

**CORPORATION BOARD****Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 3pm at the Taylor Hill Centre Huddersfield**

Present:	Mr J Adam	Student member
	Dr A Conn	Independent member
	Professor S Donnelly	Independent member
	Ms C George	Independent member
	Ms M Gilluley	Principal & Chief Executive
	Mr G Hetherington	Independent member, Chair
	Mr H Linn	Independent member
	Mr J Royle	Independent member
	Mr N Taylor	Staff member
	Mr J Thompson	Independent member
	Ms R Thornton	Student member
	Ms S Weston	Independent member
	Mr A Williams	Independent member
Attendance:	13/18 = 72%	[KPI 80%] [Quorum 12/20 = 60%, Minimum 40% required =8]
Apologies:	Mr D Keeton	Independent member
	Ms L Precious	Staff member
	Mr M Varyani	Independent member
	Mr J Williams	Independent member
	Mr C Howarth	ESFA representative
In attendance:	Ms M Bagshaw	Interim Clerk to the Corporation
	Ms C Gonzalez-Eslava	Vice Principal
	Mrs R Meara	Director of Finance
	Mr A Riley	(for agenda items 17 and 18)
	Ms J Simpson	Director of HR
	Ms J Evans	(for presentation item 6)
	Mr R Chamberlain	(for presentation item 6)

The Meeting was proceeded by a meet and greet opportunity for staff and Governors.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received as listed above. The Chairman took the opportunity to inform the Board of the resignation received from Ms E Hainsworth. The Board all asked that their appreciation for her time and commitment to date be recorded. It was also noted that this is the last meeting for Mr J Thompson, it being the case that he steps down as a Governor after 6 years. All Governors wished to pass on their thanks and appreciation for his valuable contribution and input to date. The Chair introduced Maxine Bagshaw who has been engaged to provide interim clerking support until a permanent appointment is secured. The Board asked that their thanks be noted for the many years of service provided by the former Clerk, Derek Winward.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Standing declarations were noted and Mr Hetherington repeated his declaration of interest regarding the sale of the Holmfirth Centre.

### **3. APPOINTMENT OF THE INTERIM CLERK**

The Principal put forward her written report which made the proposal that Maxine Bagshaw be appointed as the interim Clerk to support the College up to the point of a permanent Clerk being confirmed. She provided assurance that the permanent recruitment process was well under way with the expectation being that an individual would be appointed in April 2019.

AGREED: to approve the appointment of Maxine Bagshaw as the interim Clerk to the Corporation, with the terms of engagement to be finalised by the Chair on behalf of the Board.

### **4. BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING & MAJOR INCIDENT PLANNING UPDATE**

Mr A Riley provided the Board with a presentation which provided an overview of the major incident plan and the actions required in response to a number of scenarios. It was agreed to treat the presentation provided as a governor training opportunity. Having received the presentation the Board were assured that reasonable and robust processes are in place, with clear communication lines being evident.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

### **5. STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Mr A Riley presented his written report and drew the Boards attention to any areas where changes have been made on the register. He confirmed that the register includes any matters where the exposure calculation is '12 or above' and that this narrows the issues down to 52 risks. The Board all agreed that they found the risk review process to be very helpful, particularly as they could see how it clearly aligns with both internal and external priorities. They felt that this would lead to a 'no surprises approach' which was welcomed by everyone.

The Boards attention was specifically drawn to College risks which have changed since the previous report to the Corporation in July 2018, these are:

- Risk 13 (annual budget) – this risk has increased given the reduction in the EBITDA forecast following material shortfalls in fees. The risk is now a key college risk.
- Risk 18 (STEM staff recruitment) – this risk has increased given the ongoing sector wide STEM recruitment issues. This risk remains a key college risk and is also a sector wide problem.
- Risk 29 (staff morale) – this risk has decreased given the success of the FE Commissioners visit and recent overall staff survey results. This risk remains a key college risk but it was acknowledged that the staff event held on Wednesday had really helped to boost morale.
- Risk 48 (loan covenants) – this risk has decreased as RF covenant monitoring is not required until 2020. The risk is no longer a key college risk.
- Risk 54 (estates consolidation) – this risk has decreased given the progress of the disposal of the Holmfirth and Wheelwright Centre sites. The risk is no longer a key college risk.
- Risk 56 (staff retention) – this risk has decreased following completion of the restructure and recent overall staff survey results. The risk is no longer a key college risk.
- Risk 64 (Dewsbury learning quarter) – this risk has decreased given recent progress made with the Pioneer House development. The Board were asked to cross reference the information provided in the estates report which will be discussed later in the meeting. The risk remains a key college risk.

