

Minutes of a Corporation Meeting held on

Tuesday 24th April 2018 at 8.30 am

Held City Campus, South Building Boardroom

Present: Jasmine Baguley, Student Governor
John Barrett - Independent Governor
Ashley Boon - Student Governor
Dave Busst - Independent Governor
Peter Brammall - Principal
Anne Brennan - Independent Governor
Stewart Fergusson - Independent Governor (from C27/18)
Kathryn Johnson, Independent Governor (from C25/18)
Peter Matthews - Independent Governor
Tony Minhas - Independent Governor
Sue Noyes- Independent Governor (Chair)
Neelam Raju - Independent Governor (from C25/18)
Adam Wheatley - Independent Governor (from C25/18)

In Attendance: Sharon Dowling - Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards
Nikki Goodwin - PA to the Principal
Clare Hatton - Assistant Principal Employer Engagement and Growth
Jo Lawrence - Assistant Principal Student Experience
Mark Payne - Vice Principal Finance and Resources
Debbie Wright - Assistant Principal People Services

C23/18 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from: -

Lee Barrett - Teaching Staff Governor
Charlotte Bosworth - Independent Governor
Chris Cooper - Independent Governor
Jim Edwards - Clerk to the Corporation
Chris Hinde - Independent Governor
Vangeya Murphy - Independent Governor (from C25/18)

C24/18 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

C25/18 Membership

1. The Chair of the Corporation presented the paper and advised Governors that, following a search process and detailed review undertaken by the Principal, herself and the Clerk, a number of recommendations were being made as follows:

- Ms Kathryn Johnson be appointed to the Corporation as an Independent Governor with immediate effect.
 - Ms Vangeya Murphy be appointed to the Corporation as an Independent Governor with immediate effect.
 - Ms Adam Wheatley be appointed to the Corporation as an Independent Governor with immediate effect.
 - Ms Neelam Raju be appointed to the Corporation as a Business Support Staff Governor.
 - Ms Debi Donnarumma be appointed as a Co-opted Governor on the Standards Committee.
2. Mrs Johnson has extensive skills and experience and works as a consultant in Further Education, having left Leicester College as Assistant Principal for 14-19 and HE provision. She has a thorough and current understanding of the Ofsted inspection framework and the quality assurance processes in FE. It is proposed that she sits on the Standards Committee given her curriculum and quality management skills and experience.
 3. Mrs Murphy is a commercial solicitor for Shakespeare Martineau based in Stratford-upon-Avon. She specialises in commercial property, having graduated from Warwick University and qualified as a solicitor in 2014. It is proposed that she joins the Standards Committee, as she has a particular interest in the Student Voice.
 4. Mr Wheatley, has, until recently, been a Senior Buyer with JLR, having worked in the automotive industry following his graduation as a law undergraduate. He is now moving on to work at Eversheds on a traineeship to complete his practising certificate, and it is proposed that he sits on the Resources Committee where his business knowledge and skills particularly gained at JLR will be helpful. Mr Wheatley is also an Alumni of Coventry College
 5. Mrs Raju is the Student Support Manager for the College, and has extensive skills and experience in the areas of additional student support and pastoral care. She was proposed by her colleagues in the recent Staff Governor nominations.
 6. Ms Donnarumma is a previous employee of Henley College and is currently Vice-Principal, Curriculum, Quality & Learner Experience at Loughborough College and brings a wealth of skills and experience. It is proposed that Ms Donnarumma join the Standards Committee.
 7. Governors were also advised of the resignation of Ms Charlotte Bosworth as an Independent Governor, but the Chair advised members that Ms Bosworth would undertake an Associate Governor role, advising and supporting the College on employer engagement and apprenticeships.
 8. Governors considered the skills of the proposed members and agreed that they would strengthen the existing expertise and experience on the Corporation.
 9. The Chair also advised that the tenures of existing Governors would be considered at a Search Committee which would meet in June and the recommendations would be brought to the 3rd July Corporation Board. In addition, the Link Governor arrangements would be presented and signed off at the May meeting of the Standards Committee
 10. After due consideration Governors resolved: -

