

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOSTON COLLEGE CORPORATION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2012

1. PRESENT

Mr P Cropley (chair), Mrs L Ladds, Ms I Lebedowicz, Mrs A Mosek, Mr A Reynolds, Mr R Stanley, Mr R Walder, Mr D White, Mr B Wright and Mrs H Wright

Also in attendance: Mrs J Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Mr P Collins (Director of Business Development), Ms K Gilbert (Marketing Manager) – 1st item only, Mrs F Grady (Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality), Mr S Stanley (Finance Manager) and Mr K Tharby (Director of Workforce Development).

Apologies for absence were received from Miss C French, Mr M Gallagher, Mr D Hanson, Mr A Lascelles, Mr S McCracken, Mrs S Richards and Mr J Woodward.

2. MARKETING

Members received a report from the Director of Business Development and a presentation from Katrina Gilbert, the College's Marketing Manager, on marketing activities. The presentation and report ran through the range of activities being undertaken and the way in which new techniques were being developed to reach the College's market. Particular note was taken of the new College website.

3. MEMBERSHIP

It was reported that Robert Haynes had resigned from membership of the Corporation and that the Chairman had written thanking him for his long and committed service to the work of the College. A discussion took place about filling the vacancy which arose as a result.

It was noted that the Finance and General Purposes Committee membership was getting low and Mick Gallagher had offered to join the committee. The Corporation approved this appointment.

4. MINUTES

a) Meeting of the Corporation 17 October 2012

The Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on 17 October 2012 having been circulated were agreed and signed as a correct record.

b) Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee 14 November 2012

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee dated 14 November 2012 were received.

c) Meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee 4 October 2012

The minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee dated 4 October 2012 were received.

d) Meeting of the Standards Committee 14 November 2012

The minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee dated 14 November 2012 were received.

Helen Wright, Chair of the Standards Committee, gave a verbal report on the work of the committee and particularly how it reviewed the performance of the College. Corporation members had already looked at some of this work as part of the recent development session. It was noted that a key role of the Standards Committee was to set and/or approve targets for quality standards particularly those relating to teaching and learning

Mrs Wright reported that the response rate on learner surveys had been a disappointment and a discussion took place about why the responses were low. It was suggested that many learners didn't fully appreciate the relevance of their responses to improvements in the College's work and that there were also some technical difficulties regarding the validation of student email addresses to ensure that survey responses were genuine.

Mrs Wright advised members that the committee was placing increased emphasis on the quality of teaching and learning and that a lot of work was being put into the development of outstanding teaching and learning.

e) Meeting of the Audit Committee – 12 November 2012

The minutes of the Audit Committee dated 12 November 2012 were accepted but it was noted that there was a typographical error in the minutes where the one-off impairment in respect of the De Montfort campus should be £774,000 rather than £77,000.

5. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Members received a report from the Principal giving information on a number of strategic matters affecting the work of the College and news of College activities. A paper was circulated to members on College improvement and a discussion took place about the annual governor's conference where there was an opportunity for any interested member to attend.

A particular focus of discussion was the potential for direct enrolment to the College of 14-16 year olds. At the present time information about the requirements to allow this to happen was comparatively insubstantial but governors identified that there were potentially significant advantages to the College in going down this route. Governors agreed that it was an important issue for the College to address and agreed to look in detail at a business case for this when full details of the requirements were available.

A further discussion took place about the development of enterprise and entrepreneurship activities within colleges. It was suggested that possibly this development could link into external enterprise zones.

Note was taken of the consultation taking place about the creation of chartered status for further education colleges and governors agreed that the College should look into acquiring charter status if possible.

6. PERFORMANCE AGAINST 2011-12 BUSINESS PLAN

Members received a report from the Principal on performance against the priorities of the 2011-12 Business Plan. Members noted the progress which had been made.

7. GOVERNOR SELF ASSESSMENT

Members received a report from the Principal including a draft governance self assessment and quality improvement plan. A discussion took place about the new induction processes which were receiving positive feedback from governors who were going through this induction.

8. COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT

Members received a verbal report from the Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality on the College's Self Assessment for 2011-12.