Members attention was also drawn to a number of strategic risks that do not appear on the key college risk report which have changed since the previous risk report. These are

- Risk 8 (quality improvement processes) – the likelihood of this risk has increased
- Risk 16 (business continuity planning) – the likelihood of this risk has decreased
- Risk 25 (build closure political impact) – the likelihood of this risk has decreased
- Risk 44 (cash flow) – the impact of this risk has decreased
- Risk 52 (financial targets) – the impact of this risk has decreased

- Risk 62 (financial information) – the impact of this risk has increased due to additional structuring fund requirements, however the likelihood has decreased due to knowledge sharing within the finance team.
- Risk 70 (FE Commissioner recommendations) – the impact of this risk has decreased.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

(Mr A Riley left the meeting at this point and Ms J Evans and Mr R Chamberlain joined the meeting.)

## **6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 2019**

The Board reviewed the non-confidential and confidential minutes and were satisfied that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019, these were signed by the Chair.

## **7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2019**

The Board reviewed the minutes of the meeting and were satisfied that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019, these were signed by the Chair.

## **8. CURRICULUM OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGES**

The Board received two presentations from Heads of Faculty

- 1) Head of Faculty – Jenny Evans

She explained that her faculty covers a number of key areas including:

- Foundation learning CAM
- ESOL Adult English and Maths Dewsbury CAM
- ESOL Adult English and Maths Huddersfield CAM
- Community learning

She explained that the faculty includes a huge proportion of adult learning.

In terms of an overview of the faculty the financial expectation is for income of circa £5 million. Staffing establishment is 110, with staff costs expected to be just short of £2.5 million. Contribution level for FL target is 30% and for ESOL/English and Maths 60%. In terms of recruitment;

- 16-18 year old target is 445 and actual 423, therefore a negative difference of -22
- adults target is 2775 with the actual being 2207, a difference of -568
- community – whole college target on CP is 1363, actual 204, therefore a difference of - 1159. She explained that this line includes headcount and enrolments.

In terms of achievements and strengths she described the Dewsbury Centre as being much stronger than other centres and there is definitely an opportunity for managers to learn from the work done at Dewsbury. It was noted that the Dewsbury Foundation provision is twice the size of that provided at the Huddersfield Centre. The Board questioned whether the Dewsbury Centre has always outperformed the Huddersfield Centre. It was explained that in real terms the difference between the two centres is not as significant as the statistics would suggest and that really it is quite balanced, with the two centres supporting completely different cohorts.

The Boards attention was drawn to the fact that

- Foundation learning has been graded 1/outstanding for 7 years out of 8 – she explained that staff were really proud of this
- Foundation learning current retention is 98.18%, this is higher than last year and remains strong

- ESOL Adults current retention at the Dewsbury Centre is 96.31% and at the Huddersfield Centre 94.86%
- Excellent work based opportunities in FL and 16-18 ESOL, this is an area that continues to grow
- Beaumont Park Green Flag award (work focused – Foundation) this is a safe place for children and families
- Strong partnership with Kirklees Work Placed Learning
- Strong partnership with the local authority

She explained that the team were continually looking at lots of ways to grow adult learning and continue to support the community.

She explained that there remain challenges in a number of areas including;

- Development of community learning
- Achievement of adult budget – English and Maths in particular. That being said she does believe that the team would get to where the college needs to be and provided assurance that there are a lot of plans in place.
- ESOL/English and Maths quality – this is ‘requires improvement’. This is the grade given at the beginning of the year and assurance was given that already lots has been done. There is confidence that the team are improving teaching and learning as required.
- Attendance
- Retention in adult English and Maths – it was explained that this is low at 86% and the team are looking at various support strategies.
- ESOL for employment – she explained that the College is offering a service in relation to this

The Board questioned whether learners move out of the area? It was explained that this very much depends on individual circumstances and that there are a huge range of reasons for withdrawals. Assurance was given that the team are always looking at progression opportunities as part of the service provided to learners.