- i) to approve Mrs Kathryn Johnson's appointment as an Independent Governor for a four-year period from 24th April 2018 - 23rd April 2022, and her membership of the Standards Committee;
- ii) to approve Mrs Vangeya Murphy's appointment as an Independent Governor for a four-year period from 24th April 2018 - 23rd April 2022, and her membership of the Standards Committee;
- iii) to approve Mr Adam Wheatley's appointment as an Independent Governor for a four-year period from 24th April 2018 - 23rd April 2022, and his membership of the Resources Committee;
- iv) to approve Ms Neelam Raju's appointment as an Business Support Staff Governor for a four-year period from 24th April 2018 - 23rd April 2022, and her membership of the Standards Committee;
- v) to approve Ms Debi Donnarumma's appointment as a Co-opted Governor Governor for a four-year period from 24th April 2018 - 23rd April 2022, and her membership of the Standards Committee;
- vi) to note the resignation of Ms Charlotte Bosworth from the Governing body with immediate effect, and to approve her appointment as an Associate Governor;
- vii) to agree that the various tenures of existing Governors would be considered at the Corporation meeting on 3rd July 2018;
- viii) to agree that the link governor arrangements would be finalised at the Standards' Committee meeting on 16th May 2018.

[Mrs Johnson, Mr Wheatley and Ms Raju joined the meeting at this point and introductions were made]

C26/18 Minutes of the last meeting held on 6th March 2018

The minutes of the last meeting held on 6th March 2018 were approved as a true record.

C27/18 Matters arising

- i) Under Minute 23 (ii), Governors agreed that the title should be amended to Inclusion Governor. The Chair will undertake this role on an interim basis, with a substantive arrangement to be confirmed at a Corporation Board in the Autumn term;
- ii) Under Minute C16/18 (iv), it was reported that the rolling 12-month cash flow forecast will be discussed at Resources Committee on 1st May 2018 and approved at the Corporation meeting on 3rd July 2018;
- iii) Under Minute C16/18 (vi), the Vice Principal Finance and Resources was commended for the exceptionally good training delivered on 10th April 2018 to Governors.

C28/18 Principal's Report

1. The Principal presented his latest report, which summarised key developments on the next stage of the restructure; staff engagement activities; quality and finance; and sector policy issues.

Organisational

2. Work is beginning on the next stage of the restructure. A provisional schedule of phased reviews has been agreed and work has started to develop structure proposals for these areas. The schedule has been aligned with both the curriculum planning process, for September 2018 and the draft three-year financial forecast to ensure the proposals are fit for purpose and meet curriculum, financial and quality requirements.
3. Additional routes for further communications and engagement mechanisms have been added following consultation and these were attached for Governors information. It was noted that the full Staff Engagement Plan is on the agenda for the forthcoming Resources Committee on 1st May, along with an overview of HR priorities for the next months and the results of the Staff Survey which was launched at the end of March 2018.
3. The strategic plan is currently being consulted upon with staff, and final discussions are being held at individual team meetings.
4. A number of staff engagement and team-building activities have been taking place to bring staff across both campuses together. Cross-campus working groups, linked to the delivery of the College's strategic objectives, are currently being established, and the Principal talked through the various engagement initiatives

Quality

5. The Standards Committee met on 23rd March 2018 and the Principal confirmed that the Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards will provide Governors with a breakdown of predicted year-end achievement later in the meeting.

