring no additional appointments, and a growth structure through associate relationships allowing schools to retain their individual ethos and identity.

The debate continued around possible partners both in the short term and establishment phase, as well as associated risks from both a Priestly and partner perspectives. A possible conversion date of January 20 was discussed.

The Principal reported the option to go it alone or go with others. Expression of interest needs to be made during the ABR process. Consideration given was given to savings for all parties.

**Resolved: for the Principal to continue to explore the opportunities and options for academisation during the Area Based Review process.**

## 7. Clerk of the Governing Body

The Chair suggested that temporary arrangements were put in place until the end of the academic year. He reported that the Search Committee had met and interviewed two candidates to share the duties as detailed in Paper A and sought approval from the Governing Body. In order to undertake these duties, it was noted that Mrs Owen had asked to suspend her membership of the governing body with effect from 31 January to 31 August 2016.

**Resolved: That the suspension of the membership of Mrs C Owen be accepted and that the temporary appointment of Mrs C Owen to provide Clerk services covering the full Governing Body, the Strategic Planning Committee, Remuneration & H.R. Committee and the Governance & Search Committee, and Mr C Kressel to provide Clerk services to the Audit Committee, Finance & General Purposes Committee and Curriculum & Standards Committee be made.**

## 8. Reports from Committees (including receipt of Minutes)

### a) Strategic Planning Committee

The Chair reported from the meeting held on 14 January and noted that the focus of the meeting had been covered in agenda items 5 and 6. He thanked Committee members for their support in sharing the workload associated with the ABR process.

**b) Governance & Search Committee**

A verbal summary of the meeting held earlier in the day was given by Mr Monaghan. He reported discussions around the Annual self-assessment form for Governors and the individual reviews of governors which are ongoing

**c) Remuneration & HR Committee**

**(i) Meeting on 14 January 2016**

**(ii) Meeting on 4 February 2016**

The Chair reported that targets had been set for the next year for the Principal and wished to congratulate him on his successful first year in post.

**9. Date of Next Meeting: 5 May 2016 at 4.30pm**

The Chair suggested that it might be necessary for extra meetings to be called as required.

Curriculum & Standards Committee will meet on 3 March.

The meeting closed at 6.25pm

Carole Owen  
25 January 2016

## James Kewin, SFCA update

### Spending Review

- Funding Rate for 16/17 Yr olds better than expected and held at £4k until 2019/20
- Pension and NI increased costs will still have an impact therefore prudence is still required.

### Area Based Review

- Opportunity
- set process; locals steering groups data collection visits etc.
- theory is the development of bottom up recommendations for colleges to implement
- challenge is to keep eye on day job whilst going through an absorbing experience
- Area review has no legal status

### Top tips

- structural change only 1 option
- set out preferred position in an evidence based way
- engage constructively but fight corner
- think ahead to recommendations
- understand how the recommendation stage works and beware the funding card
- Birmingham case study: 1 SFC converting to an academy/1 SFC to remain as is/1 SFC merge with GFE as a possible MAT

### Academisation

- worth consideration
- can apply through ABR process: the criteria for approval continue to create even higher standards through closer collaboration
- pros and cons
- timescale challenging
- full guidance Feb/SFCA in Mar

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Governors asked a range of questions based on 'what if' scenarios and associated risks.

RH thanked JK for the quality and usefulness of his presentation.