

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2018

Present:

Tracey	Branson	Governor	Apologies
Pat	Brennan-Barrett	Principal	✓
Ellen	Buttler	Governor	✓
Bill	Chalker	Governor	✓
Robert	Davey	Governor	✓
Henrietta	Farrugia	Student Governor	✓
Mark	Hall	Governor	✓
Julia	Harley	Governor	✓
Philip	Hilton	Governor	✓
Martin	James	Staff Governor	✓
Geraldine	Schofield	Governor(Chair)	✓
David	Smith	Governor	✓
Adam	Stone	Student Governor	✓

The quorum for the meeting was six Members.

In attendance:

Patrick Leavey	Deputy Principal
Steve Rankine	Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs
Gary Brough	Director of Estates
Jason Lancaster	Interim Vice Principal, Teaching, Learning, Quality Improvement and Employer Engagement
Jan Hutt	Director of Human Resources
Mark Owen	Head of Student Services
Jenny Thorpe	Assistant Principal, Teaching Learning and Quality
Julie Brasier	Clerk to the Corporation

The meeting was held in the Boardroom and started at 6.00pm.

Text in italics indicates questions from Governors

Before the meeting there was a presentation from the Student Governors. The presentation explained the work of the Student Union.

The Union covered the College's three sites and its key roles were to both listen and represent student views. The Union met monthly and worked closely with the Student Liaison Officer. The Union was part of Student Voice and also featured in the College Prospectus. The Union provided Student Ambassadors – this was a voluntary role.

A variety of events and competitions had been organised to promote the Union within the College. A short film had been produced 'Why voting matters' which had been submitted to a national competition. The film was shown to the Corporation. A 'Dragon's Den' type competition was also being planned on ways to improve the College. The best idea for each site would then be implemented.

The Student Governors were thanked for their presentation.

1	Welcome and Apologies		Action
	1.1	Apologies were received from Tracey Branson.	
2	Declarations of Interest		
	2.1	The Chair reminded Members to declare their interests as and when necessary on the agenda.	
3	Minutes and Matters Arising		
	3.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair. <i>Rob Davey arrived during this item</i>	
	3.2	Matters Arising – 5 December 2017 Minute 3.2 – Governance committee actions – these were either complete or in progress. Minute 5.2 – Overseas Visit details – this action was complete – there were two members of staff in attendance, one male and one female for 15 students. Minute 13.1 – Governance Committee – The Governor recruitment process had begun – minute 16 refers. The 360 degree review would take place shortly and the Student Union Constitution would be considered at the next Governance Committee.	Governance Committee
4	Determination of Any Other Business (urgent and necessary only)		
	4.1	There were no items of any other business.	
5	Objectives from Strategy Day		
	5.1	The notes of the main discussion points from the recent Strategy Event had been circulated. Governors felt the Event had gone well and was a good way of working. RESOLVED C[1/18] <i>That the notes from the Strategy Event be received and noted.</i>	

