

**PRESENT:** Helen Walley (Chair)  
Ben Geeson  
Kene Ibezi  
Roz Liard  
Stephan John  
Anthony Parker  
Gordon Smith  
Tim Thirlwall  
Frances Wadsworth (Principal)

**ATTENDING:** Neil Blackmore (Clerk)  
Chay Champness (Chief Operating Officer - COO)  
Andy Smith (Deputy Chief Executive – DCE)

**APOLOGIES:** Clare Mackie  
Piers White  
Kate Ward

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## **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

As noted.

## **2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

No new declarations were made.

## **3 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF 5 DECEMBER 2012 AND 6 FEBRUARY 2013**

Both minutes were agreed and signed as true records.

### **3.1 Matters Arising From These Minutes**

At the last meeting, Governors had asked about metrics or descriptors that would be used to describe a "Grade 2 culture". Governors now asked that managers return with a report broadly themed around this.

**ACTION:** Managers to provide Governors with a description of metrics or descriptors of a "Grade 2 culture" or if appropriate, to report more flexibility around the same.

### **3.2 Additional Report on Any Recent Decisions**

The Clerk noted that the updated version of the Code of Conduct had been circulated by email and had now been adopted.

## **4 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

The report was **RECEIVED**. Managers updated members with the latest allocations from the SFA and the EFA. The Principal confirmed that there had been an all-staff briefing about savings and restructuring the same day. She also outlined developments with the UKBA and LB Croydon. Governors welcomed the breadth and innovation of actions re OTL and associated pedagogical practice. They requested further information about these actions, and Managers discussed how these processes had been developed and reviewed.

The Principal noted that following its second inadequate inspection, Coulsdon College was entering a new relationship with Reigate College. There was a discussion about the level of consultation about this new relationship with the range of potential stakeholders in the Croydon area. The Vice Chair confirmed this wider background. The Principal also outlined possible impacts in terms of these changes to student cohorts in the local area. The Chair asked that the Principal keep Governors informed about these developments.

## **5 KPIS & OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS OF TARGETS AT MID-YEAR**

The report was **RECEIVED**. Governors asked for more information on any research into learners with poor attendance. The DCE confirmed that the College undertook such research, which often pointed to domestic circumstances within such a cohort. The DCE stated that the College routinely directed such learners towards a pastoral route (e.g. concern clinics) but that it was important that the College remembered that academic routes also existed. Governors agreed, noting that many learners can achieve admirably in difficult personal circumstances.

Governors asked about discrepancies in class sizes and when classes become non-viable either because they were too small or too large. The DCE gave examples of the range of class sizes and the background to how these classes function, for example, where JobCentre Plus might require attendance or in the relative popularity of a subject. These differing priorities affect viability/necessity of providing the class. The DCE outlined the possibility to increase class size in very popular areas but this would have to be supported by strong e-learning and tutorial strategies to ensure no learning loss.

Governors requested that the impact of non-retention between years of study be considered at LQC. Governors asked about the comparability of "urban colleges" (re Ofsted Report on Urban Colleges). The Principal and DCE reported that large London colleges tend to report similar issues arising: attendance, very high levels of "walk-in" enrolments, etc. More information on the same was requested by Governors to come to LQC.

**ACTION:** LQC to receive reports on the impact of non-retention between years and about the issues of "urban colleges" (following the Ofsted Report on Urban Colleges).

**ACTION:** The COO to distribute the details of the number of Health & Safety drills via the Clerk.

## **6 ANNUAL REVIEW OF SAFEGUARDING**

The report was **RECEIVED**. The DCE asked for feedback on the format of the report. Governors stated that the format was good with routes to additional information, if required. Governors noted the usefulness of the online safeguarding training in consideration of this area for those working outside the sector. There was a discussion about the duty of the College to ensure its own reporting was robust to ensure effective safeguarding referral both internally and externally, arising from some of the situations outlined in the report.

## **7 GOVERNANCE ITEMS**

### **7.1 Student Governor Report**

The Student Governor gave an oral report, including: March 12 Parliament Square event with UNICEF If Campaign; the Student Common Room being awarded CitySafe Haven status; UNICEF lobbying re the upcoming G8 summit. Governors welcomed particularly the CitySafe Haven status.

