

Minutes of the Full Governing Body held at 5.30pm on Wednesday 2nd November 2011 as a continuation of business from the meeting on 25th October 2011 at 5.30pm in the Committee Room, Ashington campus

	<p>Present: L Ions, L Rickerby, P Langton, M Rossi, P Down, R Casson, C Todd, S Barlow</p> <p>In attendance: K Allan, D Simpkin, M Charlton (for items 5-11 only)</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/1	<p>Confirmation of eligibility and quorum</p> <p>The meeting was quorate. There were no eligibility issues.</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/2	<p>Apologies for absence were received from David Moon and Bob Bedson. T Shirley was not able to attend, as due to human error he had been omitted from the email distribution of the meeting notification.</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/3	<p>Confidentiality of Board papers</p> <p>Linda Ions expressed her disappointment that an agenda paper from the Corporation meeting of 25th October 2011, which was intended to provide a confidential briefing by the Principal to Governors, had been leaked to the press. Whilst the source of the leak was unknown, Linda reminded governors of their responsibility to ensure that confidential papers were treated as such and that confidential papers were clearly marked as such on distribution</p> <p>As the full agenda had not been completed in 25th October and was to be concluded this evening, the Corporation had not formally stated which parts of the agenda on 25th October were to be marked as confidential. It was agreed that agenda items 14-15 from 25th October were to be treated as confidential.</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/4	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2011 were approved as a correct record</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/5	<p>Complaints policy and procedure</p> <p>Maureen Charlton joined the meeting to introduce a number of proposed amendments to policies as well as new policies for approval. Maureen outlined that policies have been based on those operated in Newcastle College, and explained any changes.</p> <p>Governors noted and agreed the policy and procedure subject to the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governors to be notified of complaints via a quarterly report. This should include `compliment/praise` as previously reported to Standards Committee - A section be added on handling complaints made against the Principal. - Wording to be consistent eg Principal or Chief Executive. 	M Charlton

2011/FGB2Nov/6	<p>Student disciplinary policy</p> <p>M Charlton advised that the aim of this policy and associated procedures is not to penalise students and create a restrictive and oppressive college environment. The aim is to provide all learners, staff and visitors with a clear set of guidelines which will ensure the college creates an environment which maximises learner achievement and the use of college resources.</p> <p>Governors noted and agreed the policy subject to the following amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Title to read as Student Disciplinary Policy 	M Charlton
2011/FGB2Nov/7	<p>Admissions Policy</p> <p>M Charlton advised that this is a new policy for the admission of students onto Further Education programmes at the College. She added that the policy does not apply to programmes that students apply for through UCAS.</p> <p>Governors noted and agreed the policy subject to the following amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy to outline a range of criteria for consideration. 	M Charlton
2011/FGB2Nov/8	<p>Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy</p> <p>M Charlton advised that this policy and the associated procedure had been developed in response to guidance issued on the protection of vulnerable adults in the DfES/NIACE publication "Safer Practice, Safer Learning" (2007). The guidance applies to all education providers of post-16 learning and skills.</p> <p>The policy was approved with no changes.</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/9	<p>Child Protection Policy</p> <p>M Charlton advised that this policy and associated procedures have been developed in response to Government guidance. The Children Act 1989 defines a child as any person under the age of 18 years. This includes all 14-16 year old school children attending any Northumberland College as part of the "School Links Programme".</p> <p>Maureen confirmed that this had been sent to the Northumberland Safeguarding Board</p> <p>Governors approved the policy with no changes.</p> <p>Governors asked regarding frequency of update training for themselves regarding their responsibilities in this area as well as safeguarding vulnerable adults. It was noted this would be annual</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/9	<p>Disclosure Policy</p> <p>M Charlton advised that this policy applied to all staff employed with Northumberland College under a contract of employment, all agency staff and all independent contractors and consultants.</p>	

