



**Mission Statement:** *Inspiring learning, developing character, building futures*

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION OF BLACKPOOL SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

**Date:** Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022  
**Venue:** The Blackpool Sixth Form College  
**Room:** Committee Room  
**Time:** 5.00- 7.50pm

<b>Present:</b>	<hr/> Cllr Calum Baxter (Chair) Ms Jill Gray (Principal) Cllr. Don Clapham Mr David Gascoigne Mr Ray Baker Ms Sukie Woodhouse Ms Hannah Critchley Ms Tabitha Davey <hr/>
<b>Together with:</b>	<hr/> Ms G Yeadon (Deputy Principal: Quality & Curriculum) Ms T Cooper (Vice Principal: Curriculum & Vocational) Mr S Ormson (Assistant Principal: Student Support) Ms A Crumblehulme (Assistant Principal: Business Support) Mr Tom Holland (Head of Student Services) Mr David Williams (Head of Additional Learning Support) Ms Debbi Hodson (Head of Learning Resources and Careers) Mrs S Hawitt (FCAT Governance Administrator) <hr/>
<b>Apologies:</b>	<hr/> Ms Debbie Taaffe, Ms Caroline Coyne, Mr Jeremy Mannino, Mr Alistair Burr, Ms Natalia Baranowska, and Ms Tharany Vijayaratham <hr/>

### **21.2022 Preliminaries**

The Chair reminded directors to send any apologies for governance meetings to the Clerk via email, telephone or in writing.

The Chair reminded directors of the need for all to respect the confidential nature of the meeting and discussions had and not to disclose governance business or decisions to others.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Tom Holland, Dave Williams and Debbi Hodson (Heads of Departments)

The Chair bid farewell to the two upper six student directors who were not in attendance at the meeting, the Clerk agreed to send a gift to them direct.

Apologies for absence were noted

### **22.2022 Area of Challenge – Student Support report**

Directors received the Student Support Report for 2021-22 (paper 2.1) presented by the Assistant Principal: Student Support and the Heads of Departments. Directors were given a brief introduction to the report and highlighted the three areas and the focus for 2022-23. It was noted that the report provided an valuable overview of the work carried out over the last year in particular key highlights and focus areas that staff are particularly proud of.

Directors were invited to ask questions.

### **Questions from Directors**

The Principal informed directors that all support areas received recognition for their work in the recent Ofsted inspection. It was noted that students at Blackpool Sixth are supported holistically rather than just academically, and it is clear from the report staff are always striving to be better.

Asked how students are identified and supported if they consider suicide, it was noted that 32 college staff have completed 'applied suicide skills training' the training gives staff the skills to spot signs and how to respond in the right way. Directors were informed that safeguarding data shows an increase in numbers of students needing suicidal support, it was noted that college staff are very vigilant and will intervene to offer support and in addition will signpost to other professionals, where needed. It was also noted that staff at the college will talk about suicide, it is not a taboo subject and there are posters displayed in the college to encourage students to speak out and seek help.

Asked if there is a level of supervision in place for staff working in these areas, it was noted that peer supervision in small groups takes place as regularly as every month or more often if required. Other supervision such as, counselling is available for staff. It was acknowledged that this area of work can be emotionally draining.

It was noted that with every new cohort of students, focus on breaking down barriers to mental health is revisited and supporting students starts before they arrive at Blackpool Sixth. New students with SEND or high levels of anxiety are invited to attend college over the summer to try to balance the anxiety of meeting new people and new surroundings. It was noted that information sharing with schools is getting much better resulting in better support for all students even before they start at the college.

Directors were informed that college had developed strong links with other mental health support services including Lancashire Minds Matter, Healthy Minds, and Child and Adolescence Mental Health Service (CAMHS), and will signpost when necessary. It was noted a practitioner based at the college offering counselling services is supporting students who perhaps would not seek this service elsewhere.

Asked if there is any data to benchmark the ALS department with other colleges, it was noted that there is no official data, however it had been highlighted during good practice visits that other colleges have a very similar structure and size of department and most are increasing their support services for mental health, behaviour and safeguarding. It was also highlighted that students have had less time to prepare for their future due to the pandemic restrictions.

