

Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 13 December 2017 at 17:40 in the Conference Centre

Present:

- Allison Sunley (Chair)
- Janet Meenaghan (Principal)
- Martin Ballard (left at 6.30pm)
- Rob Cottrell (Staff Governor – Support)
- Peter Fraser
- Jasmine Kelly-Gobuiwang (Student Governor)
- Anthony Partington
- David Pennell
- Louise Perry – arrived 5.50pm
- Phil Smith (Staff Governor - Academic)
- Jack Thubbron (Student Governor)

In attendance:

- Andrew Clare (VP Finance & Resources [VPFR])
- Alison Fox (Asst Principal Partnerships & Skills [APPS])
- Rachel Nicholls (Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality [DPCQ]) (arrived 5.50pm)
- Denise Pitt (Assistant Clerk - minutes)

Apologies: Sarah Hobbs, Charlotte Favill, Paul Wingfield and Alison Grant.

10/17 **Eligibility, Quorum and Disclosure of Members Interests:** The apologies were accepted, no notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there were no declarations of interest beyond those already recorded in the Register of Interests.

Check numbering

No requests for urgent business had been received.

11/17 **Minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 18 October 2017**

The minutes of the Corporation meeting held on 18 October 2017 were agreed as a true record.

12/17 **Actions Table and Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 October 2017**

- a. There were no matters arising.
- b. Apprenticeships - The Principal had written again Nick Boles, MP and had received a reply.
- c. Digital Skills Centre Funding – Details within the Principal's Report – agenda item 3.1.
- d. Capital Works Programme – discussed at the Finance & Resources Committee meetings in October and December 2017.

13/17 a. **Principal's Report**

Autumn Budget – 22 November 2017 – No good news for education generally nor FE specifically. The Government's target to reduce the deficit has been pushed back to 2025, meaning austerity for the sector for another 7 years. Funding has been flat lined since 2013.

- b. Technical and Further Education Action 2017 – The 'Baker' Clause – From January 2018, colleges will have the right to talk to school pupils about post-16 options. Schools will be required to publish their policy on this. **Action 1: The College will monitor to see whether this initiative gains momentum.**

- c. Capacity and Delivery Fund (CDF) – T Level – These new courses will be introduced in 2020. Colleges will be required to commit to 10% of their qualifying student cohort receiving a 3-month meaningful work placement (equivalent not block) in 2018/19. Colleges will receive £250 per qualifying

student (£184,500 will be paid to NCS after August 2018). Finding meaningful placements will be problematic for NCS due to its rural setting. Two Cabinet Officers visited the College on Friday 11 December 2017 to gather feedback on the initiative. There are 26 pilots nationally, only one in a rural setting. There will be a phased introduction with routes in Digital, Construction and Education and Childcare being the first. An assessor will review each placement once a month. One Member offered support for Construction placements. Progress will be monitored.

- d. Apprenticeship Growth and Business Development – The College is pushing ahead with its apprenticeship growth agenda and has been successful in securing an adult education growth bid of £350k and a non-levy apprentice bid of £444k.
- e. Digital Skills Bid – The College's bid for funding to support the creation of a Digital Skills Centre has been awarded in full by the GLLEP. This represents half the cost of setting up the centre. The due diligence process will begin shortly. The aim is to enhance IT facilities and training, and improve disabled access as part of the project; with a planned opening in September 2018. Approval to release match funding from College reserves was sought. This project is timely strategically within the area. The Executive team and college managers were congratulated on securing the successful bid. The Finance & Resources Committee had looked at this scheme in detail and supported the proposal to release College funds to match fund the successful bid. The Corporation unanimously **approved** the project.

Martin Ballard left the meeting at 6.30pm.

- f. Financial Health Statement November 2017 – The finance dashboards are issued periodically by the ESFA which RAG rate individual college's financial performance. NCS is rated as Good, however, based on the ESFA metrics, the College's financial position for last year has just moved into the Outstanding bracket. The number of colleges who achieved Outstanding status in 2016/17 was 22%, a declining number over the past 10 years due to cuts in funding.

