

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2016

Present:

Tracy Branson	Governor
Pat Brennan-Barrett	Governor (Principal)
Emmanuela Boakye	Governor (student)
Ellen Buttler	Governor
Mark Hall	Governor
Julia Harley	Governor
Philip Hilton (Vice Chair)	Governor
Martin James	Governor
Roger Morris	Governor
Geraldine Schofield (Chair)	Governor

The quorum for the meeting was six Members.

In attendance:

Steve Rankine	Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs
Patrick Leavey	Deputy Principal
Gary Brough	Director of Estates
Victoria Cornwell - Lyon	Assistant Principal, Teaching Learning and Quality
Mark Owen	Head of Student Services
Ann Newark	Head of School, Maths and English
Lea Thompson	ELearning Manager
Julie Brasier	Clerk to the Corporation

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

1		Apologies	Action
	1.1	Apologies were received from Rob Davey and David Smith.	
2		Declarations of Interest	
	2.1	The Chair reminded Members to declare their interests as and when necessary on the agenda.	
3		Daventry Project Update	
	3.1	The Director of Estates presented the update on the project from the latest project management report. The risk register needed to be amended and would be recirculated. Overall the risk on the project was dropping significantly. The land disposal was on track. Consideration was being given to the feasibility of the early release of a portion of the land for show homes. Further discussions would be held with the College's legal advisers later in the week.	GB/JB

3.2	All pre start planning conditions had now been discharged. High winds had caused some delay to the erection of the steel frame as it was unsafe to use cranes. The handover of the building would not be delayed by this.	
3.3	It was hoped to get a live video feed of the construction work onto the College website. It was expected that the car park would be finished in 4 weeks' time.	
3.4	In terms of risks onsite, the following points were noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface water had been pumped away • A residents meeting had been arranged – no complaints had been received since the last report • Some asbestos had been found – the contractors were dealing with this in the appropriate manner • There was some soil contamination. Samples had been taken and analysis of these was awaited 	
3.5	Value engineering savings secured to date were on track against the contract target.	
3.6	Members asked that a site visit be arranged for them at the appropriate time. RESOLVED C [1/16] <i>The Corporation resolved to note the progress on the Daventry Project</i> The Director of Estates left the meeting at 6.15 pm	GB
4	Presentation – Maths and English	
4.1	The Head of School for Maths and English gave a presentation to the Corporation. This outlined the College vision for these subject areas and the progress made since 2014 when the obligations of the FE sector for these two subjects had changed significantly.	
4.2	The vision is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maximise the potential of all students and • To prepare students for employment or further study. 	
4.3	5,010 enrolments included English or Maths or both subjects. There was a bigger demand for Maths. For many students, English and/or Maths would be part of their full time study programme and where this was the case attendance in these classes was a condition of funding. There was ongoing recruitment onto part time courses and this would continue until Easter.	
4.4	There had been significant growth in the number of students requiring Maths and English courses but this was now expected to stabilise. The offer was changing. More students were doing GCSE and stepping stone qualifications and less were doing Functional Skills, with the biggest drop in Functional Skills level 2. Results in functional skills level 1 and 2 were improved on the previous year but still low. For 2014/15 the area has been assessed as a grade 3 in the Self - Assessment Report.	
4.5	The College target for grade A* to C at GCSE was 50%. To support staff, CPD	