Asked about 'levels of provision' it was noted that there are 3 levels of provision depending on a student's current need, which are reviewed three times per year and are interchangeable.

Asked if the growing reputation for SEND provision, is part of the college strategy, and the impact if any on other learning provisions and if there is funding to support the growth, it was noted that the college strategy to attract more students with SEND was a conscious decision because this cohort of students attending Blackpool Sixth do really well. Asked if there is a danger that the reputation of the college will focus on SEND students and some pure academic students may choose alternative colleges, it was noted that

Blackpool Sixth offers what is right for all students and it is hoped the messaging is about individuals, (regardless of background/needs) ambitions and aspirations and finding the right offer for everyone.

Directors were informed that the number of students with a SEN need (18%) falls in line with Blackpool schools. Asked what the expected numbers will be for 2022-23, it was noted that 232 students with SEN need will continue at Blackpool Sixth and a further 356 applications so far disclose a SEN need, although not all students will want additional support.

Asked about additional staff and the difficulties across the sector with recruiting staff to support roles, it was noted that within the team there is some capacity to move staff around to cope with the demand and there are contingency plans in place should forthcoming interviews not be successful.

In response to a question about what percentage of students respond to the study skills survey, it was noted that the response had decreased since the lockdown from 628 responses in September 2020 to 177 in May 2022 and 375 responses in September 2021 down to 50 in May 2022, it had been recognised that students may need an incentive to encourage participation in future surveys.

Asked what overall percentage of students engage with Learning Resources and Futures (LRFU) and how it is followed up, it was noted that the number of students who access FYI (the college learning resource centre) had declined due to more face-to-face interactions with teachers (the data shows the number of bookings not the number of students). It was noted those students who still access the resource like it and take value from it. The FYI team following on from discussions with students are currently finding a way to further improve the booking system so it does not create a barrier for those students who want to use the resource and haven't booked.

Asked how SMART targets for future development and progress are agreed, it was noted that targets are agreed between the student and Pastoral Mentor using a variety of information, such as, 'getting to know you survey' progress data and parents' evenings, this all provides a holistic approach to target setting which is available to students and stored on the central hub.

Asked about key priorities for ADLS 2022-23, especially the increase to counselling service, it was noted that there are currently 64 on the waiting list, to address this a triage service is being introduced, the aim of the service is to provide a triage call within a week of a request.

The Chair thanked the Heads of Department for attending the meeting and answering directors' questions so openly and with such passion.

Directors were informed that Caroline Coyne, Director for SEND took part in a college Strive podcast 'nine key concepts for success' which can be found on the college website.

<https://www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk/new-podcast-to-help-wellbeing/>

*Dave Williams, Tom Holland and Debbi Hodson left the meeting*

## **23.2022 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **24.2022 Consideration of any items of urgent business.**

There were no items of urgent business to discuss.

**25.2022 Confirmation of Quoracy**

It was confirmed the meeting was quorate.

**26.2022 Minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022 were approved.

**Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

- a) **Directors' training** - (item 14.2022 from the previous minutes) confirmation dates for 1-1 meetings with the Chair were circulated to directors, The Chair asked directors to contact the Clerk to arrange their 1-1 meeting if they had not already done so

**27.2022 College Action Plan**

Directors received and approved the College Action Plan 2021-22 (paper 7.1) presented by the Deputy Principal and were invited to ask questions.

**Questions from Directors**

In response to a question about sexual harassment training within college and how will it change the current approach, it was noted that since the Ofsted inspection and its findings the college had increased awareness activities about sexual harassment and abuse, including zero tolerance and removing barriers to young people disclosing information.

In response to a question about having a director link to each of the actions on the action plan, it was noted that this would be seen more of an operational approach than strategic approach, however directors approve the action plan at each full board meeting.

The Chair asked the DP if there were any significant concerns, it was noted that there were no major concerns other than financial, e.g. inflation, the lack of additional funding to support the increasing number of support staff roles required, staff pay awards and a general increase in costs which is a concern across all college departments.

