

**BOSTON COLLEGE****MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 25 OCTOBER 2017**

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**1. PRESENT**

Mr P Cropley (Chair), Mr S Brown, Mr S Crozier, Mr M Gallagher, Mr D Hanson, Ms J Maher, Mrs H Mather, Mr S McCracken, Mr C Pett, Mr B Webb, Mr N Worth 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) and Mrs V Locke (Head of Quality).

Meeting attendance: 75%

Apologies for absence were received from: Mr A Atkins, Prof J Mitchell and Mr G Tawton.

**2. MEMBERSHIP**

Steve McCracken withdrew from the meeting whilst members considered a recommendation from the Search and Governance Committee that his appointment should be renewed until 31 December 2018. In considering this matter the Board took into account the supporting information provided and the contribution which Steve McCracken had made and was planning to make to the work of the Corporation. It was agreed that this appointment should be confirmed.

Members considered the appointment of George Harrison as a student governor who had been unopposed in the election which had taken place. It was confirmed that he should be appointed as a student governor for the 2017-18 academic year. It was noted that a further election would take place to fill the remaining vacancy. ●

Steve McCracken and George Harrison joined the meeting.

Members considered the appointment of David Earnshaw who was unable to attend the October meeting and agreed that the start date of his appointment should be deferred until the December meeting of the Corporation.

**3. PRESENTATIONS****a) Work of the Employability Team**

Members received a presentation from Donna Garrard on the work of the Employability Team and on traineeships and sector based work academies. After the presentation a discussion took place about the groups' undertaking this training and a specific query was answered about the eligibility of unemployed learners.

**b) Post-16 Skills Plan T-Level Implementation**

Members received a presentation from the Principal on the implementation of T-levels. The biggest change which was planned to take place would be an increase in the amount of Work Placement to be undertaken by learners. It was noted that funding was anticipated to have an uplift to the rate and that the College would be bidding for implementation funding for Work Placements but it was noted that

funding was likely only to cover costs. It was agreed that more time should be spent looking at this at the Governor Development day in March.

#### 4. **REVIEW OF ACTION LOG**

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

A discussion took place about the succession planning for the position of Chair of the Corporation. It was noted that the position of Vice-Chair had been discussed in some detail at the Search and Governance Committee and one of the suggestions put forward was that if members expenses were highlighted it might be possible to attract more people to membership of the Corporation. Nick Worth pointed out that one option for the Board would be to go to the market looking specifically for a successor Chair. There was a feeling that the Corporation would prefer to recruit internally but noted that it would need to be someone with the time available for the role. It was agreed that clarity about the role would also be necessary.

Peter Cropley advised that a local college had recently lost its Vice-Chair and was looking at using an agency for recruitment. It was agreed that it might be interesting to see what the outcome of this exercise was. Jo Maher advised that there had been a presentation from recruiters recently to Lincolnshire colleges and that they had offered to follow this up for individual colleges. It was noted that it would be possible to ask this organisation for a presentation and the Search and Governance Committee can give consideration to this. It was noted that recruitment of governors to the College was competing against other paid roles in non-profit making organisations.

#### 5. **MINUTES**

##### a) Corporation – 5 July 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 July 2017 were reviewed and noted.

Peter Cropley advised members that the College had been well represented at the funeral of Phil Scarlett.

##### b) Search & Governance Committee – 25 September 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 September 2017 were reviewed and noted.

##### c) Finance & Resources Committee – 19 June 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 June 2017 were reviewed and noted.

It was agreed that George Harrison would continue to attend the Finance and Resources Committee. In response to a query it was noted that the Health and Safety Report referred to in the minutes had had nothing significant in its findings.

##### d) Finance & Resources Committee – 25 September 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 September 2017 were reviewed and noted.

##### e) Audit Committee – 29 June 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 June 2017 were reviewed and noted.

## 6. REPORTS

### a) Principal's

Members received a report from the Principal on a number of strategic matters and issues relating directly to the College.

Jo Maher advised that with respect to Institutes of Technology the College had been asked by the University of Lincoln to join in an expression of interest. Moving forward in this way would fit with the College's plans for capital investment but would not be an actual commitment at this stage. It was agreed that this matter should be referred back to the Board once more information was available.

Jo advised members that Ofsted preparation work which had been carried out in the College had proved to be very useful. Vicki Locke advised that her recent Ofsted experience had confirmed the validity of the preparation work undertaken and the relevance of its content. A particular benefit which had come out of the work had been to develop the confidence of Managers in identifying positive features of the College's work.

Jo advised members that the new GDPR legislation coming into force in 2018 had been the subject of a number of conferences recently attended. The information gained would be distilled and brought back to the December meeting of the Corporation. She also advised that the College's marketing team had been nominated for an award organised BY THE National FE First Awards.

Helen Wright queried an element of the KPI data in respect of progression. Fiona Grady confirmed that it was not yet available for the 2016-17 academic year as it had not settled. Destinations are likely to be fully analysed in November/December and the data will be provided to members.

Jo Maher noted that good progress had been made in English and maths performance particularly in the light of qualification levels of learners on entry. VITAL had proved to be a very useful tool for monitoring progress of learners across the College.

### b) Finance

Members received a report from the Vice-Principal: Corporate Services on accounts and Risk Management.

Janet Hemmant advised members that the 2016-17 end of year audit had now been completed and no significant issues had arisen during the course of the audit. Full accounts will be presented in November to both the Finance and Resources committee and Audit committee ready for final sign off by the Corporation at the December meeting.