		<p>sessions were available once a week. English and Maths was a teaching and learning priority in every lesson. Additional support was available in most lessons, which were made as accessible as possible. Data recording meant that the level of current attainment was clear for each individual student. Classroom displays also supported learning.</p>	
	4.6	<p>Although there were still some vacant posts, the number of Maths and English teachers was growing. Academic coaches had a particularly important role in these subjects. Lesson observations indicated that 92% of English and Maths lessons were good or better. (English teaching was all judged to be good or better.) Where teaching was at a lesser standard, robust measures to support improvement were put in place. Areas for improvement in the delivery of English and Maths overall had been identified and a programme was in place to address these.</p>	
	4.7	<p>When looking at GCSE data for FE colleges nationally, where it was appropriate to do so, the average for grade A* to C at GCSE is low.</p>	
	4.8	<p>Attendance had improved from last year from 84 to 86.6% but was still below target the college target of 90%. Discussions were held with students about this and where necessary disciplinary measures were taken. Managers continue to monitor attendance at all levels.</p>	
	4.9	<p>Looking to the future, one of the key challenges would be the changes to the GCSE specifications. Questions were asked as follows:</p> <p><i>Why would students be more likely to be successful with GCSE rather than Functional Skills?</i></p> <p>They may not necessarily be more suited to GCSE. Some students find the Functional Skills elements useful in their vocational subject and then develop employability skills. However the gold standard is GCSE but those with a Grade D or below may find it very difficult to achieve a higher grade.</p> <p><i>How will the College cope with so many students doing English and Maths examinations at the same time?</i></p> <p>Detailed planning was already taking place because of the number of rooms required.</p> <p>The Head of School for English and Maths was thanked for her presentation.</p> <p>Ann Newark left the meeting at 6.45pm.</p>	
5		E Learning Strategy	
	5.1	<p>The ELearning Manger submitted the E Learning Strategy. It identified the factors driving change in the learning environment and the challenges that may arise. There was a wide range of technology available. Clear goals for how it would progress learning were needed.</p>	

5.2	<p>A technology and innovations group had been set up and staff were working with another FE College known for its good practice in this area. Initiatives included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT Heroes – staff were giving extra training and support to help their respective schools use E Learning effectively • Advanced practitioners promoted and shared good practice • Student IT coaches supported other students – this counted as work experience • Game based learning • Auditing current practice – these was a lot of good practice • Voluntary and compulsory training for staff • Task force to launch resources • Testing new technologies – 300 students were using google classroom. 	
5.3	<p>The expected impact would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students engaged in learning and more independent • Improved pedagogy meant that if students learnt independently there would be more discussion and application in lessons • Greater differentiation and stretch and challenge • Sharing resources – this would improve retention and success rates <p>Questions: <i>There was research at Bristol University into learning through games?</i></p> <p>The College were looking at this. There were ways in which games could be adapted so that by them playing with others, course work could be completed.</p> <p><i>What if students could not afford laptops/tablets?</i></p> <p>Students were supported. A lot more could now be done on mobile phones and virtually all students had these. Technology was getting cheaper and equipment was lent to students through student services (120 laptops were lent to students in 2014/15). Sometimes there were problems with broadband access at home. The College was looking at ways of accessing information through phones.</p> <p><i>Where are we in relations to other colleges?</i></p> <p>In some areas Northampton was well ahead, but as mentioned was learning from good practice in other providers. There were however pockets of inconsistency and these were being tackled.</p> <p><i>Does E Learning form part of the assessment for teaching and learning</i></p> <p>This is covered in item 7. Ms Thompson was thanked for her report.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[2/16] <i>The Corporation resolved to note the E Learning Strategy Report.</i></p> <p>Lea Thompson left the meeting at 7pm.</p>	
6	Safeguarding Report	
6.1	The Head of Student Services submitted the Safeguarding Report for 2014 -15.	

