

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2018

Present:

Pat	Brennan-Barrett	Principal	✓
Sharon	Bunker	Student Governor	✓
Ellen	Buttler	Governor	✓
Bill	Chalker	Governor	✓
Robert	Davey	Governor	✓
Dean	Griffin	Student Governor	Apologies
Tracey	Griffiths	Governor	✓
Julia	Harley	Governor	Apologies
Philip	Hilton	Governor (Chair)	✓
Rebekah	Potter	Student Governor	✓
Geraldine	Schofield	Governor	Apologies
Helen	Scott	Governor	✓
David	Smith	Governor	✓

The quorum for the meeting was six Members.

In attendance:

Patrick Leavey	Deputy Principal
Steve Rankine	Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs
Jason Lancaster	Interim Vice Principal Teaching Learning Quality of Improvement and Employer Engagement
Gary Brough	Director of Estates
Jan Hutt	Director of Human Resources
Julie Brasier	Clerk to the Corporation

1		Welcome and Apologies	Action
	1.1	Apologies were received Geraldine Schofield, Dean Griffin and Julia Harley. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair chaired the meeting.	
2		Declarations of Interest	
	2.1	The Vice Chair reminded Members to declare their interests as and when necessary on the agenda.	

3		Minutes and Matters Arising	
	3.1	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2018 were agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:</p> <p>Minute 10.2</p> <p>In the first sentence delete the word 'of' and insert 'over'</p> <p>The corrected minutes were signed by the Vice Chair.</p>	
	3.2	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Minute 2.1 – Declaration on Interest forms continued to be followed up by the Clerk.</p> <p>Minute 6.2 – the Director Of Human Resources circulated a briefing sheet on the College's approach to lone working. <i>Is there a category of employees missing – e.g. those observing. Is this 'lone working'</i></p> <p>Under Health and Safety legislation, Lone Working was defined as workers who worked by themselves without supervision and mobile workers, e.g. Assessors in the Business Centre. There were procedures in place to cover this. Something could be put in place for staff visiting other colleges. If home visits were necessary, it was always with 2 members of staff.</p> <p>The Corporation were happy that the questions raised had been dealt with.</p> <p>Minute 15.1 – the Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs had amended the Anti Fraud and Response Plan</p> <p>Minute 17.1 – the strategy to support governor roles was outstanding, the strategic planning event had taken place.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
4		Determination of Any Other Business (urgent and necessary only)	
	4.1	There were no items of any other business	
5		HR Report	
	5.1	The Director of Human Resources presented her reports, comprising the Annual Equality and Diversity Report and the HR Report.	
	5.2	The College was required to report annually on its work towards the three areas of the public sector equality duty. The report set out the College's actions and work in relation to the curriculum, staff and students. An update was given on last year's objectives and set out the objectives for the current year.	
	5.3	There had been reporting in the media regarding the gender pay gap. The College compared favourably against regional data. The data was simplistic in that it did not identify where colleges may have outsourced lower paid workers and these jobs were often done by female staff.	
	5.4	The College had compared its actions to those in the Government's document: 'Reducing the gender pay gap and improving gender pay reporting data: Evidence – based actions for employers'. It was already doing 5 out of 6 of the recommended actions and was partially doing the sixth.	
	5.5	The objectives for this year were set out in the Equality and Diversity Plan. Some actions were already completed for parental leave. There was a concern	

