

# BOSTON COLLEGE

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOSTON COLLEGE CORPORATION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2013

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### 1. PRESENT

Mr P Cropley (Chair), Mrs L Adey, Miss C French, Mr M Gallagher, Mr D Hanson, Mrs L Ladds, Ms I Lebedowicz, Mrs A Mosek, Mr N Percy, Ms S Richards, Mr R Stanley, Mr B Walder, Mr D White, Mr J Woodward and Mr B Wright.

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

Apologies received from Mr T Lascelles, Mr S McCracken, Mr A Reynolds, Mr S Stanley and Mrs H Wright.

### 2. PRESENTATION

Members received an interactive presentation from Ben Webb on 'What makes an outstanding lesson'. Members found the presentation very interesting and noted the focus on learning rather than teaching. Of particular interest was the way in which the lesson content could be differentiated for different learners within a group. Members felt that this presentation enhanced their understanding of what was required to move Teaching and Learning at the College to outstanding.

### 3. MINUTES

#### a) Meeting of the Corporation 12 December 2012

The Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on 12 December 2012 having been circulated were agreed and signed as a correct record.

#### b) Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee 23 January 2013

The Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee dated 23 January 2013 were received.

Members were advised that an offer had been made to Boston Grammar School for the land that had been discussed and a response was awaited.

#### c) Meeting of the Standards Committee 23 January 2013

The Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee dated 23 January 2013 were received.

Mr Stanley commented on the work which had been carried out at the Committee meeting and advised that the Committee is keen to find someone with an educational background to join the Committee. The Principal advised that there were a number of possibilities currently being pursued to enable this to happen.

d) Meeting of the Remuneration Committee 23 January 2013

Members of staff and student governors together with the Clerk and the College Managers present at the meeting withdrew whilst the Corporation considered the confidential recommendations of the Remuneration Committee.

On their return to the meeting the Chairman advised that the Corporation had accepted the recommendations of the Committee but that the Principal had declined to accept the award recommended by the Committee and was only prepared to accept an award in line with the rest of the staff of the College at 0.5% increase, although she appreciated the offer being made by the Board.

**4. JANUARY 2013 OFSTED INSPECTION**

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality on the recent Ofsted inspection.

The College had been disappointed by the outcome of the inspection but was focussing its efforts on teaching and learning to ensure that the next visit had a more positive outcome. Members were advised that it was the intention to look at the Post Inspection Action Plan in detail at the development day on 8 March.

The College had known that although outcomes had improved in 2011-12 they were still only satisfactory and that there were pockets of inadequate performance. It had been hoped, however, that inspectors would see sufficient good or better teaching to justify an overall Grade 2 for Teaching and Learning. This did not prove to be the case and this subsequently impacted on the Leadership and Management grade. Members noted that there will be a need to manage any local publicity arising from the inspection and that the Marketing team had worked on a press release. It is anticipated that Ofsted will revisit in 12-18 months and many steps are already in train to improve the College's performance in anticipation of this visit.

Governors were disappointed to note that a lot of the College's work on community engagement and widening participation had not counted for a great deal in the inspection and considerable discussion took place about how the College was to achieve its objectives, particularly in improving outcomes. Governor links with curriculum areas were noted to be valuable and good and governors will be playing a key role in the monitoring of the Post Inspection Action Plan.

Members were advised that the College's staff were committed to improvement and they had been disappointed at the outcomes of the inspection and it was important for the staff to know that the governors were supportive of their plans.

A discussion took place about whether there were any structural implications for the Board in focussing on academic standards and in particular the intention of the Standards Committee to enhance its academic expertise was noted.

**5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT**

Members received a report outlining a number of strategic matters and items of college news. Some concerns about the proposed reform of 'A' levels was discussed in the context of long-term concerns about 'A' levels within the College. It was noted that the EBAC proposal had now been withdrawn.

