

GOVERNING EXECUTIVE

Minutes of Part A of the five hundred and eighty-first meeting of the Governing Executive held on Friday 4th March at 10.30am at Ruskin College, Dunstan Road, Old Headington, Oxford, OX3 9BZ

Present:

Carole Orgell-Rosen (Chair) O
Alan Shepherd (Vice-Chair) O
Chris Baugh O *part*
Van Coulter O
Neil Crew O
Anne Hock O
Paul Inman O
Roger McKenzie O *part*
Pearl Ryall O *part*
Chris Wilkes S
Kieron Winters S
Lisa Birch St
Key
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In attendance:

Miriam David (Academic Advisor) *part*
Sally Courtney (Finance Director) *part*
Paul Di Felice (Vice-Principal)
Helen Jeffries (Clerk)

Ordinary member
Staff member
Student member

PART A

- 1 Apologies for absence** Action
Apologies were received from Wendy Dawson, Peter Dwyer, Rob Hancock, Bridget Ng'andu and Doug Nicholls.
- 2 Declarations of interest**
There were no declarations of interest.

The Clerk took the chair for the next item.
- 3 Election of Chair**
Carole Orgell-Rosen was nominated and seconded. There were no further nominations.
Approved: the election of Carole Orgell-Rosen as Chair of the Governing Executive and Council
Carole Orgell-Rosen again took the Chair
- 4 Election of Vice-Chair**
Alan Shepherd was nominated and seconded. There were no further nominations.
Approved: the election of Alan Shepherd as Vice-Chair of the Governing Executive and Council.

5. **Welcome and approve new members (when appropriate)**

MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORTS AND SPECIAL ITEMS

6 **Risk Management Training**

Received: a presentation on Risk Management Training from the Internal Auditor, Katharine Moss of Critchley's.

The presentation will be added to the Governors page of the Intranet and distributed via e-mail.

Noted (6.1): a query from Van Coulter regarding the Social Value Act and how the College drives public values through non-financial outcomes and through procurement from suppliers providing the living wage.

Noted (6.2): that this was achieved in the procurement for the catering contract and the Capital Project.

Chris Baugh joined the meeting at 10.50am

Agreed: that Van Coulter would provide a paper for the Audit Committee in May.

Noted (6.3): that the Chair of Audit Committee was not convinced that the Governing Executive had grasped how it felt about risk, and that it needed to improve performance in this area and look at how it handled risk.

7 **Prevent Duty Training**

Received: a presentation from the Vice-Principal and Safeguarding Lead for the College.

The presentation, the Prevent Safeguarding Action Plan and the Prevent Duty Risk Assessment would be added to the Governors Intranet pages and circulated via e-mail. Guidance and links to external guidance was available on the Intranet. The link would be circulated with the above e-mail.

Governors must also undertake the online training provided free of charge by the Education and Training Foundation. The link to this would be circulated again.

Noted (7.1): that Prevent Duty played a major part in any Ofsted inspection.

Noted (7.2): that both Pearl Ryall and the Chair had already completed training in this area and were happy to be critical friends for the College.

Noted (7.3): that the College was developing a policy for events at the College that would include the Prevent Duty. This could include convening a panel with UCU representation to discuss any possibly controversial speakers/events. It was important that colleagues were part of the decision making process.

Noted (7.4): that the proposed policy would come to the May meeting of the Governing Executive.

Noted (7.5): a question on how any such policy would impact on summer schools held at the College. The College ensured that due diligence was completed by the summer schools.

Noted (7.6): that the students were uncomfortable with such a policy and concerned about any impact on freedom of speech. Student representatives would be involved in any discussions.

Noted (7.7): that it was important to keep work and policies around Prevent firmly centred within the College's core values. The College had a choice about how it dealt with the Duty, but the Duty itself was compulsory. Publicly funded bodies risked the removal of their funding if they did not comply. Compliance with the Duty was a

priority for Ofsted.