She explained that there were a number of opportunities for the department including;

- New management team with new ideas
- Forging stronger links with more external partners
- Development of a strong community learning offer meeting key priorities
- Development of the ESOL curriculum – she explained that this was not just adults but included study programmes too. The intention is to introduce more vocational aspects.
- Project research – foundation learning
- 14-16 ESOL project – the College is starting to forge strong links with schools
- sharing of good practice in teaching, learning and assessment across the faculty

She ended her presentation by showing a number of photographs which give a flavour of the work based activities undertaken. She confirmed that Governors were all welcome to visit the faculty and she described staff as working well together within the faculty and that this is positively leading to cross pollination in terms of teachers and teaching.

At the end of the presentation Governors were invited to ask questions and one Governor asked what the biggest challenge is for the faculty. The answer given was ESOL funding and it was described as a ‘minefield’ and significant challenge for staff and the college. An observation made by one member of the Board was that in terms of the predictions for achievement the forecasts look really good and a real jump and they asked why this was the case. It was explained that the College is no longer delivering an employability programme/qualification this year. This programme and qualification was offered last year and had a negative impact in terms of achievement. The removal of this provision has positively influenced performance this year.

AGREED: to note the content of the presentation provided.

- 2) Faculty report from Sport and Public Services, Health & Social Care and Children and Families

Mr R Chamberlain provided a presentation to the Board and as an overview indicated that there were some issues within the faculty last year and that as a consequence it is under a 'quality notice'. He explained that the issues have negatively impacted upon progression in to the 18/19 year.

In terms of student numbers these are

- Study programmes (16-18) 763
- Part time adults 780
- Apprenticeships 87
- Higher education 14
- Total 1644

By way of comparison, he explained that there are less than 10% of schools nationally who have more than 1500 students and therefore this gives a better context in terms of the scale and the size of the faculty.

Key statistics in relation to the quality of provision include

- Retention – 95.88% which is really good
- Progress in learning is good
- External quality assurance is excellent
- Teaching, learning and assessment
  - a) health and social care/counselling – good with outstanding features
  - b) child care – good with outstanding features
  - c) work based learning – good with outstanding features
  - d) sport and Public Services – requires improvement.

He confirmed that improvements have been made this year but that there is still more to do.

Examples of enrichment activities were presented including trips to Sweden, Sicily and Martinique. It was explained that students within the faculty undertake a lot of charity work and fundraising. There have been 5 overseas trips planned for this year and these are funded through 'everything is possible' funding which is European and also Fundraising.

The Board considered data on the financial performance of the faculty and it was explained that this has been negatively influenced by poor recruitment in Sport and Public Services. The expectation is that the faculty will end the year below target which is a real challenge. The ESFA difference is expected to be -£205k and will have an impact next year because of the lagged funding methodology. The Board questioned whether the financial position will need rebasing. It was confirmed that curriculum planning is currently underway and does include growth in some areas, however it is believed that Sport and Public Services recruitment will take longer to recover and there is a need to better profile the adult provision.

Challenges – short term these include;

- financial forecasting – adult learning. It was explained that this can be funded in lots of different ways for example AEB, full cost, loans etc. Because of this the College has certainty regarding the headcount at enrolment but not the income lines and that this only becomes clear once the adults arrive.
- TLA issues in sport and public services which has impacted negatively upon recruitment
- Returning Public Services to Springfield
- Staffing – this has been fluid throughout the year and has been a challenge. Staffing has not been static and was described as 'a balancing act'.

The Board acknowledged that reintroducing provision once it has been removed from a particular area is quite a challenge.

Challenges – long term;

He explained that T Levels are going to be a huge challenge for the College particularly as health and social care is to be transformed with social care being removed. Sport and Public Services is not recognised as a pathway, which will be a huge negative for the College. He explained that the

20% off the job training aspect of T Levels is a huge challenge for this College and also others. He believes that Health and Social Care recruitment has been massively impacted by 20% off the job training as employers just can't manage and/or support this as it is too big a challenge for them operationally.

The Board asked what will happen in terms of the current social care provision. It was explained that students could do A Levels but that this wouldn't necessarily help the students who want to go to University. The Board made the observation that it was incredibly surprising and a real shame that there is no sport and public services pathway as the police, army etc. are the largest levy payer.

