

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation held in the SEN centre of Lakes College on Thursday, 30th September 2021 at 1730h

Present: Michael Priestley (Chair); Norma Boyes; Peter Ellwood; Beth Wordsworth; Nigel Holliday; Phil Jardine (Vice Chair); Denise Rollo; Chris Nattress; Stuart Williams

Present by Teams:

Amie Calvin; Elaine Clinton; Alison Hampson; Robert Milburn; Tanya Weston

Apologies: None

Also present:

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

67/21 Minutes

Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held in open session on 30 June 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

68/21 Declarations of Interest

It was noted for the record that Nigel Holliday had tabled a declaration of interest in the Sellafield Ltd tender, notification which had been circulated to all Governors. The discussion to be held this evening was at a very high level, with no detail involved and unless specific details emerged through governor questioning, there was no need to withdraw.

It was also noted for the record that two other Governors, Robert Milburn and Beth Wordsworth, were also employed by Sellafield Ltd, but remote from the tender and it was judged that they need not need to withdraw.

69/21 Agenda Management

There were no proposed changes to the agenda.

70/21 Key Performance Indicators

The outturn key performance indicators for 2020-21 did not show any substantial changes from the previous version considered at the last meeting. 16-18 learners remained at 871 and apprenticeship starts had remained relatively strong, bucking the national trend. Asked about apprentices in learning, it was felt that, as apprenticeships operated to a different model which didn't follow the academic year, the slight drop

reflected the drop in apprenticeship starts the previous year during the first lockdown. HE Learners were above target.

The struggle with the Adult Education Budget had been documented throughout the year and £160,000 of clawback was anticipated for this year. In response to questioning, it was explained that although numbers looked strong, it was noted that a good many of the numbers were short-term courses which did not hold the same weight as a full-time course.

Overall attendance, bearing in mind lockdowns and the challenges that learners had endured, was fairly positive. While there was some slippage in 16-18 attendance, it was particularly attendance in maths and English, which was of most concern, however, it was noted that attendance improved once back on site. It was noted by the Assistant Principal that this had been recognised with efforts being made to bring in learners earlier than most, who had poor attendance during lockdown.

The Board was assured that a lot of work had gone on over the summer to make up ground on work placements and included some opportunities with Lakes College.

Valued added scoring looked strong as did GCSE outturn grades, and noting performance of individual curriculum areas (against one another), there had also been improvements.

71/21 Confidential Session and Minutes

Resolved –

- 1) To move into confidential session
- 2) That the minutes of the meeting held in confidential session of 30 September 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.
- 3) To formally record the notes from catch up meetings during the summer months.

72/21 Strategic Update – Confidential

The Principal discussed internal developments; opportunities and partnership projects, and local and national sector developments.

73/21 Finance and Corporate Update – confidential

The Deputy Principal discussed outturn figures for 2020-21 (to be published in December) and further financial matters.

74/21 Public Interest Disclosure –confidential

The Board was briefed on an investigation into a public interest disclosure.

75/21 Open Session

Resolved – that the session be re-opened.

76/21 Annual Summary Reports

Health and Safety

The annual overview of health and safety activity was considered by the Board and noted that there had been not RIDDOR reportable incidents for five years. Assurance was sought and received that there was a well – publicised procedure for reporting near misses. The fact that the crossing outside of College land was not yet operational was raised as a concern, but also noted that there seemed to be some activity which would suggest that it was now being commissioned. It was noted that its operation was outside of the control of the College.

Human Resources

FTEs were down on previous years and it was acknowledged that there was a balancing act to ensure that the College had the capacity to grow. There had again been good feedback from the York College survey of staff, which was recognised by the Board, with the significantly above average performance commended.

It was asked about turnover of staff and it was felt while small, the turnover tended to happen in the first year of appointment. Evidence would suggest that those leaving felt that it was a harder task than they had thought and this was being addressed at interview stage. One governor noted the TLA approach of support and coaching which she felt would also help retention rates.