Learner numbers across the sector show a declining trend over the past four years. NCS's enrolments currently stand at 1,852, which exceeds the Financial Plan and shows how the College has repositioned itself, growing its apprenticeship and core full-time 16-18 delivery, a good Ofsted report and improved relationships locally and regionally.

- g. Letter from Peter Lauener, ESFA Chief Executive – The Chair of F&R Committee confirmed that the financial management of the College against each of the measures in the letter is scrutinised and challenged robustly. Following the review of management reporting recently, the auditors recommend mapping out key performance indicators via a series of matrices to record what each committee receives and reports on. **Action 2: Reporting lines will be considered by the appropriate committee before the report is presented to full Board.**

14/17 **Performance Dashboard – December 2017**

The Corporation commented on the very good dashboard which shows the College is positioned well. The attendance rate target will be recorded as "+ 2%" in future, as requested by Governors. Learner progress is comparable with 2016/17. **Action 3: Show the in-year position and full position from the previous year to allow comparison for appropriate metrics.**

- 15/17 **Approval of Self-Assessment Report 2016/17**
Three members of the Corporation sat on the SAR Moderation Panel on 13 November 2017, plus an external member from another college who chaired the meeting. It was a sound and robust process. All aspects were measured in line with the CIF. The executive summary shows the key strengths, actions for improvement and overall effectiveness judgements. Data tables at the end of the report show strong performance and direction of travel in vocational areas. The Corporation **approved** the SAR 2016/17. The Corporation considered and **approved** the QIP. The DOQ and other members of the team were thanked for their hard work.
- Action 4: Progress against the QIP will be presented to each CQS Committee meeting.**
- 16/17 **Management Accounts – October 2017**
The Finance & Resources Committee had discussed the Management Accounts at length during their meeting earlier this afternoon. As at the end of October, the accounts are slightly above profile, with a similar position predicted for the November accounts.
- Borderville Sports Centre income and expenditure is reported monthly to the Executive and similar reports will be produced for the ACS Gas Centre when it becomes operational.
- 17/17 **Audit Annual Report**
The report summarises the audit recommendations for 2016/17, with very few housekeeping recommendations; no recommendations were recorded for quality assurance and subcontracting. Governors recognised this as an excellent outcome.
- The auditor is currently reviewing Subcontracting Partnership Delivery, HE and the IT Network, and has found no recommendations. Detailed audit reports are presented to the Audit Committee. College managers were thanked for their hard work.
- The Chair commented on the solid foundations being forged building a strong college for the future and it was noted this is a whole college approach.
- 18/17 **External Audit Management Letter**
The report included three low priority recommendations and work will continue to address these. Also included in the report was a summary of small audit adjustments and corrections, a summary of financial performance and a review of auditor assumptions.
- 19/17 **Letter of Representation**
The Corporation gave their **approval** for the Chair to sign the external audit letter of representation.
- 20/17 **Annual Financial Statements 2016/17 for the College and QRS Ltd to Year Ended 31 July 2017**
The Finance Record produces a financial health grading and the College's current financial health is confirmed as outstanding for 2016/17 against sector measures and indicators. All objectives within the Financial Statements have been met. The Finance & Resources Committee has been through the Financial Statements in great detail at their meeting.
- The Corporation **approved** the Annual Financial Statements year ended 31 July 2017.

21/17 **Risk Register November 2017 (High Risks)**

The full Risk Register was considered by the Audit Committee on 7 December 2017. In October, the layout had been changed to show controls and mitigating actions in more detail. A discussion took place about progress towards an independent University of Peterborough and it was noted that delays had been introduced because of the ongoing reform of HE.

Jack Thubbron (Student Governor) left the meeting at 6.55pm.