6		Principal's College Overview Report	
	6.1	<p>The Principal presented her report.</p> <p><i>Item 2.3 'use data, research and information effectively' has gone from green to amber?</i></p> <p>It should still be green</p> <p>RESOLVED C[2/18] That the Corporation note the Principal's College Overview Report for the academic year to date.</p>	
7		Safeguarding Report and PREVENT	
	7.1	<p>The Head of Student Services presented his report.</p> <p>The current academic year had been busy with 177 internal referrals. Referrals were counted by incident not student, so some referrals would relate to the same student. Last year had seen 307 referrals in total. Key issues included diagnosed and emerging mental health concerns, self – harm and suicidal tendencies and young people either homeless or missing from home.</p>	
	7.2	<p>The College was developing its skill set and resources where necessary to meet growing areas of need. Most referrals were within the 16 -18 age range and this was as expected. However, the new trend was the increasing number of referrals within the 19+ age range; most of whom were supported learners. For external referrals the highest number was for suicidal tendencies.</p>	
	7.3	<p>The College had some young offenders enrolled, all of whom were vulnerable. So far there was 100% retention and the College was gaining skills in working with these students more effectively. All students who were deemed Children in Need or subject to child protection procedures were doing well in College. There were a range of needs to be met. Looked After Children were supported from the very beginning of their time with the College and were doing well. The College was working with the Local Authority to support young carers</p>	
	7.4	329 students received free meals and 2,000 were receiving bursary support.	
	7.5	All staff training should be completed by the end of term. The Single Central Record was regularly reviewed and action taken as necessary. The report outlined the position regarding allegations against staff. The Local Authority Designated Officer was informed in each case.	
	7.6	Extremism was a continuing risk. There had been 8 referrals so far this year which included concerns regarding far right activities. The College was working to support these students.	
	7.7	<p>Actions for development were identified as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequent updates to staff of local and national safeguarding developments • Develop the reporting of bullying to ensure robust procedures are in place to deal with this • Use of Graded Care Profiles to better identify instances of neglect • Develop the tutorial process to be more bespoke to cover risks to wellbeing 	
	7.8	<p><i>Is the number of referrals for suicidal tendencies an increase on last year?</i></p> <p>Yes.</p>	

		<p><i>Is that because we are recognising it more or there is more of it?</i> Both – more students are experiencing anxiety and more staff are identifying this.</p> <p><i>Is this the same for other Colleges?</i> Yes</p> <p><i>In the next report can we see last year's data for comparison?</i> Yes.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[3/18] That the Corporation note Safeguarding and PREVENT report.</p> <p><i>The Head of Student Services was thanked for his report and left the meeting.</i></p>	
8		Teaching and Learning Report	
	8.1	<p>The Assistant Principal, Teaching Learning and Quality presented her report. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to be the key area of focus for the College with particular priorities as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring teachers plan differentiated learning activities that enable every student to progress as quickly and as far as possible given their ability and starting point • Developing activities to stretch and challenge every student • Effective and challenging questioning • Integrating the development of English and Mathematics within lessons • Teaching and learning focussed on student progress and the development of high quality skills and knowledge. 	
	8.2	<p>Most lesson observations were now complete. Those outstanding were agency staff, new staff and staff who were absent through illness. 88% of staff observed were judged to be good or better. This was lower than last year but was expected to grow. There was an increased focus on progress, which was not the same criterion as last year.</p>	
	8.3	<p>Where teaching was deemed to require improvement or be inadequate, staff were put on an improvement programme. So far all except one had improved as a result of the programme. Consistency was achieved by using internal and external observers. Learning Walks for new and agency staff were done in the first few weeks of a person starting. Themes from all Learning Walks were collated to support more focussed CPD. There was a crossover between strengths and areas for improvement.</p>	
	8.4	<p>CPD for teaching, learning and assessment was being reviewed to ensure the offer best met need. A toolbox of resources around core topics was being developed to enable teachers to deliver high quality lessons around the central theme of 'Expecting More'. The observation process itself was also being reviewed for 2018/19 to ensure it provides an overarching view that is not just based on one observation.</p>	
	8.5	<p><i>Numbers of staff are needed as well as percentages to give context.</i></p> <p><i>What is work based learning?</i> Apprenticeships.</p>	

