

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation Held on 14 May 2018

at City Centre Campus, Room H102a at 4.45 pm

Carole Stott
Andy Furse
Laurel Penrose
Victor da Cunha
Erica Draisey
Tesh Baber
Paul Blenkinsopp
Jane Shaw
Gary Waylen
Neil Wilson
Julian Young

Chair
Vice-Chair
Principal

Apologies

(to item 9)

In attendance

Heather Cross
Jayne Davis
Rachel Hepworth

Daisy Walsh
Simon Bracken

Clerk to the Corporation
Deputy Principal
Director of Finance and
Corporate Services
Interim Commercial Director
HE Manager (until item 5)

- 1. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest** **ACTION**
Apologies were received from Gary Waylen.
- 2. Confidentiality of items**
It was noted that item 18 was confidential, but was an item only for receipt unless questions had been notified in advance, and none had.
- 3. Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on 26 March 2018 and any matters arising**
The minutes of the last meeting which had been circulated previously were accepted as a true record.

It was reported that following the promotion of the role by the SU President, that some interest had been generated in the post for the forthcoming year and there were now two candidates who had put themselves forward. Governors welcomed this positive news.

4. Office for Students Registration

A short report explaining the new role of the Office for Students (OfS) had been circulated previously. The OfS's role as a non-departmental public body with powers established by the HE Reform Act 2017 to ensure that English HE is delivering positive outcomes for students and that those from all backgrounds, particularly the most disadvantaged can access, succeed in and progress from HE, that they received value for money and a high quality academic experience was all noted.

The College's position was that in order to be registered in time for students to receive student loans for the 2019/20 year, as with each current university and college offering HE, it was required to make a detailed registration submission by 23 May 2018 at the latest. As substantial registration fee was payable.

The Clerk and the HE Manager presented the key components of the required submission. The Board satisfied itself about the College's Access and Participation Plan, compliance with consumer protection and risk preparation arrangements for events which could affect course delivery. Governors confirmed that they were prepared for their personal details, including any directorships or trusteeships held, to be cited in the application. The College would place on the college website the documents required to be housed there.

It was agreed to delegate to the Chair the final approval of the submission to the Office for Students.

Governors thanked Simon Bracken for his attendance at the meeting.

5. Principal's update

A report on student applications for the 2018-19 year to date had been circulated previously. It was noted however that this did not include the figures from the most recent open evenings. Numbers were down overall but there was a 6% increase in converted acceptances. Enrolment for second years had been moved earlier to ensure greater certainty for the students and the college alike. The meeting discussed the courses where numbers were notably down and it was recognised that transport arrangements were an issue. It was felt that relationships had been built successfully with schools to assist recruitment. Students were sometimes finding study difficult with increased end point assessment on GCSEs and this was thought to have an impact on future recruitment, as well as uncertainty on predictions for incoming students. GCSE results day was critical. The College was seeking to make staffing arrangements which matched likely enrolment.

The Principal reported further on a series of bids which the college had made recently. Capacity delivery funding for T Quals had been secured. A bid to pilot T quals had been made – this was designed mainly to assist in finding work placements. The budget for the special educational needs development at Somer Valley Campus was anticipated shortly. A new development for residential SEN accommodation in the city was starting to be considered by the local authority.

The college had been successful in getting to the regional finals of a number of competitions, notably for enterprise, hair and stonemasonry.

Governors thanked the Principal for her report.

6. Estates Proposal and fees

An update report on the relocation from the Ralph Allen building together with options for hospitality and catering had been circulated previously.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented the different sub-options for Option 4e which had been agreed in January 2018 as the option to be progressed. The Architects had been working on developing different solutions based on the needs to be met. Management favoured sub-option SK002 on cost grounds but the full costings and timescales were not yet available. Critically, whether each scheme could be achieved within the times available was not yet certain. The department has made a substantial submission which needed to be answered.

The schedule of fees up to £140,000 was agreed and sub-options 2 and 3 were agreed to be examined in more detail for recommendations to return to the Board.

Governors determined that three key questions needed to be set out for sub-options 2 and 3 – the business case including risk, what efficiencies could be realistically achieved and the required timing and consequential urgency of moving locations. In addition, if sub-option 3 were chosen, the additional costs if this were done first were requested. It was agreed that if clear information was available prior to the next Board meeting that the Finance and Estates Working group be asked to look at the proposals in detail and make a recommendation.

The Principal reported that the outcome of the bid for funding to the West of England Commissioning Authority (WECA) would not be known until November 2018. Relationships with Bath and North east Somerset Council were progressing positively in relation to the scheme.

7. Apprenticeship update

A summary update on work on apprenticeships had been circulated previously. Daisy Walsh provided a verbal update to the meeting. The College was working with 33 levy and 139 non-levy organisations; new standards and frameworks had been established and a range of areas of activity were in place. Heads of Department were responsible for the recruitment of apprentices and new effective software was being used to track pipeline numbers.

The income figures were reviewed and positive increases noted. Governors commented that a different business model would be needed together with clear plans for growth and questioned whether there were any areas where investment was needed. The Principal commented that hospitality and catering were clear areas, there was a possibility of joint working with another college on health and

equipment for IT and engineering was currently being considered. Internships were being offered at Hinckley Point and the college had made an expression of interest for this work. The Curriculum Plan would address the requirements for apprenticeships.

Daisy Walsh was thanked for her report and it was **agreed** that discussions about apprenticeships be integrated into the Board's consideration of the curriculum plan, but that a particular focus on apprenticeships be incorporated into the Board's business schedule twice a year.

