

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING**HELD ON TUESDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2015****Present:**

Emmanuela Boakye	Student Governor
Tracey Branson	Governor
Pat Brennan-Barrett	Governor (Principal)
Rob Davey	Governor
Mark Hall	Governor
Philip Hilton (Vice Chair)	Governor
Geraldine Schofield (Chair)	Governor
David Smith	Governor

The quorum for the meeting was six Members.

In attendance:

Julia Harley	Prospective Governor
Steve Rankine	Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs
Patrick Leavey	Deputy Principal
Gary Brough	Director of Estates
Stuart Markham	Fusion
Heidi Stroud	MIS Project Manager
Julie Brasier	Clerk to the Corporation

The Chair welcomed Julia Harley to the meeting.

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

Before the main meeting there was a presentation from Heidi Stroud. She gave an overview of the work being done in the College regarding data, both in terms of its collection and application. Data as resource was an area of improvement for the College. 238 projects on data have been identified with 110 now finished. This was a four year programme with two years completed so far. Each project had a timeline for delivery. The presentation highlighted some of the key reports for students.

This data was then used as the basis for meetings with each subject area as part of the SAR process. The data covered both achievement and retention to give the success rate for a given subject area. One of the data projects had related to English and Maths with a particular focus on 16 -18 year olds.

Data reports to managers also included information on attendance. There would be a profile for each study programme enabling tutors to set targets individually for students in the light of national and college data. There would be six monitoring points throughout the year for each student for each qualification they were taking. RAG rating was in place and this monitoring would trigger interventions and expectation contracts where necessary. Early leavers were also picked up enabling conversations with students to take place. The number of early leavers had been reduced as a result.

Data was collected centrally, with new features being included on existing systems. Systems had been set up to make functioning as straight forward as possible for staff. Training for staff had taken place on a 1:1 basis and in meetings. The new reports meant that staff were well informed on the progress of each teaching group.

The Board asked how accuracy was checked. Quality checks took place on a weekly and monthly basis. They also asked about projects that were still to be completed. These included Looked after Children, high needs, more on achievement and success measures and diversity. Data would be available across the College. The Executive now oversaw requests for data reports, to make sure the resource was effectively prioritised.

HS was thanked for her presentation and left the meeting.

1. Apologies

1.1 Apologies were received from Ellen Buttler, Roger Morris and Lucy Wright.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 The Chair reminded Members to declare their interests as and when necessary on the agenda.

3. Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 29 September 2015 and any matters arising

3.1 The minutes were agreed as a true and correct record and were duly signed by the Chair.

3.2 Members noted the action points arising from the minutes. Items 4 and 6 were now complete.

3.3 Members asked about the Equality and Diversity Action Plan; the draft update had now been completed.

4. Determination of Any Other Business

4.1 There was one item of 'any other business', an overseas trip to Ypres, item 16 refers,

5. Post 16 Review

5.1 The Principal gave a verbal update.

5.2 The Association of Colleges' website had information about reviews which would be circulated to Governors. 5 Area Reviews had been announced.

5.3 Colleges within SEMLEP had agreed that they be included in the same Area Review and would prepare for this together. A data report on the 10 colleges had been commissioned to help plan provision within SEMLEP.

5.4 The outcome of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review would be announced on 25 November. Any funding implications would have an impact on the Area Reviews. In light of the cuts to the FE budgets that have occurred over the past few years, many Colleges had signed a letter to the Prime Minister detailing the impact of any future cuts. The College, through the Principal and the Chair, was also a signatory to this letter. A copy of the letter was circulated. The letter had attracted media coverage.

RESOLVED [C 64/15]

The Corporation Board noted the current position for area reviews.