		<p><i>Is there reason for early observations for agency and new staff to provide more support?</i> Yes, there are challenges to providing support to hourly paid staff and ways of improving this are being looked at.</p> <p><i>Will resources be provided in line with evidence based practice?</i> Yes - we will link resources to both evidence based practice and also a member of staff's own experience and evaluation. Teaching and learning needed to be at the forefront of staff approaches.</p> <p><i>What is the proportion of agency staff? Are hourly rate paid staff appropriately trained?</i> At the moment there were 5 agency staff. There were more hourly paid staff across more curriculum areas. Resources could be made available electronically.</p> <p><i>What is the proportion of full time to hourly paid staff?</i> This is recorded and would be included in the next report.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[4/18]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to note the Teaching and Learning Report.</i></p>	
9		Staff Development Report	
	9.1	The Assistant Principal, Teaching, Learning and Quality presented her report. The current main themes for staff development were around improving the quality of teaching learning and assessment, essential training (safeguarding etc.) and planning for the implementation of GDPR.	
	9.2	<p>Areas of development included ensuring part time and hourly paid staff can easily access training. Evaluations of CPD were being analysed to review value and effectiveness and inform planning.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[5/18] The Corporation resolved to note the Staff Development Report.</p> <p><i>The Assistant Principal, Teaching, Learning and Quality was thanked for her report and left the meeting.</i></p>	
10		HR Policies – Capability, Disciplinary and Grievance	
	10.1	<p>The Director of Human Resources presented the three revised policies. The changes proposed were not major. They gave more clarity regarding the processes that would be followed. In some cases, the policies exceeded the requirements of ACAS guidance such as when staff could be accompanied. It was confirmed that the only changes being made were those highlighted in the report.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[6/18] The Corporation resolved to approve the revised Capability, Disciplinary and Grievance policies.</p>	

		<i>The Director of Human Resources was thanked for her report and left the meeting.</i>	
11		Learner Data Monitoring – Retention, Attendance and Progress	
	11.1	The Deputy principal presented his report. Retention had been increasing over the last 3 years. It currently stood at 96%. Last year the final figure was 92.9% - the College hoped to exceed this for 2017 -18. Retention for 16 -18 year olds was better than for adults. Level 2 courses had the lowest retention, which was the case last year, and this was being closely monitored. Level 3 retention was strong and this had the largest proportion of students. There were close links between progress tracking and retention. If a student did drop out of a course they were offered a fresh start programme. The College was working in partnership with Saints Rugby Club on this.	
	11.2	The target for attendance was 90% - this was challenging. The year to date figure was 87.7%. It was lower when Maths and English lessons were included. There was a lot of focus and intervention on attendance and punctuality. In English and Maths senior managers were mentoring low attendees, as this would help them get higher grades.	
	11.3	<p>The report set out the proportion of students working at or above their main aim target at the second phase progress check. It was noted that students are making better progress to target in English than in Maths particularly in the GCSE qualification. There are 5 formal progress assessment points throughout the year (based on criteria linked to BRAG ratings) and these help inform interventions.</p> <p><i>Is the stated proportion good?</i> We do not have last year's data, additionally the process and criteria has been adjusted so like for like comparisons would not be possible, but this will be better next year when there is a previous year to compare it too. The assessment points are used to determine and drive individual intervention.</p> <p><i>It would be useful to be able to compare different assessment points.</i> <i>What is the definition of amber?</i> It will be the quality of a student's work compared to their target. A lot of work was being done to test and check the rigour of progress ratings given. The progress checks are driving students to understand where they are in relation to their targets.</p> <p><i>Is the 9.30 start time helping?</i> There is a degree of queuing when students are late, but the College needs data on the students that are persistently late as this will then lead to a formal meeting to explore how the College can help the student. It was too soon to tell, but the later start gives staff more opportunity to meet and discuss students or other aspects of their work (through the scheduled early morning staff team meetings). It was a challenge to get some students in on time and occasionally there are traffic problems. Senior staff would continue to be on duty to monitor the position.</p> <p><i>Has the College talked to bus companies regarding changed bus timetables?</i></p>	