8. People Plan

The proposed People Plan had been circulated previously. The document gave a framework for an effective working environment, aiming for a planned and designed approach to staff development, wellbeing and cultural cohesiveness with 5 inter-related intentions.

Governors welcomed the development of the Plan and felt that it was focussing on the right things which valued people. Questions were asked about the current extent of a training needs analysis and it was accepted that this information needed development. Having adopted the plan, the next stage would be to identify all the supporting information.

The staff governor commented very favourably on the extent of staff development available to him in comparison to previous workplaces and he saw similar opportunities being provided to his colleagues.

The Board approved the People Plan and looked forward to its implementation.

9. GDPR update

A report providing the current position on GDPR within the college was circulated. Governors were provided with a reminder of the key aspects of the new data protection regulations coming into effect towards the end of May 2018.

The Board reviewed the action plan and noted the additional policies being put in place, including an update to the data protection policy and policies for handling data breaches. Privacy statements were also being prepared. All the key tasks would be completed in order to be compliant by the 25 May 2018 deadline.

The current self-assessment was circulated – this maintained its amber rating as there was still more to be done.

The Board considered the decisions which had been made concerning the lawful bases for processing data presented in the report. **The lawful bases for processing were approved.**

Governors encouraged college staff to maintain the action plan to keep it as up to date as possible as it showed active commitment to data protection.

10. Quality Dashboard summary and Post Inspection Improvement plan update

The quality data dashboard summary and the Post inspection improvement plan update had been circulated previously.

Governors noted key information in the documents. The Achievement of the Adult Education Budget remained red. Teaching and learning was a focus for development in the improvement project with Dudley College. Attendance was assessed as amber at 91%, with retention holding at 93%, but both figures were much higher than the rates at the end of 16/17.

It was noted that all the inspection actions were expected to be 'green' by the end of the academic year.

The reports were **received**.

11. Financial Reports

The management accounts until the end of March 2018 had been circulated previously.

A year to date deficit of £425K was reported compared to the budgeted surplus of £189K, but there had been an improvement of £54K on the previous month's figures. The key main feature continued to be the under-recruitment on the Adult Education budget.

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported that bank covenants were still at risk and conversations were due to take place with the bank at the end of May 2018. It was expected that budget would be achieved but there was an issue with the position before depreciation and the college was £100K short of the required position, which would either require an improvement on income or to reduce costs. The proposals to meet the requirements would be presented to the next meeting of the Finance and Estates Working Group which would be meeting in June.

The May accounts would be circulated shortly.

The Finance dashboard was considered. There was a section which was missing which would be included in the version to be circulated.

The financial reports were **received**.

12. Risk Register

The latest risk register had been circulated and was reviewed.

It was noted that the risk on apprenticeship funding had been reduced from high to medium; the Office for Students registration had been added to the register and the Estates Strategy remained at medium risk.

13. Subcontracting – policy and procedures

A review of the subcontracting policy had been undertaken and the revised subcontracting policy had been circulated for approval as a consequence. The circulated document highlighted where changes to

the policy had been made. **The revised subcontracting policy was approved.**

A proposal was made for an additional £200K provision to be purchased from a new contractor and a report providing the business case and the due diligence financial review had been circulated with the papers for the meeting. The new contractor was Astara Training Ltd and specialised in employability programmes. It was proposed that 30% be retained for contract management. The Principal advised the Board that the work involved working with offenders and the contract would need special approval from the ESFA as prisons activity was moving in 18/19 to the Ministry of Justice. There was a genuine reason for current funding as the subcontractor had exceeded funding in position elsewhere.

Noting that a business case had been prepared and due diligence undertaken which was acceptable, the new contractor arrangement for £200K with Astara Training Ltd was approved.

Review of e-governance

14. A report had been circulated previously. The Clerk reported that a number of members had responded to the survey on how they found the use of Minutepad. Everyone had found the system useful and generally accessible when accessing prior to and preparing for meetings, but found a range of significant difficulties when in meetings themselves. It was generally felt that this was impeding debate and decision-making, plus there were difficulties in reading large documents which did not reproduce well and were problematic to follow when zooming in, exacerbated by degradation of visual quality in the process.

The Clerk was asked to seek remedies with the company and to consider what alternative arrangements might be made, however it was generally agreed that the use of electronic papers had been a considerable advance in practice.

Proposed calendar of meetings for the 2018-19 year

15. The proposed calendar of meetings for the 2018-19 year had been circulated previously and was **approved.**

Governor appointments

16. The Chair informed the meeting that Councillor Paul May had decided that he should stand down from the Board with immediate effect as he considered the subject matter of his conflict of interest was growing in significance and would have a regular effect on his ability to contribute in the Board.

A report had been provided previously making the recommendation from the Governance and Search Committee that Gary Waylen be appointed for a second term of office of 4 years from June 2018 to June 2022. **The appointment was approved.**

A verbal report was received in respect of progress to fill the 3 vacancies currently on the board. Interest had been received from the Managing Director of Mayden and also a person who was the chief

executive of an examination body. Contact was being made with these people in order to arrange interviews. Links with local companies continued to be pursued.

Minutes of the Quality Working Group held 16 April 2018

17. These minutes which had been circulated previously, were noted and received.

Confidential Minutes of the Senior Staff Employment Committee held 16 April 2018

18. These minutes which had been circulated previously other than to the staff and student governors, were noted and received.

Minutes of the Governance and Search Committee held 16 April 2018

19. These minutes which had been circulated previously were noted and received.

Any Other Business

None

- 20.

Date of next meeting

21. The date of the next meeting was agreed as Monday 25 June 2018 at 5.00 pm at Somer Valley Campus