		The report format was used by all three FE Colleges in Northamptonshire. The Designated Senior Person was now Patrick Leavey. Other than that, roles continued as outlined in the report.	
	6.2	The report included year on year student survey results. There was positive year on year improvement in students feeling safe. There had been a small increase in anti social behaviour for 2014 -16 but this had been successfully addressed and dealt with.	
	6.3	All staff had received safeguarding training. There had been a significant increase in referrals. This was in part due to staff being better informed and trained and a growing cohort of students under the care of external services. There had been an increase in students reporting concerns – this was seen positively in terms of faith and trust in staff. Concerns from both staff and students did now include issues raised due to PREVENT.	
	6.4	<p>Areas of good practice included risk assessments for work placements, information given to staff and shared internally and externally. All actions for the year had been achieved. The report outlined the actions for the current year and these included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E learning training packages for staff on students for safeguarding and Prevent • Database improvements to show monitoring of at risk students • Further development of young and ex – offenders’ policy • Development of ‘lock down’ procedures <p>The Head of Student Services was thanked for his report.</p> <p>RESOLVED [3/16]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to note Safeguarding Report for 2014 -15</i></p> <p>Mark Owen left the meeting at 7.15pm</p>	
7		Teaching and Learning Report (Interim 2015/16)	
	7.1	The Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment, presented the Teaching and Learning Report for the year to date. Most teaching and learning continued to be good. There had been a new strategy for 2015/16 which included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A closer alignment between lesson observations and the CPD offered • Teaching and Learning priorities which had been shared with all staff • Detailed tracking and monitoring • Tracking of day to day classroom practice • Regular learning walks. 	
	7.2	Over 90% of lesson observations had been completed by the end of term 1. Specialist observers were used for Maths and English. For all observations there was a tight focus on learning and the progress students were making. Where lessons were judged less than good, an intensive four week support package was put in place and this had been positively received by staff with strong improvement being showing where reassessment had taken place. Where	

		improvement was not secured, there was a close link between lesson observation data and relevant HR processes.	
	7.3	The report outlined the extent to which the teaching and learning priorities have been successfully implemented across curriculum areas and the action taken where improvements were required.	
	7.4	<p>Academic coaches played an important role in supporting students where there were concerns about progress. They were getting developmental observations.</p> <p>Questions: <i>Do others look at the work of academic coaches?</i></p> <p>Yes, but if they are in 1:1 sessions with a student, the student's consent will be requested as a matter of courtesy <i>What was the proportion of lesson observations completed at the end of term 1 last year?</i></p> <p>It was 82% last year and 90% this year. Observations were dual with one observer from within the curriculum area and one outside. Staff preferred this.</p> <p><i>In relation to the staff graded 3 and 4 – how long had they been teaching in the College? Is account taken of past judgements?</i></p> <p>Yes it is. Robust performance management was in place three staff who received a grade 4 had left the College. One had improved and one was on performance management .The majority of staff graded 3 were keen to improve and only a small minority failed to do so.</p> <p>Underperformance has been swiftly identified early in the year .This was partly due to the increased standard to be met under the Common Inspection Framework and the moving from teaching to learning and progress made during a lesson and over time.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[4/16]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to note Teaching and Learning Report.</i></p>	
8		Student Voice Report (Interim 2015/16)	
	8.1	<p>The Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment, presented the Student Voice Report for the year to date. Student Voice activity covered 4 areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted Learner Voice survey – 1500 students had taken part. For many colleges the number was in the region of 200 • Curriculum area focus groups • Student role in lesson observation process • Student conference – a conference for SEN students was also held. 	
	8.2	Staff were working hard to listen to students. The Ofsted survey showed good satisfaction rates overall. There were points on teaching, learning and assessment to be picked up from the Curriculum Focus groups but the responses overall supported the Ofsted Survey data.	