Opportunities – there is potential for growth across all funding streams but particularly

- Adults – mental health. It was explained that the College is already doing mindfulness courses and is now looking at confidence building
- Full cost – fitness instructor, paediatric first aid
- Community learning – health and wellbeing tasters, introductory courses
- Advanced loans – access to education professions
- HE – advanced early years practice/HNC public services
- Level 5 Apprenticeships – partnership with Huddersfield University (nursing associates)

Having received the presentation the Board asked what opportunities the faculty has in terms of visiting schools. It was explained that the College recruitment team have focussed on the broad pathways and that the faculty has targeted recruitment through social media, particularly progression opportunities. The police service also go in to schools and positively promote the partnership with the College.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

(Ms J Evans and Mr R Chamberlain left the meeting at this point.)

## **9. HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT**

Ms J Simpson provided her detailed mid-year report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019 and key matters noted were;

- Section 2 sets out the key achievements for the prior year period (17/18). The Board were reminded that there were significant restructures undertaken and therefore this has impacted upon the ability to report and the content of the information provided.
- Key developments for 2018/19 are set out on page 4 and these include
  - a) apprenticeship review – as part of the FE Commissioner recommendation a comprehensive review has been undertaken of all apprenticeship delivery. This review was completed by the end of the Autumn term. From a HR perspective the review looked at workloads, contracts terms and conditions, salaries and training. She explained that as a result of the review a number of changes have been made including notice periods being increased, much more detailed induction, robust use of the probationary period and more training opportunities.
  - b) 3 recruitment fayres have taken place, 2 for Engineering Science Digital and Processed Manufacturing and 1 for Construction. These have proved to be a real success and therefore the College will do more.
  - c) The HR team secured ETF funding to recruit 2 trainee teachers through the 'taking teaching further' initiative in to skills shortage areas. 2 trainees were recruited in January 2019 and the project has been very successful thus far. This has given the College a very good template to work against.
  - d) A staff skills shortage strategy group has been set up to consider strategies to both attract and retain staff in skills shortage areas. For the areas identified as being in scope, work is being undertaken on salary levels to ensure that the College is offering a competitive package, review recruitment practices, graduate recruitment schemes, grow your own staff through the apprenticeship routes, referral bonus schemes etc. It was explained that shortage areas will include STEM and that in terms of the package offered the view is that the College has slightly fallen behind local competitors.

- e) Leadership and management programme – one team one vision. It was explained that a comprehensive leadership and management programme has been developed with a plan rolled out over the next 18 months.
- Employee engagement - an employee engagement strategy and a comprehensive action plan has been developed. The action plan covers 6 key areas which includes college culture and leadership, staff engagement and communication, line management development, work place wellbeing, personal development, growth and reward and measurement and monitoring. It was noted that the College has just launched the Inspire Awards programme.
- Section 7 of the report gives details of the staff survey with a really good response rate of 85%. She drew Governors attention to the early indicators i.e. the top level summary, which shows what works and what the College can do better at.

In terms of the survey information provided the Board challenged why 1 in 5 employees are not 'proud to work at the College'. All felt that this needed to be confronted head on with a much greater understanding developed. It was acknowledged that there is a lot of work to do this year in terms of communicating the outcomes of the survey and in some areas better communicating what the college actually does, as it could be that staff perceptions do not mirror the actual position.

A challenge from the Board was why the response to 'SLT act on feedback' is so low. It was explained that staff generally seem to be happy with their managers but that SLT are treated differently i.e. 'SLT up there' but that no specifics have been provided in relation to this. There is the potential that this response could have been negatively influenced by middle management in terms of a lack of corporate identity. A challenge from the Board was for the senior team to better label how they are acting upon feedback and make sure that there is a really clear connection for staff. It was acknowledged that there are opportunities to communicate specifically and also more generally. All felt that the culture of 'one team one vision' is very much needed.

The Board were advised that there is evidence that a lot of staff don not read the current methods of communication and therefore there is work to be done to unpick this to ensure maximum impact. The Board indicated that they would be very interested to see the action planning that follows from the survey results. There are a lot of mechanisms mentioned and it is going to be important to have a really coherent approach. In terms of staff feedback it was agreed that staff satisfaction is not just about salary and that it is important to better communicate the wider rewards package.

One member of the Board questioned how often surveys are completed and whether or not they are in the same format so that comparisons can be made. It was explained that the last survey was undertaken in 2012 and therefore at this point in time the College cannot directly track the distance travelled. Assurance was given that the next survey is planned for 12 months hence and therefore comparisons can be made and the distance travelled measured.

