

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2017

Present:

Pat Brennan-Barrett	Governor (Principal)
Ellen Buttler	Governor
Bill Chalker	Co Opted member of Audit Committee
Rob Davey	Governor
Mark Hall	Governor
Julia Harley	Governor
Philip Hilton (Chair)	Governor
Martin James	Governor
Roger Morris	Governor

The quorum for the meeting was six Members.

In attendance:

Steve Rankine	Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs
Patrick Leavey	Deputy Principal
Victoria Cornwell-Lyon	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

1		Welcome and Apologies	Action
	1.1	Apologies were received from Henry Osborne, David Smith and Geraldine Schofield. In Geraldine Schofield's absence, Philip Hilton, as Vice Chair, chaired the meeting.	
2		Declarations of Interest	
	2.1	The Chair reminded Members to declare their interests as and when necessary on the agenda.	
3		Minutes	
	3.1	The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2016 were agreed a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.	
	3.2	It was noted that the Overseas Visit to Euro Disney had been approved by way of written resolution.	

4		Teaching and Learning Report	
	4.1	<p>The Assistant Principal, Teaching Learning and Quality, presented the Teaching and Learning Report. The three areas being focussed upon for the current academic year were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more intense focus on day to day quality with more unannounced learning walks • Cross College weekly Teaching Learning and Assessment/Quality improvement hour to support teaching staff and drive improvements – this was in addition to the CPD Programme • The use of specialist observers for Maths, English and ESOL 	
	4.2	<p>The data in the report was interim; 225 out of 247 teaching staff had been observed. 14 re observations were due to take place in addition to the 22 still to be observed. 94% of observations were good or better. This figure was expected to improve as the year progressed.</p> <p><i>Ellen Buttler arrived at 6.10pm</i></p>	
	4.3	<p>The quality of teaching for individual curriculum areas was set out in the report. It was also split by teacher group, student group and level. Improving the quality of teaching of hourly paid staff remained a priority. Theory teaching was still a challenge but the staff development strategy had helped. As well as showing teaching that needed to improve, observations also highlighted good practice. Effective use was being made of learning support. Unannounced Learning Walks took place every half term.</p>	
	4.4	<p>Performance Management was swift, robust and effective. Of the 14 staff undertaking the 4 week intensive support package, 12 were expected to be reassessed as good.</p>	
	4.5	<p>The impact was assessed in terms of outcomes and the students' experience at the College. This was based on the data available so far for 2016 -17, as well as the outcome data for 2015 -16. This indicated the quality of teaching was continuing to improve. Key points to note were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A level and AS level outcomes had improved significantly in 2015 -16 • Retention for 2016 -17 stood at 97.5% which is 2.5% higher than last year • Attendance was below target but had improved on last year • Student satisfaction rates continued to improve • The FE choices survey showed a 10% improvement. 	
	4.6	<p><i>Are specialist observers external to the College, what makes them specialist?</i> Yes, they are external and with Ofsted experience. Curriculum Managers also do observations.</p> <p><i>Do we track to see if grade 2 teachers are re observed?</i> No. if graded 1 or 2 there will not be further graded observations, but there will be unannounced Learning Walks. For a graded observation, staff receive 2 days' notice of the day they will be observed and are observed for a whole lesson.</p>	