8.3	<p>Student feedback as part of lesson observations was important and was compared to observation and outcome data. Issues raised by the student conferences had been fed back to the relevant areas and action plans were being produced.</p> <p>It was noted by members that 91% of students felt that technology and on line resources supported their learning whereas staff had felt this to be lower.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal, Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment was thanked for her reports.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[5/16]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to note Student Voice Report.</i></p> <p>Victoria Cornwell – Lyon left the meeting at 7.40pm</p>	
9	Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 15 December and any matters arising	
9.1	Subject to amending 'Mark James' to 'Martin James' under "present", the minutes were agreed as a true and correct record and were duly signed by the Chair.	
9.2	Members noted the action points.	
10	Determination of Any Other Business	
10.1	Two items would be raised, items 20 and 21 refer.	
11	Area Review	
11.1	The Principal advised members that the Area Review for the College was scheduled for September 2016. National developments were being noted and the Area Review would be the focus of the Corporation Strategic Event in July.	Principal /Clerk
12	Key Performance Indicators for the Strategic Plan for 2015 - 16	
12.1	The Principal submitted her report. Other reports for the meeting had covered several areas of the Strategic Plan. It was noted that there was further recruitment ongoing for English and Maths.	
12.2	<p>Questions</p> <p><i>Why was 'use data, research and information effectively' still amber, should it be green?</i></p> <p>The Principal indicated the College was still in 'catch up' mode although a lot had been achieved. A consultant was working with the College and progress was being made. A full suite of reports was being put in place, particularly to give comparative data. It was noted that as part of the planned Internal Audit Service. KPI reporting was being reviewed and there would be a report to Audit Committee on this.</p>	

		<p><i>Is our data now accurate?</i></p> <p>In most cases it is. Where there were issues, this was more about how information was extracted and what was asked for. The underlying data was accurate.</p> <p>The Student Progress rating for this item would be reviewed again once the Internal Audit Report had been received. There would be a further presentation to the Corporation on this. It was also noted that there were now more measurements required and additional data was now collected for this.</p>	Clerk
	12.3	<p>It was noted that ‘respond to changing landscape’ had improved in the light of data compiled for the FUSE group for the Area Review.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[6/16]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to the progress against the Key Performance Indicators for the Strategic Plan 2015 -16.</i></p>	
13		Learner Data Monitoring Retention	
	13.1	<p>The Deputy Principal presented the retention data for the year to date. Overall it was almost 98% and there was consistency across the age profiles. For 2014 -15 the end of year figure stood at 92%. The monitoring and progress checking was having a positive impact. It was probable that there would be a dip from current levels, for example where students were not engaging in English and Maths. The College did not want to lose students but it was a funding condition that 16 -18 students followed English and Maths courses where a grade C at GCSE had not already been achieved.</p>	
	13.2	<p>The retention target for 2015-16 was 93%. Some parts of the curriculum had been rearranged which changed when courses started. So ESOL courses for example started termly rather than all at the beginning of the academic year.</p> <p>RESOLVED [7/16]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to note the student retention data.</i></p>	
14		Quality Improvement Plan	
	14.1	<p>The updated Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was submitted by the Deputy Principal. Three areas were highlighted for the Corporation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports qualifications – An internal quality review had taken place and detailed feedback had been given to the team concerned. They now had two weeks to produce an action plan to address the issues identified. • A levels – this area needed improvement as already identified. A head of school had been appointed. Progress checks were being carried out. Expectation contracts had been put in place for students at risk • AAT – work with an external provider was proceeding to achieve improvement. 	
	14.2	Some students had moved to apprenticeships where they were not well matched	

		<p>to a course.</p> <p>Questions <i>It was helpful that the QIP showed progress and impact; could evidence of impact be included?</i></p> <p>Yes</p> <p><i>How much progress was needed with E Learning – what quality measures were there to show how well the College was doing? How were quality measures set?</i></p> <p>The College was working with another FE provider considered to have strong practice in this area. There had been a high student response to E Learning in the Ofsted Survey. Part of the judgement on E Learning would come from lesson observations. For adult courses, 10% had to be via E Learning or ILT. There were JISC measures for 16 -18 year olds. The E Learning Manager was looking at each school's Moodle pages and identifying those needing support to use this resource more.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[8/16]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to note the improvements made in the updated Quality Improvement Plan.</i></p>	
15		Overseas Educational Visits for Students	
	15.1	<p>The Deputy Principal submitted details of two overseas visits, one being an Arts trip to Los Angeles and the other being a visit to Auschwitz hosted by the Holocaust Education Trust.</p> <p>It was asked how students brought back information about the visits. It was noted that it was part of a study programme to share and feedback information gained.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[9/16]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to the overseas educational visits to Los Angeles and Auschwitz.</i></p>	
16		Management Accounts and Commentary for the period to 31 December 2015	
	16.1	The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs submitted the Management Accounts for the five months to 31 December 2015.	
	16.2	The College will receive its EFA allocation for the year in full with any adjustments for over (or under) recruitment being adjusted in next years' funding, the lagged funding mechanism. If recruitment was ahead of allocation, then this would assist funding for next year, a 1% increase in retention would also have a significant beneficial impact.	
	16.3	SFA funding was earned throughout the year, with achievement funding, representing 20% of funding, coming at the end of the year. Recruitment in year is expected to be higher this year than last year, particularly as ESOL students are now enrolled on a termly basis and demand for PT adult Maths and English classes had increased. Due to the substantial uncertainty around future earnings we	