	<p>The purpose of the policy and the associated procedure is to enable any fraud, misconduct or wrong doing by staff of Northumberland College to be reported and properly dealt with.</p> <p>The aim of the policy is to provide safeguards to protect staff who raise genuine concerns about malpractice in connection with the organisation.</p> <p>Governors noted and agreed the policy subject to changing the title to “Disclosure/whistleblowing policy”</p>	M Charlton
2011/FGB2Nov/10	<p>Handling CRB certificates information policy</p> <p>M Charlton advised that as an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the College complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Certificates and Certificate Information. The College also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Certificate Information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.</p> <p>Governors approved the policy with no changes.</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/11	<p>Bullying and harassment policy</p> <p>M Charlton advised that the aim of this policy is for the College to provide a learning community that is safe and free from harassments and bullying where all learners are treated with respect at all times.</p> <p>Governors noted and agreed the policy subject to the following amendment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Title should read Bullying and Harassment of Students Policy. <p>S Barlow asked what review period was in place for new policies. C Todd explained that Louise Kinghorn maintains a register of all approved policies and will ensure that policies are reviewed and submitted for approval as necessary and review dates will be confirmed for all policies agreed at this meeting</p>	M Charlton
2011/FGB2Nov/12	<p>Principals’ update</p> <p>C Todd presented a report outlining changes made to management arrangements, in particular:</p> <p>The posts of Vice Principal (Finance) and Vice Principal (Curriculum) are vacant. These senior post-holder roles may only be appointed by the Corporation, but are not being filled at present due to planned merger.</p> <p>Two interim posts have been filled in order to provide temporary support whilst the VP roles are vacant; Nigel Lister as Head of Curriculum and Carol Welch as Head of Finance.</p>	

	<p>In response to questions about the curriculum leadership in Construction as a result of this C Todd confirmed that Nigel Lister’s substantive post as Programme Leader (Construction) was currently being advertised both internally and externally as a temporary post.</p> <p>C Todd referred to actions required to improve management of safeguarding, health and safety, and equality and diversity. Many of these actions were related to other items on the agenda. A Single Equality Scheme will be submitted to the Corporation in November 2011</p> <p>Governors noted the actions being taken to address areas identified as weaknesses and interim changes to the Executive Team</p>	C Todd
2011/FG B2Nov/13	<p>Period 12 Performance Report and Management Accounts</p> <p>C Todd presented the financial report for the last month of the 2010/11 academic year. It was noted that a deficit of £459k was reported. This included provision for a potential clawback of £400k by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) due to under-delivery of student numbers. However, C Todd confirmed that he had now received notification from the SFA that this amount would not be clawed back., and subject to final calculations, the amount of deficit would be significantly lower in the order of 60k.</p> <p>S Barlow said there were still issues about the sustainability of college finances and the ability to recruit planned student numbers. She asked what headroom existed to avoid repetition of the same situation and received reassurances from the Acting Principal that there was headroom and the budget would not be exceeded on 2011/12.</p> <p>The Chair noted that this potential clawback had come to light towards the end of the academic year when earlier reports to F&P committee and Governing Body had indicated we were on target..</p> <p>The report was received and noted</p>	
2011/FG B2Nov/14	<p>Financial Regulations</p> <p>C Todd presented a revised set of financial regulations accompanied by a brief report highlighting the most significant changes from the previous version, as they affected the role of Governors.</p> <p>Governors expressed concern at the some of the proposed changes to delegated financial limits and following discussion the financial regulations were agreed subject to the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Section 3.3 (capital expenditure) – leave the delegated limit, beyond which Corporation approval is required, at £50k, to be reviewed after 6 months. b) Section 3.4 – (major developments) - leave the delegated limit, beyond which Corporation approval is required, at £50k, to be reviewed after 6 months c) Section 7.8 – agreed that Corporation approval in advance is not required for individual severance payments over £5k but payments will be listed in the management accounts <p>With these amendments, the financial regulations were approved.</p>	C Todd

