

Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 13th February 2020

Present: Ian Barham (Chair), Max Hailey (Vice Chair), Karen Mitchell (Principal), Ian Harper, David Bainton, Anne-Marie McNeill, Julie Gillespie, Ty Slocombe, Jackie Campbell, Eddie Weiss

In Attendance: John McGrath (VP, Corporate Services (VPCS)), Clare Rooney (VP, Learning & Quality (VPL&Q)), Anna Smith (Clerk to Corporation), Nick Bevan, Amir Khaki

AGENDA ITEM		Evidence of Support & Challenge (S / C)
1.	<p>CHAIR'S WELCOME</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Ty Slocombe (student Governor) to his first Corporation meeting and potential new Governors Nick Bevan and Amir Khaki. Each Member and attendee introduced themselves and gave a brief overview of their backgrounds.</p>	
2.	<p>NEW GOVERNOR APPOINTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>Nick Bevan and Amir Khaki left the meeting and the Clerk briefed the Board on the recruitment process and recommendation from the Search and Development Committee for their appointment as Governors on the Board of Corporation. Further recommendations from the Committee were for Nick Bevan to join the Audit Committee and Amir Khaki to join the Remuneration Committee based on their skillsets and experience.</p> <p>With unanimous agreement, the Corporation Approved the appointments of Nick Bevan and Amir Khaki for an initial four year term from 13/2/20 to 12/2/24 and their appointments to the Audit and Remuneration Committees accordingly.</p> <p>Nick Bevan and Amir Khaki re-joined the meeting and the Chair welcomed both to the Board of Corporation.</p>	
3.	<p>CHAIR'S UPDATE</p> <p>Apologies for absence had been Received from Rabia Bhatti and Lina Ghosh.</p> <p>The meeting was confirmed as quorate and there were no new declarations of interests.</p> <p>In response to feedback from the Chair's performance review conducted earlier in the year, the Chair updated the Board on some of the activities and engagement he undertakes outside of meetings in support of the College (<i>these are included in the confidential minutes</i>).</p>	
4.	<p>CLERK'S PAPER</p> <p>The Clerk briefed the Board on her report and recorded as follows:</p> <p>a) <u>Board Membership</u> Governors noted the terms of office for Lina Ghosh and Rabia Bhatti were due to end on 20th March 2020. The Corporation Approved the reappointment of Eddie Weiss for a second term of office from 24th May 2020 to 23rd May 2024. The Corporation noted the succession planning document.</p>	

AGENDA ITEM	Evidence of Support & Challenge (S / C)
<p>A. This could be timing as applications for the area were earlier last year but it is something management are looking into.</p> <p>Q. What is the conversion rate from applications to enrolments?</p> <p>A. Approximately 60%</p> <p>Q. Is there a critical point where numbers have a financial impact?</p> <p>A. Lagged funding means funding allocations are granted in March based on the previous September's enrolment figures.</p> <p>Q. Are the numbers in line with the College's longer term strategic plans?</p> <p>A. There are currently 830 applications which will continue throughout the year with a surge around the GCSE results in summer and this is critical to numbers. This does not include the 16-18 progressing students, which will see applications rise after the #I'm Staying Campaign. The application numbers are very similar to last year at this point, which saw a 5% improvement in student headcount. School leaver demographics show a rise over the next few years and the estates strategy work is expected to help increase our market share. Competition with schools has increased as schools are increasing their vocational delivery.</p> <p><u>Health and Safety</u></p> <p>In addition to the report, the Principal briefed Members on a recent incident regarding a student requiring CPR and praised the staff involved for their support resulting in a positive outcome. The Chair requested and the Board agreed to send a letter of thanks on behalf of the Board to the staff involved. (Action: Chair/Clerk)</p>	<p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>S</p>
<p>8. QUALITY REPORT</p> <p><u>Student Union Report</u></p> <p>The Student Governor briefed members on the report and Governors praised the SU for securing £3k funding for each campus to increase sporting activities for students. Query was raised over how many students are involved in the work of the SU and it was confirmed that this will be reported at the next meeting (Action: Student Governor).</p> <p>The Board thanked the Student Governor for his report.</p> <p>The Student Governor left the meeting.</p> <p><u>Learning and Quality Report</u></p> <p>The VPL&Q briefed on her report noting good improvements in overall achievements for English and maths. Governors raised the following throughout the report briefing:</p> <p>Q. Is the lack of success in English a correlation with having English as a second language?</p> <p>A. No, there are 20 marks difference between grades so it is difficult to move up a grade.</p> <p>Q. What happens to those who have not resat in November?</p> <p>A. They will resit in the summer after more learning has taken place to ensure they have more chance of improvement.</p> <p>Q. Do we offer GCSE grade 4 learners the opportunity to progress to higher grades?</p> <p>A. In most cases GCSE grade 4 (equivalent to grade C) is sufficient for progression and we do offer the option of a digital skills qualification, which is valued by employers. It would be by exception to offer to achieve to beyond a grade 4.</p> <p>Q. On attendance, is there anything you do to incentivise students to attend?</p> <p>A. Yes, many strategies including league tables for healthy competition; pizza for the highest attending group etc. Student forums are taking place at present to obtain feedback from the learners on what they would value as incentives.</p> <p>Q. On apprenticeships functional skills attendance issues, to what extent are they our learners or is it a subcontractor issue?</p>	<p>S</p> <p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>S & C</p> <p>C</p>