		<p><i>The strategy is having a positive impact. Were the Maths Tutors graded 3 specialists?</i> Yes</p> <p><i>How is the good practice of the 51 teachers graded as outstanding shared?</i> The Teaching Learning and Assessment hour – they shared practice as well as running workshops. They also gave peer support to teachers graded as requiring improvement.</p> <p><i>How many joint observations?</i> 22 were joint. There were many joint observations last year. This year joint observation were done where someone was new to the observations team.</p> <p><i>There seems to be a general pattern of improvement but then some appear to slip back?</i> These staff were the key focus in Learning Walks. Managers also speak to students about the quality of lessons. Unannounced Learning Walks give a better picture.</p> <p><i>Are there problems with English and Maths Teachers?</i> Last year it had been agreed to over resource and create full time positions. With the changes to the qualifications, observation criteria were also tougher this year.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[4/17] <i>The Corporation resolved to note the Teaching and Learning report.</i></p> <p><i>The Assistant Principal, Teaching Learning and Quality was thanked for her report and left the meeting at 6.25pm.</i></p>	
4		Daventry Project Update	
	4.1	The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented the latest report from Fusion on the Daventry Project. The building had opened in November and most of the snagging was now completed. The drainage agreements had been completed. The highways agreement would be split into two agreements with one be entered into by the College and one by Avant. Construction costs were under budget but demolition costs had exceeded the budget because of the removal of asbestos. Demolition was due to be completed over the course of the next month.	
		The second part of the land sale was due in April. Avant homes had been asked for a contribution towards the cost of the revised drainage scheme.	
		<p>The project had been delivered on time and on budget and the Corporation appreciated the work that had been done to achieve this.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[5/17] <i>The Corporation resolved to note the update on the Daventry project.</i></p>	
5		Principal's College Overview Report	
	5.1	The Principal presented her report and highlighted the following:	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data reports were covered at item 7 • There was a concern about punctuality. The timetable was being reviewed and the possibility of starting later was being considered to avoid the school run. • The specifications for many of the BTECs had changed. A lot now had end of course tests, which was hard for many students. More work was being done to support with exam technique • ‘Respond to the Landscape’ had moved from red to amber. The College had applied to register as an approved apprenticeship assessment provider • ‘Develop entrepreneurship and employment skills’ had moved from amber to green. There was a good plan in place for work experience. It was noted that James Whybrow was leaving the College and the Corporation recorded its thanks for James’ work in advancing apprenticeships and improving the Business Studies area. Interim arrangements were in place and recruitment to a permanent position would start shortly. <p><i>How are the needs of the LEP known and how do we show that we are responding to them?</i></p> <p>There is a formal process in the College for new courses to be agreed which takes account of the LEP priorities.</p> <p>The College wanted to increase its level 5 offer in these areas. The College received information from the LEP on demographics and what demands there were for particular subjects and courses.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[6/17]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to note the update on progress with the implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2016/17.</i></p>	
6		Courses in Special Measures – Improvement progress	
	6.1	The Deputy Principal presented his report. Courses identified as underperforming were in ‘special measures’. Where outcomes were below national averages, these courses had been investigated to ascertain weaknesses so that improvements could be made. The Quality Team in the College led this process. Objectives were set for improvement and a QIP was in place.	
	6.2	Outcomes in 24 out of the 29 courses had been reviewed. The College was confident that 18 courses were on course to achieve their target. 3 courses were judged as ‘amber’. This was mainly because of retention and intensive work was happening to maximise this. 3 courses would not meet their target because retention was already too low for the target to be met.	
	6.3	The report set out the more detailed position for 3 courses in this category; one judged as green, one amber and one red. To be green the indicators were strong that targets would be met. Where the course was amber, the target would be met if all students got through and retention was maintained. A motor vehicle course was red because the target was unachievable due to the number of students leaving the course. A complete realignment of foundation	

		<p>studies had happened a result. The College would review losses to ensure this did not happen again. Other 'red' courses were public services and hairdressing, because of retention rates.</p> <p><i>Can we clarify why we lose students?</i> It could be to do with early experiences of College but also because of behaviour issues.</p> <p><i>There has been previous discussion about students interested in more than one course – is this the reason for the loss?</i> No because of the 42-day rule, withdrawals in this period are known as 'no shows'. Some foundation students that had withdrawn are now doing short fresh start courses.</p> <p><i>Is there a correlation between the quality of teaching and retention?</i> Yes – assessment, planning and course design can also be a problem.</p> <p><i>Is retention or achievement the problem? If we retain do we usually get achievement although end tests can be harder.</i> Students' study programmes include English and Maths and some do not like this. The fresh start programme was to help students to re-engage.</p> <p><i>How many fresh start students have re enrolled?</i> So far, 20 have come back to other courses.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[7/17]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to note the report on courses in special measures and the improvements made.</i></p>	
7		Student Progress	
	7.1	The Deputy Principal submitted his report. Monitoring progress was a critical feature of the Common Inspection Framework. Regular feedback to students was both important and motivational. The Corporation had already had a presentation on the datasets the College had developed to monitor student progress. There were 5 progress checks throughout the year with each qualification in the study programme being RAG rated against target. 3000 students were monitored in this way.	
	7.2	<p>This data meant that interventions could be interrogated. Some targets were external – for example, A levels were informed by ALPs. The report gave examples of a student profile. The RAG rating breakdown across the College was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8.3% red • 24.5% amber • 67.2% green 	
	7.3	Monitoring meetings looked at the percentage shifts between red, amber and green and progress by school. At these meetings, staff knew their data, students by name and the interventions taking place. The progress data captures the whole student journey. The data reports, developed in house, were used by staff and students. Targets were set in line with attainment on entry to the College. Receipt of data from previous providers could be slow.	