		<p>amongst staff regarding the lower success rate in black applicants securing jobs at the College.</p> <p><i>How will you approach this?</i></p> <p>At the recruitment and shortlisting stage protected characteristics are not shared, so it is the process between shortlisting and appointment that is being looked at and the criteria for a role.</p> <p><i>Is there an 'unconscious bias'?</i></p> <p>This was not found to have had any effect.</p> <p><i>How is the gender pay gap calculated?</i></p> <p>This year was the first year and the calculation was basic. It would be looked at in more detail for next year</p> <p><i>Do hourly paid staff get appointed at a lower rate?</i></p> <p>No</p> <p>The College was carrying out actions recognised as having an impact such as the sharing of parental leave although these were not always taken up.</p> <p><i>What about return after maternity leave?</i></p> <p>Meetings are held with staff before they go on maternity leave and discussions take place about support when returning to work. Risk assessments are also done as the employee returns to work.</p> <p><i>Are we looking at all areas?</i></p> <p>There is a new policy on flexible working and the College was mindful of the difficulties in terms of both recruitment and returning to work.</p>	
	5.6	<p><i>In terms of attainment, are there issues with attainment for BME students in apprenticeships?</i></p> <p>Numbers are low but it is still an area for focus on. This also reflected on the poorer performance in apprenticeships</p>	
	5.7	<p>The initiatives for employee welfare were explained. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee assistance programmes – these include face to face counselling, telephone and on line services and an Health e – Hub Mobile app. • Health surveillance – risk assessments in the work place • Sickness absence – welfare meetings were being held and the level of absence was reducing but this would remain a focus 	
	5.8	<p>Staff turnover was significantly below the East Midland average. The College had a workforce very committed to its students. There were hard to fill posts and strategies were being developed for this to reduce agency costs.</p> <p><i>Is there a points system for sickness?</i></p> <p>The College used the Bradford score which looks at patterns of absence.</p> <p><i>Performance management was recognised as a strength at Ofsted – well done</i></p> <p>RESOLVED C[72/18] That the Corporation note the Equality and Diversity and Human Resources Report</p>	
6		Ofsted	
	6.1	<p>The Ofsted report had been circulated. The Principal expressed her thanks to the Corporation for their work. The QIP had been revised to reflect the recommendations in the Ofsted Report. Detailed notes had also been kept during the inspection process, which would help drive further improvement.</p>	

6.2	<p>The College's ambition was to be in the top 10% of colleges nationally. Key points emerging from the inspection were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more accurate recognition of the College's strengths that had already been present at the last inspection • High needs judged to be a Grade 1 – outstanding • Apprenticeships remained a Grade 3 	
6.3	<p>There was an improving picture – interventions were working, the College had an accurate view of its position. Interventions were working. The impact of school monitoring systems would be looked at further in terms of how it could be improved as far as paperwork was concerned.</p>	
6.4	<p>The importance of governance had been noted in terms of strategy and holding to account. Teaching and Learning continued to improve with students developing skills rapidly. There had been positive comments about English and Maths – this was not the case nationally. There were some areas in Teaching and Learning for further development.</p>	
6.5	<p>Personal development behaviour and welfare was strong. The comment regarding extremism was specific to the local area. The findings regarding Outcomes highlighted students' skills, progress and the impact of work experience. The overall judgement was a strong Grade 2 – Good.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[73/18] That the Corporation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the Ofsted Report 2. recognises the very considerable achievement of the College attaining a Good Ofsted rating and wishes to record its appreciation and gratitude for the commitment, determination and effort of the executive leadership, the staff and the students in attaining this outcome 3. that staff be given an additional day's leave for 2018/19 	
7	Principal's College Overview Report	
7.1	<p>The Report was circulated with the agenda. Apprenticeships would be added to 1.6 and would be RAG rated amber with the expectation that it would be green by the end of the year</p>	Principal
7.2	<p><i>3.2 is shown as green but then mentions the challenges of recruitment – is this localised?</i> There are strategies to look at this. <i>Because of the recruitment implications, should it be green?</i> This has only been a recent issue for one area of the curriculum and a solution had now been found for its assessment. <i>Is this subcontracting?</i> No. <i>Are there other professional organisations that could help support a career change into FE teaching?</i> It was important to look at all approaches.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[74/18] That the Corporation note the Principal's Overview Report.</p>	
8	Self Assessment Report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)	
8.1	<p>The Deputy Principal presented the SAR and the QIP which has been considered in detail by the Quality, Teaching and Learning Committee immediately before the meeting. It had been prepared early in the term. The</p>	