In relation to survey results the Board were advised that there are, as expected, issues raised regarding salary. The College is a very flexible employer and there is confidence on this. All felt that there were some easy wins in terms of responding to the survey and it was confirmed that the information obtained will be used through focus groups to make changes. A challenge from the Board was that the senior team should not lose sight of the fact that 80% of staff are happy even after a tough year. They congratulated staff on the results as they felt it was very positive in terms of the challenges that the College has had and continues to face.

In terms of future reporting it was agreed that HR reports will be provided twice a year, the first being in October which is the end of the prior year review and annual report and the second being in March which will be a mid-year review.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided

(Ms J Simpson left the meeting at this point.)

## **10. PRINCIPALS REPORT AND PERFORMANCE AGAINST BCPI'S**

The Principal introduced her detailed written report and a number of matters were noted

- The College is now starting to achieve some sort of normality post RF and are focusing on the required monitoring reports. The recent FEC stock take visit and ESFA case conferences have been positive.
- The recruitment of a new Clerk was unsuccessful in the first instance and the College is now engaged in a second round of recruitment supported by external consultants
- Employee engagement activities are continuing. The staff conference which took place on 27<sup>th</sup> March was a really positive event with 700 staff participating. The aim was to make it enjoyable and to provide training. There were 60 different activities on offer and there was clear evidence of staff engaging in all aspects. The theme of the event was one team and it was hoped to inspire staff in terms of values and achievements. There was really good attendance and during the event nominations were put forward for the Inspire Awards which will become a regular event. There were 2 winners both of whom are part of the faculty which provides ESOL provision. There was a bake off at the event which was a hugely popular and an impressive competition.
- Information was provided in relation to the BCPI's and it was explained that there have been no significant changes since the last report. Key matters brought to the Boards attention included
  - a) HE – there are 215 HE funded students which is 70 below the 2018/19 curriculum plan. All acknowledged that there was not much that the college could do to address the gap at this stage in the year.
  - b) There are 761 full cost enrolments which is 198 enrolments below the 2018/19 year which was 959, although it was explained that numbers are creeping closer day by day.
  - c) Staff costs to January 2019 are under budget compared to profile by £479k
  - d) Agency costs to the end of January 2019 are £290k above profile at this point due to offsetting savings against pay budget but partly due to the increase in numbers of learners above that assumed. Additional funding has been agreed with the local authority in relation to high needs learners.

In terms of the overall financial position this was described as 'acceptable' but assurance was given that staff are keeping a very close eye on all lines of income and expenditure.

Governors' attention was then drawn to a number of College Chronicle articles, particularly the Huddersfield Town takeover and also the Edu Rank competition success. In relation to the latter it was explained that out of 467 other Sixth Forms and Colleges in the UK Kirklees came top in 2 categories in terms of digital and social media performance. Governors present all agreed that they had seen really positive social media feedback in terms of the staff conference and that it was clear that this is a very effective form of communication.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

#### **11. FE COMMISSIONER STOCK TAKE – FEEDBACK**

It was agreed that discussions on this agenda item would be recorded on a confidential basis.

#### **12. QUALITY RECOVERY TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

The Principal presented her written report and confirmed that the group had met for the first time earlier in the day. In terms of membership she advised that of the external members Phil Mark is Kirklees Councils post-16 strategic lead and has a background in quality and Sixth Form Colleges. Andrew Tyley was approached with a request for support from a national leader for FE, these are Principals from high performing colleges who are part of the FE Commissioners team and usually work with colleges which are in intervention due to poor quality. Although that is clearly not the case for Kirklees we felt that it would be a valuable resource to draw upon and we were matched with Lindsey Whiterod from South Tyne College. Lindsey is willing to help but we are aware that the short timescale may make it difficult for her to attend all meetings. She explained that in reality



she will be providing between 4 to 6 days free consultancy as part of the FE Commissioner support package.

She acknowledged that there was a risk that the work of this group could overlap with QPS and the corporation Board but explained that it was the intention for this task group to be as focussed as possible and that meetings have been established to synchronise with existing QPS and corporation meetings. 4 meetings have been planned over the rest of this academic year with a further 2 in the Autumn term of 19/20. A benefit of the task and finish group is the ability to have less formal agendas but to focus the members expertise on the plans in place, enabling them to comment and advise rather than to generate new areas of work.