GDPR

It was noted that there had been a few minor breaches in 2020-21, none of which had been required to be reported to the ICO. There had been one this year, which had been considered sufficiently serious to be reported to the ICO, but this was in process and had not yet received a response. It was asked how judgements were made and there was ICO guidance as the ICO did not expect every breach to be notified.

Lakes College Enterprises Ltd

There had been a clean audit of the setting up and structure of Lakes College Enterprises in the past year. Cleaning had been a positive move and cost effective with a saving of approximately £64,000 over the previous contract. Catering had been brought into house on 1 July 2021 and the offer was being comparatively well received (bearing in mind the

competition across the road). Some staffing challenges were currently being addressed.

National College for Nuclear

The Principal noted the tremendous asset that the NCfN was for Lakes College, with student numbers growing and staff now numbering around 20 and 300-400 students. He noted the changes to the NCfN Board, the provision of new providers and reminded the Board of a strategic shift to low carbon energy.

Curriculum

The Assistant Principal shared his summary overview and early indications of performance for 2020-21. Overall the picture was relatively positive, with improved performance at level 3, improving performance at level 2 and an increase in high grade outcomes for GCSEs. Apprenticeships had proved challenging during the pandemic, as work place assessment had been delayed. However, good employer engagement and support for students to keep them motivated had been well received. In respect of Higher Education, Performance had been good and learner engagement had improved. Work was continuing on a revised Higher Education Strategy.

It was noted that the digital learning model, including a virtual learning environment, during the pandemic had allowed learners to attend as per their timetables and the work of the Progress and Welfare coaches was recognised. The Chair noted that there had been good feedback from learners he had spoken to about the support of the coaches.

Of most concern was performance on Functional Skills maths, where attendance had dipped significantly in the latter stages of the term and the outturn was looking significantly less than had been previously reported. In response to questioning it was noted that remedial work had taken place and that in response to concerns, the maths and English strategy had been updated and followed in the next item.

77/21 English and Maths Strategy

The Deputy Principal felt that good improvement had been made in GCSE English and maths, but noted the concern of functional skills and in particular FS Maths. This had led to some hard decisions being made. It concerned 72 students studying at Level 1 and 2.

There had been a number of issues at play which had seen performance dip on FS maths; this was not necessarily a TLA issue, but a lack of engagement which was magnified by online learning, a need in some areas of the curriculum to understand that FS maths and English was a whole college issue, and that the changes to the exam format for FS maths (that some other colleges had maybe recognised earlier) had led it to be less relevant to those who were taking it. It was felt that changes to the exam put achievement beyond the reach of many learners and as such, was no

longer fit for purpose for their progression. The decision had been taken to move to a GCSE syllabus.

The strategy had been drawn up to provide clarity to responsibilities and a clear path to improvement.

The Chair acknowledged that he had had a meeting with the Assistant Principal and felt that the strategy was a rigorous response. It was proposed to set up a small quality working group to monitor progress against the strategy and report back to the Board.

Resolved –that the Quality Working Group be tasked with monitoring the strategy on behalf of the Board and report back on progress.

78/21 Governance

Following consultation with the Search and Governance Committee, the Board was asked to approve the appointment of Paul Hardon to the Board, who would bring civil engineering sector experience as the training manager for Morgan Sindall, which was agreed.

The regularity audit, which had been subject to scrutiny by the Audit Committee, was approved for signature by the Chair. Also subject to scrutiny by the Audit Committee, had been the Board assurance framework, which directed the Board to sources of assurance linked to the risk register.

Both Freedom of Information activity and the Annual Report of activity with the Seal was received and noted by the Board.

A revised Code of Conduct was tabled.

Resolved –

- 1) That Paul Hardon be appointed to the Board from 1 November 2021-31 October 2022 (to be extended by mutual agreement to a full 4-year term of office);
- 2) That the Regularity Audit be approved for signature by the Chair and Principal;
- 3) That the Annual Report of the Seal be received and noted;
- 4) That the Code of Conduct issued September 2021 be approved and adopted by the Board.

79/21 Confidential Session

Resolved – to move into confidential session

80/21 Performance Reviews

The Board considered the performance reviews of the Principal and the Clerk.

The meeting closed at 2015h