Members noted that assessments of all of the curriculum areas had been completed and noted the grade profile. Members were pleased to note that 95% of learners think that teaching in the College is good and that there was a lot of work going on to ensure further improvements in teaching and learning including changes to course structures where appropriate. Members noted that the proposed grade for leadership and management was 2 and that the grade for the quality of teaching and learning was also 2.

Members noted that areas of concern arising from this self assessment were adult retention, 16-18 year old retention on level 3 courses and success rates on AS and A2 courses.

9. FINANCE

Members received a report from the Finance and General Purposes Committee and from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services on a number of financial issues:

a) Finance 2012-13

The outcomes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee review of accounts to 30 September and the accounts reviewed by the Committee were considered. It was noted that the October accounts which had subsequently been produced included a detailed review of performance at the end of the first quarter and that at the end of October the forecast outturn for the year excluding any impact from pension liabilities was a surplus of £214,000.

Members noted that work was proceeding on developing the format of Management Accounts and Performance Monitoring. A change had been

made to the way in which some of the performance measures were being reported to the committee to bring them into line with the Skills Funding Agency definitions and that this particularly impacted on the cash days in hand calculation. Members were advised of the College's performance against the bank covenant and it was noted that a meeting was to take place in the following week with the bank about the 2011-12 performance against the covenant.

The Finance and General Purposes Committee had reviewed the arrangements for the letting of units in the Red Lion Quarter through Eastern Enterprises and it was noted that a business plan was being developed for this activity supported by advice from Baker Tilly.

b) Risk Management

Members received and accepted the Risk Management Report for 2011-12 as provided by the Risk Management Group.

c) Annual Accounts 2011-12

Members received draft accounts for 2011-12 and noted that these had already been reviewed by both the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Audit Committee. The performance reported in the accounts and the contents of the members' report and the members' declarations contained within the accounts was noted and members agreed to:

- confirm the appropriateness of the accounting policies
- accept the annual report of the Audit Committee
- accept the annual audit report for 2011-12 and annual plan for 2012-13
- confirm the view on the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management, control and governance process
- authorise the signing of the letters of representation and letter of support for the company
- approve its accounts and statements for 2011-12.

d) Budget Procedures

Members received a copy of the College's budget setting procedures for 2013-14 and noted these.

10. PROPERTY

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services on the property developments being undertaken. Particular note was taken of the alterations for the creation of the Hair and Beauty salons at the Red Lion Quarter which were costing just over £100,000 plus VAT and were scheduled to be completed in early February 2013. Members were advised that some of the grant funding available to the College would support the cost of alterations.

Members noted that a first offer had been received for the De Montfort campus but that the offer was viewed to be speculative one at a very low price.

It was reported that the College was pursuing a bid for alternative use for the Skegness premises subject to an ongoing lease and was also pursuing options for alternatively sub-letting the property.

11. GOVERNANCE

Members received a report from the Clerk to the Corporation on the performance targets of the Audit Committee for 2012-13 and agreed that the committee's targets should be:

- make an annual report to the Corporation
- 80% attendance at meetings
- Make an in depth review of a selected area of College activity – the proposed area is network security and disaster recovery.

A discussion took place about the circulation of information to members and it was agreed that in future the Governors Handbook and Skills Analysis would be circulated electronically although hard copies would be available on request.

12. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Members received a report from the Director of Workforce Development on the College's Performance Management processes and the range of measures which the College used to set standards and manage performance to achieve them.

13. RED LION QUARTER

Members received a report from the Director of Business Development on the Red Lion Quarter. It was noted that some new tenants had been moved in and that these tenants had not been offered significant discounts on the rents whilst some of the tenants inherited from South Holland District Council were enjoying ongoing discounts. Members noted that the reconciliation of the service charges and rent receipts relating to the transfer from South Holland District Council to the College of the property had not yet been completed. Members reviewed the financial performance being reported and particular note was taken of an amount of £76,000 held in sundry debtors. It was agreed that this should be reviewed at the next Finance Committee meeting.

14. DATES OF MEETINGS

It was noted that the next meeting of the Corporation would take place on 27 February 2013 and that there would be a development session on 8 March 2013.