6 Key Performance Indicators for Strategic Plan 2015 – 16

- 6.1 The Principal submitted a progress reports on key Performance Indicators. The Board asked for further information regarding the development of English and Maths strategies. For the current academic year there was an English and Maths Strategy Group, chaired by the Principal, which met every two weeks. This group closely monitored all aspects, particularly the level of attainment and progress of students and their attendance at English and Maths classes. There were new qualifications this year that would help progress towards achieving a GCSE C grade. The College was reviewing how best to prepare students who are entitled to exam consideration for exams, including functional skills. The delivery of English and Maths involved 3000 students. English and Maths lessons were only observed by subject specialists. This was particularly relevant in assessing the quality of interventions. Foundation students were being screened for specific learning difficulties with a view to implementing specialist support to help them to progress. Local schools were supportive of supplying the College with information on students at an early stage which would be helpful but difficult to implement. It was important to build confidence in the students and skills in these subject support employability. Workshops, revision classes and support activities were held both during the day and in the evening.
- 6.2 The Board asked about the percentage of apprenticeship vacancies and the RAG rating applied to this measure. This was a moving figure as vacancies were being filled and new ones occurring. The Assistant Principal, Employer Engagement and Enterprise, would be reporting on this and other matters to a future meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED [C 65/15]

The Corporation resolved to note the progress towards the Strategic Objectives 2015/16

7 Learner Outcomes 2014 -15

- 7.1 The Deputy Principal circulated the report giving headline figures relating to student outcomes for the academic year 2014 -15. The overall success rate for the College, which was a combination of retention and achievement rates, was 86.6% which was the best outturn over 3 years and ahead of national averages. For both achievement and retention, the College had exceeded its targets.
- 7.2 When looking at success rates by age and level, there were areas for improvement. The success rates for subject specific areas (SSA) were noted. Previously these had been looked at by Ofsted but their focus would now be on study programmes. Nine SSAs showed improvement, two had stayed the same and three had declined.
- 7.3 Data on three year notional level achievements (excluding functional skills and keyskills) showed improvement in nearly all aspects. The focus for improvement would be level 3 courses for 16 -18 year olds and adults and retention at level 1
- 7.4 All data was tested, with moderation exercises as necessary. Targets had been set for 2015 -16 and the quality initiative prioritised for financial resourcing.

RESOLVED [C 66/15]

The Corporation resolved to note the Learner Outcomes report and the progress made

8 Learner Data Monitoring - Retention

- 8.1 The Deputy Principal circulated the current retention statistics for 2015/16. This stood at 99.73%. Students dropping out were having a meeting with the relevant Head of School and some were re engaging as a result. All leavers were carefully monitored.
- 8.2 There was a RAG rating in place for each student to enable appropriate monitoring and support to be in place. All students had an academic coach.

RESOLVED [C 67/15]

The Corporation resolved to note the current retention rates for the College.

9 SEND report

- 9.1 The Principal submitted the SEND report, which explained the role of the College and the 2014/15 retention, achievement and success rates for SEN students. This showed that the support put in place was effective both for supported learning as a discreet provision and High Needs students in main stream. A recent Ofsted survey indicated that the College was performing well with High Needs students.
- 9.2 The SEN framework had been revised in 2014; colleges' performance in this area would be graded by Ofsted as part of the Common Inspection Framework.
- 9.3 The College received funding for students meeting the 'High Needs' criteria from the Local Authority. Support was being updated for disabled students. There were 800 students who were not deemed to be High Needs that needed some form of support.
- 9.4 The College was implementing improvements in the assistance given to students with Specific Learning difficulties and this would be reported to the Board in February.
- 9.5 A Governor with an overview of SEN was needed.

RESOLVED [C 68/15]

The Corporation resolved to receive the SEND report.

10 Management Accounts and Commentary for the period to 30 September 2015

- 10.1 The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs submitted the management accounts for the period up to 30 September 2015. Data on EFA income would not be received until December. Based on enrolment data it was forecast that the College would meet its income budgets. 16-18 enrolment should mean that the College earns what it has been allocated. Because funding is lagged there will be no change in EFA (16-18) funding this year. Adjustments to funding based on this year's recruitment will be made to next years funding.. It was expected that allocations and overall targets would be met. HE would be a little below budget, programmes for 24 year olds would be above.
- 10.2 Pay and non pay costs were close to the budget and included the 1% pay rise.

RESOLVED [C 69/15]

The Corporation resolved to note the Management Accounts and Commentary for the eight month period to 31 March 2015.

11 Treasury Management

- 11.1 The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs submitted the revised Treasury Management Policy. The key changes related to the period for retention of cash balances. Due to the increased risks of funding cuts being announced at short notice, the uncertainty regarding area reviews and increased competition it was agreed to change the Policy to require the College to retain cash balances of 60 days.
- 11.2 It was agreed to amend the Policy to allow the College to invest in UK Operating banks (subject to satisfactory ratings). A benchmark mechanism for bank and building society ratings would be looked at.

