



The Corporation of
Barton Peveril College

Stewardship Report

2009 - 2010

Introduction

This brief report sets out to show how the Corporation has discharged its responsibilities to the College and the wider community in the academic year 2009 to 2010. If you are interested in further information or wish to discuss any of the issues raised, please contact the Clerk to the Corporation at the College or by email rdm@barton.ac.uk

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Barton Peveril Corporation

Who are we?

Membership remained at 20 throughout most of the year. The following have served in this period: new members are shown in italics; retiring members shown by an asterisk; active members are highlighted.

Shirley Anderson	Simon Gardiner	Mohammed Mossadaq
Christine Bedford*	Christopher Gunby	Jonathan Prest (Principal)
<i>Peter Boote</i>	Shirley Guy	David Quinney (Vice Chair)
Paul Broderick*	<i>Joel Horner</i>	Andy Renwick (Chair)*
Roger Brown (Chair)	Keith House	Daniel Ridley*
Sheila Campbell	Jasmine Knox Langford	Nick Tustian
Nicola Carcone*	Thora Lomax*	Steve Vincent Marshall
Nicole Dowland*	Christine McNulty	Sally Weavind
<i>Karen Everett</i>	Shokraneh Moghadam*	Geoff Woollan

Membership is diverse and rich in skills, demonstrating strength in financial, business, human resources (HR) and public sector management. The Search and Governance Committee is focused on recruiting further audit and local education management skills, and is always looking to increase the gender and ethnic mix.

What is our role, what are our responsibilities?

Although a new version of the Instrument and Articles (Sixth Form Colleges) is awaited following the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, it is unlikely to alter the fundamental role and responsibilities of the Corporation. They are in brief:

- To act independently as employer, as stakeholder representative and as critical friend;
- To bring independent judgement to bear on issues of strategy, performance, resources, and standards of conduct;
- To ensure the effective and efficient use of resources and ultimately the solvency of the College;
- To determine the educational character and mission of the institution and oversee its activities;
- To employ the Holders of Senior Posts (HoSPs) and set a framework for the pay and conditions of all staff.

How do we carry these out?

Six committees have been active during 2009 – 2010, all meeting at least once each term. Two committees have had additional members, boosting expertise in finance and HR. There are two statutory committees:

- 1 The Search and Governance Committee, which advises on Corporation and committee membership, and quality governance;
- 2 The Audit Committee which advises on the adequacy of the operation of the financial controls, key activities and systems within the College, and appoints the College Auditors.

In addition, the groundwork of the Corporation's business is undertaken by:

- 3 The Standards Committee which focuses on educational strategy and character, quality and improvement, and the student experience;
- 4 The Remuneration and Employment Committee which advises on the employment and remuneration of senior postholders, and on HR issues for all staff;
- 5 The Finance Monitoring Group, which advises on the College's financial management, planning and performance;
- 6 The Building Support Group which is active when a capital project is being considered or is under way.



Our ad hoc committees (Corporate Planning, Special Committee and Appeal Panel) did not need to sit this year. Committee minutes appear on both the Governors' homepage and the College website at <http://www.barton-peveril.ac.uk/governors>

The Chairs report formally to the Corporation on committee discussions and recommendations, and Corporation members look to the committees for advice and assurance on key issues.

