

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 29 JUNE 2016

1. PRESENT

Mr D Hanson (Chair), Mr A Atkins, Mr S Brown, Mr R Dalton, Mr G Harrison, Mr S McCracken, Mrs A Mosek, Mr C Pett, Mr G Tawton, 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 K Tharby (Director of Workforce Development) and Mrs J Webb (Minute Taker)

Meeting attendance: 75%

Apologies for absence were received from: Mr P Cropley, Mr M Gallagher, Prof J Mitchell and Mr P Scarlett

2. ACTION LOG

Members reviewed the Action Log from the previous meeting.

Janet Hemmant provided an update on outstanding actions:

- Land on Skirbeck Road – the vendor has suggested a different layout which would alter the shape of the plot. A suggested alternative is being investigated.
- Redundant premises in Skegness – a meeting date is being pursued. ●

3. MINUTES

a) Corporation – 11 May 2016

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2016 were reviewed and agreed.

Janet Hemmant informed Members that she had taken advice through Eversheds regarding the possibility of George Harrison, Student Governor, becoming a member of the Audit Committee. They had responded saying that technically this was permissible however a student member would probably be asked to withdraw from the meeting on so many discussion points that it might not really be workable in the best interests of the Committee. It had been agreed that this would not be pursued.

b) Standards Committee – 15 June 2016

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2016 were reviewed and agreed.

Helen Wright asked Fiona Grady to send out Success Rates to all Corporation members and not just to Standards Committee members. This was agreed to be actioned. ●

4. REPORTS

a) Principal's

Members received a report from the Principal.

Amanda Mosek gave a short presentation, as was requested at the last meeting, on key strategic issues. These mainly centred on the potential effects of the result of the EU referendum. The highlighted points were:

European Union

Short term

- Possible reduction in number of non-dom learners choosing to study at the College, if no impact this year it may well be next
- Likely delays in policy e.g. apprenticeship changes, changes to technical and professional education
- Increase in community tensions although the College will continue to work within the community promoting the totally inclusive environment of the College

Longer Term

- Market volatility may force further austerity budget. FE and Skills likely to see funding cuts
- Reductions in numbers of European students who have settled in UK
- No more ESF funding – the current bid, if successful, can be delivered within the 2 year withdrawal period

Amanda Mosek said that the EU referendum result had been included in the Risk Register.

Apprenticeships

- Greater focus on apprenticeships – the College is working hard with employers to become the 'trusted local college' that can supply young people to fill the skills gap
- Changes offer an opportunity but also a threat - massive changes ahead as the funding will go direct to the employer enabling them to choose their provider

- Importance of employers – relationships need to be built and maintained
- Impact on cash flow – this will be difficult to plan

New

- White Paper
- HEFCE to be replaced with Office for Students
- Introduction of new Teaching Excellence Framework
- New entrants to HE market and more flexible degree awarding powers

Area Review

- The date of the first meeting is 3 October 2016 and the last, 20 February 2017 – Chairs and Principals will be invited to these with governors being invited as and when required. Amanda Mosek said that so far all Reviews had run over the time scale.

Amanda Mosek then gave a short update on collaboration talks to date and said that the next meeting of the Collaboration Working Party Group will be on 26 July 2016 at Spalding.

b) Finance

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

Janet Hemmant presented the draft budget for 2016-17 together with key elements of the financial plan for the Board's approval. Both of these documents had been reviewed by the Finance and Resources Committee at their meeting on 20 June 2016. The budget needs to be submitted to the Skills Funding Agency by the end of July.

Members' attention was drawn to the SFA guidance on reviewing financial plans and to the completed checklist appended to the Financial Plan Commentary. The points were discussed and Members were asked to ensure they understood and agreed with them. Members confirmed that they were satisfied with the completeness of the process undertaken.

Members agreed it was pleasing to note that the financial health of the College is indicated as moving to outstanding. Savings have been made across the College and the Plan includes a proposed 1% pay rise to staff in 2016-17. The pay rise will not be awarded to those staff who have already received a recent increase to their hourly rate due to the National Living Wage directive. Members agreed this proposal.

Members approved the Financial Plan and confirmed that the financial health grading as calculated was appropriate. It was agreed that the 2016/17 figures should be the base budget for the year.

Janet Hemmant drew Members attention to the set of Management Accounts for April 2016 which had been reviewed by the Finance and Resources Committee.

