

Meeting/Committee	Board Meeting
Date of meeting	10 th May 2018

18.38 Membership

	Ms L Adams	Ap	Dr A Nortcliffe
	Ms C Burn		Ms A Phillips
	Mr D Buxton		Mr S Smith
	Mr J Connolly	Ap	Mr C Stanbra
	Ms H Groves		Mr A Stott (Chair)
Ap	Mr I Knowles		Miss S Symms
		Ap	Mrs K Wood

In attendance:

Mr T De'Ath	Clerk to the Corporation
Ms J Dallinson	Secretary to the Board
Mr P Sayles	Deputy Principal
Mr J Austin	Vice Principal

18.39 Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Mr Knowles, Mr Stanbra, Dr Nortcliffe, Mrs Wood and Dr Noble.

The Chair welcomed Ms Phillips to her first meeting.

The Chair reiterated that recent attendance at Board meetings was a concern and would be considered as part of discussions with Governors over the summer in order to establish an appropriate Governance model for the organisation.

Mrs Adams, Staff Governor, withdrew from the meeting for the next item of business, which was deemed confidential and therefore minuted separately.

18.40 Declarations of Interest & Eligibility

Mrs Burn declared an interest in item 18.52 as a Governor of DALP Academy Trust.

Mr Smith had joined the Board of the Royal Crown Darby Trust.

18.41 Minutes of the meeting held 8th March 2018

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

18.42 Matters Arising

- 18.42.01 Re 18.25.01: As reported at the previous meeting, the joint bid for an Institute of Technology had been submitted with the support of all SCR FE colleges as partners, but not as anchor partners. As such, a copy of the bid

had been requested but refused on the grounds of commercial sensitivities. The Board asked that Mr Connolly continue to pursue the matter.

- 18.42.02 Re 18.27: Following advice from Ms Groves, triggers for amber alerts had been revised to 3 months to allow earlier identification of Apprentices nearing end dates.

18.43 Governor Resignation and Review of Constitution

Mr D Smith had tendered his resignation as Governor, and a period of leave of absence had been granted to Mrs Wood. It was therefore proposed that the constitution of the Board remain at 16, with 11 external members. The Board expressed their thanks to Mr D Smith for his years of service to the RNN Group and to Rotherham College prior to the merger.

RESOLVED 18.43 That the Search Committee continue to seek an additional external Governor to fill the vacancy

18.44 Strategic Plan Monitoring Report

Mr Connolly presented progress against the strategic priority to become outstanding. Mr Austin briefly explained the initiatives put in place to monitor attendance on English and Maths programmes, and further details had been provided in the Curriculum & Quality Report. Whilst it was difficult to identify the direct impact of the initiatives, due to the lack of any control group, attendance had improved in March but had subsequently slightly dipped in April.

18.45 Ofsted Monitoring Report

The final version of the Ofsted Monitoring Visit Report had been published on 13th April and a copy was included within the papers. After moderation, theme 1 had been revised to "insufficient progress", whilst themes 2 and 3 remained as "reasonable progress". Action plans had been put in place and integrated in to the wider Apprenticeship and WBL provision, particularly in terms of safeguarding processes. Improved due diligence processes for subcontractors had been established since January, in addition to increased TLA observations with a focus on skills development, unannounced visits, and close monitoring of achievement rates on all Apprenticeship programmes.

Excellent feedback had been received to the CPD day on 2nd May, and further sessions had been requested around TLA observations and Ofsted requirements.

18.46 Curriculum & Quality Report

A summary of headline data had been appended to the report. Overall retention on Education and Training programmes was 2.4% above the 2016/17 national average, whilst attendance remained below the college target, despite the initiatives put in place. Overall retention and achievements on Apprenticeship programmes had been provided, although the main focus was on timely achievement. Close monitoring of timely predictions was taking place by the SLT, with a focus on key risk areas.

Whilst recognising the increased Governor oversight of subcontracted provision, and the drive by Management, Ofsted had been unable to

evidence the impact during their recent visit. In light of these comments and the publication of National Achievement Rates, it was proposed to rebase the SAR gradings to more accurately reflect the current understanding of relative performance.

The following discussions were deemed confidential and were therefore minuted separately.

