

BOSTON COLLEGE**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION ON 6 DECEMBER 2017**

1. PRESENT

Mr P Cropley (Chair), Mr A Atkins, Mr S Brown, Mr S Crozier, Mr D Earnshaw, Mr D Hanson, Mr G Harrison, Ms J Maher, Mrs H Mather, Mr S McCracken, Mr B Webb, Mr N Worth, Mr G Tawton and Mrs H Wright

Also in attendance: Mrs J Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Mr P Collins (Director of Business Development), Mrs F Grady (Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality), Mr R Chambers (Head of Curriculum) , Mrs V Locke (Head of Quality), Ms D Telford (Head of Learner Services and Mrs J Webb (Minute Taker)

Meeting attendance: 82%

Apologies for absence were received from: Mr M Gallagher, Mr C Pett and Prof J Mitchell

Peter Cropley welcomed David Earnshaw to his first meeting of the Board.

2. ACTION LOG

Members reviewed progress which had been made against the items identified on the Action Log.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Peter Cropley enquired whether the student election had yet taken place. Janet Hemmant confirmed that the election would take place the following week.

4. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**a) Corporation – 25 October 2017**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 October 2017 were reviewed.

b) Search & Governance Committee – 20 November 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 November 2017 were reviewed.

c) Finance & Resources Committee – 20 November 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 November 2017 were reviewed.

d) Standards Committee – 22 November 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 November 2017 were reviewed.

It was noted that the Higher Education Action plan had been dealt with and signed off by the Chair of the Committee.

5. REPORTS

a) Principal's

Members received a report from the Principal including information on the latest strategic issues affecting the FE sector.

Jo Maher informed Members that over one thousand pages had been released on a variety of issues over the past two weeks including the T-level consultation. She had tried to condense as much details as possible into her report.

Peter Cropley referred to the information relating to 16-18 learner enrolments which had shown a decrease. Jo Maher explained that demographics will remain low for at least a couple of years. Primary schools are currently full to capacity and within three to four years FE should start to see a rise in numbers. The College is working creatively with its marketing team to maximise enrolments. The College is trying to analyse locally how Brexit will impact upon it. Jo said enquiries had been made with a company who could do some postcode mapping to support the analytical work but that this would be a costly exercise. Jo explained that any real term drop in student recruitment would impact on the following year's budget but that the College was proactive in its ongoing recruitment.

Steve McCracken enquired as to what an FE Centre of Excellence would physically look like. Jo Maher responded saying it would probably be a 'virtual' entity as opposed to a building. Steve McCracken referred to the national Retraining Scheme to support re-skilling in Digital and Construction and asked how that aligned with the closure of CITB. Jo Maher said that she was concerned that there had been no mention of the role of colleges retraining nationally. She thought that with the proposed expansion of construction provision at the College there was a need to liaise with civil engineering people to optimise work in this sector.

b) Finance

Members received a report from the Vice-Principal: Corporate Services on financial and risk management issues.

Janet Hemmant drew Members attention to the draft annual accounts for 2016-17 which were for review and approval by the Board. These were supported by the large amount of information provided to enable Members to make an informed decision.

Members discussed in depth the recommendations and proposed actions and reviewed the content of the supporting documents. Members were satisfied that they were able to confirm compliance with the requirements for signing off the accounts and management representations which were agreed. Members also agreed to confirm their acceptance of the Audit Committee report including the:

- Reappointment of Auditors
- Internal Audit Annual Report
- Internal Audit Plan 2017-18
- External Audit Report

All were approved however Steve McCracken made an observation pertaining to the feedback on the internal auditors, saying that in his opinion their work had not always been accurate. He highlighted concerns about a report where the college had to rewrite part of it due to some inaccuracy which did not sit comfortably with him. Helen Wright said that it would have been helpful to have received some feedback on the point of concern at the time. To move the issue to its conclusion Jo Maher suggested

that on all future Audit Committee agendas there should be an item “Any concerns around audit” as a standard agenda item. Members accepted this suggestion and agreed the report.

Janet Hemmant then drew Members attention to the end of September management accounts and concerns about AEB performance which had a negative impact on the forecast year-end position. The College had carried out a sensitivity analysis on last year’s AEB sub-contractor performance to review capacity to address the shortfall.

Information was also provided on the recent budget statement.

c) Governance

Members received a report from the Vice-Principal: Corporate Services.

Members were asked to review the information presented and agree the Standards and Audit Committees’ 2017-18 targets.

Members agreed both sets of proposed targets.