Finance

6. Following on from the positive meeting held with the Local Authority about possible financial support, a future meeting is planned to progress discussions and look at a possible mechanism to secure the required level of support on a mutually satisfactory basis.
ACTION :- progress to be reported back to Resources Committee

Sector Policies

7. The latest guidance from the DfE outlining the new National Standards for Further Educational Residential Accommodation had been circulated. Members noted that the Assistant Principal Student Experience is leading on this and that meetings have already taken place with relevant staff to ensure that the College meets the new standard;
8. Governors were also notified of consultation taking place regarding multi-site campuses and Ofsted inspections with the outcome of the consultation being circulated by Ofsted when completed.
ACTION:- implications to be reported back to Resources Committee

Student Success

9. An overview of recent student successes and achievements was shared with Governors.

Conclusions

10. Governors resolved: -

- i) to thank the Principal for his report, and to note the contents;
- ii) to note the new National Standards for Further Educational Residential Accommodation and to agree that an action plan relating to the residential inspection be presented to a future Standards Committee;
- iii) to note the current consultation process being undertaken by Ofsted with regard to inspections for Colleges with multi-site campuses;
- iv) to congratulate the College's students on their recent successes.

C29/18 Strategic Plan

1. The Principal provided a further update on the development of the strategic plan 2018-22. The draft summary 'plan on a page' had been approved at Corporation on 6th March.
2. Extensive staff consultation has already taken place on the plan and staff feedback had provided endorsement of the proposed Strategic Objectives.
3. Governors noted that the plan will be formally launched at the next staff briefing in May 2018. The focus now will be populating and starting the Task Groups previously discussed to scope and develop the individual Business Plans.
4. During discussion, it was agreed that a Governor Link be added to Annex A 'Ask the Principal' but that attendance by Governors be deferred until a future date.
5. In response to a question, the Principal confirmed that the project management function referred to in his paper will be built in to the responsibilities of the team of the new Assistant Principal Business Growth.
6. Governors noted that there was no reference to HE in the draft summary strategic plan. It was confirmed that, as provision in this area is small, HE will be incorporated into the Quality objective at this stage.
7. It was confirmed that the July Corporation Board would receive a paper on 'Living our Values' as part of the organisational development plan for the College

ACTION:- paper on 'Living our Values' to be presented to July Corporation Board

7. Governors resolved: -

- i) to approve the proposed forums as part of the Strategic Plan objectives;
- ii) to add a Governor Link to the communication mechanisms;
- iii) to update Governors on the Assistant Principal Business Growth role and the project management function as part of the remit.

Learner Performance

1. The Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards guided Governors through the latest position on learner performance which included attendance, retention and predicted achievement by curriculum area.
2. Governors noted that a detailed report on the position had been presented to Standards Committee at their recent meeting on 23rd March 2018. The Chair advised that she had asked for an abridged version of the presentation to be made to the full Corporation Board in view of the criticality of the issue for the College
3. Governors probed the mechanisms that had been put in place to assess the predicted achievement, and confirmed the Standards' Committee's acceptance of the methodology.
4. The Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards advised that progress reviews along with an in-year tracker on learner progress and the use of Pro Mark book and Pro Monitor had been used along with ongoing meetings with herself, the Head of Faculty and Programme Manager(s) responsible for each area on a line-by-line, learner-by-learner basis to determine the predicted achievement.
5. The Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards advised Governors that, due to the migration of the MIS systems, the data provided at Standards Committee and this meeting of the Corporation, was being updated, and the updated predictions would be presented at their next meeting on 16th May.
6. The Corporation were informed of those courses which were considered at risk, and probed what the interventions were. In response, the Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards advised that interventions are tailored to the learner, and can therefore be variable depending on the individual learner's needs, and whether a group session is more beneficial.
7. The Vice-Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards advised new Governors that the College's achievement data was based on those students who were still attending after day 42.
8. Governors queried why the figures for GCSE Maths and English were not predicted to change. In response, the Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards advised that the projected achievements for these had been based on mock exams that had been taken by students.
9. Governors asked what the attendance figure had been at GCSE examinations in 2016/17, and the Assistant Principal Student Experience confirmed that this was 82%.
10. Extensive discussion took place on the additional support that the College put on during this stressful period to prepare the students and incentivise their attendance.
11. The Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards and Assistant Principal Student Experience advised Governors that additional workshops in English and Maths are offered in the run up to the exams. The Student Council are also pro-active in encouraging their peers to attend and take the additional support offered. Breakfast before exams is supplied, text reminders are sent and stationery provided to help any student who may not have brought it on the day of their exam.