		grades given were in line with the Ofsted Judgements, other than High Needs, which the College had graded as a 2, but Ofsted had graded as a 1.	
	8.2	The Headline data showed a 4 year trend of improvement. The focus on high grades and value added had been important in the Ofsted inspection, together with the individualised approach of monitoring from the outset. Ofsted in speaking to students could see that progress was closely monitored with strategies and interventions in place.	
	8.3	Work continued to improve progress in English and Maths – GCSE and Functional skills results were credible and compared well with the FE sector. Student engagement and behaviour was very strong and close to a Grade 1. The high expectations of students would continue. The retention, pass and achievement data and the focus on high grades and value added had taken outcomes to a different level. There was a detailed data pack to support the SAR – this had been shared with Quality, Teaching and Learning Committee.	
	8.4	The QIP was prepared on the basis of the SAR and the Ofsted recommendations . <i>The data in the SAR is a fantastic achievement – this is an excellent record.</i> RESOLVED C[75/18] 1. That the Corporation approve the SAR and the QIP 2. That the Corporation acknowledge the significant achievement of the College in securing 4 years of consistent improvement	
9		Audit Committee Annual Report 2017/18	
	9.1	The Audit Committee’s Annual Report had been approved by the Audit Committee and was circulated with the agenda. The report outlined the sources of assurance used by the Committee in fulfilling its role	
	9.2	The Audit Committee had concluded: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College’s systems of internal control are adequate and effective • The College’s audit arrangements and framework of governance are adequate and effective • The College’s arrangements for risk management, control and governance processes, securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money) are adequate and effective It also concluded that in its opinion it had effectively discharged its duties as set out in the terms of reference.	
	9.3	A copy of the report went to the ESFA as part of its assurance procedures. Evidence for the committee’s conclusions came from a variety of external sources and these were set out in the Report. The context for the lack of completion of the Internal Audit Service report was noted. The report set out the alternative sources of assurance the committee had considered to overcome this. The report itself was assurance to the Corporation to assist in its approval of the Annual Financial Statements and Accounts. <i>The GDPR audit was not completed? What is in place to look at this</i> This was due to timing of the dispute. GDPR will be a priority for the new Internal Audit provider.	
		The College had tendered through the relevant Framework for a new provider. The responses received were scored against the appropriate criteria. The successful tenderer had met with PH and BC and were experienced in providing Internal audit services to FE Colleges. The contract would be awarded to Haynes Watts. RESOLVED C[76/18] The Corporation resolved to approve the Audit Committee Annual Report for 2017/18	

10		Audit Findings Report and Financial Statements – 2017/18	
	10.1	The Audit Committee had gone through the Report and the Financial Statements and had recommended that they be approved by the Corporation. The deficit for the year was largely due to the application of FR102, which included notional costs in relation to the LGPS. If these notional pension costs were removed there was a small deficit. This is due to the College finance's being squeezed between a flat income line and rising costs, particularly staff costs.	
	10.2	Depreciation was shown in the accounts but this was not a sum that had to be paid. There were also capital grants released of £3million. The EBITDA measure was £1.422million. The cash position was strong, fixed assets had reduced due to depreciation. Creditors included loans. The Lloyds loans had been repaid, after the year end. <i>The cash position was healthy but the small deficit is a cause for concern.</i>	
	10.3	<i>Pay costs have increased less than the previous year</i> <i>Is the guidance still for pay costs to be 63%</i> It is 65%, the College is at 66%. This was more to do with a flat income, which had been held up by partnership work. Pro solution should aid efficiency with savings being seen this year. Refinancing the remaining loans would also save interest costs.	
	10.4	<i>Ofsted focussed on the Daventry Campus – can we do some analysis around that?</i> Numbers have been impacted by the competition from schools – the College was now looking at revising the curriculum offer. Numbers at Daventry would be an agenda item for the next meeting. Housing planned for the area should increase student numbers RESOLVED C[77/18] The Corporation resolved (a) To approve the Letters of Representation, Audit Findings and Financial Statements for the Year to 31 July 2018; (b) To delegate authority to the Vice Chair of the Corporation to sign these documents as necessary	Agenda
11		Student Recruitment and Enrolment	
	11.1	The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented his report. The figures took account of no shows and withdrawals. There was a drop, but in- year and part-time recruitment continued. Access courses had recruited well. Apprenticeship recruitment was in line with last year when nationally it was significantly down in this area. Adult recruitment was better than last year. RESOLVED C[78/18] the Corporation resolved to note the report on recruitment	
12		Management Accounts up to the end of October 2018	
	12.1	The Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented his report. Income had increased, but so had staffing costs. This was due to restructuring and this would produce savings. Agency and non pay costs had increased. The ESF income had still to be received. Although behind budget, it was felt that the budget would be achieved over the year. Costs would be kept under tight review.	