## 7.2 Governors Conference Follow-Up

Following the Conference on 22 March 2013, the Clerk had produced a summary of decisions, which was **RECEIVED**. It was noted that the Croydon College Public Value Statement had been finalised as follows:

*Croydon College is ambitious for its community and seeks to provide outstanding education and training opportunities for all. We strive to raise aspirations and change the lives of the people living, working and learning around us. Our focus is on actively working in partnership to invest, grow and shape the services within our community.*

The other items were noted.

## 7.3 Governor Reports On Non-Committee Items

The Chair invited members to report on items at which they had attended. S John reported on his attendance at Student Parliament and at GOAL. At GOAL, he spoke to 20-25 people were very positive at the College, but a sizeable number mentioned slow turnaround of assignments. The Principal confirmed that she had had feedback on the same and there was possibly some work to do on curriculum design. The Chair cited research into the impact of students getting effective feedback. T Thirlwall reported on his attendance at Student Parliament. He noted how confident and articulate the College learners are. The Principal noted the strength of the learner voice and representation structures at the College. The Vice Chair had attended a DQR the same day and stated that the Acting Head of Division provided a strong presentation. He suggested that it would be useful to attend a DQR in an area which was less robust. It was noted that continuity of attendance at particular division's DQR might be difficult due to scheduling changes. P White had also sent notes in his absence to the Chair, from which she read.

## 7.4 Governance Quality Improvement Plan

Following the Conference, the Clerk had produced an updated QIP, which was **RECEIVED**. Governors **RESOLVED** to accept this version but the Chair asked that any additional comments be sent to the Clerk.

## 8 RISK MANAGEMENT

The report was **RECEIVED**. The COO drew attention to the impact of the discussion at LQC to change the analysis of risks to reputational impact re safeguarding and that this was a good example of Governors' impact in risk management. The Chair suggested that references to last audit dates some years back be reviewed.

## 9 MINUTES OF MEETINGS

### 9.1 Audit Committee 27 February 2013

The minutes were **RECEIVED**. The Chair of Audit, who had sent apologies, had sent the Chair and the Clerk an email, about the content of the minutes. Governors asked for more information on pension risk. The COO outlined possible future issues re the LB Croydon Local Government Pension Scheme, which is an underfunded multi-employer scheme. He noted that the College therefore had limited input into discussions as well as the statutory restrictions placed on such schemes.

### 9.2 LQC 28 November 2013

The minutes were **RECEIVED**. The Chair of LQC (the Vice-Chair) outlined the minutes and the Committee's expressed wish to get a stronger sense of programmes with a NTI. The position on the Annual Equality & Diversity Report was noted from the Committee minutes.

### **9.3 Search & Governance Committee 8 February 2013**

The minutes were **RECEIVED**. The Chair of Search outlined the minutes, including issues of succession planning and linked it to the Skills Audit. There was a discussion about external views of the robust peer-/chair-assessment strategies that the board has been undertaking.

### **9.4 F&R 27 March 20 2013**

The minutes were **RECEIVED**. The Chair of F&R outlined the minutes. He noted Governors' concern at the Committee about unconsolidated pay awards. The COO confirmed that Barclay Road is to be marketed, as agreed by the Committee. He noted that LB Croydon had stated its interest in doing this in partnership. The COO noted that there had been some changes to the figures in the Budget Preparation paper following discussions with funding bodies. There was a discussion about the issues of continual savings in the whole FE sector. The Principal noted the pressures facing a number of colleges, some carrying significant deficits. The Chair concluded that the College's strategic thinking had to be a step ahead to plan for the future but had to be cautious to avoid the pitfalls sometimes associated with mergers and shared services.

**ACTION:** The Clerk to put the Staff Survey Feedback on the Governors' intranet.

## **10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Referring referred to J Blake's report's comments, there was a discussion about the proportion of consideration of HE within the reporting to the Board. The Vice Chair, as Chair of LQC, stated that the Committee was mindful of this but that there was regular reporting on HE at the Committee. Managers outlined upcoming events including Community Day (12 June 2013) and events at Chef.

## **11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

15 May 2013 6pm. This date may be used for a workshop.

*[The Clerk moved the following items to the public minutes. Original items remain confidential]*

## **12 MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE 27 FEBRUARY 2013**

The minutes were **RECEIVED**.