		There was a lot of urgency and positive activity up to and approaching 9.30 and a lot of students were in the Library from 8.30am.	
	11.4	<p><i>The report shows 88% overall but 6 categories are below this?</i></p> <p>These are the latest figures and attendance has been impacted by the flu virus. Only some of the categories were linked to study programmes.</p> <p><i>It is really good that the College is working with the Saints Rugby Club - how many female students are involved?</i></p> <p>This figure was not known. The College also worked with the Football Academy who insisted that female students were involved. There were a lot of female students on the Saints programme.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[7/18] That the Corporation note the Learner Data Monitoring – Retention, Attendance and Progress Report.</p>	
12		SEND Report/High Needs	
	12.1	The Deputy Principal presented the report due to the relevant Manager having to cover classes. Funding from the Local Authority had now been finalised at £809,000. There was year on year growth in the College’s High Needs provision, 50% of whom were in mainstream and 50% in supported learning.	
	12.2	A lot of Maths and English assessment was College based – this was being reviewed to see if more students could progress to qualification based activity.	
	12.3	<p><i>Is the reason that High Needs is not graded higher than 2 due to the number of internships?</i></p> <p>The number of internships had now increased.</p> <p><i>This is worth emphasising.</i></p> <p>RESOLVED C[8/18] That the Corporation note the SEND/High Needs Report.</p>	
13		Student Recruitment	
	13.1	The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented his report. Trends were continuing as previously reported. All age full time recruitment was comparable to last year. The demographic was still declining for this area. Recruitment for 16 -18 was ahead of last year. Recruitment, together with retention would drive next year’s funding.	
	13.2	Adult Loan provision was down largely due to a reduction in Access students. Adult Skills was similar to last year and the approved subcontracting arrangements should ensure that the target is achieved.	
	13.3	<p>Apprenticeships were slightly behind and this was thought to be due to changes in the funding system. Nationally apprenticeship recruitment is down 60%. It was predicted that the target would be achieved by the end of the year. HE numbers were down.</p> <p><i>Are apprenticeships being identified?</i></p> <p>Yes - a lot of work was being done with employers to explain the levy and the new frameworks. There was a need to get employers back on board following the changes. There were still a lot of apprentices on the old scheme. Some of</p>	

		<p>the new frameworks were well funded (such as Engineering and Electrical) others were poorly funded (such as Health & Social Care).</p> <p><i>Who sets the recruitment targets?</i></p> <p>These are set within departments and then moderated by the senior team for budget purposes.</p> <p><i>HE is down on last year – is this not developing as hoped?</i></p> <p>Nationally both Higher Education and Further Education are struggling. Removing the cap on university places has generated greater competition. Opportunities to increase HE numbers are limited.</p> <p><i>Will the new Construction Engineering provision include an HE offer?</i></p> <p>No it will be T levels and may in due course support Higher Level Apprenticeships.</p> <p><i>Can we work in partnership with Higher Education on a 2 and 2 basis?</i></p> <p>We will look at this.</p> <p>The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs would check what the level 4 and 5 offer was at Bolton College.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[9/18] <i>That the Corporation note the Student Recruitment report.</i></p>	Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs
14		Management Accounts	
	14.1	The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented the Management Accounts up to December 2017. A net operating surplus was forecast for the year, with the surplus being behind budget. This would need to be achieved by in year savings by tight control on non pay budgets and reducing pay costs wherever possible.	
	14.2	16 -18 recruitment was ahead of last year but funded on a lagged basis. Shortfalls in the Adult budget were expected to be met with franchised provision. Apprenticeship funding was behind budget but all indications were that the budget was likely to be met by the year end. Tuition fee income was also down including loan funded provision.	
	14.3	Pay costs were under pressure with more having to be paid to recruit within certain areas. Agency costs could also mean that the budget was exceeded. This would need to be covered by reducing non essential expenditure. Income was close to budget. There had been a drop in Accountancy income due to a change in the Awarding Body. Gearing was shown as pink due to the approaching repayment date for the College loans.	
	14.4	<p>Funding for SEND had increased from the Local Authority and there was additional funding through the ESF project.</p> <p><i>Is there any risk for the College regarding Local Authority funding and recent announcements regarding Northamptonshire County Council?</i></p> <p>We do not think so because it is High Needs Funding which is ring fenced.</p> <p><i>There is a reliance on reducing non pays costs to offset pay cost increases – what is being hit?</i></p>	