A discussion took place about how the insolvency regime, which comes into effect in 2018/19, may affect full Board or individual members. The Corporation was assured that the College has Governor and officer liability insurance, and that the monthly management accounts, bank covenants and other financial matters are discussed in detail at Finance & Resource Committee meetings. The Insolvency Regime is unlikely to have any impact on Corporation Members with the measures in place including insurance to cover all Members against any liability, the College's strong financial position and robust scrutiny by the Finance & Resources Committee.

Members felt that an update on the Insolvency Act would be helpful for Governors.
Action 5: The Principal will forward a website link and AoC update, expected to be issued in January 2018.

22/17 **Business Development and Partnerships Report**

A similar number of starts compared to 2016/17. Nationally starts are down by 60% since the introduction of the levy and the apprenticeship reforms. The College has 15 apprenticeship vacancies currently being advertised. Continuing to enrol and numbers will increase. Further funding has been secured to support apprentices currently on programme.

The Finance & Resources Committee had approved an increase in funding for two of the College's subcontractors following the successful adult education growth bid. The College is working with a new subcontractor, Inspire+. 173 apprenticeship learners have transferred from Aspire – due diligence had been undertaken before taking on these students. Controls and procedures are in place to monitor all subcontractors. Regulations are in place regarding the level of management fees colleges can charge their subcontractors.

The Corporation **approved** the College's partnership arrangements. The APPS was thanked for her hard work.

23/17 **Standing Orders**

The Standing Orders had been updated with minor amendments, including a recommendation that the Audit Committee should appoint their own Chair, currently approved by the full Corporation. The Corporation **approved** the changes.

Action 6: Formal approval of the Audit Committee Chair will be included on the agenda and enacted at the Audit Committee on 6 March 2018.

Action 7: Draft minutes from all Committee meetings will be uploaded to BoardIQ so that members can read them in advance of meetings.

24/17 **Any other urgent business**

There was no other business.

25/17 Date of next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on **Wednesday 7 February 2018** at 17.30 in the Conference Centre.

The meeting closed at 19:20.

Action Table				
Act No.	Minute No.	Action	Resp	Date
1	13/17b	<u>Technical and Further Education Action 2017 – The ‘Baker’ Clause – From January 2018</u> - Monitor whether the right for colleges to talk to school pupils about post-16 options and publication of school policy on this initiative gains momentum.	Principal	Spring 2018
2	13/17g	<u>Letter from Peter Lauener, ESFA Chief Executive</u> – Financial measures and reporting lines will be considered by the appropriate committee before the report is presented to full Board.	Executive	2017/18
3	14/17	<u>Performance Dashboard – December 2017</u> (i) The attendance rate target will be recorded as “+2%” as requested by Governors. (ii) In-year attendance position to be shown plus full position from previous year to allow comparison for appropriate metrics.	Executive Executive	Feb 18 Complete Feb 18 Complete
4	15/17	<u>QIP</u> – Progress against the QIP will be presented to each CQS Committee meeting.	DPCQ	2017/18 Complete
5	21/17	<u>Insolvency Regime</u> – The Principal will forward a website link and AoC update, expected to be issued in January 2018.	Principal	Jan 18 Complete
6	23/17	<u>Standing Orders</u> – Draft minutes from all Committee meetings will be uploaded to BoardIQ so that members can read them in advance of meetings.	Asst Clerk to Corp	2017/18 Complete

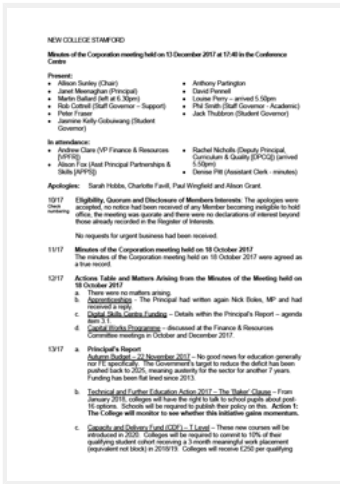
Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Alison Sunley (Chair)

Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Alison Sunley (Chair) (Mar 23, 2018)

NCSCorporation Minutes - 13-12-17






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