As a general observation the Board felt that the establishment of task and finish groups was a really positive idea and acknowledged that, to date, the work of the Board has been very focused on finance. They felt that it would support the work of QPS and would provide an injection of time, energy and focus. A question and challenge from the Board was that it is going to be a tough challenge to make and evidence positive impact this year/in one year. It was acknowledged that the FE Commissioner recommendation is focused on the 18/19 academic year and therefore the college needs to look for quick wins. The College has to consider short, medium and long term gains but that the longer term opportunities will sit with the QPS Committee rather than the task and finish group. It was acknowledged that, whilst the task and finish group may conclude its remit after 6 meetings, it will not however be the case that the work required will be complete and this will be ongoing. A challenge from the Board is that this task and finish group needs to be genuinely additional and must not detract from the 18/19 plans already in place.

AGREED:

- a) To note the content of the update provided
- b) To support and endorse the establishment of a Quality Recovery Task and Finish Group as proposed.

### **13. STUDENT ATTENDANCE REPORT**

The Vice Principal introduced her detailed report and a number of key matters were drawn to Governors attention:

- Student attendance to the end of the first academic term 18/19 was reported to Board on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019. It identified actions that needed to be taken and these actions are included as further development in the report. Since then we have identified that the timetabling of English and Maths is an issue and the ownership of attendance to English and Maths by the curriculum needs to be improved. She explained that the key areas for concern are Maths and English, curriculum areas of Health and Beauty, creative ESOL and Science and Level 1 provision. She provided assurance that a full analysis of attendance statistics has been undertaken and it is now clear where the focus needs to be but that strategies to date have only taken the college a short way forward in terms of improvements needed.
- She explained that there may need to be a review of how the college actually measures attendance. Currently the situation is that students are provided with a timetable and if they attend all sessions then their attendance is 100%. What the college is actually seeing is that some learners are much more flexible in terms of how they learn and, for example, they would rather spend time working in the library rather than the room where the session was planned. This negatively impacts upon attendance but does not mean that the students are not 'in learning'. A challenge from the Board was for the senior team to question and review how they measure attendance, certainly for the purposes of reporting.
- The Boards attention was drawn to the context summary provided at the bottom of page 1 and a challenge from the Board was that there is a tested correlation between attendance and achievement in HE and schools at Key Stage 4, therefore it is surprising that there is no similar evidence link in FE.
- Current in year overall cumulative attendance is 85.53% compared to 87.32% in 17/18. This is mainly due to the decline in English and Maths. There is a significant gap between main vocational programme and English and Maths (-6.52% and -7.49% respectively). She explained that it is consistently Maths and English where the challenges are.

The Board's attention was then drawn to the action plan on page 5 and a number of key areas were picked out and noted;

- Review of student experience and enrichment programme – this is being currently undertaken with feedback informing changes to planning of the learner journey for 19/20
- Develop a new model for English and Maths for timetabling 19/20 – current guidelines for timetabling are being reviewed and English and Maths will be timetabled differently for next year. The Board asked for an example of what this difference may look like. It was explained that currently Wednesday is an easy day to walk away from as the majority of Maths and English is timetabled on that day. It was also explained that currently sessions are 3 hours long because of logistics, however it is clear that this is not working for students.

There were a number of challenges from the Board;

- Staff need to make Maths and English relevant to the vocational area
- Is it possible to upskill vocational staff to deliver Maths and English so as to improve relevancy
- Staff to contextualise where they can but governors do understand the difficulties

It was acknowledged that the logistics alone of providing Maths and English is a huge challenge as there are 7,000 students to plan for. In terms of timetabling, efficiency is very important to learners and this needs to be better considered going forward.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

(Mr S Donnelley left the meeting at this point).

#### **14. RETENTION REPORT**

The Vice Principal introduced her detailed report and confirmed that the overall position is positive with retention being 94.56% compared with 94.33% at the same point in 17/18. Governors' attention was drawn to the comprehensive breakdown by curriculum areas and assurance was given that, where there are any red RAG rated areas staff know what the issues are and what needs to be done to improve. A question and challenge from the Board was for the traffic light system to be reviewed. They indicated that they would like to see it more clearly highlight the areas of concern.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

#### **15. PREDICTED ACHIEVEMENT 2018/19**

The Vice Principal introduced this report and explained that it was a first attempt to try and improve the processes for the collection and reporting of data to ensure that informed and timely actions can be taken across all levels of the organisation. She indicated that the report was quite a challenge to write and particularly it has been difficult to aggregate the information and this shows that there is more work to do in terms of data tracking. In reviewing the information and the method of reporting she indicated that, whilst there was still a long way to go it had still been a very worthwhile exercise and the Board all agreed that it provided rich ground for discussion.