**28.2022 Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Directors received the Learning and Development annual report 2021-22 (paper 8.2) presented by the Deputy Principal and were invited to ask questions.

**Questions from Directors**

In response to a question about any tension between the requirement from the DfE standards for professional development focussing on student outcomes and a desire by staff to see more personal development, it was noted that changes to the L&D approach had resulted in staff development becoming much more bespoke. The staff director noted her gratitude for all the training opportunities offered by the college and also noted that it has helped her become more effective in her role.

In response to a question, directors were informed that Edupay is a new HR and payroll system which will replace the current system (Cintra).

**29.2022 Compliments, Concerns and Complaints**

Directors received the Compliments, Concerns and Complaints report for the year ending 2021-22 (paper 9.1) presented by the Deputy Principal and were

invited to ask questions.

### **Questions from Directors**

Directors asked if there were any concerns about the decrease in complaints, it was noted in the report that, despite the decrease in the number of complaints there was a slight increase in concerns compared to the previous year, suggesting staff are open to feedback and able to respond effectively to avoid concerns becoming complaints.

Directors asked for some clarification regarding the increase in E&D complaints, it was noted that as a result of the increase, SLT and the Strategic Equality Committee have worked with a parent and a student to begin to further enhance the college's understanding of faiths and other cultures and, as a result, more robust plans are in place for 2022-23.

Directors noted they were pleased that there had been no complaints regarding teaching and learning which reflects highly on college staff given the challenges they have faced with teaching during periods of remote learning.

In response to a question, it was noted that all compliments are completely unsolicited, the Principal noted that one of the concerns is that all compliments received are not recorded, lots of compliments go to individual staff members but only compliments from external sources are accepted for recording purposes.

### **30.2022 Student Report**

Directors received and noted the student director report (paper 10.1)

### **31.2022 Governance**

Directors discussed how to attract potential directors to the board based on the current skills audit (paper 11.1). Directors were asked to reach out to any contacts they have that may be a suitable candidate, particularly in the areas of security, estates and HR and pass on information to the Clerk to start initial discussions.

Directors

**31.2022 D1 resolved: Directors formally approved the appointment of the Teaching Staff director Alistair Burr for a further term of 4 years**

*SLT left the meeting*

### **32.2022 Strategic Development Plan**

Directors reviewed and approved the Five-Year Strategic Development Plan including the Public Value Statement (paper 12.1) presented by the Principal.

### **Questions from Directors**

Directors asked about the priority to be consistently in the top 20% for value added and what is the current position, it was noted that there had been no data for the last two years due to the pandemic, therefore the current position is not known. Directors were also informed that most colleges are academising, which means data will not be received in the same way, making it harder to make comparisons.

### **33.2022 Professional Support**

The Principal informed directors that there are no staff currently receiving professional support.

### **Questions from Directors**

Asked in light of the lack of data for the last two years, how is teaching performance being monitored, it was noted that monitoring is taking place in a

variety of ways such as, in classrooms, review of progress update on EMRIS after every data drop and discussions with Heads of Departments who meet with staff on a regular basis.

The Principal noted that it was important to have faith in staff and reduce unnecessary pressure on them after such a difficult time. It was noted that despite the outcome of results staff will not be put on professional support this year due to the disruption over the last two years.

In response to a question, directors were informed that the difference between informal support and professional support is the latter is more formal.

### **34.2022 Principal's Report**

Directors considered and approved the Principal's report (paper 14.1) presented by the Principal, she highlighted the following from the report.

Directors were informed that the **new student day** was a success with over 600 students attending, there are a further six year-10 experience days taking before the end of term which involved 15/17 local high schools.

**Recruitment** - the current data shows an increase of 1.6 pp in the market share of the local year 11 cohort across the Fylde Coast, it was noted that staff are aware that the need to convert applications to enrolment is vital. There are lots of 'keep warm' activities planned over the summer.

**Principal's activities** - the Principal gave directors a flavour of the activities she had been involved in since the last report in March, which included ASCEND counter terrorism training. She highlighted the importance of all staff and directors being aware of any potential threats.

