

BOSTON COLLEGE**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 8 JULY 2015**

1. PRESENT

Mr P Copley (Chair), Mr A Atkins, Mr M Gallagher, Mr D Hanson, Mr S McCracken, Ms O McMahon, Mrs A Mosek, Mr C Pett, Ms S Richards, Mr P Scarlett, Mr G Tawton and Mrs H Wright

Also in attendance: Mrs J Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Mrs J Webb (Minute Taker), Mr P Collins (Director of Business Development), Mrs F Grady (Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality), Mr K Tharby (Director of Workforce Development)

In attendance for presentation purposes: Mrs L Griffen (Partnerships Manager and Ms D Telford (Learner Services Manager)

Meeting attendance: 67%

Apologies for absence were received from: Ms J Mitchell, Mr A Reynolds, Mr D Shutts, Mr K Smith and Mr M Stubbs

Apologies not received and did not attend: Miss G Edwards

2. PRESENTATION – PREVENT STRATEGY

Dawn Telford gave a presentation on the Prevent Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and reiterated the roles and responsibilities of governors under the Act which places a duty on certain bodies to have ‘due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism’ and outlines practices which should be adopted. Although the UK is currently on a high alert Lincolnshire is classed as a low risk area.

The presentation flagged up Governor and Board member responsibilities and these were identified as:

- Adopt the Prevent Duty
- Actively engage with partners to carry out the duty
- Undertake appropriate training and development
- Nominate a Prevent Governor
- Exemplify British values of ‘democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance’
- Understand the inspection regime

An in depth discussion took place on its interpretation, understanding and implementation across the College. Siobhan Richards agreed to take on the role of the Prevent Governor which will run in conjunction with her Safeguarding role.

The presentation will be uploaded to the Governors section of the Intranet. ●

Dawn was thanked for her presentation.

3. **MEMBERSHIP**

There are currently two vacancies on the Board and Members were asked to give thought to suitable candidates and advise Janet Hemmant accordingly. ●

4. **MINUTES**

a) Corporation – 13 May 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 May 2015 were reviewed and approved as an accurate record.

There were three Matters on which queries were raised:

- i) Steve McCracken referred to the learner complaint and Amanda Mosek confirmed nothing further had been heard from the learner or his father following Peter Cropley's letter to them and there had been no appeal lodged against the funder's decision.
- ii) Amanda Mosek confirmed that the Higher Education Strategy was moving forward as planned
- iii) Janet Hemmant said that the LCC were carrying out a review of a number of Boston properties shortly and the College should then anticipate a response to its enquiry about the Sam Newsom Centre lease.

The Action Sheet was reviewed and it was noted that all points had been substantially completed.

b) Standards Committee – 10 June 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 June 2015 were reviewed.

Members noted that the issue of securing suitably qualified Construction staff remains a problem within the curriculum area. A discussion took place regarding whether other colleges experienced the same difficulties and it was agreed that those providers in more urban areas had the benefit of a larger employment market. Other colleges within Lincolnshire were also experiencing the same issues as Boston College. Members agreed it would be useful to have a report on the issues, including financial implications of different staff models and Amanda Mosek will provide this for the October Board meeting. ●

Discussion then centred on apprenticeships and traineeships and whether sufficient and timely contact is made with employers where learners are

experiencing difficulties with their placements. Louise Griffen explained that Employment Coordinators do go out on a regular basis and liaise and monitor all placements and that in her opinion this was sufficient to meet the needs of both sides. Amanda said that retention is good overall at around 90% with 78% for apprenticeships. Despite all the support in place there will inevitably be some individuals who will withdraw either through their own or the employers' decision.

c) Finance & Resources Committee – 16 June 2015

The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2015 were reviewed.

There were no matters arising.

