

**BOSTON COLLEGE****MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2018**

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**1. PRESENT**

Steve McCracken (Chair), Peter Cropley, Jo Maher, Gerry Tawton and Nick Worth.

Also in attendance: Janet Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Paul Collins, George Harrison (governor observer), Debbie Holland (College Accountant) and Karen Whitton (Head of HR).

Apologies for absence were received from Mick Gallagher.

Attendance 83%

**2. ACTION LOG**

The action log was reviewed by Members.

It was noted that a task and finish group was addressing the Red Lion Quarter strategic review. Horizon scanning was complete and the College was reviewing the HE offer in Spalding with Bishop Grosseteste and mapping out what the curriculum would look like in the future. Options for delivery were discussed and Jo Maher advised that a further update would be provided to the Corporation in March.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2017**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 September 2017 were reviewed and approved.

A question was raised about the good practice advice which had been received and whether there were any plans to address changes to reporting. Jo Maher advised that there was scope to develop reporting when Debbie Holland takes up her post as Head of Finance.

**4. FINANCE**

Members received a report from the College Accountant on the accounts to December 2017. The committee noted that Debbie would be taking up her post as Head of Finance in mid March.

Debbie advised the committee that there had been extensive re-forecasting and that the outturn on the accounts was very similar to that which was reported in November. The Adult Education Budget variance is within tolerance with an additional £100,000 allocation to partners. The College is still looking at making further savings on consumables and staffing.

The committee discussed the significant drop in surplus from the original budget which was largely due to external forces on which an additional paper had been presented. Jo Maher explained that the College was still looking at improving the situation to provide for a larger surplus at outturn. An issue which has been affecting performance is changes to apprenticeship payments and also levels of recruitment to

apprenticeships. Nationally apprenticeships have reduced in number and there has been a considerable splitting of apprenticeship budgets across different allocations.

Steve McCracken asked if the College was vulnerable with a limited number of levy paying employers in the area. The committee was advised that the College was working to establish relationships with the levy paying employers and there were currently 23 of these employers with apprentices in place. Jo Maher advised that changes in arrangements had hit particularly hard on care homes from whom it was difficult to recruit learners when the employers had to pay costs. Small businesses were also no longer eligible for age grants. The employer contribution was hitting hardest at 19+ apprenticeships and enrolments are slower and later generally than previously. Jo explained that the government is looking at the possibility of how the levy might pass down the supply chain. One sticking point which had been partially addressed was the reintroduction of qualifications into apprenticeships.

Steve McCracken asked about confidence in the forecast budget for the year. Jo Maher advised that she was confident that it would hold up and that it was intended to build more on business development next year. At the present time on selling is working but not upselling so 20 staff are to be upskilled on selling. There is a need for the College to invest in this to get growth.

Peter Cropley asked about Catering income and it was noted that free school meals income and expenditure had been transferred back to the balance sheet. Catering curriculum income and expenditure had both been reduced and the curriculum team has been tasked to make the links with the diner to enhance the learner experience. It was noted that there was a possibility that there would be a Café Direct refurbishment of the University Centre coffee shop.

Members discussed specific income and expenditure lines and asked for further information to be provided. These included self-supporting work, travel expenses and the spend on security. A discussion took place about Higher Education income which had been identified as a growth area but did not appear to be growing at this time. Jo Maher advised that it remains a growth area and the College should ideally have 400 Higher Education students. The committee asked what had driven the optimism in the setting of the 2017-18 targets and why the target is not being reached. An area to be checked is recruitment on teacher education.

The committee noted that there had been a lot of changes in the forecast outturn this year and asked about the reasons for this. Jo Maher reminded the committee that the outturn and forecast was similar to that presented in November. Steve McCracken suggested that the committee members had limited knowledge of what was happening on the budget in between meetings although it was noted that the pre-meeting had originally been set up to look at specific issues. Peter Cropley suggested that what is required should be reviewed and Jo Maher advised that the reporting to the committee was being reviewed to develop it.

Gerry Tawton commented on the shift of AEB work to partners and it was noted that next year the College budget will assume more work being carried out on a sub-contracted basis from the outset.

## **5. ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET SUB-CONTRACTOR PERFORMANCE**

Members received a report from the Director of Business Development.

Paul Collins explained the background to the report and how sub-contractor performance is monitored. He advised the committee that the recruitment of additional

partners was promising and that the College would be overcontracted to ensure full delivery and would then cut back if necessary.

Steve McCracken asked whether the time elapsed and volume of work delivered should match. Jo Maher explained how enrolments are being tracked against partner plans. She also explained how financial checks are carried out on partners.

Steve McCracken commented that this was a good report crystallising the current position and asked if it could be updated in the next Finance and Resources pack.

Nick Worth and Paul Collins left the meeting at this point.

## **6. GENDER PAY REPORTING**

Members received a report from the Head of Human Resources on Gender Pay reporting.

A discussion took place about the information presented and it was noted that the mean and median gender pay gaps and the proportion of male to female employees are the only elements which will be published on the government website. The website will have a link to the College's own report. The information presented to the committee had gone to the Equality and Diversity committee meeting and will also go to the Senior Leadership Team for review before publication.

It was noted that the College had provided people with additional training on unconscious bias as well as on EDI and safer recruitment and this could be referred to in the report. Jo Maher commented that she thought that the College's result showed that it was towards the better end of Colleges' performance but was not outstanding. Gerry Tawton suggested that the results might need to be further contextualised as the College does have equal pay across its jobs for male and female employees.

Committee members were asked to send any further comments to the Head of Human Resources.

## **7. PENSIONS BRIEFINGS**

Members received three AoC Pensions Briefings. Information on the tier 3 LGPS review was discussed and it was noted that the actuary briefing would take place imminently.

## **8. PROPERTY**

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services on a number of property issues. Progress in developing plans for the EMAT centre were noted including the arrangements to consult with employers and visit to a similar centre in Cambridgeshire which would be taking place later in the week. The latest position in respect of the proposed new lease in the Red Lion Quarter and the Skegness lease were noted.

## **9. GDPR**

Members received a report from the Data Protection officer which was presented by Janet Hemmant.

Members were advised that a meeting had taken place with Grantham and Stamford colleges and that the colleges would be sharing the writing of the necessary policy and working together on GDPR.

**10. INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Jo Maher reported that the College's participation had stuck to the red lines agreed previously but that she had to produce the final document for submission before the Corporation meeting. A discussion took place about the likelihood of getting investment and it was noted that the proposals to be submitted would produce extra revenue for the College with a positive margin. The rationale for producing the planned numbers and income and expenditure was explained and the committee were happy that the proposal produced over £1 million of revenue over 5 years and at least £300,000 of capital investment

**11. STAFFING**

Members noted the change of staffing arrangements in the Management Office and were advised that all governors would be provided with a new email address for use.

The committee discussed the recruitment process for the Vice-Principal: Curriculum & Quality which had generated a lot of interest. Jo Maher explained to members what the interview process would be.

**12. NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the committee would take place on 16 April 2018.