The Chair thanked Katharine Moss for the training on Risk Management.

Katherine Moss left the meeting at 11.30am.

8 Chair's update

Received: a verbal update from the Chair on recent engagement.

Noted (8.1): The Chair had been meeting with students every six weeks and this had been well received.

Noted 8.2): that the Chair had carried out part 1 of the Principal's appraisal and that the Clerk's was pending.

Noted (8.3): that the Chair attended the Association of Colleges (AOC) Governance Summit, from which she highlighted the following points;

- One of the main focus areas of the conference was Area Reviews-did the Executive understand the challenges and potential impacts.
- There was an emphasis on changes required from 2018, including the apprenticeship levy. It would be a college's responsibility to approach potential employers. Some colleges had chosen to provide 'white collar' apprenticeships.
- Ofsted would be using four key judgement areas in inspections. A copy of the presentation given by Ofsted would be sent out by the Clerk. Inspectors would test governor's identification of areas of weakness in the college, and their capacity and ability to deal with them.
- Outcome agreements would be required whether or not a college was part of an area review. Data would look at the tax records of students and marry this with the outcome agreements. Outcome agreements would be signed off by the funding organisation. The College would need to be able to map students' progress after they had left the College and use the statistics to demonstrate the worth of the College.

Clerk

The following points were noted in discussion;

- i. The Development Office work with alumni would be important to this. Many Ruskin alumni had high visibility in the city of Oxford.
- ii. At what point would Ruskin consider/discuss apprenticeships?

Principal's report

9 **Received:** a report from the Principal on current issues.

Noted (9.1): that the immediate challenge for the College was the forthcoming Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) review. Staff and students had completed a vast amount of work towards this, including submitting more than 200 pieces of evidence.

Noted (9.2): that the key risk in the strategic plan was in the area of trade union education. The funding would be reduced by 50% in 2016/17. The College was in discussion with the TUC and unions on how the new funding regime would work. The College was aiming to fill the funding gap in seven different ways. The College needed to focus on how to meet Skills Funding Agency (SFA) targets despite the cut in trade union funding.

Noted (9.3): following a Special Designated Institution (SDI) meeting with the Skills Minister, the SDIs had been promised national funding and flat line funding for next year, using a special pot held by the department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). The SDIs would help the SFA write a submission to BIS on the transition to the

new funding arrangements. Another meeting had been arranged with the SFA for April. The SDIs were arguing for special outcome measures for their colleges of which social value would play a major part.

Noted (9.4): the SFA would be restructuring and may lose staff. At the recent meeting with the SFA on the Recovery Plan the Principal and the Finance Director were able to explain why the College ended up as 'inadequate' last year. The College had moved area within the SFA and the relationship with them would change. The plan was for the College to return to 'Satisfactory' financial health this year.

Noted (9.5): that the College was piloting a scheme with Unite offering IT training to workers at the Cowley BMW factory.

Noted (9.6): that the College was proposing collaboration with Abingdon and Witney College that would enable the College to be in a stronger potential funding position.

Noted (9.7): that the Development Officer had reported to the Finance Committee in February and that the College would set up a Business Development Panel to look at non-academic income-generating ideas.

The following points were noted in discussion;

- i. Unison was looking at what courses it could deliver in the workplace and online. It would be useful to discuss this with the College, and Unison was keen that Ruskin should be involved in the accreditation of shop stewards. The Principal would welcome a meeting with Unison representatives.
- ii. It was part of the SDI bid for special funding to the Minister that the colleges involved did not offer apprenticeships. However higher education apprenticeships had not been ruled out. The College would not pay any apprenticeship levy as it was not large enough. There had been a paucity of take-up for adult apprenticeships. More students had taken a 24+loan for an Access course.

Agreed: that item 12 could be taken next.

12 Finance Director's report

Received: a report on the financial position to end December 2015

Noted (12.1): that the year-end position was forecast to be 'Satisfactory' within the SFA terms. The College was forecasting an extra £200k in cash and an overspend on agency fees with a corresponding underspend on payroll.

