



# Heart of Yorkshire Education Group

Minutes of the Group Corporation Board Meeting

Held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 3.15pm

In the Board Meeting at Wakefield District Housing, Castleford

**Members In Attendance:** Ruth Baxter (RB), Dmitry Fedotov (DF), Jayne King (JK), Andrew McConnell (AM - Chair), Ben Porter (BP), Martyn Shaw (MS), Sam Wright (SW - Principal and CEO).

**Apologies received from:** Yasmin Ayub (YA), Nigel Brook (NB), Claire Corneille (CC), Ellie Halligan (EH), David Powell (DP), Richard Stiff (RSt), Vijay Teeluck (VT), Janet Waggott (JW), Neil Warren (NW).

**In attendance:** Clare Allcock (CA), Lorraine Cross (LC), Gordon McAlpine (GM), Lisa Macdonald (LM), Antonia Praud (AP -Director of Governance), and Karen Sykes (KS)

**Apologies received from:** Jason Pepper (JP)

Item		Action
1	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, and especially Gordon McAlpine, representing the Selby Board as Vice Chair, in the absence of Richard Stiff.</p> <p>Apologies were received from YA, NB, CC, EH, DP, RS, VT, JW and NW, which were all <b>accepted</b> with consent.</p> <p>No declarations of interest for items on the agenda were received.</p> <p>There were no additional items of business to add to the agenda and governors noted the rules of confidentiality.</p> <p>Governors thanked the executive team for an excellent session, the external strategic event that had preceded the meeting, and noted it was a shame that more governors had not been able to attend. They also noted that feedback from stakeholders had noted how professional the event was. Formal feedback will be requested from attendees and shared to inform future events.</p>	1
2	<p><b>Group SAR's and the QIP</b></p> <p>It was confirmed that DF, as Acting Chair of the Curriculum and Quality Committee, would present the session with LM.</p> <p>In November, the Committee had met to validate the SAR's and QIP. The process had been robust, with each governor reviewing sections in each report and</p>	

reporting back with questions for the Executive Team. Following the responses, the Committee had felt further work was needed before approval would be given.

Governors were informed that after Christmas LM had circulated formal responses to the comments from committee members. Committee members had then had a chance to respond, and GM had produced a very useful and analytical paper.

Additional feedback had been received from committee members and it was confirmed that the latest reports, submitted for approval, had taken this feedback on board.

It was acknowledged that some responses had not been included. As an example, concern had been noted that the two SAR reports were not balanced - for example noting the strong vision at Wakefield College, but not replicated at Selby College. It was explained that this was because it has been difficult to gather similar evidence at Selby College. The capture of MI differed, and statements could only be given when supported by robust evidence.

It was also noted that some of the terminology differed, with the use of strongly supportive terminology in the Wakefield report. It was confirmed that whilst there is evidence of strong practice at Selby, and there is learning for staff at Wakefield College from Selby staff, this again was linked to evidence (as an example, at Wakefield they have links and feedback from schools and learners).

Governors noted concern that a number of systems and processes were not yet aligned and were concerned if this imbalance may run into this academic year. Assurances were requested that even if the reporting mechanisms would differ, similar evidence would be collated across the group so that the group report in the future would be fully evidenced, informed and balanced.

Governors were also informed that some of the feedback (use of tables, presentation of data with comparators and evidence) had been useful and would be reflected in the group SAR next year.

Governors questioned how Ofsted would reflect on the two SAR reports and it was confirmed that in the monitoring visit the Inspectors would review both the SAR's and the new Group QIP, and would be asking questions to understand the progress the group was making.

Assurance was given to board members that a lot of progress had been made already.

The inspectors would also want to see if the group have accurately self-assessed itself, and this is where the need for robust evidence had impacted the Selby report.