She confirmed that there were 3 key actions, these are:

- Collection of in year predicted achievement data from managers
- The development of progression boards to be piloted in May 2019
- Submission of timely in year achievement ensuring that additional support is provided to learners.

She indicated that the data collection exercise undertaken has been useful in terms of assessing variances in accuracy and that this can now inform training. It certainly gives staff direction as to where to focus and ask more questions. It was described as another tool so as to be able to accurately monitor the in year position and respond appropriately.

She described the data collected so far as very raw and where predictions are based upon staff views there is a need to be cautious. There remains some challenges but assurance was given that there is now a list of at risk learners and this then enables staff to focus on them. She confirmed that, in terms of the data collection, it is possible to look at it at course level as well as a curriculum overview.

In considering the table provided on page 3 a challenge from the Board was to carefully consider the colour ratings. They indicated that improvements year on year were not enough if the achievement percentages were still low.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

## **16. HIGHER SKILLS REVIEW**

The Vice Principal introduced her written report and confirmed that in January 2019 a review of higher education and higher skills was commissioned with a view to enabling future growth at the College. She confirmed the intention to provide a full and detailed report to the next meeting of QPS (**Vice Principal, June 2019**). In terms of the outcome of the review she explained that there was nothing identified that the college wasn't already aware of, however it has more clearly shown where the opportunities are. She indicated that, whilst the strategy will not be ready for another few months, there are lots of plans and discussions taking place. The College is planning for a small amount of 19/20 growth of circa £100k. She indicated that there was a need to consider this alongside the higher apprenticeship numbers and that all would be additional income. She expressed the opinion that the College has taken a significant directional step forward.

In terms of the review she expressed the opinion that, to a certain extent the College has neglected its HE provision and has not addressed the need for growth as early as it could have done. She drew members' attention to the summary and actions needed set out on page 3 of her report, she described these as high level at this stage. She confirmed again that the full strategy and action plan will be presented to the next meeting of QPS.

A challenge from the Board was to carefully consider potential staff shortages in the areas where the college wants to grow. One member of the Board questioned what data is available to the College in terms of why students go elsewhere and there was some discussion as to how this could be collected. The Vice Principal indicated that, if the College can keep its level 3 learners and progress them then this would be a huge step forward and has to be a priority. It is not known what the College doesn't do which influences choices and therefore the immediate priority needs to be focused on internal progression.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

## **17. FINANCIAL RECOVERY UPDATE**

The Principal introduced the written report and confirmed that since the last meeting the College has been able to evidence the need for all of the working capital drawdown except for the sum of £66k. She confirmed that the College has been able to secure all of the procurement and spend evidence required and requested by the transaction unit.

She reminded the Board that a restructure of the senior team has been agreed in order to address the change needed in the strategic leadership. This is in progress currently. Work has commenced on developing the operational plan to deliver the Transformation Project. This work will be led by the appointments to the new roles identified. Timescales for change were shared previously in the paper to corporation describing the changes. She confirmed that she would keep governors updated on developments over the Easter break.

She confirmed that the working capital facility has been reduced by £66k based on the forecast of available cash days in hand over the period to July 2021. Although it is disappointing that the full sum couldn't be secured, college management is pleased that the majority was secured as non-receipt would have caused possible pressures on financial health in the current year due to a reduction in the current ratio position. The College can therefore now move forward with the

capital programme. Cash balances are forecast to remain very close to or above £4 million from now and throughout the 19/20 financial year.

Lloyds bank have indicated that they are willing to renew the overdraft facilities, although in view of the likely levels of cash balances, the recommendation is that this facility is not renewed. A facility of £250k would cost £3k per year and is money which can be better applied elsewhere.

The forecast of high cash balances now bring in to focus the requirement to consider treasury management arrangements. It was explained that a review of this policy will be brought to the May meeting of the Finance Committee.

AGREED:

- a) To note the content of the update provided
- b) Support the recommendation that the overdraft facility is not renewed
- c) Invite the Finance Committee to review the Treasury Management Policy at its next meeting.