Noted (12.2): that contracts had been signed for summer schools worth £70k and that the agreement with the John Radcliffe hospital for the use of rooms would continue through the spring and summer terms.

Noted (12.3): that the café was working well and that support areas were mainly in line with expectations.

The following points were noted in discussion;

- i. That unbudgeted agency fees were for cover in Short Course administration and work on changing the MIS.
- ii. That the College was considering outsourcing cleaning, for both financial and quality reasons. Cleaners could play a role in safeguarding and reported back on student issues to the wardens.

10 Vice-Principal's report

Received: a report from the Vice-Principal on teaching, learning and assessment.

Noted (10.1): the Vice-Principal thanked the student governor for her work on the QAA review.

Noted (10.2): that the College was working with local employers to deliver courses in Maths, English and ITQ.

Noted (10.3): that the College was investigating Health as an area to develop at HE and FE levels. It had been agreed that the College would develop a degree in Applied Social Sciences, with an employment focus. This would be allied to a degree in Health and Social Care to be launched in 2017 for which there was a demand.

Noted (10.4): that the BA (Hons) in Youth and Community Work had been re-validated as the BA (Hons) in Community Development and Youth Work.

Noted (10.5): that retention was good on the Access and HE long courses.

Noted (10.6): that there had been a lot of activity within the student community and that the student governor had been a leading figure in this. A Student Committee had been formed and a successful Student Conference held.

The following points were noted in discussion;

- i. A query regarding figures on equality, diversity and inclusion on the Governing Executive and the Council. Student figures were shown in the Key Performance Indicators and the Annual Report.
- ii. A query on how part-time staff were developed and appraised. All part-time staff attend an induction. The College was looking into e-learning as a way of providing training for part-time staff.
- iii. A query on continuity in the student voice programme. A number of student reps were in the first year of their programme. The priority was to sustain the momentum created this year.

11 Strategic Action Plan 2015/16

Received: the Strategic Action Plan Monitoring Report

Noted (11.1): that the report showed a summary of the situation and that it showed that the College was on track to achieve the plan.

POLICIES

13 Harassment Policy and Procedure

Received: the revised Harassment Policy and Procedure.

Noted: that the policy would return to the Governing Executive after further review in terms of Prevent Duty at the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC).

14 Finance Committee Annual Schedule of Business

Received: the revised Finance Committee Annual Schedule of Business.

Approved: the revised Finance Committee Annual Schedule of Business.

15 Financial Regulations

Received: the revised Financial Regulations.

Approved: the revised Financial Regulations.

- 16 Protocol for Excellence in Governance**
Received: the revised Protocol for Excellence in Governance.
Noted: the additions to the Protocol. The Protocol would return to the Governing Executive after a review of the internal audit of governance.
Approved: the revised Protocol for Excellence in Governance.
- 17 Records Management Policy**
Received: the updated Records Management Policy
Noted: that item 5e ensured that appropriate records would be added to the archive.
Approved: the updated Records Management Policy.
- 18 Risk Management Policy**
N.B. the Risk Management Policy will be taken to the May 13th meeting after a review by the Audit Committee on March 11th.

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

- 19 Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Framework 2016-2020**
Noted (19.1): that the number of female students had increased on long courses. The number of BME students was below target, whilst the number of disabled students was much higher than target.
Noted (19.2): that concern was expressed over the reduction in BME students and how this reflected the wider economy.
Noted (19.3): that it would be useful to see the total number of students and breakdown by programme. This data would be brought to the next meeting.
Approved: the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Framework 2016-2020
- 20 Tuition fees and charges**
Received: the tuition fees and charges for 2016/17 and the HE tuition fees for 2017/18
Noted: that the 16/17 levels had been set in the Access agreement and that the fees and charges document had been approved by Finance.
Approved: the tuition fees and charges for 2016/17 and the HE tuition fees for 2017/18
- 21 Options appraisal**
Received: a proposal for an options appraisal on collaboration between Ruskin College and Abingdon and Witney College.
Noted (21.1): that this report had already been seen by the 6 week meeting committee and the Finance Committee.
Noted (21.2): that the values of the two colleges were similar in terms of success and quality.
Noted (21.3): that a full merger was not being proposed.
Noted (21.4): that the report from the options appraisal would be brought to the May meeting.
Noted (21.5): that the AOC had produced a Guide for Governors and Senior Leaders

