

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation held on Thursday, 30th January 2020 at 5.30 pm in room FO27 of the College.

Present: Michael Priestley (Chair); Norma Boyes; Amie Calvin; Rebecca Dockray; Peter Ellwood (from Minute No 04/20); Beth Gaskell; Alison Hampson (by phone); Phil Jardine (by phone); Robert Milburn; Chris Nattress (by phone); Dr Robin Talbot; Tanya Weston; Stuart Williams.

Apologies: Elaine Clinton; Nigel Holliday; Denise Rollo; Leanne Singleton

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

01/20 Minutes

Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held in open session on 12 December 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

02/20 Declarations of Interest

None received.

03/20 Agenda Management

It was noted that, with the agreement of the Chair, a confidential staff matter would be raised at the start of strategic update (during which staff and student governors would be asked to withdraw)

04/20 Governor Appointments

The Board was invited to appoint Peter Ellwood, Managing Partner at Robinson and Co, a local accountancy firm with good coverage of West Cumbria. His appointment would fill the vacancy for financial skills.

Resolved –

1) that Peter Ellwood be appointed from 30 January 2020 to 29 January 2021, renewable for a further three years by mutual agreement.

Peter Ellwood was welcomed to the meeting. The following re-appointments were agreed:

2) Alison Hampson; Elaine Clinton; Nigel Holliday; Loren Redmon be re-appointed for a further three years, from 29 February 2020-31 December 2022 (equivalent to a first 4-year term of office);

3) Amie Clavin be re-appointed from 23 March 2020-31 December 2022 (equivalent to a first 4-year term of office);

4) that Michael Priestley be reappointed as Chair from 31 January 2020-30 January 2022;

5) that Phil Jardine be reappointed as Vice Chair from 7 February 2020-6 February 2022.

On other Governance matters, the Clerk informed the Board that updated insolvency guidance had been issued by the DfE and that she would circulate shortly.

05/20 Confidential Session & Minutes

Resolved –

- 1) To move into confidential session;
- 2) That the minutes of the meeting held in confidential session on 12 December 2019 be approved and signed as a correct record.

06/20 Strategic Update – confidential

Stuart Williams; Amie Calvin and Rebecca Dockray left the meeting.

A confidential staffing matter was discussed.

Stuart Williams; Amie Calvin and Rebecca Dockray re-joined the meeting.

The Principal continued to discuss local and national developments and partnership working.

07/20 Management Accounts (December) & Financial Planning -confidential

The Deputy Principal discussed financial planning and business partnerships.

Resolved –

- 1) that the College retain the relationship with Learning Curve with a £200,000 sub-contract for the provision of distance learning courses in the North of England;
- 2) that the Financial Planning Assumptions 2020/21 be approved;
- 3) that the report of progress in respect of the HE sub-contract with Lancaster and Morecambe College be received and noted;

- 4) that standing orders be waived and the Finance and Corporate Working Group be delegated to approve the new integrated financial plan (if there is no significant impact under the new model).
(Action since: a special of the Corporation was held on 25 February 2020)

08/20 Open Session

Resolved – that the session be re-opened.

09/20 Key Performance Indicators

Reflecting previous discussions, the Key Performance indicators confirmed the lower starts against target for study programmes, for apprenticeships and for HE.

The Board was pleased to note the significant improvements made to the retention rate for this year, with above target performance anticipated at the moment.

Despite best efforts, however, attendance continued to be disappointing and in response to questioning it was felt to be largely owing to English and maths attendance, in spite of everyone's best efforts, which were continuing. The Board was assured that everything possible was going in to support students to attend.

Some concern was raised about the low levels of progress against target for Leisure, Travel and Tourism and it was felt that one course of only 8 learners was having an impact on the number, where 50% of the course were behind target and this was being addressed.

10/20 Curriculum Update

The Assistant Principal presented an overview of Teaching, Learning and Assessment (TLA), noting that good or better was currently 80%. There had been evidence of a variation of performance within a few curriculum areas and this was being taken forward through moderation meetings.

It was noted that higher education teaching teams had requested some technical support and the higher education representative on the Board offered assistance.

Safeguarding and prevent continued to be effective with training mostly up-to-date and effective partnership relations with police and social services. Online safety monitoring was proving quick to identify vulnerable learners and prevent access to inappropriate web sites.

Learner Voice was mostly positive and exceeding targets in most respects, although disappointment was expressed over the low satisfaction rates for HE after a long number of years of strong and consistently high satisfaction

rates. This was being addressed as a matter of priority, given that HE provision has consistently good outcomes.

A number of growth opportunities in the market had been identified from a project group tasked with securing £200k of growth. The Board was pleased to note the involvement of middle management in the process.

11/20 Facilities Update

The Board received and noted an update in respect of facilities. This included Health and Safety monitoring information, where there had been 0 Riddor reportable incidents. The Deputy Principal also noted that an audit had been carried out into health and safety practice with some recommendations around training and process identified. This report would be tabled to the audit committee.

Insurance had been subject to annual review, with no significant changes. It was also noted that carbon management of the college needed to be reconsidered and reviewed.

A request had been made for the purchase of a small strip of land by a neighbour of the college. This was still under consideration and any further developments would be brought back to the Board for approval.

12/20 Equality and Diversity Policy

Following a review of performance at the previous meeting, the policy had been subject to review. There had been no significant changes.

Resolved – that the Equality and Diversity Policy be approved.

13/20 HR Report

The Deputy Principal noted that while there had been a decrease in full-time equivalent staffing numbers, costs were higher and therefore a need to decrease agency costs.

The HR strategy had been updated around a number of key themes, with a focus on talent attraction and development, valuing staff and engendering a culture of excellence.

The Board did express some concern about the change in sickness absence this year, after several years of good performance. It was also a concern to management, and was being addressed. In addition to some long-term sickness absence, people didn't always react well to stress which was also having an impact. Governors requested regular updates to the Board of progress being made.

Turning to the pension statement under the LGPS regulations, the Board approved the statement for publication

Resolved – that the LGPS Statement be approved.

Staff, student and staff governors withdrew

14/20 Confidential Session

Resolved – to move into confidential session.

15/20 Remuneration and Performance Reviews

The draft minutes of the Remuneration Committee were received and noted, including the fact that senior staff had suggested they receive the same award as the rest of the staff, which had been accepted by the Committee, and the revised salary levels were noted.

The Annual Report of the Remuneration Committee and Pay Statement was received and approved for publication in line with the AOC's remuneration code.

The performance reviews of the Principal and the Clerk were received and noted.

Resolved – that the annual report of the Remuneration Committee and Pay Statement be approved for publication.

The meeting closed at 1955h