		Staff had engaged well with the progress reporting system. The Corporation were reassured that so much effort was going in to monitoring performance. RESOLVED C[8/17] <i>The Corporation resolved to note the Student Progress report.</i>	
8		Management accounts and commentary for the period to 31 January 2017	
	8.1	The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented his report. The year-end operating surplus was forecast to be below budget before LGPS pension scheme adjustments are made.	
	8.2	The operating income for the year to date was below budget. Adult Learner Responsive funding was forecast to be under budget with student numbers currently at two thirds of the budget figure. It was felt that this was due to the requirement to take out a loan. The College was looking at franchising arrangements to protect funding. The red and yellow colouring indicated the level of risk. Adult Apprenticeship funding was forecast to be £100,000 under budget, this might be balanced by 16 -18 Apprenticeships being ahead of budget. If numbers exceeded the target, it was hoped that extra funding would be received.	
	8.3	Total pay costs were over budget to date. This was in part due to the recruitment of teaching assistants to support high needs students. The Local Authority should cover some of these costs. Pay costs excluding restructure costs were 66% of operating income. Permanent staff numbers were lower than budget but agency staff costs exceeded the budget. Management costs were below budget, A recruitment freeze was in place. Wherever possible agency and consultancy costs were being reduced.	
	8.4	Current cash balances were 181 days in hand and it was expected that bank covenants would be met. The increase in the cash flow report was due to land receipts. <i>What about the redundancy forecast?</i> It was unlikely that redundancy payments would be made. <i>Are the staff costs showing a worst case scenario?</i> Yes, some of the over spend would be pulled back. <i>Will the operating surplus be less than shown</i> No. RESOLVED C[9/17] <i>The Corporation resolved to note the Management Accounts for the period up to 31 January 2017.</i>	
9		Student Recruitment and Enrolment (latest) 2016 -17	
	9.1	The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented his report. All age and 16 -18 full time recruitment was lower than last year, but fulltime 16 -18	

		recruitment had exceeded the EFA allocation. Part time 16 -18 recruitment was also lower but would increase with summer enrolments in ESOL, English and Maths. Any impact on funding for 2017 -18 from reduced numbers should be offset by an increased retention rate.	
	9.2	Access course numbers were lower in part because the bursary for nursing had been discontinued and the need for students to take out a loan. Overall funded courses were on budget.	
	9.3	<p>HE numbers were below those predicted, but HNC numbers had exceeded projections. SR would review the variance on the Sports courses. The College was looking at the minimum and maximum numbers to be recruited to any given course.</p> <p><i>What are the implication for next year's funding?</i> Funding should be similar to this year. Funding information would come out in March.</p> <p><i>There appears to be a trend of numbers dropping in Arts and increasing in STEM?</i> Many schools were now offering BTECs. If a student had done a level 3 course and was 19 or over, and they wanted to do another one, there would be a fee payable. Students and parents needed to be alerted to this.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[10/17]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to note the latest information on Student Recruitment and Enrolment.</i></p>	Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs
10		Franchise	
	10.1	The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented his report. Due to the gap in the Adult Education Budget compared to last year, when it exceeded its budget by 5%, the College was looking to engage in some partnership delivery with a franchise partner. This would protect current funding streams and generate a top slice income for the College. The figures in the report were a worst-case scenario.	
	10.2	<p>This had been done before. ICCA, the Internal Auditors, would be asked to support brokerage and due diligence. Board approval was required for franchise arrangements.</p> <p><i>How do we ensure quality?</i> This would be covered in the due diligence exercise.</p> <p><i>How do we test the resilience of a franchisee?</i> This is covered in the due diligence exercise</p> <p>RESOLVED C[11/17]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to approve that partnership opportunities through franchising be approved up to a value of £350,000.</i></p>	

11		Audit Committee	
	11.1	The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 1 December 2016 had been circulated prior to the meeting. RESOLVED C[12/17] <i>The Corporation resolved to note the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 1 December 2016</i>	
12		Quality, Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee	
	12.1	The minutes of the meeting of the Quality, Teaching and Learning Committee held on 6 December 2016 had been circulated prior to the meeting. RESOLVED C[13/17] <i>The Corporation resolved to note the minutes of the Quality, Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee meeting held on 6 December 2016.</i>	
13		Overseas Visit	
	13.1	The Deputy Principal requested approval for 2 students to take part in an Overseas visit to Auschwitz as part of the Lessons from Auschwitz project, hosted by the Holocaust Education Trust. RESOLVED C[14/17] <i>The Corporation resolved to approve the Overseas visit to Auschwitz provided the students were accompanied by staff.</i>	
14		Date and Time of Next Meeting	
	14.1	The next meeting would be held on 25 April 2017 at 6pm in the Boardroom at Booth Lane. <i>The meeting finished at 8.25pm</i>	

Julie Brasier
Clerk to the Corporation
Northampton College

Signed by the Chair:	
Date:	