on New Structures, Collaborations, Federations and Mergers. The link to the relevant AOC web page would be circulated by the Clerk and a link would be placed on the Governors Intranet pages.

Clerk

Noted (21.6): that the options appraisal would look at extending the reach of Ruskin, including marketing to students. The consultant performing the appraisal was familiar with the special status of the SDIs.

Noted (21.7): that the College should not rule out consideration of other links with SDIs or trade unions.

Approved: a proposal for an options appraisal on collaboration between Ruskin College and Abingdon and Witney College.

The Chair now allowed an extra agenda item from Councillor Van Coulter on devolution.

The Councillor reported that the District Councils within Oxfordshire had submitted their own unitary proposals to the devolution agenda. The four District Councils were unhappy with the County Council bid which proposed that the districts be abolished. The district's proposal was that the County Council be abolished. The Councillor recommended that the College strengthen its relationship with the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OXLEP).

The Principal had been informed of the District Council bid by the Principal of Abingdon & Witney College. The Principal had been invited to take part in the local skills board once it had been restructured.

The meeting broke for lunch at 1.05pm. Roger McKenzie, Pearl Ryall and Miriam Davis left the meeting.

The meeting re-convened at 1.45pm

COMMITTEE AND GOVERNANCE ITEMS TO RECEIVE

22 Minutes of the meetings held on 20th November 2015 and 13th January 2016 (GE/578A and 580A/M)

Received: Minutes of the meetings held on 20th November 2015 and 13th January 2016 (GE/578A and 580A/M)

Confirmed: as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 20th November 2015 and 13th January 2016 (GE/578A and 580A/M).

23 Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

24 Finance Committee

Received: the minutes of the Finance Committee held on 5th February 2016

Noted: different ideas for the Business Development Panel, including scoping and costing ideas before going to the panel and scoping ideas after an initial appraisal by the panel. The management team would discuss this and it would be brought to the next meeting of the Finance Committee.

25 Academic Quality and Standards Committee

Received: the minutes of Part A of the meeting held on 11th December 2015.

26 Governance items

26.1 Received: minutes of the Search Committee held on 9th February 2016

Noted: that the Committee recommended that Richard O'Brien be nominated to Council and approved the nomination of Richard O'Brien and Marva Small to the Finance Committee. The Committee also approved the nominations of Rob Hancock and Kieron Winters to the Search Committee.

Noted: that the Committee approved the action plan for the work on the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges and the conduct of a skills audit in 2016.

26.2 Received: feedback from the annual self-assessment exercise.

STANDING ITEMS

27 Received: a verbal report on the work of the Ruskin Student Union.

Noted: that meetings of the student committee had been well attended, and that representative training for members would be helpful. The students wanted to organise an end of year party, probably on 27th May, so that facilities could be shared with the Community Day. The Union had received £500 from the local UCU branch and £200 from the Ruskin Fellowship in donations. The Union would bring the proposed budget to the Finance Committee. A new constitution was being drafted and elections would be held in May.

Agreed: that a non-speaking observer could attend the next meeting of the Governing Executive in the context of training to be a student governor and that this would be without precedent.

Meeting dates

28 Noted: the meeting dates for the remainder of the academic year

- 13th May 2016
- 1st July 2016

Agreed: that meetings would start at 10.30am.

There being no further business Part A of the meeting closed at 2.06pm

Signed by the Chair of the meeting succeeding that to which these minutes pertain

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