12. Governors also received assurances that although staff do lead on the workshops, students contribute greatly to the experience.
13. Governors probed if there was a cut-off date for achievements in English and Maths. In response, the Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards advised that the next nine weeks are fundamental to achievement in these areas with the absolute final cut-off date being October 2018.
14. The Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards confirmed that she continues to have a positive level of confidence in the figures provided.
15. Governors also asked about the recent Value Added score for the College, and raised concern that this had shown a decline on the previous year. Plans to show how this could be improved was to be an item for a future Standards Committee

ACTION: - Value added score to be a focus at Standards Committee

Apprenticeships

16. The Assistant Principal Employer Engagement and Growth presented Governors with an update on the predicted achievement for apprenticeships.
17. To ensure clarity of understanding among Governors, the Assistant Principal Employer Engagement and Growth guided the Corporation through the differences between the way in which FE study programmes / part time courses achievement rate / apprenticeship success rates are calculated.
18. Unlike the FE achievement rates, none of the apprenticeship achievements in 2017/18 will be from apprentices who started in 2017/18, as every apprenticeship must run for a minimum of one year and a day.
19. Each individual apprentice is assigned a start and planned end date based on their expected time to complete and each standard has a recommended minimum duration. Indications of the programme lengths were given.
20. Governors noted that to achieve an apprenticeship, a learner must achieve all elements of their apprenticeship. This could include English and Maths. If these are not achieved, then the apprentice will not count as an achievement.
21. Turning to the predicted achievement rates for apprentices, Governors welcomed the positive news that the College is now predicting a higher overall figure but noted with concern that timely predictions are slightly lower.
22. Attention was drawn to 25 learners in PSV which, if they complete in a timely manner could improve the position on the timely indicator. Currently only 7 out of the 25 are predicted to do so but intensive work is taking place to change the position for this cohort of students.
23. Governors probed the impact that staffing has in this area and the Assistant Principal Employer Engagement and Growth confirmed that finding good assessors has proven to be significantly difficult.

24. In answer to a question, the Assistant Principal People Services confirmed that the College has applied a market forces supplement with an aim to ensuring the continuity for the students in keeping the same assessor.
25. The Assistant Principal Employer Engagement and Growth confirmed that there are three assessors in place for all the PSV learners and that she felt the resource was sufficient.
26. Extensive discussion took place on whether our offer is what the industry requires. The Assistant Principal Employer Engagement and Growth reassured Governors that the offer had been co-designed with companies and would continue to do so, but that this would be reviewed again as part of the curriculum planning process for September.
27. Governors endorsed the view of the Chair that, although this would be a key item for the Standards Committee going forwards, there should be a specific item on apprenticeships should form part of the agenda for the Corporation Development Day in June, as it was a priority for the College to improve the current position

ACTION:- the Improvement Plan for Apprenticeships to be an item at Standards Committee, and at the Corporation Board development day on 15 June

28. After careful consideration, Governors resolved:

- i) to take assurance on the process being undertaken by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards;
- ii) to request the need for greater scrutiny on teaching and learning walks, attendance and value added;
- iii) that greater scrutiny should be placed on the level of attendance and approved absence as part of the Learning Walks
- iv) to receive and note the current position regarding projected apprenticeship achievement;
- v) to endorse the current actions in place to address the current apprentice achievement rates but to request a focus on this issue at the Standards Committee;
- vi) to request an item on the plans for strengthening our apprenticeships offer at the Corporation Development Day on 15th June 2018.

C31/18 Standards Committee Feedback

1. Governors received the minutes of the last meeting of the Standards Committee held on 23rd March 2018.
2. Part of the feedback given by the Chair of the Standards Committee had been incorporated into the discussion on Learner Performance (C30/18).