Janet Hemmant gave background information regarding the new Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) and the introduction of the FRS 102 (Financial Reporting Standard) document which is applicable in the UK and came into force on 1 January 2015. The College Auditors at the last Audit Committee meeting had said that the schedules needed to be reviewed and agreed by the Board. Following discussion, Members approved the revised accounting policies which are to be included in the first set of accounts under the FRS 102 standard. It was agreed that the accruals model should be maintained for government grants and that land and buildings should be kept at depreciated cost with no policy of depreciation. It was noted that the Auditors will charge an additional fee above their agreed audit fee for oversight of the FRS 102 work.

c) College Leadership Business Plan

Members received a report from Principal.

Amanda Mosek informed Members that SP4 relating to the growth of business, had been re-graded as green due to evidence of the continued growth of apprenticeship provision and financial stability. However, SP1 relating to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment remains at amber due to concerns relating to English and maths. Actions are being taken to address the issues for the next academic year. Steve McCracken enquired as to the percentage of students not turning up for their English and maths exams to which Fiona Grady replied that it was around 5% and that after checking for any anomalies it is planned that students will be invoiced accordingly.

d) Governor Curriculum Links

Members received a report from the Principal.

Amanda Mosek thanked Governors for their commitment and time in participating in the curriculum links over the past year. She explained the intention to swap link areas after two years. A discussion took place and a suggestion was made that those governors who wish to retain their curriculum area for longer could do so if they felt it would be beneficial to build on the relationship. However, Amanda Mosek pointed out that as there are more curriculum areas than there are governors it would be difficult to ensure all areas received the same support if this were to happen across the board. In addition some governors have found it difficult to devote the time to the process due to their own commitments. The decision made was to work to a two year cycle wherever possible.

e) Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Members received a report from the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager.

Frank Hanson gave a short overview of the EDI annual report and data which was supported by a presentation and film featuring some of the work produced by students and staff that has helped advance equality, celebrate diversity and promote inclusion across the College during 2015-16.

Frank Hanson advised the Board that he had been invited to be on the Sophie Lancaster Foundation board. The Foundation focuses on creating respect for an understanding of subcultures in the community.

f) Safeguarding Update

Members received a report from the Head of Learner Services which was presented on her behalf by Fiona Grady.

Fiona informed Members that the Prevent Duty had been incorporated into Safeguarding and implemented across the College. She said the College had seen a large increase in the number of referrals over the year, including internet and firewall breaches, and the monitoring of internet activity is proving to be very time consuming. The promotion of British values is being incorporated into tutorial sessions across all curriculum areas. It was noted that the College's approval form for visitors to complete needed slight attention as this is an area the College needs to control and validate. This is being worked on ready for the start of the new academic year.

5. CHAIR FOR THE 2016-17 ACADEMIC YEAR

Having been duly nominated, Peter Cropley was unanimously elected as Chair for the 2016-17 academic year. Members noted that there was advice that individuals should not hold the Chair for extended periods but agreed that, with the Area Review pending, Peter's reappointment was appropriate.

Members felt that the wealth of experience and knowledge Peter has should be taken into account when appointing and that in their opinion at the present time this consideration outweighed the negatives of extended service in this role. Members felt that it would be useful for the Search and Governance Committee to discuss the matter of succession planning.

6. **VICE-CHAIR FOR THE 2016-17 ACADEMIC YEAR**

Having been duly nominated, David Hanson was appointed as Vice-Chair for the 2016-17 academic year.

7. **GOVERNOR DINNER**

Chris Pett asked that thanks be noted for the excellent meal in recognition of Adrian Reynolds' retirement from the Board which was held on 6 June. Members agreed that the occasion had been pleasant and informal which had also enabled them to become more acquainted with other Board members, something which was of particular benefit to the newer members of the board.

8. **COASTAL COMMUNITIES FUND**

Janet Hemmant informed Members that a bid was being submitted to the Coastal Communities Fund for funding for the EMAT Centre which, if successful, would not require match funding. She explained the remit of the Coastal Communities Fund and said the College was hopeful that the bid would be successful. If it was, there would need to be some college funds committed to allow the project to proceed within required timescales. Members agreed to support the application.

8. **DATE OF MEETINGS FOR 2016-17**

Dates for the diary were confirmed as:

- 12 October 2016 (Rochford 4pm)
- 14 December 2016 (PPPC 4pm)
- 03 March 2017 (Rochford 2pm)
- 10 May 2017 (RLQ 4pm)
- 05 July 2017 (Rochford 4pm)

CPD/Planning Session

- 03 March 2017 (Rochford 9am)

The meeting concluded and Members then undertook a review of Board Effectiveness.