## **18. MID YEAR BUDGET REVIEW**

It was agreed that discussions in relation to this item would be recorded on a confidential basis.

## **19. FEES POLICY 2019/20**

The Director of Finance introduced her written report and confirmed that changes from the 18/19 policy have been highlighted in yellow and include

- Changes to the description of job roles following the 17/18 restructure
- Paragraph 8.2 has been updated to reflect the requirement to assess apprenticeship fees down where the student has prior learning
- Paragraph 14.3 has been added to make it explicit that short full cost courses that are not accredited should be booked and paid for upfront via the college online store. She explained that this should improve fee collection.
- 15.1/18.2 – requests for refunds to be directed in the first instance to the relevant Head of Faculty not Assistant Principal. Heads of Faculty are also authorised to waive fees.

Fee rates themselves are proposed to remain largely unchanged. The part time hourly rates are above those assumed within the ESFA funding matrix and given reduced enrolments in recent years it is not felt that raising them will improve participation.

The community learning fees have been rationalised from 6 different groups to 3.

AGREED:

- a) to note the content of the update provided
- b) approve the Fees Policy for 2019/20 as presented.

## **20. ESTATES REPORT**

It was agreed that discussions on this item would be recorded on a confidential basis.

## **21. CORPORATION MEETING DATES 2019/20**

The interim Clerk presented proposed dates for 19/20 which are based upon the same pattern utilised this year. The Board were happy to support and agree the same.

AGREED: to approve the meeting dates for 2019/20 as presented.

## **22. USE OF THE CORPORATION SEAL**

The interim Clerk presented the written report and asked the Board to ratify the use of the seal. She confirmed that since the last meeting there have been 2 occasions where the corporation seal was required, these were both on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2019 and included

- a) legal charge – Brunel second title (authorised by the Director of Finance)

b) facility amendment – LA loan repayment holiday (authorised by the Director of Finance)

AGREED: to ratify the use of the seal as reported.

### **23. REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The Director of Finance introduced this detailed report and described the changes as a 'housekeeping exercise' all of which are highlighted in yellow. She provided assurance that the proposed changes were discussed at length by the Audit Committee and it is their recommendation for approval.

AGREED:

- a) to note the content of the update provided
- b) approve the amendments to the Financial Regulations as presented.

### **24. APPOINTMENT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDITORS**

It was agreed that discussions on this item would be recorded confidentially.

### **25. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Board were asked to consider a number of meeting minutes.

- 1) Minutes of the Executive Employment Committee meetings held on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 30<sup>th</sup> January and 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019.

It was confirmed that there were very robust discussions in relation to the transformation project. It was acknowledged that the College has had to make some difficult decisions but that there is confidence that these are the right decisions with the FE Commissioners report in mind.

In terms of recruitment for a permanent Clerk the closing date for applications is today with shortlisting taking place next week.

AGREED: to note the content of the minutes provided.

- 2) Minutes of the Audit Committee Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019

One particular matter brought to the Boards attention was the fact that the College is now going out to tender for the internal audit service.

AGREED: to note the content of the minutes provided.

- 3) Minutes of the QP&S Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019

It was reiterated that the college has now had its first meeting of the quality task and finish group and that this will feed in to QPS.

AGREED: to note the content of the minutes provided.

- 4) Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019

AGREED: to note the content of the minutes provided.

### **26. CHAIR AND VICE CHAIRS REPORT**

The Chair took the opportunity to provide an update in a number of areas

- He confirmed that he has signed up for the Chairs development programme and attended his first event in Oxford recently. He found it a very useful opportunity and he is now part of a learning group.
- The Chair confirmed that he had attended the recent student conference

- The Chair and other Governors confirmed that they had attended the recent staff conference and all had found it a very enjoyable event.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

**27. PUBLICATION OF AGENDA ITEMS**

The Board reviewed the agenda items discussed and it was agreed that items 5, 13, 15 and 22 would be recorded on a confidential basis.

**28. AOB**

There were no items of additional business.

**29. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The interim Clerk confirmed that the next scheduled meeting was Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019 at 3pm. There was some uncertainty regarding the location of the next meeting with the agenda stating 'Oldroyd Centre, Dewsbury' whereas some Governors and members of staff have the diary invite location as 'PMC'. The interim Clerk confirmed that she would review and would clarify for Governors and staff (**interim Clerk, April 2019**).

Meeting closed at 6.15pm.