

Minutes of the Corporation meeting held in the Conference Centre in NCS at 1730 hrs on
21 March 2018

Present	Rob Cottrell	Peter Fraser	Alison Grant
	Sarah Hobbs	Jasmine Kelly-Gobuiwang	Janet Meenaghan (Principal)
	Anthony Partington	David Pennell	Louise Perry
	Phil Smith	Allison Sunley (Chair)	Jack Thubbron
In Attendance	Andrew Clare (VP(F&R))(06/17b on)	Ralph Devereux (Clerk)	Rachel Nicholls (DP(C&Q))
	Angela O'Reilly (DOQ)(Item 46/17 only)		
Apologies	Martin Ballard	Charlotte Favill	Alison Fox (VP(P&S))(Attendee)
	Paul Wingfield		

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and explained that Item 4.1 would be taken immediately after Members' consideration of the Curriculum Quality and Standards Committee (CQS) Minutes to allow the Director of Quality (DOQ) to consolidate the Teaching Learning and Assessment Report (TLA)(2018-20).

44/17 ELIGIBILITY, QUORUM AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- a. The apologies were accepted. Martin Ballard had sent his best wishes to all at the meeting and explained that his unavoidable absence had been caused by inadvertent reference to dates on the 2016/17 meeting schedule.
- b. No notice had been received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office, the meeting was quorate and there had been no declared interests.
- c. There was no urgent business requested.

45/17 STANDING ITEMS

- a. The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2018 were confirmed for electronic signature, Clerk to Action. **(Action 1)**
- b. Matters Arising. There were no matters arising.
- c. Outstanding Actions. All actions from the previous meetings had been completed or were in progress.
- d. Audit Committee (AC)(06.03.18). The minutes from the AC meeting held on 6 March were presented and were noted.
- e. Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) (20.03.18) The Committee Chair gave a verbal debrief of the previous evening's business; issues had been robustly considered and it had been agreed that:
 - (i) he would be briefed on the outcome of the Executive considerations of the commercial features of Bordeville (Gym) and report back to members; and

- (ii) to hold a special dedicated meeting focused on the capital programme for Bordeville and related issues for consideration by the Corporation.

Preparations for the introduction of GDPR were progressing well and 4 recommendations had been made to the Corporation, which would be noted at the appropriate point in the meeting.

- f. Urgent Business. It was agreed that Jack Thubbron would present a report on the Students' Union (SU) as Urgent Business.
 - g. CQS (14.03.18). The minutes from the CQS meeting held on 14 March were presented by the Corporation Chair; the outcomes were noted. (See 46/17 below).
- a. **The information was received.**
 - b. **Actions had been identified.** (See Table 55/17 below.)

The DOQ joined the meeting and was introduced by the Chair.

46/17 TEACHING LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT (TLA)

Changes to the Common Inspection Framework in 2016/17 had prompted the College to examine the then TLA processes and move from an observation based assessment to a more developmental assessment regime; the imaginative initiative was designed to encourage staff to take ownership and accountability of personal teaching practice and had been piloted sufficiently for consideration as the approved model. The new model used a range of metrics to provide a broader assessment of TLA than reliance on a single 50-minute observation and had been proven in other FE Colleges, it had:

- a. allowed an Ofsted assessment of TLA as "Good or Better";
- b. been received very favourably by staff as more supportive and self-developmental;
- c. introduced valued and successful Teaching and Learning Coaches (TLC); and
- d. introduced the Curriculum Area Review (CAR) Process.

In the light of experience and close review, several improvements and principles for the suggested next phase had been suggested, all of which had been considered by the QSC and recommended to the Corporation. The staff had responded positively both to the concept and the practicality; the likelihood of individual capability misconceptions from 50 minute observations had undoubtedly contributed to that feeling and the more balanced approach, including the extremely valuable Learning Walks and CARs, had been welcomed. Questions were then invited and a lively session ensued, for example, explanations of arrangements for agency and sub-contracting staff. The CQS Committee had agreed in principle to the change and that approach was enthusiastically endorsed by the Corporation. **(Action 2)**

- a. **The information was received.**
- b. **Actions had been identified.** (See Table 55/17 below.)