Jo Maher raised the issue of whether Members should receive electronic copies only of papers. This matter had come to a head following some technical issues with preparing the last set of papers which was particularly large. She suggested that OneDrive, which can be password protected, be used in future and outlined how the system would work.

Members discussed the proposal and agreed that this was the way forward and it would be acceptable if they were to receive just the Agenda and Executive Summaries as hard copy in future with a full set of papers being sent to the Chairs only. This agreement would become effective immediately. Jo Maher said that papers could be displayed on screen during the meeting and laptops could be provided for Members’ use if they wished. Members could also print off any papers where they preferred a hard copy. It was agreed that Janet Hemmant would arrange for some training for Members prior to the next meeting once the support staff and herself had been trained. Helen Mather said that her Board had trialled going electronic earlier in the year and although there were some reservations at the time they now prefer to work with this method.

d) Partnership Contracts 2017-18

Members received a report from the Partnership Manager which was presented by the Director of Business Development.

Paul Collins informed Members that new partners are still being sought to refresh the current ones. He informed them that a sensitivity analysis was being done and more specific information would be available by the end of the week. To date there is one new partner, one going, and one ceased with the rest remaining as last year. Jo said that a huge piece of work had been conducted on partners and each one of them had been individually risk rated with improved tracking.

e) Residential Provision

Members received a report from the Director of Business Development.

Paul Collins gave an overview of progress made on the Post Inspection Action Plan following the Ofsted inspection of the college’s residential provision. Although the overall outcome of the inspection had been good there were a number of improvements highlighted which needed to be addressed. He said that good

progress had been made and the team had started to refocus to look at the new standards prior to the next inspection.

Steve McCracken referred to the point of job title 'Security Staff' where inspectors had suggested the College change their title. Paul Collins said that this had been discussed at length and it had been decided to retain the title as the word 'security' gives assurance to parents, particularly with those learners coming from overseas. The Security Staff also provide a pastoral care role to learners.

f) Self-Assessment Report 2016-17

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality.

Fiona Grady gave an outline of what the Self-Assessment report is and does, especially for the understanding of new Members. She explained that the College SAR is a top level summary evaluation of the quality of provision. The College is currently rated as 'good' with some aspects 'outstanding'. A number of areas are requiring improvement e.g. Hair and Beauty, AS levels and Functional Skills in English and maths levels 1 and 2 and a minority of apprenticeships in electrical, construction and motor vehicle.

Fiona Grady drew Members' attention to some specific areas and explained that where there are concerns a robust action plan is in place to address issues.

Small Animal Care had seen a drop in performance due to management and staffing issues within year however more audits and support mechanisms are now in place.

The refurbishment of the Sam Newsom Centre had led to a disruption within the Performing Arts area however as they are now back in situ this was only a blip.

Electrical had been a concern for some time due to long standing staffing issues and difficulty in recruitment to posts. Richard Chambers said that the college reputation amongst employers with whom the college worked is good but there is a real need to retain staff in the area. Jo Maher informed Members that the HR department had been very pro-active in work being done to address this issue. Fiona Grady concluded by saying that there are no endemic problems across the curriculum areas.

g) Property

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services.

Janet Hemmant gave an update on the proposed EMAT centre and next steps following which Members discussed the development. It was noted that consultants would be employed shortly to support the project. Members agreed that the Finance and Resources Committee should be involved in the selection of a main contractor. ●

Janet informed Members that there had been no developments with regards to the Skegness premises.

Janet also gave an update on RLQ proposed developments.

h) Institute of Technology

Peter Cropley asked Jo Maher to explain to the Board how an Institute of Technology would work.

Jo Maher gave an in-depth explanation stating that basically it is a virtual facility and how Lincolnshire would apply for funding through the University which the LEP will

fully back. Following discussion Members agreed that Jo Maher should explore the matter further and report back in due course. 'Red lines' regarding the College's participation in the bid were discussed and Members agreed those already put forward by the other Lincolnshire Colleges.



6. **GOVERNOR CPD EVENT IN MARCH**

Members agreed that the following be on the agenda:

- Refresh of the Strategic Plan
- Policy changes and T Levels

It was agreed that the possibility of using an external facilitator should be considered, if IoT was to be a long discussion point.

Jo Maher is to liaise with Janet Hemmant in drawing up an agenda for the day.

7. **DIARY DATES**

CPD/Planning Corporation	2 March 2018	9.00 am	BCUC, Medlock
Corporation	2 March 2018	2.00 pm	BCUC, Medlock
Corporation	9 May 2018	4.00 pm	BCUC, Medlock
Corporation	4 July 2018	4.00 pm	BCUC, Medlock