Particular note was taken of the 'Be Brilliant Foundation' which was to support learners and it was agreed that Mrs Adey should be a volunteer governor serving on the management committee overseeing the Foundation. A query was raised about whether Gift Aid could be claimed on donations to the College and it was agreed that this should be investigated.

Considerable discussion took place about the Key Performance Indicators presented with the report, in particular the performance against funding targets. Members were pleased to gain further insight into the College's funding arrangements.

## 6. **BUSINESS PLAN**

Members received a report from the Principal on progress against the Leadership Business Plan. Particular note was taken of areas of the plan giving cause for concern.

## 7. **FINANCE**

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services together with the Finance and General Purposes Committee report on its review of the accounts up to December 2012.

It was noted that the Finance and General Purposes Committee was considering a revised presentation format for the College's accounts in the future.

Members were advised that following a meeting with the bank in December the bank was proposing to increase charges on the match and base rate loans by 0.25% following the breach of the covenant.

After due consideration of all the circumstances and on being satisfied that it is for the benefit of the Corporation and in the interests of the Corporation for the purpose of carrying on its business to enter into a supplemental agreement between the Corporation and National Westminster Bank Plc (the "**Supplemental Agreement**") in the form now produced in respect of the loan of £2,890,000 made available to the Corporation by National Westminster Bank Plc (the "**Bank**") in terms of the Agreement dated 22 November 2010.

Indicative information was provided on the likely funding levels for 2013-14 although it was noted that allocations had yet to be finalised.

Members received a routine report on the operation of the College's risk management processes.

## 8. **PROPERTY**

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services on property developments including the completion of the Red Lion Quarter Hair and Beauty development. Members were advised that the bid for funding for the alternative use of the Skegness premises had been turned down.

## **9. PARTNERSHIP**

Members received a confidential report from the Director of Business Development on issues relating to one of the College's partners. Mr White expressed an interest in this matter and took no part in the consideration of this item.

A discussion took place about how much business should be given to other organisations and their place within the College's overall strategy. It was noted that a green light assessment had been given on the partnership audit report but potentially this was regarded as a risk area for the College.

A discussion took place about the possible merits of exploring a social enterprise company model for delivery to give the College more control whilst achieving the same objectives as partnerships.

Members asked that a full list of partners working with the College be provided at the next Corporation meeting together with information on what provision is offered through partners. It was also agreed that the annual partnership report should come to the Corporation as well as to the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

## **10. RED LION QUARTER**

Members received a report from the Director of Business Development on activities within the Red Lion Quarter. It was noted that a new tenant would be taking a place in the retail unit from 1 March.

It was noted that the College had recently had its busiest open evening in Spalding so far and that an open event was planned for 17 April at which the Food Heritage Exhibition and the Hair and Beauty facility would be officially launched.

## **11. EASTERN ENTERPRISES LTD**

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services on the proposed use of Eastern Enterprises in relation to activities in the Red Lion Quarter. It was noted that the College controls this company as a subsidiary and that its accounts are reported alongside the College accounts. It was noted that the final structuring of the arrangement in respect of the Red Lion Quarter had not yet been complete because further advice was pending.

A discussion took place about the management of the company and in particular about the appointment of Directors. Members agreed that they were happy to continue with College staff acting as directors of the company so long as the staff themselves were comfortable with that arrangement.

## **12. GOVERNANCE**

Members received a report on the Governor Liaison activities which had been undertaken so far. It was noted that there were still one or two visits to take place. Governors felt that this was proving to be a good way of enhancing their understanding of Curriculum and Teaching and Learning.

**13. DEPARTMENT FOR BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS LETTER**

Members received copies of a letter from Matthew Hancock MP regarding the role of colleges particularly in respect of assessing and meeting local needs. Members noted that much of this was at odds with the Ofsted view of how colleges should be performing. It was agreed that this letter should form part of the consideration of the College's strategic direction at the development day.

**14. NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Corporation would take place on the 15 May 2013.