	12.2	<p><i>Some curriculum areas are down on enrolment.</i></p> <p>Yes but it is up in other areas – work was being done to predict course demand.</p> <p><i>Will there be a lagged funding impact?</i></p> <p>The College is also funded on retention.</p> <p><i>What strategies are we using to address recruitment now and in the future?</i></p> <p>The curriculum is kept under review, there is careful marketing and a strong focus on the quality of provision. It was not easy due to the competition from schools. FE had not been awarded more funding and lobbying was taking place on this via the ‘Love our College’ campaign.</p>	
	12.3	<p><i>Will the Ofsted judgement help?</i></p> <p>This is being monitored, but there was strong competition – more had to be done to promote the advantages of a FE college</p> <p><i>Can we do more with parents?</i></p> <p><i>Transport is also a factor – it can be easier to get to a school and in some villages the buses have stopped</i></p> <p>We will look in more detail at this.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[79/18] <i>That the Corporation note the Management Accounts up to 31 October 2018</i></p>	
13		Governance Committee	
	13.1	<p>The minutes of the meeting of the Governance committee held on 9 October 2018 were circulated with the agenda.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[79/18] <i>That the Corporation note the report from the Governance Committee.</i></p>	
14		Audit Committee	
	14.1	<p>The minutes of the meeting held on 29 November had been circulated. The Committee had reviewed the annual accounts and statements. The External Auditors had advised that the key challenges for colleges were pension contribution increases, wage increases and flat income. The Risk Register had been reviewed and the Annual Report of the Audit Committee agreed.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[80/18] <i>1. That the Corporation note report from the Audit Committee</i> <i>2. That the Corporation approve the revised terms of reference</i></p>	
15		Quality, Teaching and Learning Committee	
	15.1	The Chair of the Committee gave a verbal report on the meeting held before the Corporation meeting.	
	15.2	The Committee was delighted for the College that it received such a positive Ofsted Report. The Committee had reviewed the report and wished to congratulate all those involved. The High Needs profile was impressive, particularly with 50% on High Needs students in the main college provision. Areas for further development were felt to be fair.	
	15.3	The SAR had been reviewed and the Committee agreed with the College’s conclusion on the gradings. At 5% above the national average the College was bordering on a grade 1, more improvement in Value added was needed. An excellent data set had been produced to support the SAR. The Committee had approved the SAR on the basis that High Needs was a grade 1	

	15.4	The QIP had also been reviewed. The objectives and actions were detailed and accurate. The Committee had asked that Accountancy be added in to the QIP to maintain monitoring. RESOLVED C[81/18] <i>That the Corporation note the verbal report of the Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee</i>	
16		Strategy Event	
	16.1	There had been an informal meeting on 4 December to assist in the planning for the Strategic Event in January. The next 3 year strategy would be built from that. Discussion had been wide ranging and covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting the right curriculum offer • Continued focus on quality • Growth from a strong base • Being the College in the Community • Relationships with other providers • Maintaining financial strength • Smarter ways of working • Effective advice and guidance • Review interview approach • Preferred efficiency model These points would be discussed further at the Strategic event. RESOLVED C[82/18] <i>That the Corporation note the outcome from the informal planning meeting.</i>	
17		Election of Chair	
	17.1	The current Chair had indicated that she would not be seeking re election as Chair when her term finished in July 2019. RESOLVED C[83/18] <i>That the election of Chair be considered on 17 January 2019 and that the Clerk circulate information regarding the role.</i>	Clerk
18		Date and Time of Next Corporation Meeting:	
	18.1	Corporation Meeting – 5 March 2019 at 6pm <i>The meeting finished at 8.00pm</i>	

Julie Brasier
Clerk to the Corporation
Northampton College

Signed by the Chair:	
Date:	