- 11.3 It was agreed to add Close Brothers Group plc to the list of UK Retail Operating Banks that the College is allowed to place funds with (Appendix 1 of the Policy)
- 11.4 The details of the College's Treasury Management will be reviewed by the Audit Committee as appropriate
- 11.5 Current loan interest was fixed until 2019 and this would be relevant to any decisions taken.

RESOLVED [C 70/15]

The Corporation resolved to approve the revised Treasury Management Policy.

12 Enrolment Data

- 12.1 The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs submitted the Enrolment data report. The targets for each area were based on what was in the relevant course file. Actual enrolments could also be compared to those for the subject area for the previous academic year.
- 12.2 Some areas had seen a decline, such as music, and course content was being reviewed to increase the vocational element so that students could see closer employment links. Recruitment of 16 -18 year olds was above allocation, although some withdrawals were possible. It was possible to submit a growth bid for apprenticeships. Adult recruitment was buoyant.

RESOLVED [71/15]

The Corporation resolved to note the report on enrolment data.

13 Health and Safety Report 2014/15

- 13.1 The Director of Estates submitted the Health and Safety Report for 2014/15. The function of the College Safety committee had been reviewed and its focus was now on monitoring across the College, in line with industry practice. The annual Health and Safety inspection had been completed and this service was out to tender. No accidents were reportable under RIDDOR.
- 13.2 Record keeping had improved and the success of compensation claims decreased. All systems and approaches had been externally reviewed and changes made as appropriate. It was noted that there was a potential disadvantage if the same external Health and Safety adviser was retained over a period of time.
- 13.3 Automatic External Defibrillators were on all sites with most first aid officers now trained in their use.
- 13.4 Overall it was judged that Health and Safety was well managed across the College.

RESOLVED (72/15)

The Corporation resolved to note the Health and Safety Report for 2014/15.

Gary Brough was present for this item and for item 18.

14 Governance Committee Report

- 14.1 Tracey Branson, Chair of Governance Committee, gave a verbal update of the committee meeting held before the Corporation meeting. The Committee had met with Julia Harley who was interested in becoming a Governor.

- 14.2 The Committee had looked at priorities for Governors for the coming year. The clerk would produce a summary grid showing how these priorities were considered in meetings over the year. A protocol had been agreed for Governors and this would be circulated by the Clerk.
- 14.3 Consideration had been given to the SAR process and how Governors could make the most effective contribution to this. A questionnaire reflecting the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework would be circulated for Governors to complete. This would also help inform activities for the strategic corporation event in January.
- 14.4 The Committee had reviewed the recommended aspects of the Association of Colleges' Code for Good Governance against current Corporation practice. This would be repeated later in the year.
- 14.5 As Geraldine Schofield had been elected Chair, another Governor would need to take on the role of safeguarding Governor within the College. Anyone interested in this role was asked to contact the Clerk. A role description was available.

RESOLVED [73/15]

The Corporation resolved to appoint Julia Harley as a Governor for the Corporation and note the verbal report of the Governance Committee.

Julia Harley left the meeting for the decision on her appointment.

15 Revisions to the Instrument of Government and Articles - Update

- 15.1 This had been considered at the previous meeting. There were three items still to be decided relating to the size of the Corporation, the quorum and website information.

RESOLVED [74/15]

The Corporation resolved as follows:

- a. The corporation would comprise up to 16 members***
- b. The quorum for ordinary business at a Corporation Meeting would be 40% of Governors in post. The quorum to change the Instrument of Government and Articles or agree a significant strategic change for the College would be 75% of Governors in post***
- c. Minutes of the Corporation Board, except confidential items would be published on the College website.***

16 Trip to Ypres

- 16.1 The Deputy Principal submitted a proposal for a student residential visit to Ypres.

RESOLVED [75/15]

The Corporation resolved to approve residential visit to Ypres

The Principal was not present for this item

17. Date and Time of Next Meeting

- 16.1 The next meeting of the Corporation will be held on Tuesday 15 December 2015 at 6.00pm in the Boardroom at Booth Lane.

The meeting closed at 8.23pm.

Julie Brasier
Clerk to the Corporation
Northampton College

Signed by the Chair:	
Date:	