

Full Governing Body Committee meeting 13 December 2011, Committee Room, Ashington

	<p>Present: R Casson, L Rickerby, P Langton, P Down, C Todd</p> <p>In attendance: L Kinghorn, N Lister, M Bolton, K Ramsey, M Thompson (KPMG), K Allan, D Simpkin (note taker),</p>	
FGB/13Dec11/01	<p>Confirmation of eligibility and quorum</p> <p>The meeting was quorate. There were no eligibility issues.</p>	
FGB/13Dec11/02	<p>Apologies were received from:</p> <p>C Smith, B Bedson and M Rossi</p>	
FGB/13Dec11/03	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2011:</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>There were no matters arising.</p>	
FGB/13Dec11/04	<p>Approve the reappointment of Robin Casson and Chris Smith as members of the Corporation:</p> <p>Both Robin Casson and Chris Smith were appointed as members of the Corporation on the 18 December 2007 for a four year term. Their terms of office therefore expire on 17 December 2011, and both governors expressed their wish to be re-appointed.</p> <p>Following the completion of governor assessment forms by other governors, the Search Committee made recommendation to the Corporation that both Robin Casson and Chris Smith be reappointed for a further four year term commencing 18 December 2011 which was approved.</p>	
FGB/13Dec11/05	<p>Approve the appointment of new members of the Corporation:</p> <p>KA advised members that Jacqui Henderson CBE had applied for appointment as a governor. She had submitted a CV, which KA summarised. This appointment was approved and KA to advise Jacqui Henderson accordingly.</p> <p>It was noted that the Search Committee had agreed to place a governor recruitment advertisement in the Newcastle Journal; copies of the advert had also been distributed to local employers and community organisations by email. A number of expressions of interest had been received and members of the Search Committee were following these up.</p>	K Allan
FGB/13Dec11/06	<p>Approve the appointment of a Chair of the Audit Committee:</p> <p>It was noted that a Chair was needed for the next meeting scheduled in February. However, L Rickerby agreed to chair the meeting if required.</p>	

FGB/13Dec11/07	<p>Summary results of staff survey – L Kinghorn:</p> <p>LK reported to governors on the main themes of the Staff Survey 2011 and provided an update on the work done so far to address identified issues.</p> <p>By way of a background, LK advised that the survey had been carried out over a two weeks period in June 2011. The survey had been confidential for all staff asking them 94 questions about the organisation. Data was collected on employee’s perceptions which led to insight through data analysis, which in turn led to actions for making improvements in those key areas.</p> <p>LK provided an action plan at the end of the report and advised that this had been developed and agreed with the College Management Team. LK added that the action plan will be monitored throughout 2011-12 through CMT.</p> <p>LK advised that the survey will be carried out on a yearly basis to enable measurement of distance travelled and which will be a powerful way of measuring the degree to which College’s organisational systems and processes are operating effectively, with trends being tracked over time.</p> <p>LK provided the action plan and the end of the report and Governors noted the key themes identified within the report.</p> <p>RC asked if information on results and action plan would be fed back to staff. LK advised that the action plan would be disseminated via the staffnet. It was noted that the board was missing from the action plan in respect of leadership team.</p> <p>LR advised she would welcome a breakdown of staff and would be happy to be linked to a faculty. LR also suggested hosting an open meeting with governors and staff. Following discussions it was agreed that CT would write a governor engagement strategy which would be completed quickly in the new year. PL also advised that an induction programme for new members would be useful.</p>	C Todd
FGB/13Dec11/08	<p>Period 3 Performance Report and Management Accounts – C Todd:</p> <p>CT provided a presentation to members highlighting the following key aspects:</p> <p><u>Learner volumes and funding performance</u></p> <p>CT advised that the 16-18 LR budget looked low for the year to date which was mainly due to significant under performance against budget and plan in one particular faculty area (Creative and Lifestyle). CT advised that this had resulted in the compilation of a college wide funding recovery plan. CT added that a comprehensive plan to recover the College’s forecasted shortfall of £529k at the year end had been developed and that the College expects to make significant progress towards closing the gap over the course of the next few months and will be reported to governors after the Period 6 performance reviews.</p> <p><u>Lesson observations and quality improvement</u></p> <p>CT advised that 60% of teaching and learning is good or better across the College. It was noted that during October 2011 a new Policy for the</p>	

Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment was approved and new guidance documentation was produced and disseminated. CT advised that following the observations, individual staff action plans have been agreed with line managers and support put in place for those who received either a grade 3 or 4 in advance of these staff being re-observed.

Attendance

CT advised that attendance rates had risen in all but four departments. Art and Hair attendance rates remained the same as the previous year. Renewables and Sport have attendance rates that are lower than the same time in 2010/11. However, the most significant improvement of 15% has been made in Tourism, as well as improvements of 5% or more in Construction, Engineering, Early Years and Hospitality.

Student satisfaction (based on September 2011 survey)

The Learner Induction survey ran from September 14th to October 7th 2011 with an overall completion rate of 70.9% (1,746 learner respondents).

Financial performance

CT advised that the operating position at period 3 demonstrated an over performance against budget for the year to date of £1,303k. CT added that the over performance on income was due to SFA employer responsive (apprenticeships) where the budget had been profiled on a monthly 'earned' basis and the actual reported is the funding currently generated for the full year. The profiling is to be reviewed and adjusted accordingly for future periods.

