

Priestley College

Meeting of the Priestley College Governing Body
held at 4.30pm on Thursday, 5 May 2016 in the Conference Room (P1.16)

MINUTES

Present	Mr R Haslam	Chair
	Mr A Farquharson	
	Mr M Grant	Principal
	Mrs K Hope	Staff member
	Mr J Monaghan	
	Mrs B Scott-Heron	
	Mrs S Yates	
	Mrs C Owen	Clerk to the Governing Body
Also in attendance	Mr G Contos	Vice Principal (Curriculum & Standards)
	Mrs J McCann	Vice Principal (Resources)
	Mr D McGuire	Director of Finance

Presentation to Peter McMellon

The Chair made a presentation to Mr McMellon and thanked him for his service and guidance to the Governing Body.

Chair's Report

It was noted that Mr Haslam has been on the Governing Body for twenty years and had attended forty consecutive meetings. He expressed disappointment that this meeting did not reach its quorum.

Mr Haslam noted that his term of office as Chair is due to expire on 7 October and indicated a preference make the necessary arrangements for the appointment of Chair for the next four years at the July meeting. He indicated his intention to stand again for election. Those present also discussed the current arrangements for the Vice Chairs.

It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Governors to remind them of the need to provide apologies in advance of meetings and ask expressions of interest in the positions of Chair and Vice Chair to be returned by Monday 6 June. Those present agreed that it would be helpful if the schedule of meetings for the next academic year take student exams and election days into consideration as much as possible.

1 Apologies for absence

The meeting noted the apologies of Mr A Cannell, Mr P Dyke, Mr Hill, Mr D Hudson, Mr D Mowatt, Ms H Roach, Ms K Simcock and Mr B Jackson-Spruce.

The meeting fell slightly short of its quorum. It was agreed that the meeting would take place as planned as there were no decisions requiring authorisation from the Full Governing Body.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest in any item on this agenda.

3 Minutes of the Meeting held 21 April 2016

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

4 Matters Arising

There were no further matters arising which are not covered by this agenda.

5 Principal's Report (including College Improvement Plan Update)

The Principal thanked the Vice Principal and Finance Director for the excellent work undertaken to manage the College's finances and achieve the desired economies.

Mr Grant continued by highlighting particular aspects of his report which was discussed by those present.

- STEM Accreditation: the College has successfully completed the reaccreditation process and the meeting acknowledged the lead taken by Ms Costello in this area. STEM across the curriculum was a strong aspect of the College's provision which was noted by the assessor. Governors viewed an exemplar of this which was entitled 'The Birth of Modern Human' created by Art student, Guillermo J Bueno It was noted that the piece used five thousand images to produce the anatomically correct film showing human development.
- Student recruitment for the next academic year shows an increase of 3% compared to the same period last year. This matter has been raised with the EFA who have informed the College that letter of 'comfort' will be received to provide reassurance that additional funds might be provided should the higher student numbers be realised.
- Student retention has increased by 1% compared to the same period last year. Mr Haslam queried Student absence from exams was discussed in detail. The Vice Principal explained that this was not untypical and explained reasons for absence as exam nerves, illness, and sometimes absence from Paper 2 when students feel that the first paper has not gone well. He reported work undertaken particularly with vulnerable students to help support them. This has included the College funding transport costs for some individuals.
- Safeguarding: Rufus, the sniffer dog undertook a patrol of the College. It was noted that one item of paraphernalia was discovered however, no illegal substances were found.
- Invitations were extended to Governors for upcoming College events including Art & Design exhibition and the Performing Arts show.

6 Area Based Review and MAT Update

The Principal provided information from the ABR process to date in relation to the five 5 FE Colleges as follows:

- South Cheshire College to undertake a type B merger with West Cheshire and Warrington Collegiate (two will be dissolved and merge with the other);
- Mid Cheshire College and Macclesfield College to merge (type unknown);
- The long term plan is for Mid Cheshire and Macclesfield them to join with the South Cheshire merged College.

He continued to report that the 24 May Steering Group 4 meeting has been postponed until 22

June 3 – 5pm. This will be held at South Cheshire College. A Governors meeting has not been suggested following this and the Principal has raised this issue and awaits confirmation of a meeting for Governors.

Governors noted with some frustration that Priestley had met all required deadlines and this has caused an unwelcome delay to the progression of the College plans.

7 Data Dashboard and QAR Presentation

Mr Contos, Vice Principal (Curriculum) reported that the Teaching & Learning survey across the College has been followed up by exam preparation sessions, tutorials through the exam season and formal mock exams following feedback from students. Currently a new automated text system is being trialled and this is having a positive impact on student's attendance which is showing an increase for the same period as last year.

Mr Haslam queried retention comparisons with other colleges. It was reported that there were two comparator colleges below Priestley.

61% in year leavers have left to take up apprenticeships. The meeting discussed a number of case studies in terms of apprenticeships and the impact on attendance at exams and retention. Mr Monaghan noted the 4% improvement in AS retention particularly as this was a priority area for the College this year. In particular 12 lines have increased on last year and are above Sixth Form College National Averages. The meeting noted the retention rate of 90.2% in L3 courses which was above the target of 87.7%

Teaching and Learning: two internal posts have been advertised in order to develop Lead Practitioners to work with SLT. One is to lead and develop CPD and Teaching & Learning whilst the other role will offer coaching and mentoring as well as providing support for Colleges.

Mr Contos gave a demonstration of the new Dashboard and gave a health warning regarding the accuracy of the 2015 data. This common problem has also been identified by other Colleges.

Governors discussed:

- 16 – 18 overall and timely figures are above national averages.
- 19+ is less successful and is below National Averages. This is an area for development.
- AS was below National and remains a key area for improvement in the College Improvement Plan. The College has a target of 82.9%.

8 Reports from Committees (including receipt of Minutes)

a) Remuneration & HR Committee held on

- i. 4 February 2016**
- ii. 28 April 2016**

Mr Haslam presented the minutes of the meetings and summarised the discussion and points for action.

b) Search Committee held on

- i. 4 February 2016**

Mr Monaghan reported to the meeting that the April meeting was not required and reported back from the February meeting.

**c) Curriculum & Standards Committee held on
ii. 3 March 2016**

There were no questions from the minutes of the meeting as the detail had been discussed in item 7.

**d) Finance & General Purposes Committee held on
i. 24 February 2016**

Mr Haslam asked if the EFA had confirmed that the financial health of the College remains at Outstanding. Mr McGuire replied that the current financial efficiencies would ensure that the College retains this Outstanding judgement.

Mr Haslam also thanked SLT for the work undertaken to ensure that financial efficiencies have been achieved

He explained that the decision to pay off the College loan is aligned to academy status. He asked that this be considered at the next FGB meeting.

**e) Audit Committee held on
i. 14 March 2016**

The meeting noted the report from the internal auditors which classified learner numbers as 'green'. College systems were praised and there were no recommendations for action. The benchmarking report evidenced a better financial performance in comparison to post 16 providers.

**f) Strategic Planning Committee held on
i. 28 April 2016**

Mr Haslam reported that the focus of the meeting held the previous week was the implications of the academisation process. The Committee agreed that a Working Group be established to oversee the due diligence process comprising Chair, Vice Chair, Chairs of Committee, the Principal and Mr Hudson due to his legal experience.

9 Date of Next Meeting: 7 July 2016 at 4.30pm

AoB

The meeting closed at 5.50pm

Carole Owen
6 May 2016

Accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair

Signature

Date