		are currently forecasting a shortfall against the budget figure.	
16.4		<p>Funding for apprenticeships was ahead of the budget, with extra funding approved because of increased numbers. The outcome of the bid for additional funding for 16 -18 year olds was still awaited.</p> <p>It was asked whether the apprenticeship target was a risk and too stretching. 80% of the target had been met and new apprenticeships were coming on stream all the time. It was felt that the target was achievable.</p>	
16.5		24+ Loan income was behind budget but other fee income had increased was ahead of budget.	
16.6		Pay costs were on budget, non-pay costs were slightly ahead, but are expected to be on budget by the year end. The College maintained a strong surplus. Cash on the balance sheet was high and had benefitted from receipt of Q1 SEMLEP funding in January for Daventry project.	
16.7		<p>There were some issues with figures picked up from last year, which was thought to be due to new software. This would be looked at.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[10/16]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved to note the management accounts for the five months to the end of December 2015</i></p>	SR
17		Student Enrolment	
17.1		16 -18 recruitment in bands 4 and 5 was ahead of target. For bands 1 to 3 it was lower but this was expected to recover. At present the College was ahead of target which meant funding for next year would be at a similar level.	
17.2		As mentioned in 16.4 above, apprenticeship enrolment was expected to reach target as the year progressed. HE was behind budget but ahead of last year.	
17.3		<p>It was possible that the College may be able to continue its subcontract relationship with Templegate Training this year. If it went ahead it would be of a small value.. A final decision on this would be delegated to three members as set out in the resolution below.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[11/16]</p> <p><i>The Corporation resolved</i></p> <p><i>(1) to note the report on enrolment data and</i></p> <p><i>(2) To delegate to the Chair, Vice Chair and Chair of Audit authority to agree to continue subcontracting with Templegate Training</i></p>	
18		Quality of Learning Teaching and Assessment Committee Minutes	
18.1		The minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2015 were noted. Rather than a summary of the Self Assessment Report, position statements were being produced on each category which would be shared with Governors as appropriate.	Principal /Clerk

		RESOLVED C[12/16] <i>The Corporation resolved to note the minutes of the Quality of Learning, Teaching and Assessment Committee.</i>	
19		Confirmation of Safeguarding/SEND Governor	
	19.1	Tracey Branson had agreed to take on this role. RESOLVED C[13/16] <i>The Corporation resolved to appoint Tracey Branson as the Safeguarding/SEND Governor.</i>	
20		Strategy Day	
	20.1	Notes would be circulated from the Strategy Day on 20 January 2016.	Clerk
21		Staff and Student news	
	21.1	The Principal was very sad to have to notify the Corporation that a long serving and valued member of staff was very seriously ill and a former student at the College had been murdered at the weekend. Staff and students were being offered support.	
22		Date and Time of Next meeting	
	22.1	The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 26 April 2016 at 6.00pm in the Board Room at Booth Lane. The meeting finished at 8.20pm.	

Julie Brasier
Clerk to the Corporation
Northampton College

Signed by the Chair:	
Date:	