5. **REPORTS**

a) Partnership Arrangements

Louise Griffen gave a presentation on a summary of Partnerships for 2014-15 and 2015-16. She explained that the College had ceased working with two partners but had taken on one new partner, Merit Skills, who will be delivering Apprenticeships in Water Engineering. Louise informed Members of the due diligence and quality processes. She explained that all contracts are presented to the Senior Leadership Team for approval on an annual basis. A discussion took place on processes for monitoring the financial status of partners and Paul Collins assured Members that if there were any concerns further investigations are carried out for reassurance purposes. Amanda further confirmed that companies are not paid until they have delivered the provision. Internal auditors had commended the College's contracting arrangements as the best they had seen.

Members approved the proposed partnership arrangements for 2015-16.

Louise was thanked for her presentation.

b) Principal's

Members received a report from the Principal.

Amanda Mosek brought Members' attention to a number of points:

- i) Headlines from the newly announced budget.
- ii) Devolution had been discussed at the recent Principals' Policy Forum where it was announced that there will be less colleges nationally within 5 years.

Discussion took place on the implications of devolution with relation to control of funding.

- iii) A visit from Ofsted is anticipated earlier than had been indicated due to the fact that the timetable has been changed. Ofsted are reducing the number of inspectors and the way they inspect has changed. Fiona Grady said she would give a more in depth presentation to Governors on this matter at a later date.

Discussion took place regarding the potential impact of changes to grading of observations. Orla McMahon endorsed the suggestion that this should not impact on performance.

- iv) Feedback was given from Amanda's attendance at the South Holland District Council's Senior Management Team meeting. The meeting had been positive and they are keen to put forward a suitable person for the membership to the College's Board of Governors and to work with the College to address skills within the area.
- v) ParkFest which had been held on 27 June 2015 in Boston's Central Park had been a huge success. Over 7,000 people came through the gates and it was pleasing to note that it appears to have had a positive effect on enrolments. Facebook activity had been good between learners both at the College and elsewhere.
- vi) The amount of 6th Form provision in the local area was discussed.

Congratulations were expressed to Kirsty Fonseca, a College catering student, and it was agreed that a letter be sent from the Board acknowledging her hard work and success in the 2015 British Turkey Student Chef of the Year competition.

Members were referred to the Key Performance Indicators data sheet which was self-explanatory.

c) Equality & Diversity Annual Report

Members received a report from Frank Hanson, Equality and Diversity Manager which was presented by Keith Tharby. The presentation included a film highlighting equality and diversity activity through the academic year. The soundtrack to the film was put together by students from the Sam Newsom Centre and featured a song penned for the Sophie Lancaster Foundation.

Members agreed that the film was a good snapshot of activity within equality and diversity.

Discussion took place regarding use and accessibility of the multi-faith room which is currently located within the Halls of Residence. Should use become more regular then consideration will be given to moving its location to a more easily accessible one.

Members noted the College's achievements as outlined in the report and the integral role of the 2014-16 EDI Business Plan to the Prevent duties.

d) Finance

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

Janet gave an overview of the report and budget setting process. She explained that the Finance and Resources Committee had held an extra informal meeting which enabled them to analyse the budget as it was being constructed. Steve McCracken said that it was a very useful exercise and should be adopted in future years as it gave Members the opportunity to gain an insight into issues affecting the budget.

The ongoing pension deficit remains an issue and is unlikely to be resolved quickly or satisfactorily.

Following a review of the Finance Report and Financial Plan and after discussion Members:

- i) Approved the Financial Plan
- ii) Agreed the College's grades for financial health as calculated by the software.
- iii) Approved the 2015-16 figures as the College's base annual budget

e) Business Plan Progress

Members received a report from the Principal.

Amanda drew Members attention to the RAG rated strategic priorities which had not changed since her last report. Strategic Priority 4, 'To Grow our business whilst maintaining financial stability' remains at Amber which is as a result of cuts in adult funding and the College's failure to meet its 16-18 target.

A meeting with the Regional Schools Commissioner has been arranged for September to which Amanda said she had invited other local college Principals to attend together with Paul Eeles from EMFEC.

f) Governor Curriculum Links

Members received a report from the Principal.