	<p>The Ofsted Inspectors and executive team would understand the sensitivities, would take confidence that statements were only given when based on a secure evidence base, and would take assurance that the QIP has picked up the most appropriate areas for improvement.</p> <p>Governors were reminded that the group could expect a two day monitoring visit at any time after the first anniversary of merger, and a full inspection by July 2025.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the team were seeking ratification to sign of the process and approve the SAR's and QIP. Governors <b>approved</b> the documents.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Curriculum and Quality committee would debrief on the process at their next meeting. Feedback would incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The timing of the meeting, to enable challenge within the process</li> <li>• Governors confirmed that as part of their triangulation exercise, they would welcome an opportunity for a deep dive at each site.</li> <li>• Governors confirmed that it was difficult to read across from the SARs and the QIP – and they were informed that having one group SAR and QIP would make this easier next year.</li> </ul>	2
3	<p><b>Growth Strategy</b></p> <p>The Executive team had undertaken a SWOT analysis and have clearly outlined in the strategy what the plans for growth are in the plan (2022- 2025). The three key segments for growth over the next three years were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young People</li> <li>• High Needs Learners</li> <li>• Adults</li> </ul> <p>The team have a tight handle on the demographic in the region and are keen to maintain the market share in Wakefield and Castleford. There is an opportunity for growth for school leavers in Selby.</p> <p>There is also an opportunity to offer entry level course at Level 1 and 2 at Selby College, reinforcing the inclusive nature of the group. Some Level One courses were introduced this year and there is a plan to extend the offer next year. There is also an opportunity to build stronger relationships in the Selby area, and good progress is already being made.</p> <p>Adult education – the group have relied on subcontracting in the past, but can learn from a successful offer at Selby College. The group have recently appointed a Director of Adult Skills.</p> <p>Apprenticeships: the growth plan is based on current levels being maintained. Governors challenged this, asking if it was ambitious enough. Governors were reminded that the group were moving learners, addressing a number of withdrawals, and dealing with a number of complaints – and the focus in the</p>	

	<p>short to medium term would be ensuring the quality was secure and good, and building up the provision again.</p> <p>Governors had sent in questions to JP, in advance of the meeting. One area noted included how to benchmark the group’s provision for 16-18, and for apprenticeships.</p> <p>Governors were informed that one area where the group is behind is AEB, and there is an opportunity to grow the offer at Wakefield College. However, governors were informed that a number of colleges are heavily dependent on subcontracting. The group made a conscious decision to move away from subcontracting provision.</p> <p>Governors questioned how dynamic and flexible the plan would be, and responsive to the needs of the group. It was confirmed that the curriculum planning process had recently begun, and the team would review plans accordingly.</p> <p>Governors challenged if the group were anticipating further growth through mergers or acquisitions, and if there were other colleges in the pipeline. The team confirmed that there was a need to consolidate and ensure processes and systems were in place. They would consider opportunities if they were presented, against risk appetite.</p> <p>This did not mean that the group are not pursuing opportunities to collaborate however, and recent examples were noted of Selby High School and the Rubicon Centre where there were opportunities and dialogue were in train.</p> <p>Governors challenged the desire for growth against capacity and utilisation, whether students, teaching staff, facilities, or resources and confirmed it would be useful to understand the limits within the group. It was confirmed that the board would receive a report on the estate and utilisation in March.</p> <p>Governors were informed that the group are finding the recruitment of specialist staff, especially at Selby, challenging and the HR team are working with the AoC and other colleges on how to address this challenge.</p> <p>Governors <b>approved</b> the growth strategy.</p>	3
4	<p><b>Health and Safety Policy</b></p> <p>The group are keen to have an approved policy in place and CC was thanked in her absence for the feedback that had been circulated to board members. JP and the team had reviewed the policy as a result. It was also confirmed that the policy had been reviewed by the internal health and safety committees and by David Kellett, the Lead Governor for Health and Safety.</p>	

	<p>Governors asked if it had been reviewed by Mazar's and it was noted that it had not, but it could be reviewed by them, before the policy was reviewed again in the autumn term.</p> <p>Governors <b>approved</b> the policy.</p>	
5	<p><b>Effectiveness of the Meeting</b></p> <p>Governors noted thanks to Wakefield District Housing, and confirmed it was a great space and size for future meetings.</p> <p>Attendance at the meeting had been low, and it was suggested to offer different timings for future sessions, to see if this may be a core factor for governor availability.</p>	

### Action Log from the meeting

1	Gather and review feedback from External Stakeholders on the strategic event.	LC	ASAP
2	Have a debrief on the SAR validation process	Curriculum and Quality Committee	February 2023
3	Receive an estates, utilisation and capacity report	JP	March 2023