2011/FGB2Nov/15	<p>Fees Policy</p> <p>Members noted the proposed changes to fees policy for 2011/12. CT confirmed that there were no financial implications</p> <p>The revised Fees Policy was approved.</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/16	<p>Health and Safety Policy</p> <p>C Todd presented a health and safety policy which set out the roles and responsibilities of College managers.</p> <p>The Health and Safety Policy was approved subject to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -changing the phrase on page 2 “control employees” to “manage employees”. -including a reference to the responsibilities of Governors 	C Todd
2011/FGB2Nov/17	<p>Health and Safety report</p> <p>C Todd provided this report to Governors to update them on recent health and safety activity in relation to the College estate, alongside plans for improving health and safety management and compliance going forward.</p> <p>C Todd commented that the College expects the full cost of addressing the back log maintenance and repair issues identified to be within the region of £3 to £4m.</p> <p>With regard to capital funding, the SFA have recently confirmed that the College has been given access to a capital grant of £3.1m, with a required contribution of £1.2m of the College’s own resources to cover the cost of works together with some developmental activity. C Todd added that in order to match fund the capital grant, the College would need to engage in some borrowing of approximately £1m.</p> <p>C Todd explained that the SFA timetable for funding submissions was very short and the SFA do not require Corporation approval to be demonstrated in advance of the submission.</p> <p>It was agreed to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - note the report including the actions taken to date - receive a report at the next meeting in order to approve the bid and agree any borrowing in order to support the bid 	C Todd
2011/FGB2Nov/18	<p>Health and Safety Incident Report (confidential item)</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/19	<p>Annual Report of the Finance & Personnel Committee</p> <p>Chairs of committees shared annual reports outlining work undertaken during 2010/11 and a commentary on areas of good practice as well as areas for improvement</p> <p>L Ions presented the annual report of the F&P committee to Governors which was noted.</p>	
2011/FGB2Nov/20	<p>Annual Report of the Audit Committee</p> <p>S Barlow presented the annual report to Governors which was noted.</p>	

	S Barlow advised that the Committee was pleased to note the “High Assurance” gained in significant areas. However, more work was still required with regard to data validation being a recurring issues with funding audits.	
2011/FGB2Nov/21	Annual Report of the Search Committee P Langton presented the annual report to Governors which was noted.	
2011/FGB2Nov/22	Recommendations from Search Committee K Allan presented the recommendations from the Search Committee highlighting areas for further improvements. The following recommendations were made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Areas for further improvement be adopted as a Governance Improvement Plan for 2011/12. Agreed - The Search Committee recommends to the Corporation that Tony Shirley be appointed as an additional member of the Audit Committee. Agreed - The Search Committee recommends to the Corporation the Chris Smith be appointed as an additional member of the Audit Committee, subject to his agreement. C Smith advised he would have difficulty in attending meetings but agreed to attend as an ad-hoc member. M Rossi also agreed to attend as an ad-hoc member if required. - The Board of High Gain Business Consultancy Limited be disbanded, with the company remaining in operation under the management of the Principal/Chief Executive Officer. Agreed 	
2011/FGB2Nov/23	Annual Report of the Standards Committee T Shirley was not present at the meeting so R Casson presented the annual report highlighting the strengths and areas of improvement in relation to the SAR. The report was noted by Governors.	
2011/FGB2Nov/24	Minutes of the Audit Committee The minutes of the Audit Committee held on the 20 September 2011 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
2011/FGB2Nov/25	Minutes of the Search Committee The minutes of the Search Committee held on the 4 October 2011 were received and agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	
2011/FGB2Nov/26	Merger update (confidential item)	
2011/FGB2Nov/26	Confidential items The following items are to be classed as confidential: 2011/FGB2Nov/18 Health and safety incident report 2011/FGB2Nov/26 Merger update	:

	FGB/25Oct11/03 Discussion re merger with NCG FGB/25Oct11/04 Merger update report	
2011/FGB2Nov/27	Date and time of next meeting Special meeting to be held on 15 th or 16 th November 2011. Next scheduled meeting Tuesday 22 nd November 2011, 5.30pm, Ashington Committee Room	K Allan

Signed by the Chair

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