3. Governors were pleased to note that the Standards Committee had scrutinised the learner performance data in detail, and had been re-assured by the methodology around it with the teams involved commended for the work they had done.
4. The Chair of the Standards Committee, informed the Corporation, that on reflection, she now had some concerns regarding the non-compliance of minimum standards in the classroom by some teaching staff on the learning walks undertaken. This may therefore adversely impact learner outcomes.
5. In answer to a question, the Vice-Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards advised that students' total attendance is not currently cross-referenced during learning walks. Governors felt that this should be assessed in future learning walks as it is considered to be a good measure in identifying any potential issues. Governors agreed that there is a correlation between predicted achievement and the outcome of learning walks

ACTION:- Future learning walks to be cross referenced to levels of attendance

6. Governors probed the level of stretch and challenge to learners, and it was agreed that a report to Standards Committee on the issue of value added would be presented at its next meeting.

ACTION:- Report on Value added to May Standards Committee

7. Governors resolved:
 - i) to note the feedback from the Standards Committee;
 - ii) to agree that the level of stretch and challenge to learners should be considered as part of the report on the Value Added score for the College.

C32/18 Management Accounts

1. The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented Governors with the management accounts to the end of February 2018 which included the forecast outturn to the year end.
2. The end of year outturn is projected to be a £100k operating deficit against the budgeted operating deficit of £1.546m.
3. It was reported that up to £1m of restructuring costs will be committed against the provision held in the 2016-17 accounts and that up to £150k of expenditure will be incurred against new current year commitments.
4. There is a shortfall in projected income totalling £643k (£719K reported previously). There are risks associated with AEB and Apprenticeship target income.
5. The Vice Principal Finance and Resources drew Governors' attention to the ESFA's financial health scoring mode, which had also been discussed at the recent Finance training session. Based on current predictions the College's financial health will be rated as Satisfactory based on the KPI's in the report.

6. Governors noted that if there is a significant shortfall against the non-delivery of AEB delivery or apprenticeship income projections, it is possible that the scores earned will fall below the 120 required to achieve Satisfactory. This issue will therefore be a driver for the financial plan for the coming academic year. The Resources Committee will receive the first draft of the financial plan at their next meeting.
7. In response to a question, the Vice Principal Curriculum and Learning Standards confirmed that the College is offering distance learning to assist in the shortfall in AEB.
8. The Chair requested that there should be an additional financial training session for the new Governors and those Governors who had been unable to attend the session held in April

ACTION: VPFR to arrange an additional financial training session

9. Governors resolved:
 - i) to note the management accounts as at 28th February 2018 and the positive predicted year end outturn;
 - ii) to endorse the actions being taken by College management to achieve the current financial projections for 2017/18;
 - iii) to note the risks on AEB and how this could adversely affect the ESFA health score; and to recognise that this would be a driver for the financial plan for the forthcoming academic year
 - iv) to note that the Resources Committee would receive a first draft of the financial plan for the 2018/19 academic year

C33/18 Vital Signs and KPI Report

1. The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented Governors with the College's performance against its key targets.
2. With regard to the vital signs report, Governors confirmed they were content with the methodology for the RAG ratings given in the report.
3. At the present time, five of the vital signs are not rated as Green but Amber. These are overall attendance, 16-18 student applications, predicted achievement, culture (students), and industrial relations.
4. Overall attendance across the College is at 88%. This is 3% above target but this is expected to fall to 85% in line with the target by the year end. Attendance in the key areas of maths and English is 6% below target and remains a cause for concern as maths and English achievements contribute significantly to the overall College achievement rate.
5. 16-18 Student Applications is rated as Amber. At the end of March 2018, the College has received 1,634 applications (which is 94 lower than the same time last year) against a target of 2,724 applications. The Amber rating reflects the distance still to travel to reach the target.

6. Culture Students is rated as Amber. The first term student survey produced responses below the College target for two key questions of:
- Enjoy coming to College (actual 86% vs target 93%)
 - Recommend the College to a friend (actual 88% vs target 93%).

7. Industrial relations is rated as Amber as the human resources and employment aspects post-merger are more complicated than would ordinarily be the case and consultation with the trade unions on a range of fronts (restructuring, teaching observation processes, harmonisation, etc.) is still at an early stage. The Assistant Principal People Services and Principal are meeting with the trade unions regularly to progress the range of items currently under consideration and will report on progress. The Amber rating reflects the complexity and sensitivity of issues immediately following the merger and Assistant Principal People Services will update governors on the Resources Committee on the current position.