Information was provided to members on the approach which had been taken to Risk Management over 2016-17 and details of the current risk register were provided.

### c) Governance

Members received a report from the Clerk to the Corporation on a number of governance issues.

Janet Hemmant drew member's attention to performance against the 2016-17 targets for the Corporation and for the Finance and Resources Committee which

were noted. The Audit and Standard Committees had not yet met to review their performance and these would be reported to the December meeting of the Corporation.

The proposed performance targets for the Finance and Resources Committee for 2017-18 were considered and approved and it was agreed that targets for the Corporation for 2017-18 should be:

- 80% attendance including development days
- All governors to make at least one curriculum or business support visit during the year.
- Oversight of the quality of teaching learning and assessment, learner progress and learner progression.
- Progression of collaboration options such as participation in a shared Institute of Technology
- Oversight of T-level implementation in line with national deadlines.
- Maintain a £1m minimum cash reserve

Members were provided with feedback from the member appraisal meetings and a number of follow up actions were agreed:

- a) A presentation to the Corporation on English and maths later in the year
- b) The Search and Governance Committee to consider the skills set of Corporation members particularly in the recruitment of new members and also further enhancement of the induction process for new members
- c) The introduction of a brain storming session into the March development event to allow members to consider their priorities and identify headline topics and questions to focus on in their deliberations.

Members received a copy of the Association of Colleges guidance on Governor Liability. Members noted that sound decision making was a requirement and the need to take independent advice if there was likely to be a question of solvency. It was agreed that new members should be made aware of this guidance as part of the induction process and sign to confirm that they had received this advice.

Members reviewed confidentiality of papers for the corporation and its committees during the year. A number of papers were identified for review and it was agreed that the only papers which should be released from their confidential status were the Human Resources Reports to the Corporation in October 2016, the Finance and Resources Committee in January 2017 and the Finance and Resources Committee in June 2017. Members agreed that these papers could be released to the public domain subject to the withholding of one element which related to information on individual staff members.

Members considered their processes for decision making and decided that these remained effective.

Steve McCracken advised members that Nottingham Trent University was looking to do some further work on innovation in governance and would like Boston College to partake in an extension of the study. Steve had passed information on the proposal to Jo and Peter and it was agreed that the College would be willing to participate with Steve McCracken taking a lead on this.

d) Human Resources Annual Report

Members received a report from the Head of Human Resources which was presented by the Vice Principal: Corporate Services.

Members noted the key movements in the statistics reported particularly in respect of sickness absence. It was suggested that it might be useful to see this information split between teaching staff and support staff.

Helen Mather asked about systems which were in place to deal with stress and information was given on the counselling services available. Jo Maher advised that building resilience was an important issue and that work would be undertaken with Human Resources to look at this. The intention was that learning and development would provide this support.

A suggestion was made by Steve McCracken that the College should look at the possibility of offering flu jabs to members of staff.

A comment was made by Stephen Brown on the cleanliness of the College which reflected well on the effectiveness of the College cleaning service. It was agreed that the cleaning team would be advised that this had been commented on.

A discussion took place about the presentation of the report and who should present it. It was noted that the Head of Human Resources would be attending the Finance and Resources Committee when HR reports are presented there. After discussion it was agreed that Jo Maher would look at options to facilitate attendance of a member of the HR team at Corporation meetings. It was noted that the Corporation relies on the quality of information presented and would like the opportunity to discuss this directly with a member of the HR team.

e) Health and Safety Annual Report

Members received a report from the Health and Safety Co-ordinator which was presented by the Director of Business Development.

Paul Collins advised that he was undertaking a NEBOSH course as part of his assumption of responsibility for Health and Safety. As a result of his training Health and Safety walks were being introduced and there was an intention to expand the coverage of the Health and Safety Committee. Jo Maher advised members that it was intended that Health and Safety should be driven throughout the business as it was a critical factor.

f) A-Level and GCSE results 2016-17

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

Fiona Grady identified the positive aspects from College performance and it was noted that English and maths was a success story in 2016-17. An area of concern was low AS pass rates in 7 out of 14 subjects. Members were advised that the College had dropped further maths from its offer but that this had mostly been designed for International learners. The College has a relatively inexperienced College maths team which includes 2 new maths graduates.

Steve McCracken asked about the College position in respect of the issue which had arisen nationally about the allowing of progression on to A-Levels. Fiona advised that the College doesn't make significant demands of learners regarding eligibility to progress but that some learners chose instead to transfer to Access courses.

Steve Crozier pointed out that A-Levels were becoming linear and that only 7 Lincolnshire schools and colleges had got 100% pass rates at A-level of which the College was the only one in the Boston area.

It was noted that a range of improvement actions were implemented to secure improvements in English and maths GCSE's and that these had been aimed at maintaining headline achievements. Improving outcomes in AS levels is a priority identified at both Programme area and College level.

## 7. **NEXT MEETINGS**

It was noted that the next meetings of the Corporation would take place as follows:

Corporation	6 December 2017	4pm	Medlock, BCUC
CPD/Planning	2 March 2018	9am	Medlock, BCUC
Corporation	2 March 2018	2pm	Medlock, BCUC
Corporation	9 May 2018	4pm	Medlock, BCUC
Corporation	4 July 2018	4pm	Medlock, BCUC