

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation held on Thursday, 12th December 2019 at 5.30 pm in the Boardroom of the College.

Present: Michael Priestley (Chair); Norma Boyes; Amie Calvin; Mark Stanger; Alison Hampson; Nigel Holliday; Phil Jardine; Robert Milburn; Chris Nattress; Loren Redmond; Denise Rollo; Dr Robin Talbot; Tanya Weston; Stuart Williams; Rebecca Dockray (from Minute No: 81/19)

Apologies: Elaine Clinton; Beth Gaskell; Leanne Singleton

Also Present: Karen Wilson (Deputy Principal); Daniel Braithwaite (Assistant Principal); Jane Murray (Clerk)

78/19 **Minutes**

Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held in open session on Thursday, 14th November 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

79/19 **Declarations of Interest**

None received.

80/19 **Governance**

Resolved – that Rebecca Dockray be appointed as Student Governor from 12/12/19 for FE for one year or until she leaves college, whichever is the soonest.

The Board noted with great regret the resignation of Mark Stanger, a governor for ten years, six as Chair. Mark had been a dedicated and committed Governor and Chair, and the Board was genuinely sorry to see him go, thanking him for all he had done and offering him every good wish for the future. It was anticipated that a new Governor appointment would be brought to the January meeting of the Board.

Having already been allowed for in the financial plan for 2019-20, a written resolution had been requested to authorise the AOC's pay recommendation for staff from 1st August 2019. The outturn was noted by the Board, 11 votes in favour of a 1% pay rise for staff or £250 whichever was the greater.

81/19 Confidential Session & Minutes

Resolved –

- 1) To move into confidential session.
- 2) That the minutes of the meeting held in confidential session of 14 November 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

82/19 Strategic Update - confidential

(This item was held in confidential session, but it is noted that the minute is not deemed to be confidential).

The Principal noted some recent developments in the sector, noting that the General Election result may have an impact on some of the policy development.

Noting the national shortage of teachers, it was confirmed that this was also a risk to the College identified on the register and noted that middle managers were also proving challenging to recruit. The lack of funding for the reintegration of students with complex needs was also noted.

Noting the outcome bases measures just published, it was noted that these would be used to inform SAR developments. It questioned why 6th Forms were not included in the data to provide a comparison.

It was questioned to what extent the College was disadvantaged in respect of funding for EHCP and acknowledged that while some funding was available, this was based on historic calculations.

The National Audit Office had published a report into the UTCs, questioning value for money and quality. It is anticipated that other UTCs will follow the lead of a few UTCs, by requesting recruitment from age 11 rather than 14.

In considering, apprenticeships and university education, it was thought that more students would be considering apprenticeships and degree apprenticeships as the cost of university education became apparent.

It was noted that, with the permission of the Chair, the Principal had applied to become a National Leader of FE under the FE Commissioners Programme.

83/19 Risk Register confidential

The Board received the updated risk register.

84/19 Finance Update – confidential

The Committee received and noted the management accounts and other monitoring information.

85/19 Open Session

Resolved – to reopen the meeting for non-confidential items.

86/19 Audit Committee Annual Report and Financial Statements

The Chair of Audit presented the Annual Report of the Audit Committee, which summarised the nature of the work carried out during the year and noted the reasonable assurance offered by the Internal Auditor's Annual Report. In particular, he noted that good levels of assurance had been offered by both internal and external auditors. The Board was content to approve the Annual Report for submission to the ESFA.

Turning to the External Auditor's management report and the financial statements (as demonstrated by the draft minutes of the Audit Committee) these had already been well scrutinised and the Board, having given them their due attention, were content with the financial statements and were content for the Chairman to sign the Financial Statements as a true record and for the letter of representation in favour of Armstrong Watson to be signed.

Following on from some concern the previous year, the Board requested an update of the payroll situation and it was noted that a tender for the service was expected in the New Year.

The student prize fund accounts were received and noted, as were the CCL accounts.

On the recommendation of the audit committee:

Resolved –

- 1) That the draft minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 25th November 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.
- 2) That the internal auditor's annual report be received and noted;
- 3) That the Audit Committee's annual report be received and approved for submission to the ESFA;
- 4) That the External Auditor's Management Letter be received and noted;
- 5) That the Financial Statements 2018-19 be approved for signature of the Chair and Principal;

- 6) That the letter of representation for Armstrong Watson be signed by the Chair on behalf of the Board;
- 7) That the student prize fund accounts be noted;
- 8) That the CCL accounts be noted.

Amie Calvin left the meeting

87/19 Equality and Diversity Annual Report

The annual summary for Equality and Diversity was received and noted by the Board. This carried out a high level analysis of achievement gaps around supported characteristics and other wider recruitment indicators.

It was asked what work was done in respect of inclusivity around mental health and noted that there was counselling support, peer group support and mental health first aiders.

It was asked what analysis was done around disadvantage and this was covered under the postcode analysis.

It was questioned whether the College interacted with young parent groups and felt that young parents were supported on a case-by-case basis.

The Board received assurance that any achievement gaps were analysed and actions included in continuous improvement plans.

Resolved – that the annual report summary for Equality and Diversity be received and noted.

An in-year monitoring report would be received in the summer term.

88/19 Key Performance Indicators

The Board was pleased to note that, although it was still early in the year, that attendance was within target, although maths and English was still challenging. This would continue to be monitored closely. For the time being, retention was holding firm.

Some apparent discrepancies in performance in the curriculum areas were noted, around teaching and learning, and it was felt that these were due to a small number of staff in some areas (for example 2 out of 3 staff, where 1 might not be performing as well) or was due to a timing issue in respect of new staff. Overall, at this point in the year, 80% of teaching and learning was good or better.

Loren Redmond left the meeting

89/19 **Curriculum Update**

The Board received and noted the update. Very good feedback had been received from students on hair and beauty this year, which was backed by observations and well received by the Board.

Similarly, the Foundation Degree in Chemistry was making required improvements, but continued to be under closer monitoring. A comprehensive action plan had been agreed and implemented and new processes established. Feedback from learners had also been very positive, which was welcomed.

The meeting closed at 1915h