

NEW COLLEGE, SWINDON

Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Present: Charlotte Mannion (Chair), Simon Cove, John Dernie, Les Durrant, Peter Foskett, Sam McCurdy, Peter O'Brien, Mark Owen, Graham Taylor, Jade Walters, Jim Webster

With: Sarah Church, Dennis Bridges, Razna Izdani, Maureen Debbage, Richard Harris, Amanda Spanswick, Amanda Walton (minutes 2272-2275 only)

2272 Apologies for absence – received from Sarah Noguiera-Perez, Alexey Smirnov and Paul James.

2273 Disclosure of Interests – received from Peter Foskett relating to Royds Withy King advising the college on issues relating to a previous partner (Work Place Learning). Peter is not directly involved.

2274 Appointment of new Governors – the Chair advised that the Search committee had met and had considered governor applications from Dennis Bridges and Sarah Church and were recommending to the Corporation that they both be appointed as governors.

**RESOLUTION:** that Dennis Bridges and Sarah Church be appointed as governors of the college for a term of office of four years until March 2022.

The Chair welcomed Dennis and Sarah to the Corporation

***ACTION:*** *TS to advise new governors of appointment and complete ID checks*

2275 Governor Training – Marketing: Presentation by Amanda Walton, Head of Marketing and Customer Services – received and noted.

The Marketing team and their responsibilities were outlined. The current marketing budget was noted and it was further noted that is low percentage-wise compared to marketing budgets generally. The team would like to invest more in digital skills.

The year 11 population is falling until 2019 but will increase from that point by approximately 900 over the following five years. The college is unable to gain access to some of the secondary schools in Swindon, particularly those that have their own sixth form provision (Lydiard Park Academy (and Abbey Park), Commonweal). Other secondary schools appreciate that not all of their pupils will wish to stay on at their sixth forms and in order to ensure that they are fully informed of the options available to them do allow the college access to their students. There are issues with Abbey Park which breach the Baker Clause. Gaining access to schools is the most effective way of marketing the college.

The new design for the prospectus with the tagline 'create your future' was noted.

200 registrations have been received for the Easter GCSE Maths and English courses. Additional budget has been made available to promote three new Foundation Degree courses.

The Chair, on behalf of the meeting, thanked Amanda for her presentation and advised that she would raise the issue of getting into the secondary schools with Justin Tomlinson MP when she meets with him later in the week.

2276 Minutes of the last meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017 – agreed as a correct record.

2277 Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2017 – raised as follows:

(a) 2252 (a) Matters arising – HR and Payroll System – the Director of Finance and Partnerships advised that a capital bid had been submitted for the new HR and Payroll system. Governors will be kept informed of progress.

2278 Student referred items – raised as follows:

Fundraising events were held for World AIDS Day raising £87 for the National AIDS Trust and the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund and National Hijab Day raising £230 for a refugee charity. A number of the NC Ambassadors helped at the Open Evening held on 24<sup>th</sup> January and will do so again for the event the following week. The next Student Conference will be held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January, all Governors are invited to attend. The conference is being planned and organised by a group of level 3 Travel and Tourism students as an assessed Event Management assignment. A Pool Tournament was held in the Enrichment Centre. A large group of LGBT+ students staged a very successful week long campaign to raise awareness of this community and to fundraise for the Albert Kennedy Trust. Future events include Sport Relief 17<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018.

2279 Risk Management update – report by Director of Finance and Partnerships received and noted.

Further noted that the Risk Management Group had met and reviewed the risks to the college and have updated some of the actions and controls for some areas.

2280 Principal’s report – received and noted.

With regard to withdrawals, the Principal advised that he would forward further details to the Vice-Chair. Additional funding for 19+ was noted, hopefully this will be consolidated in future years. A funding agreement is now in place for the Great Western Academy (GWA). The school will meet its target intake for year 7 but will be considerably under target for the sixth form and will need to be supported by the college. Concerns were raised with regard to there being a conflict of interest and this will be looked at further when the Internal Audit report on Governance, looking at the GWA is published.

2281 Achievement Rate (AR) update – report by Director of Curriculum, Quality and CIS received and noted.

A 1.7% increase is predicted on last year. Noted that students with a grade E/2 GCSE Maths are being entered for GCSE rather than Functional Skills. This will impact on results but is thought to be the best option for the students.

2282 Partnerships – report by Director of Finance and Partnerships received and noted.

The report addresses three main areas, an outline Partnerships strategy, a general Partnerships update and a summary model for Partnerships delivery.

One aim is to reduce the number of partners that the college works with. Contracts are issued annually and therefore it will be easy to achieve. The timing of payments to partners has been an issue in the past. No payments will be made upfront, always on completion after checks have been made and an amount will be retained for satisfactory completion. A standard assessing method is required which is more in-line with the college in-house assessment process.

With regard to Workplace Learning, there are still three learners to contact. The ESFA have been contacted regarding funding. The potential exposure was noted. This has been allowed for in the forecast. There could also be an effect of the AR figure.

The proposed new model for Partnerships delivery has been talked through with the ESFA and the Director of Finance and Partnerships is confident that the proposal meets the ESFA rules. Direct delivery must be an element.

The Chair and Vice-Chair thanked the Director of Finance and Partnerships for the excellent report.

2283 Fees 19+ - report by the Head of Marketing and Customer Services was received and noted.

**RESOLUTION:**

- (i) that fees for level 2 programmes and below for all age students be frozen at the current level (fees pitched at 60% of LARS funding level);
- (ii) that fees for level 3+ qualifications for all age students be frozen at the current level (fees pitched at 90% of LARS funding rates);
- (iii) that the flexibility to offer lower fees where necessary for specific courses or subject areas where pricing is dictated by market demand and local competition rather than funding values be continued.

2284 Safeguarding update – report by Head of Student Services and Safeguarding received and noted.

It was further noted that Duncan Webster has returned to the role of Head of Student Services and Safeguarding and Teresa Tuffin has been appointed as full-time Safeguarding Manager.

With regard to the presentation of data, governors asked for the figures to be separated to show those cases that are historical or happened outside of the college separately from those cases that happened at the college. They also asked for figures for other providers.

2285 Minutes of committees to note – noted as follows:

(a) Finance and General Purposes committee: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018

(b) Curriculum and Quality committee: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018

(c) Personnel committee: 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018

2286 Any other business – raised as follows:

(a) Great Western Academy (GWA) – potential conflict of interests – The Vice-Chair raised the matter of college staff serving as trustees and/or governors of GWA and questioned whether or not there was a conflict of interest, particularly as the school will have a sixth form in direct competition with the college.

(Les Durrant declared an interest as his company had been involved with the groundwork for GWA)

The Clerk advised the meeting that the Internal Auditors have looked at GWA as part of their recent Governance audit and have looked at this matter during their investigations. The report is expected shortly and will be presented to the Audit committee.

(b) AoC Annual Governance Summit – the Chair advised that she, together with the Clerk, was attending this event in London the following day.

2287 Date of next meeting – the Chair asked for the date of the meeting to be changed from the scheduled date of 22<sup>nd</sup> May and it was agreed that it be brought forward to Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 1700 for 1715.

2288 Appointment of Principal – confidential minutes refer.

2289 Remuneration of Clerk to the Corporation – confidential minutes refer.