Chairs and staff

Corporation Chair

Corporation Vice Chair

Search & Governance

Audit

Standards

Remuneration & Employment

Finance Monitoring Group

Building Support Group

Clerk

Assistant to the Clerk

Roger Brown

David Quinney

Roger Brown

Nick Tustian

Christine McNulty

Keith House

Simon Gardiner

David Quinney

Ros Medd

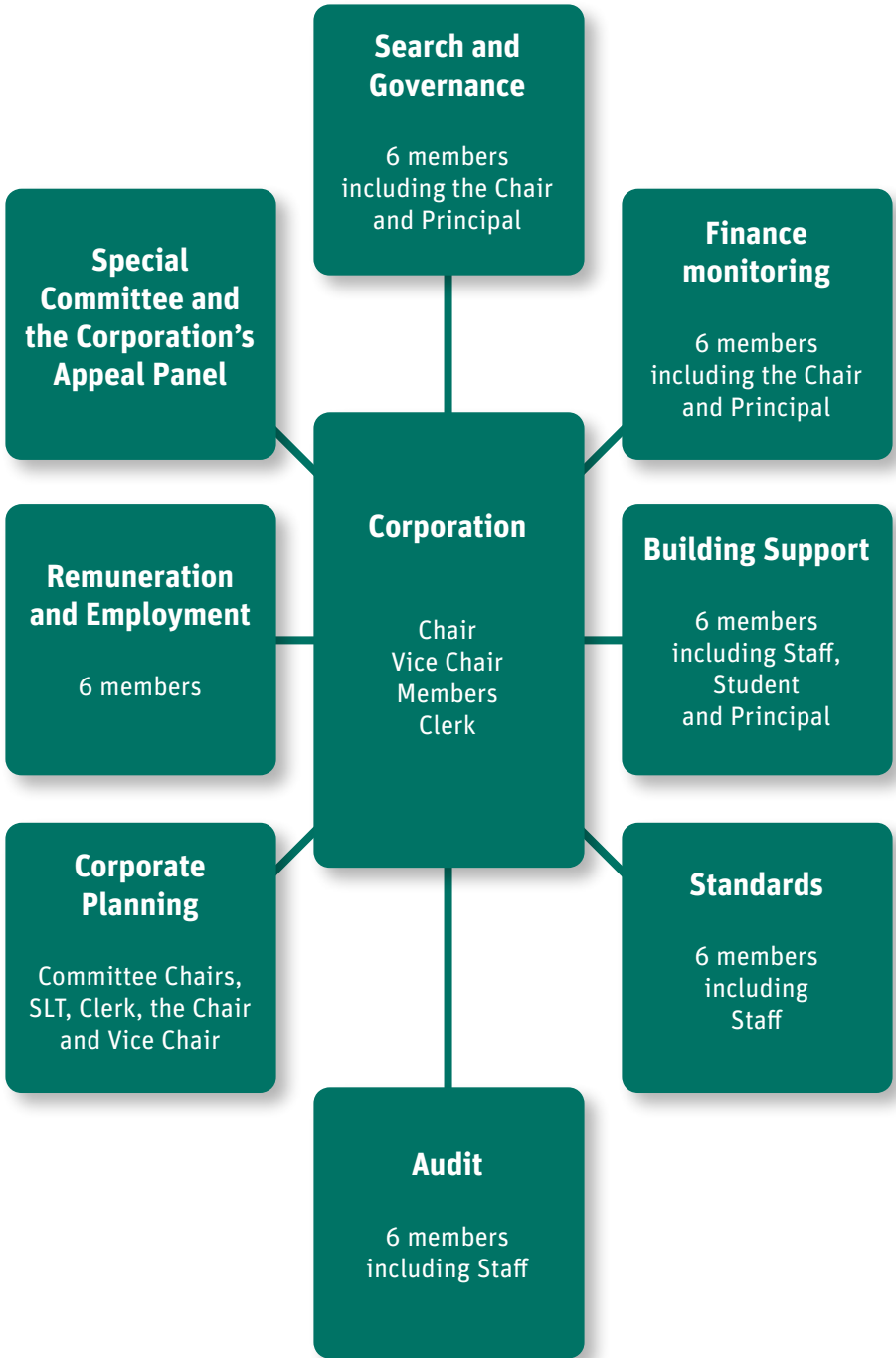
Joan Miles

Andy Renwick (to December '09)

Sally Weavind (to December '09)

Sheila Campbell (Acting Chair)

Christine Bedford (to November '09)



The year's key issues, decisions and debates

Buildings fit for purpose

The catastrophic collapse of the Learning and Skills Council's (LSC's) Capital Funding arrangements determined that the Property Strategy featured high on the agenda throughout the year. Governors and managers remain acutely concerned about the overcrowding in student social areas and some teaching spaces, and the urgent need to improve the Science areas. With small hope of government funding, the Corporation has approved expenditure on short term remodelling that is aimed to address these issues as well as urgent repairs, both funded from the College's limited reserves and by taking out a further loan.

How do others think we are doing?

Happier news came from the OFSTED Inspection Report which the Corporation was particularly pleased to receive in February. Its positive tone reflected well the dedication and skills of Barton Peveril's staff.

The most impressive outcomes were:

- The outstanding guidance and support offered to our students
- Our outstanding capacity to improve
- Outstanding value for money
- Outstanding partnerships to improve opportunities for learners
- Outstanding financial controls and governance arrangements.

Most especially, in view of its decision in 2008 to appoint Jonathan Prest as Principal, the Corporation was gratified to see leadership was described as 'outstanding', a credit to him, his team, and managers throughout the College.