Curriculum Notices to Improve

CT advised that following the analysis of 2010/11 data as part of Self-Assessment Report validation, four areas within the College have been issued with an internal Notice to Improve, these areas are:

- Sport
- Public Services
- Essential Skills
- Beauty (Ashington Campus provision)

KR provided two forecast outturn scenarios; a worst case which would produce a "satisfactory" financial health rating and a best case

PD advised that in respect of employability it would be useful to have data/information as to how many students gain employment through their course. MB advised that students are tracked over 24 months every 3 months.

With regard to hair and beauty at Ashington, it was noted that working out of a salon provided a better learning and more realistic environment. CT added that premises were being looked at for a high street salon for the Ashington learners. RC added that the emerging proposal for Ashington Leisure Centre may present some opportunities.

RC advised that the information was welcomed especially the emphasis on

	<p>teaching and learning. He commented that construction/engineering were high performance and asked if there was any possibility of staff within this area working with other colleagues to share good practice. LK advised that staff had been asked to complete a core skills grid to highlight their strengths and weaknesses to look at a buddying system.</p> <p><u>Management Accounts</u> KR advised that she was working on a different format on reporting the financial accounts to governors. RC advised that a more visual format eg balanced scorecard, be used to supplement the formal statements KR advised she would carry out some work on this and mock up some samples and circulate to the governing body for their comments. RC advised that KR contact Alan Hartwell at NCC.</p>	
FGB/13Dec11/09	<p>Annual Accounts – Northumberland College</p> <p>KR presented the Northumberland College Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 July 2011. It was noted that the accounts had been reviewed by the Audit Committee, which recommended the Coporation to approve the accounts subject to receiving written confirmation from the Skills Funding Agency of the amount of funding to be clawed back due to underperformance of the adult skills budget.</p> <p>KR stated that the SFA had verbally advised that the amount of clawback would be £204k; the accounts made provision for a £220k clawback.</p> <p>Governors approved the accounts (subject to receiving written confirmation of the clawback amount) and the management representation letter from the Chair to KPMG, the external auditors.</p>	K Ramsey
FGB/13Dec11/10	<p>Annual Accounts – High Gain</p> <p>KR presented the Directors Report and Financial Statements for High Gain Business Consultancy Limited for the year ended 31st July 2011.</p> <p>Governors approved the accounts and the management representation letter from Chris Todd to the external auditors.</p>	
FGB/13Dec11/11	<p>Northumberland College Audit Highlights and management letter</p> <p>The purpose of the report was to set out certain matters which had come to KPMG’s attention during the course of their audit of the accounts of the College for the year ended 31 July 2011. The report also covers the key findings arising from the audit of the College subsidiary, High Gain Business Consultancy Limited.</p> <p>Mick Thompson of KPMG, advised that the accounts reflected solid financial management, with much improvement over the last three years. All issues raised in the report have been discussed with management and have included responses where appropriate.</p> <p>RC thanked M Thompson and staff for their work.</p>	

FGB/13Dec11/12	<p>Response to letter from Geoff Russell, Chief Executive of Skills Funding Agency:</p> <p>RC reported on the outcomes of a meeting between himself, Chris Todd, and senior SFA staff that afternoon. Following the discussion, the draft response to Geoff Russell’s letter of 24th November, which had been circulated as an agenda paper, required significant amendment.</p> <p>The SFA had expressed concerns relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The College rescinding its decision regarding the merger, soon after asking the Minister to make an approval decision; ○ The two current Financial Notices to Improve and; ○ The loss of several governors. <p>RC advised that discussions had centered around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A plan for the college ○ Progress in responding to the Notices to Improve and; ○ What processes are in place to recruit governors. <p>RC advised that, to respond to SFA concerns, the Corporation needs to be open and transparent, working with stakeholders to devise a plan for the future of the college.</p> <p>RC proposed that an advertisement be placed in the Journal in January asking for expressions of interest from organisations who would like to work with the College in line with the framework set out in the BIS document “New Challenges, New Chances”. Following this those who had expressed an interest in working with College would be invited to discuss their ideas informally and if suitable, would then form formal discussions.</p> <p>PL asked whether this would constitute a procurement exercise. In discussion it was noted that the initial discussions would not be a procurement, but the outcome of those discussions could potentially identify the need for one or more procurement exercises.</p> <p>KA advised that the Corporation should consider carefully what information should be provided to the interested parties; non-disclosure agreements may be appropriate to protect the interests of the College. The Corporation would also need to be careful to devise a decision-making process which took into account any conflicts of interest.</p> <p>It was agreed to proceed with an advertisement in the Newcastle Journal. In addition, it was agreed that RC and CT would draft a response to Geoff Russell’s letter, which would be circulated to governors for comments, prior to submission to the SFA by 7th January.</p> <p>CT stated that he would hold briefings for staff immediately after the holiday period.</p>	
FGB/13Dec11/13	<p>Audit Committee – 6 December 2011:</p> <p>The minutes of the Audit Committee held on 6th December 2011 were received.</p>	

FGB/13Dec11/14	<p>Search Committee – 30 November 2011:</p> <p>The minutes of the Search Committee held on 30th October were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
FGB/13Dec11/15	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>The date of the next scheduled meeting is Tuesday 21 February 2012 at 5:30pm, Committee Room, Ashington. It was agreed that an additional meeting would be held in January to consider a recommendation from the appointment panel for Principal and Chief Executive and to consider the organisational expressions of interest in partnership working.</p>	