

NEW COLLEGE, SWINDON

Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Present: Charlotte Mannion (Chair), Dennis Bridges, Simon Cove, John Dernie, Les Durrant, Peter Foskett, Joe Goodman, Carole Kitching, Monica Lawson, Peter O'Brien, Mark Owen, Alexey Smirnov, Ben Tedds, Jim Webster

With: Richard Allanach, Interim Vice-Principal Finance and Resources  
Chris Baish, Vice Principal Business Development and Employer Engagement  
Adam Fahey, Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality  
Paul Jones, Head of Partnerships (minutes 2094 – 2100 only)  
Amanda Spanswick, Faculty Manager English, Languages, Maths and Science (minutes 2094 -2100 only)  
Tracy Scaife, Clerk to the Corporation

2094 Apologies for absence – none received.

2095 Welcome – on behalf of the Corporation the Chair welcomed Adam Fahey, newly appointed Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality; Richard Allanach, Interim Vice Principal Finance and Resources and Paul Jones, Partnership Manager to the meeting.

2096 Resignation – the Corporation noted the resignation of Sarah Church as a governor of the college.

2097 Disclosures of Interest – none received.

2098 Student referred matters – received and noted.

As an update to the paper circulated it was noted that the office gross takings from 'Cinderella and Her Interstellar Adventure' was finalised at £975.

The meeting reiterated that it is keen for the students to spend the money that they raise.

The Principal offered her congratulations to the students who had taken part in the recent 'Dragons Den' event.

2099 Achievement Rate – report received and noted.

It was further noted that the figures in the report are based on the January Predicted Assessment Rate (PAR). The PAR is slightly above the final Achievement Rate (AR) for last year.

With regard to the compulsory GCSE Maths and English, the meeting noted that they college came 6<sup>th</sup> out of 180+ colleges and came 9<sup>th</sup> for English, a great achievement.

On behalf of the Corporation the Chair thanked Amanda for stepping up into the role of Interim Deputy Principal Curriculum since January.

2100 Partnerships update – report received and noted.

The meeting noted that a mock QAA had been held recently at David Game and a further inspection was scheduled to take place in June.

The Partnership Team have been working with learners from recently collapsed partners Construction Skills and JB Skills. Another partner has now agreed to take over the delivery of their apprenticeships.

An AEB grant has been secured with the Greater London Authority and further grants are being sought from the West Midlands Authority.

It is hoped that apprenticeships provision will continue to grow.

2101 Safeguarding update – report received and noted.

It was further noted that Swindon Borough Council has £2.1million allocated to support young people and as a partner college New College will benefit from some of that and it is hoped that it will provide for a qualified mental health professional to be based at the college. Services available in the community are declining but the college cannot replicate a complete social services service within the college.

The Principal advised that a full review of Student Services needs to be undertaken before the end of the current academic year to ensure that resources are appropriately allocated.

With regard to the figures reported on the number of referrals the Corporation asked for these to be separated into those relating to current cases and those relating to historic cases. The majority of colleges are seeing an increase in the number of referrals being received. It should also be noted that not all matters that are referred to the safeguarding team are safeguarding matters.

2102 Minutes of the last meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018 – agreed as a correct record.

2103 Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018 – raised as follows:

(a) 2073 Principal's Report – the Principal advised the meeting that the Project Team for the Institute of Technology (IoT) were invited to London for an interview with the DfE at the beginning of March and the result of that is expected in approximately 2 weeks.

(b) 2074 Strategy/Vision – it was noted that a second session had been held the previous week and that a further session would be arranged for a date before the next Corporation meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019.

2014 Risk Management update – received and noted.

2015 Risk Management Policy – received and noted.

The Policy was considered by the Audit committee earlier in the day who had made some minor amendments which were noted.

A further amendment was proposed and agreed that the amounts in the table on page 4 of appendix 1 to the Policy be amended as follows:

Major – would reduce the college’s cash holdings by between £1m and £2m  
Moderate – would reduce the college’s cash holdings by between £500k and £1m  
Minor – would reduce the college’s cash holdings by between £100k and £500K

**RESOLUTION** – that subject to the amendments by the Audit committee and the additional amendment above the Risk Management Policy be approved.

It was further noted that the Risk Management Policy will be presented to the Corporation for approval on an annual basis.

2106 Principal’s Report – received and noted.

It was further noted that the financial figures given in the first table relate to the period 6 management accounts. The period 7 management accounts are showing that the variance halves.

The meeting was pleased to be advised that no further industrial action will take place this year. UCU have agreed that the pay dispute is now resolved.

There are currently no concerns regarding the level of staff sickness absence however this is closely monitored. The target is below the college sector average.

With regard to the IoT, there will be no overhead costs charged to the college, only course delivery costs. The IoT will have its own Board on which all partners will be represented.

2107 Fees 19+ - report received and noted.

**RESOLUTION** – that fees for 19+ for the 2019-20 academic year be set as follows:

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

2108 Re-appointment of Governor – Jim Webster – the Chair advised the meeting that Jim had indicated that he was prepared to stand for a further term of office of 4 years. The appointment and re-appointment of governors is usually considered by the Search committee however as the Search committee currently only has 3 members (1 being Jim) the re-appointment was being referred directly to the Corporation. Both the Chair and the Principal, the other members of the Search committee, are in favour of his re-appointment.

**RESOLUTION:** that Jim Webster be re-appointed as a governor of the college for a further term of office of 4 years until March 2023.

2109 Further education corporations and sixth-form college corporations: governance guide – report received and noted.

Consideration was given to the list of actions required to make the college and the Corporation fully compliant with the recommendations of the guide.

**RESOLUTION:**

- (i) that terms of office for governors generally be restricted to a maximum of two terms of office of four years. The Corporation reserves the right to review all governor re-appointments on a case by case basis with the right to override the recommended maximum term of office where there is a skills shortage or choosing not to re-appoint would cause quoracy issues;
- (ii) that enhanced DBS checks be carried out for all existing and new governors;
- (iii) that the skills audit be analysed to determine areas of expertise required for the Board and that this be used when recruiting governors together with consideration to diversity;
- (iv) that the Principal, Chair and Clerk present a paper to the next meeting of the Corporation on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019 on Board development;
- (v) that the Clerk seeks a suitable appraisal for governors and Board performance review;
- (vi) that the Clerk puts together a conflicts of interest policy for the Corporation to approve;

2110 Governance Review – report received and noted.

**RESOLUTION:**

- (i) that a search is initiated for new governors to join the Board to ensure a balance of skills moving forward;
- (ii) that governors consider how they could contribute to the successful establishment of a New College Community Ambassador Scheme.

2111 Committee minutes – noted as follows:

- (i) Finance and General Purposes committee: 29<sup>th</sup> January 2019
- (ii) Curriculum and Quality committee: 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019

2112 Date of next meeting – Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019 at 1700 for 1715.

2113 Any other business – none.

2114 Confidential minutes of the last meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2018 – agreed a correct record.

2115 Appointment of Internal and External Auditors – confidential minutes refer.