ACTION:- Assistant Principal People Services to update Resources Committee on industrial relations

8. Turning to the KPIs, Governors expressed concern and asked for reassurances regarding the low completion rate of 29% for work experience. The Vice Principal Finance and Resources advised that in recent Performance Review Board meetings, he and the Assistant Principal People Services had received firm and unequivocal assurances from Heads of Faculty that work experience has been planned and is taking place. This would be an issue for the Standards Committee to review as part of its programme

ACTION:- Completion rates for work experience to be an area of focus for the Standards Committee

9. In answer to a question regarding the restructure delivering the savings provided, the Vice Principal Finance and Resources confirmed that he was confident in the predictions provided in the KPI.

10. The Chair asked that future reports should show two levels of attendance, including and excluding authorised absences

ACTION:- Future KPI reports to show the attendance position including and excluding authorised absences

11. Governors resolved:

- i) to note the positive vital signs' position and to endorse the actions being taken;
- ii) to note the performance against the KPIs and to endorse the current actions being taken;
- iii) that Standards' Committee should receive an update on completed work experience at their meeting on 16th May 2018.

C34/18 Safeguarding Report

1. The Assistant Principal Student Experience presented Governors with the mid-year safeguarding update.
2. Governors noted with concern the key challenges being faced by the College, which included weapons being brought on site and an increase in references to well-known gangs at both campuses. They also noted the increase in the number of students who were presenting with mental health issues.
3. The Assistant Principal Student Experience gave assurances to the Corporation that as a result of the increase in weapons being brought on site that a number of workshops have taken place across both campuses to highlight the dangers of knife crime.
4. Regular patrols are also being carried out at the Henley campus as the College has seen more students using cannabis this year. Due to ongoing complaints, the College is working with the local police and an officer will be coming into the College to talk students to help them understand the implications associated.
5. Governors noted that the College now has a harmonised online referral service across both campuses.
6. The Chair noted the seriousness of the issues in the report but thanked the Assistant Principal Student Experience for her openness in presenting the issues, and providing a detailed report on the actions being taken. It was noted that this would be a focus for the Standards Committee going forwards
6. Governors resolved:
 - i) to receive the report noting the actions, priorities and key items for discussion at Standards Committee;
 - ii) to commend the Assistant Principal Student Experience and her team for a comprehensive report, which gave an honest update on the issues facing the College and the actions being taken.

C35/18 Risk Register

1. The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented Governors with the updated risk register.
2. Following the evaluation of controls in place, and consultation with SLT, the wider middle-management team and the Audit Committee, only one risk is now RAG rated Red at the end of January, namely "Failure to recruit sufficient students" as this has resulted in shortfalls in income of £1m in-year.
3. Governors noted that no new risks have been added to the register.

4. The Vice Principal Finance and Resources confirmed that the Standards and Resources Committees will look at each of the risks associated with them in greater detail at their respective meetings
5. Governors resolved:
 - i) to agree the proposed risk ratings, and acknowledged the scrutiny being taken with the risk register;
 - ii) to confirm that Governors on both the Standards and Resources Committees respectively, will continue to scrutinise the risks assigned to their Committee at their meetings going forwards

C36/18 Any Other Urgent Business

Governors noted that this would be the last meeting of the Assistant Principal Employee Engagement and Growth before she took up her new position with the West Midlands Combined Authority. On behalf of the Governing body, the Chair thanked the Assistant Principal Employee Engagement and Growth for her work, and extended the Corporations best wishes for the future.

C37/18 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, 3rd July 2018

C38/18 Publication of Documents

The publication of papers was approved without exception except for the following:

- Document 5a - Learner Performance - tables of breakdowns to be removed
- Document 9 - Safeguarding Report

Meeting opened 8.30 am
Meeting closed 11.12 am

NG