Amanda thanked all Members who had taken part and hoped that they had found the experience useful and interesting, staff had commented that they had welcomed the opportunity to meet with them. Amanda said that that plans are being made for this to be repeated in the next academic year and that Members who had been involved in a specific area for two consecutive

years would be changing to another area to give them a broad experience of the curriculum/areas.

The feedback data was reviewed and discussed.

Phil Scarlett commented on the suggestion that the successful videos be distributed to select retailers who could show them on their electronic devices such as TVs. Paul Collins replied that he would trial this with a couple of retailers to see how successful this would be. ●

A recent car boot sale had taken place on the large car park and Peter Copley asked that enquiries be made as to where the proceeds went and who benefitted from this fundraising. If it had been deemed to be a profitable event it may be worth consideration as a future potential fund raiser for the College. ●

Orla McMahon sought clarification of a comment regarding gender bias within the Learner Services Team. The team consists mainly of female staff and a discussion took place about whether this could be seen as detrimental by male learners who may have specific issues. Keith Tharby said that the College did not go out of its way to recruit gender specific but may be due to the nature of the role. Keith said he would ask the HR team to look back at the last few vacant posts and check profiles and applications and feed back in due course. ●

Steve McCracken commented that with the newly appointed Chaplaincy one of the Curates holds a formal Youth Supervision qualification which may enhance the team's contact with learners. Orla thought that it would be useful to see data on use of the Chaplaincy Service in the future. ●

Mick Gallagher drew Members' attention to the fact that within some programme areas there is an opposite gender balance. Amanda said that all College literature is mindful to show both females and males having access to and participating in the whole spectrum of the provision and is not gender biased in any way.

g) Governance

Members received a report from the Principal.

Amanda explained that her report included an additional report prepared by Steve McCracken following his attendance at the East Midlands Governors Network Meetings.

Steve explained that the Network meets four times per year and gives members the opportunity to share solutions to common issues. He said that he finds the meetings useful and informative and is happy to continue to be the representing governor from the College. He said that since his submitted report he had attended a further meeting and Nottingham Trent University have been engaged in a project on FE governor leadership. NTU

have asked if Boston College would be interested in participating. No decision was required at the meeting but he suggested that thought be given to discussion and recording of how the Board makes its decisions during the November CPD event. ●

Governors had recently been given the opportunity to answer a questionnaire circulated by the Network and a number of them had submitted a response. Steve said that all responses were being collated by NTU and feedback which would include the demographics would be circulated at a later date.

Members were advised that the issue of student governors was currently being looked into in depth in the hope that future members would be more actively involved and have better attendance.

h) Property

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

i) De Montfort Campus

A letter has been sent to Boston Borough Council supporting Cyden's application which should be dealt with during July.

ii) Skegness property

No progress has been made yet.

iii) Rochford Campus

Dedicated LEP funds may be made available for small scale developments and improvements. The development of a multi-skills workshop and Performing Arts facilities have been reiterated as priorities for the College.

Summer works have now commenced on campus including a revamp of the current Motor Vehicle workshop and set up of the centre for Small Animal care.

iv) FEAST

The contract to relinquish the lease has now been signed. The TUPE issue is still unresolved.

An item of surplus equipment within the training kitchen has been offered for disposal to the NHS.

6. **TO APPOINT A CHAIR FOR THE 2015-16 ACADEMIC YEAR**

Peter Cropley was nominated for appointment as Chairman for 2015-16. Members felt that Peter had the necessary skills and expertise to lead the College through challenging times. It was noted that he had already served longer as Chairman than might be regarded as ideal by those in government, but felt that his qualities as Chairman outweighed this. This appointment was unanimously agreed.

7. **TO APPOINT A VICE-CHAIR FOR THE 2015-16 ACADEMIC YEAR**

David Hanson was nominated and unanimously re-elected as Vice-Chair for the 2015-16 academic year.

8. **DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2015-16**

The dates of forthcoming Corporation and CPD events for the new academic year were noted.