AGENDA ITEM	Evidence of Support & Challenge (S / C)
<p>A. There is a high proportion of subcontracting and strategies are being put in place to support attendance e.g. NHS Trust apprentices are shift workers so classroom based delivery was not working so delivery is now out in the workplace.</p> <p>Q. I thought we use subcontractors to get better teaching?</p> <p>A. Yes and this is the case for the vocational course but it is the English and maths delivery which can cause difficulties and this is needed to achieve overall.</p> <p>Discussion took place around investment for good quality English and maths teaching and the national concern around this as a particularly challenging area for colleges. There is an increased focus on the learner voice and feedback is being sought from learners on how they feel classes could be improved.</p> <p>Q. How many times can a learner resit?</p> <p>A. As many as they want and opportunities are in May and November each year. Learners will continue to resit until they pass as this is a condition of funding for their course achievement.</p> <p>Q. How do apprentices provide feedback on their functional skills delivery?</p> <p>A. One-to-one feedback is obtained as well as feedback from those receiving class delivery in College. Regular assessor review is an opportunity to obtain feedback from learners as well as gaining feedback from the employer.</p> <p>Q. Is the teaching of English and maths generic or can it be contextualised?</p> <p>A. There is a specification we have to work to but it is also contextualised and we are generally very good at this, ensuring it is embedded into the learner's vocational area.</p> <p>The College was commended by Ofsted at their recent monitoring visit for the strategies being put in place for English and maths.</p> <p><u>Student Satisfaction Survey</u> The VPL&Q briefed on the responses from the survey and how management is responding to particular concerns.</p> <p>Q. 92% of students said they felt safe at College, do we know what the remaining 8% do not feel safe about?</p> <p>A. Survey responses are anonymous but if we were alerted to anything it would be picked up; this survey was done soon after students had started at the College with the majority of learners coming straight from a school environment to quite a different college environment so this could explain things but the next step is to drill down to see if it is campus related.</p> <p>Q. Are students able to add their name if they want to be identified?</p> <p>A. Yes, the survey has free text. They do include their group name so any corresponding concerns from the same group will be picked up. It was noted that the free text comments are often more useful than the statistics in hearing from learners.</p> <p>Q. What percentage of learners responded via the survey?</p> <p>A. Approximately 40% and this is improving year on year, particularly with apprenticeships so it is really positive.</p> <p>Q. Is there an incentive for students to complete the survey e.g. enter and win?</p> <p>A. Welcome the idea and this is something we will consider next time.</p> <p>The Corporation Approved the Quality Improvement Strategy and the Subcontractor Strategy. Amir Khaki left the meeting.</p>	<p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>S & C</p> <p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>C</p> <p>S & C</p>
<p>9. FINANCE AND RESOURCES REPORT</p> <p>The VPCS briefed on the December management accounts noting the challenges since the October accounts. Discussion took place around the need to increase apprenticeships and investment around this. It was agreed winning tenders with the larger companies is where the largest opportunities might be although this does not historically reflect the College's employer customer base.</p>	<p>S</p>

AGENDA ITEM	Evidence of Support & Challenge (S / C)
<p>Agency costs are also higher than the preferred position and although this can be contextualised (19 agency staff amongst 580 staff overall), agency staff are more costly.</p> <p>The Corporation Endorsed the December Management Accounts.</p> <p><u>Revised Subcontracting Values 2019-20</u> Subcontracting values have been amended since they were last approved in October following a review of the position in November and December. Discussion took place around local based providers and the new ruling regarding reservations funding noting that Digital Native are now running their first reservation provision and the College is supporting them through this. It was noted that a number of colleges are considering the future of apprenticeships given the recent difficulties in recruitment and national policy. The Chair requested and the Board agreed that the overall apprenticeship strategy needs to be considered as a standalone agenda item at a future meeting or GDE (Action: SPHs) The Corporation Approved the revised subcontracting values for 2019-20.</p> <p><u>2020-21 and 2021-22 Budget Submission</u></p> <p><i>This item of discussion is recorded in the confidential minutes.</i></p> <p>The Corporation agreed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving the capital expenditure across the two years is sensible and will only have a minimal impact. • The Corporation Approved the budget for submission to the ESFA. • The Principal supported the request that a dedicated future agenda item should be dedicated to the Apprenticeship Landscape 	<p>C</p> <p>S</p> <p>S</p>
<p>10. GOVERNOR LINK AND ENGAGEMENT RECORD</p> <p>There had been no update on the Governor links record since the last meeting. The Chair highlighted the activities the Vice Chair had been engaging in in advance of his progression to Chair.</p>	<p>S</p>
<p>11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p> <p>5.30pm on 30th April 2020 at Wycombe Campus</p>	

Approved as an accurate record of discussions.

Signed: 

Date: 30th April 2020