Overall the College was pleased by the tone and accuracy of the final Inspection Report and only disappointed with the grade for 'Quality of Provision'. Despite judging three of the four sub-grades 'Outstanding' and the fourth 'Good', Inspectors aggregated the grade for Quality as 'Good'. The College's appeal was rejected.

Who are our masters?

Governors are accustomed to the goal posts moving with regularity, but 2009-10 saw the pitch move as well. Significant change to legislation, to the machinery of government, and finally to the political landscape itself had and will continue to have far-reaching effects on the funding and delivery of post-16 education.

Our major purpose

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 saw the creation of an independent sixth form sector and the Corporation voted formally in November to be designated as a Sixth form College under the new legislation. Sixth form colleges offer greater value for money and added academic value in 16–18 education than schools. No longer 'neither fish nor fowl', the potential now exists for the sector to push for increased development based on these unique selling points, although the challenge from developing academies persists.



Funding

In 2009/10, a year of transition for Barton Peveril from the LSC, funding per student remained static. The College chose to educate 80 students above its funded level in the hope that this will be reflected in next year's funding. (2010/11 is the third year in which £ per student has remained static. Again the college has recruited 100 unfunded students, with the understanding that the new system of 'lagged student numbers' will mean we are funded for them in their second year.) Governors approved an increase in numbers in the knowledge that we are now forced to self-fund improvements to the estate, at least for the short term. Following the change of government, funding will not be coming from the local authority but directly from the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA).



Order! Order!

The Corporation voted on 47 Decision Papers in the year, about half of which reflected Governors' regulatory or monitoring duties. Routine as this sometimes feels, OFSTED acknowledges this commitment as our strength: 'the Governors monitor carefully against objectives and targets' and 'have a strong understanding of areas for improvement'; 'financial management and control are outstanding'.

The agenda has been restructured in 2010 so that more time is offered for strategic items and debate. This has been supported by an increasing bias towards delegating routine or bureaucratic tasks to committee level where appropriate. Senior managers have also contributed a concise but comprehensive reporting model known as the Quality Performance Indicator report which has been widely appreciated as a monitoring tool.

All in a day's work

Governors met together on a Saturday in March at Jermyn's House, Ampfield for the Strategic Awayday, having dined together the previous evening. The Awayday was an opportunity to explore in detail the new strategic climate, and to debate our governance structure and ways of working. As usual we reviewed the mission, values and strategic objectives for both the governing body and the senior leadership team in the medium term. In the run-up to the general election, this involved more than a little crystal ball gazing.

Development and change

Within the Corporation itself, the year has seen a change in leadership, and proposals to change the committee structure. Andy Renwick retired at the completion of two terms of office as Chair; he was warmly thanked for his committed, hard work over the four years, and the skill with which he has steered the Corporation through rapid change and financial stringency. At his wish he was presented with a magnificent oil painting of the London skyline, painted by a College student.



Professor Brown, right, at the Sixth Form Colleges Forum Conference in July 2010

Andy was succeeded by Professor Roger Brown in December. Professor Brown is Professor of Higher Education Policy at Liverpool Hope University and former Vice Chancellor of Southampton Solent University. He joined the national Sixth Form Colleges Forum (SFCF) as a board member in 2010.



Andy Renwick - Chair from 2005 to 2009

Governors are currently discussing a merger of the work of the Remuneration and Employment Committee with that of the Finance Monitoring Group. They have also developed and approved a job description for the role of Vice Chair. A pleasurable decision-making task was the appointment of Mr Nigel Groves as Vice Principal, following the retirement of Mrs Pat Mullins after 18 impressive years.

Nuts and bolts

Training

A number of Governors attended eight national and regional training events in 2009 – 2010. As well as the 30-minute staff presentations at the beginning of Standards Committee meetings, members have also visited committees other than their own as part of their ongoing professional development. Four Governors focus particularly on Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Quality, and Equality and Diversity and they have attended College meetings and area briefings on their specialisms. We hope the Governor Visiting Scheme which offers an insight during the working day into all areas of the College will be used more next year.

Statistics

The Corporation met five times, and 26 committee meetings were convened. Corporation attendance was 79% and the average committee attendance was 80%. Good attendance is an important Corporation strength, contributing significantly to its openness and robustness. We keep our arrangements and effectiveness constantly under review and anticipate that the number of Corporation and committee meetings will decrease slightly in 2010 - 2011.

2009-2010 was another successful year for Barton Peveril College. The Governors continue to be gratified at the progress which the College has made. They wish to congratulate the Principal and the staff on their achievements.