RESOLVED 18.46 That the SAR be revised to an overall grade of “Requires Improvement”

18.47 Management Accounts Period 8

The management accounts showed a further deterioration in performance from a £265k deficit forecast outturn at period 7 to a £391k forecast deficit at period 8. The year to date deficit was reported as £1,956k compared to the budgeted deficit of £1,130k. Much of the decline was due to omissions or errors in the previous year, together with the difficulties arising from integration of systems following mergers. The Finance Director was currently undertaking a full review of the 2017/18 accounts to ensure confident and accurate reporting going forward.

In response to Mr Smith’s query as to whether the position was expected to deteriorate further, the Chief Executive said the biggest factor had been the reduction in Apprenticeship income resulting from the introduction of the Levy, although he did not anticipate this would worsen any further. However, there were some uncertainties regarding achievement of the Adult Education Budget, and the Director of Finance would be asked to provide a sensitivity analysis on this aspect of the forecast before the next meeting.

18.48 Budget Planning

The first draft of the 2018/19 budget showed a significant deficit for the year, based on best predictions of income and current cost levels. The budget assumed a 1% pay award but did not include any increase in income or savings in costs. As curriculum areas were believed to be running efficiently, the significant deficit in College had to be within support areas and Apprenticeships delivery. After adjustments, the budget indicated an operating deficit of approximately £750k.

The Board were asked to consider supporting a deficit budget in 2018/19, allowing management to approach the problems from a quality perspective, whilst implementing savings for the longer term. Mr Smith expressed some concern, and requested a 3-year trajectory be provided to enable the Board to make an informed decision. The final draft budget would be presented to the June meeting.

18.49 GDPR Update

Governors received an update on progress towards compliance against the General Data Protection Regulation directive, which would come in to force on 25th May. The Clerk confirmed that good, steady progress was being made in the majority of areas.

18.50 RNN Training / Subsidiaries Proposals

Discussions relating to this item of business were deemed confidential and were therefore minuted separately.

18.51 Recommended Pay Award

Governors were presented with 3 options for consideration:

- Approval of the 1% recommended pay award for all staff
- Defer consideration for a further month
- Decide that current finances will not support a pay award.

Ms Phillips suggested that if the Board could not support a blanket award, some funds might be made available to reward a limited number of staff where warranted by good practice.

After consideration, the Board agreed to defer the matter for a further month.

18.52 Retford Post 16 Centre Proposals

Discussions relating to this item of business were deemed confidential and were therefore minuted separately.

18.53 Recommendation from Audit Committee

In the absence of Mr Knowles, Mr Buxton presented the report. The Chair of Audit Committee and the Finance Director had met with Wylie & Bisset to express the concerns of the Committee in terms of the quality of audits and content of reports. Despite these conversations, little improvement had been seen, therefore it was proposed that the contract for the provision of Internal Audit Service be terminated with immediate effect.

RESOLVED 18.53 That the contract with Wylie & Bisset be terminated and that proposals for a replacement service be presented to the July meeting

18.54 Single Equality Scheme

The updated Single Equality Scheme was presented for approval and publication on the Group website.

RESOLVED 18.54 That the Single Equality Scheme be approved

18.55 UCR Update

The project was on track to achieve the 6th August handover. Approval was sought from the Board to suspend financial regulations for the procurement of the Section 278 works within the public highway, in order to achieve cost savings.

RMBC had offered an increased footprint for the Doncaster Gate site as freehold land at no additional cost, which would allow greater facility for phase 2.

Investigations had begun to engage a high profile individual to officially open the Centre.

RESOLVED 18.55 That the suspension of financial regulations for the procurement of the 278 works be approved

18.56 Code of Conduct for Corporation Members

The fifteenth edition Code of Conduct, as presented by Eversheds, had been included in the papers. All Governors present agreed to abide by the provisions of the Code.

Mr Buxton asked if a plan had been developed for Governor CPD. The matter would be discussed at the next Governance Planning meeting and presented to the Board in July.

In order to register to the Office for Students, all institutions were required to provide personal details of Board members. Governors were therefore asked to sign the consent form, which would be held on file, and shared with OfS if requested.

RESOLVED 18.56 That the RNN Group Board adopt the fifteenth Code of Conduct

18.57 Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held 15th March

The minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 15th March were presented for information.

18.58 Minutes of the Quality & Standards Committee Meeting held 16th March

The minutes of the Quality & Standards Committee meeting held on 16th March were presented for information.

18.59 Confidentiality

Discussions under items 18.39, 18.46, 18.50 and 18.52 were deemed confidential and were minuted separately.

18.60 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 14th June 2018 at 6pm at Dearne Valley College

Signed _____ Chairman

Date _____