**Academisation** - directors were informed that conversations had begun to explore academisation, it was noted that the CEO of Ashton College had agreed to come to Blackpool Sixth on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022 to talk to directors and SLT about the journey into academisation. The Clerk agreed to invite directors to the meeting.

Clerk

It was proposed that a small group of directors and SLT will take this strategic discussion forward following the meeting.

### **Questions from Directors**

Asked if there is a period where students can leave that is the expected norm, it was noted this can happen in the first few weeks, time is spent settling the students into college life and being supportive of student choices.

Asked about the decline in applications from South Shore, it was noted that there are good relationships formed with all Blackpool schools but some students don't feel Blackpool Sixth is for them. The college is working hard to change this perception. It was also noted that travel is an issue from that particular area whereas other areas such as, Lytham, Kirkham and Garstang have the incentive of the free bus. SLT is mindful of this and is exploring whether this is a barrier to students from the south shore area considering Blackpool Sixth.

Directors were informed that Pastoral Mentors are being assigned local schools to help relieve any anxieties and worries about college. It was noted that year-10 experience days had not taken place for the last two years which has had an impact on conversion from applications to enrolments.

Asked about the ITE market review of the SCITT, the Principal explained the process to directors, which included waiting for the result of the re-submission with the outcome due in September. If unsuccessful there will be some changes ahead for the Fylde Coast SCITT as we know it.

**35.2022 Report on Chairs' action since the last meeting**

The Chair gave a verbal update on his activities since the last meeting which included; a meeting with the ESFA, discussions about academisation and noted there is a lot to think about, he also attended the awards ceremony and praised the students for their wonderful warm citations and the lovely atmosphere at the college.

*Ray Baker left the meeting*

**36.2022 Safeguarding**

Directors noted the FCAT Safeguarding Board meeting minutes (paper 16.1) held on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

**Committee Meetings**

**37.2022 Remuneration Review**

The Chair of the Corporation in the absence of the Chair of Remuneration gave directors a verbal update on the remuneration review meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2022

**38.2022 Standards Board**

Directors received the minutes of the Standards Board meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022 for approval (paper 18.1)

**38.2022 D1 resolved: to receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

**39.2022 Search and Governance Committee**

Directors received the minutes of the Search and Governance committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022 for approval (paper 19.1)

**39.2022 D1 resolved: to receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

**40.2022 Audit Committee**

Directors received the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022 (paper 20.1) and various documents for approval (paper 20.2/20.3)

**40.2022 D1 resolved: to receive and approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

**40.2022 D2 resolved: to approve the Financial Audit Plan for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> July 2022**

**40.2022 D3 resolved: to approve the Risk Management Report and Risk Registers**

**41.2022 Administration and Finance Committee**

Directors were presented with various documents for approval which included;

- Draft Budget 2022-23 (paper 21.1)
- Directors Financial report for the period ending 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022 (paper 21.2)
- The Property Strategy paper and proposal (paper 21.3)

The Principal outlined the proposal for preparatory work discussed at the recent A&F committee meeting, the chair proposed he may be able to mitigate the costs further and agreed to look into it in more detail. CB

**41.2022 D1 resolved: to approve the draft budget 2022-23**

**41.2022 D2 resolved: to approve the Directors Financial report**

**41.2022 D3 resolved: to approve the proposal to progress to preparatory work for option 1 and 4 in the property strategy.**

**42.2022 Directors' Self-Assessment**

A discussion took place about the directors' SAR and QIP for 2022-23, it was noted that the best way forward was for all directors to complete a Google form Clerk

of strengths and areas for improvement with the aim to give directors an indication of what to focus on for the next 12 months and any training that is required.

**43.2022 AOB**

Directors were asked if they would like to become involved in the Oxbridge interviews between 31<sup>st</sup> October-7<sup>th</sup> November, and were asked to inform the clerk as soon as possible if they are available to assist.

Directors were thanked for their ongoing support

**44.2022 Identification of any new or amended risks**

No identification of any new or amended risks were identified

**45.2022 Directors were reminded to update their DPR with attendance for this meeting**

**46.2022 Date and Time of next meeting**

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 5.00pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_