

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation held on Thursday, 16th May 2019 at 5.30pm in FO27 of the College.

Present: Michael Priestly (Chair); Elaine Clinton; Tanya Weston; Nigel Holliday; Chris Nattress; Stuart Williams; Amie Calvin; Denise Rollo
Until Minute No: 38/19 Norma Boyes
39/19 Robert Milburn
41/19 Robin Talbot
42/19 Loren Redmond

Apologies: Phil Jardine; Alison Hampson; Mark Stanger; John Thinnesen

Also present: Peter Ryder and Nicol Tomlinson (Minute No: 34/19)
Karen Wilson, Deputy Principal; Daniel Braithwaite, Assistant Principal
Jane Murray (Clerk)

31/19 Minutes

Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2019 in open session be approved and signed as a correct record.

32/19 Declarations of Interest

In respect of the Agenda Item 4, the Chair reminded the Board that he was also the Chair of the West Cumbria Learning Centre, but it was confirmed that it was unlikely to present conflict in the course of discussions.

33/19 Confidential Session and Minutes

Resolved –

- 1) to move into confidential session
- 2) to approve the minutes of the meeting held in confidential session of 28 March 2019

34/19 Strategic Options -confidential

The Chair welcomed Peter Ryder and Nicola Tomlinson to the meeting to talk to the report, which had been commissioned on strategic options. This minute is redacted for business confidential reasons.

Chris Nattress, Karen Wilson, Daniel Braithwaite left the meeting for part of the discussion to allow Governors to speak directly to the consultants and returned for the following items.

35/19 Strategic Update – confidential

In providing a sector update, the Principal noted continued media coverage of sector under-funding.

He outlined the main points of the intervention regime revised following the insolvency regime published in January 2019.

The first tranche of Institutes of Technology had been announced, which would benefit from capital funding but not from revenue funding. There was little coverage in the North West.

Apprenticeship starts appeared to be picking up, but still not at the same level as two years previously. The ESFA had clarified apprenticeship funding rules as 20% of all paid hours worked. Independent Training Advisors would now also be subject to intervention. He noted the significant reduction in the provision of apprenticeship provision by FE Colleges.

Some professional development support was promised for the introduction of T-Levels and new guidance had been issued for FE Corporations who wanted to transfer to the HE sector.

The remainder of this minute is redacted for confidential reasons.

36/19 Finance Update – confidential

The Deputy Principal presented the Management Accounts and gave a financial update. This minute is redacted for business confidential reasons.

37/19 Internal Auditor Appointment - confidential

The Chair of Audit noted that due process had been followed in tendering for the internal auditor, with four firms invited. Only one firm submitted a tender and, following advice from the External Auditor, this was formally evaluated by the Committee (with the evaluation scoring submitted for reference to the Board).

On the basis of a strong scoring, the recommendation was that the ICCA ETS be re-appointed as internal auditors.

The remainder of this minute is redacted for business confidential reasons.

38/19 Risk Management Policy

The Audit Committee had also considered a review of the risk management policy, which included the risk management appetite, and was being recommended for approval.

Resolved – that the revised Risk Management Policy be approved.

Norma Boyes left the meeting

39/19 National College for Nuclear: Lease and Under-lease - confidential

The Clerk drew the attention of the Board to the complex negotiations underway with the ESFA in respect of Lease and Under-lease for the northern hub. It was noted that the structure being proposed would allow the NCfN, at a future date, should it choose to do so, to re-assign the provision to another service provider.

In considering the situation, the Board unanimously agreed that the terms and conditions of the Grant Letter formed the basis on which they had agreed the project in 2016 and concurred that these should not be changed retrospectively.

Robert Milburn left the meeting

40/19 Open session

Resolved – to re-open the meeting.

41/19 Self-assessment Report and CIP

The Deputy Principal outlined the proposed changes to the self-assessment report, which reflected the new Ofsted Framework. Governors welcomed the new format which they felt brought greater clarity. However, they were also keen to see some reflection of 'impact' and 'strategy' in the document and it was agreed that this be considered.

Robin Talbot left the meeting

42/19 Key Performance Indicators

The Key Performance indicators were received and noted, including areas of concern over attendance and retention, as previously discussed in Board meetings.

Loren Redmond left the meeting

43/19 Curriculum Update

The Assistant Principal provided an update of activity, including strengths and weaknesses of curriculum areas (noting in particular targeted intervention with students at risk of not meeting their targets) and revised arrangements for Higher Education.

It was asked what arrangements had been made with students for returning to college next year and whether parents were included in the process, and advised that conditional offers would be going out to students shortly and that parents were kept informed through review and parent meetings.

44/19 Governance

The Board noted with regret the resignation of Claire Madden from the Board and the co-opted member of the Board, Andrew Fennell.

The correspondence received by the Chair from the Office for Students on financial sustainability was noted, as was the FE Commissioner's letter and the advice and guidance published in respect oversight and intervention.

Resolved –

- 1) That the committee memberships be approved with immediate effect;
- 2) That the Board calendar and work plan for 2019-20 be approved.
- 3) That the correspondence from the Office for Students be duly noted;
- 4) That the advice and guidance from the FE Commission be duly noted.

The meeting closed at 8 pm.