		<p>A lot of expenditure is front loaded at the start of the year. Accrued purchase orders are also included. Savings would be targeted across the board, particularly in premises costs, staff development and administration.</p> <p><i>Will there be any reduction in terms of what is offered to students?</i> No but in the future this may be harder to maintain. There have been discussions as to whether a target of 64 - 65% for pay costs is achievable in the current circumstances for the sector.</p> <p><i>What is the position regarding agency staff?</i> It is challenging to recruit staff – particularly in areas such as Engineering and Science.</p> <p><i>Should this be allowed for in the budget?</i> This could be done via a contingency.</p> <p><i>Is the SEN funding a one off?</i> No this is based on student numbers, but funding was low compared to other areas of the country. It was noted that some special schools in the area were considering offering 6th Form provision. Were this to become a formal proposal the College would strongly challenge that.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[10/18] That the Corporation note the Management Accounts for the period up to 31 December 2017.</p>	
15		Quality Teaching and Learning Committee	
	15.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2017 were noted. The December meeting had focused on the SAR and there had been particular discussions regarding the grades for High Needs and Apprenticeships. It was also noted that the Quality Improvement Plan and the Post Ofsted Action Plan were aligned well.	
	15.2	<p>The Committee had met immediately before the Corporation meeting and the Chair of the Committee gave a verbal report of the meeting. The focus was on post inspection actions and in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretch and challenge – there were new systems in place for this – Markbook was being used • Value Added – published DfE measures showed the College compared well to other Colleges which were either Grade 1 or Grade 2. There was only one curriculum type that had not improved – that being Applied General qualifications with approximately 280 students in scope. • Apprenticeships – outcomes had declined last year but were close to national averages. For this year targets had been set for timely completion with a range of strategies in place to support these. All delivery staff were part of teaching and learning observation process. Subcontracting quality control had been strengthened. There was still work to do around the curriculum but measures taken were on track and had halted the decline. The recent Ofsted visit had seen good teaching and there was good feedback from employers. The grade profile was justified for this area, but it was too soon to see the full impact of the changes that had been made. 	

	15.3	Under performing areas were also reported on. There had been lower recruitment into AAT because of the switch in awarding bodies and the potential lack of recognition of qualifications by some employers. Lower performance in science was linked to the new exam framework for the subject. Considerable improvement had been seen in Public Services and it was suggested that this be used as a case study. Challenging targets had been set for Sports.	
	15.4	The Committee had had a report on Student Voice. Different approaches were being used for this. An online survey was being developed to better reflect student opinion.	
	15.5	The committee received a report on work experience. The target for this year was 95% and that the experience was vocationally relevant to the student. To date 48% of relevant students had completed work experience. Triangulation occurred with Employer feedback. The Chair expressed her thanks to the Interim Vice Principal, Teaching, Learning, Quality Improvement and Employer Engagement and the Assistant Principal, Teaching Learning and Quality for their work which was moving the College forward. <i>RESOLVED C[11/18]</i> <i>That the Corporation note the verbal report of the Quality Teaching and Learning Committee and the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2017.</i>	
16		Appointment of Corporation Member	
	16.1	The CV for Helen Scott had been circulated. The Chair, Principal and Chair of Governance Committee had met with her and recommended her appointment. <i>RESOLVED C[12/18]</i> <i>That the Corporation appoint Helen Scott as a member of the Corporation for a term of four years.</i>	
17		Date and Time of Next Corporation Meeting:	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporation Meeting – 20 March 2018 at 6pm <p><i>The meeting finished at 8.10pm</i></p>	

Julie Brasier
Clerk to the Corporation
Northampton College

Signed by the Chair:	
Date:	