The DOS left the meeting.

47/17 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT AND DASHBOARD

The previously circulated Principal's report was considered and discussed, members were now familiar with the general content, but some matters prompted further and wider discussion.

- a. Privatisation of Further Education (FE). The apparently inexorable march towards stealth privatisation of FE continued, evidenced by the high numbers of independent, often newly formed, untried and untested training agencies now listed on the Register of Approved Training Providers (RoATP); previously "failed or inadequate" agencies had also gained non-levy contracts. The resultant increase in providers, up from 800 to 2588 had prompted the Ofsted Chief Inspector to request additional resource. Most funding was now dependent on a successful outcome of a competitive bidding process; applications generally required c10k persuasive words and were placing an unacceptable workload on management. There then followed a lively debate on the issue, Corporations were becoming more business focussed and it was necessary to select the best elements of the opportunities

and apply NCS strengths appropriately. Weaker agencies would invariably fail in the competitive environment, that had already been evidenced. It was necessary to look forward, be selective and remain flexible and reactive when necessary. Several imaginative suggestions emerged from the discussions which were noted for evaluation.

- b. Air and Defence Career College. The dynamic partnership between the Lincoln Colleges Group, the College of West Anglia and RAF Wittering was an exciting initiative, which had now been confirmed as a fully approved Career College with a 3-year licence. The official launch attended by the Stamford Mayor and the Station Commander, RAF Wittering had been successful and covered by local and service media.
- c. Grantham College. The Principal of Grantham College was retiring at the end of this academic year and it was agreed that the aspiration for some collaboration between the colleges could be re-examined.
- d. Wider News. The Lincoln College Group had recently been inspected by Ofsted and were hoping for an improvement on the previous Grade 3 assessment; anecdotally that seemed likely. An ex NCS student, David Malinowski, who was a gifted make-up/cosmetic artist in the media industry, had recently received an Oscar and had agreed to visit on 15 March to talk to students.
- e. Dashboard. The data was considered and discussed and noted as little changed from the last meeting. The current presentation of the information was confirmed.

The information was received and noted.

48/17 FINANCIAL DEMANDS

The issue of increasing Financial Demands on Colleges had been considered in depth by the FRC at their meeting the previous day. Notification had been received of 2 new annual subscriptions required for previously provided service (See also 47/17a above):

- a. Broadband. Broadband services were currently provided by JISC - the UK higher, further education and skills sectors' not-for-profit organisation for digital services and solutions, which operates the JANET network; and
- b. Office for Students (OfS). The OfS is planned to replace the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) in the near future.

Proposed charges for these services had been advised as an annual average of c£20k and £22-30k respectively; the costs (c£45k) would become effective in the coming year and inevitably there would be a consequent effect on the bottom line. These new charges in parallel with years of stagnated funding was obtuse. The possibility of deregulation of other currently provided services, perhaps Ofsted and the ESFA could not be discounted and would underline the current tight situation and represent a real degradation in sector finances. The situation was discussed and the strength of members' apprehension prompted positive action. The FRC had unanimously agreed to recommend to the Corporation that the attached letter from the Corporation Chair should be sent to the Minister for Skills (Anne Milton) and possibly the Prime Minister. The issue was discussed and the possibility of seeking those services elsewhere, not least to satisfy the commitment to Value for Money (VfM) was considered in some depth. Despite the valuable lobbying by the Association of Colleges and other agencies on behalf of the sector it was agreed that unilateral action was indeed justified and the FRC recommendation would be accepted and letters would be sent to both offices. **(Action 3)**

a. The information was received.

b. Actions had been identified. (See Table 55/17 below.)

49/17 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY

All necessary issues had been considered at 46/17.

50/17 FINANCE REPORT

- a. Management Accounts. The comprehensive management accounts accurate to 28 February 2018 had been carefully considered and discussed by the FRC who had determined that the situation was encouraging. The overall variance was c£146k against

budget, favourable income by c£174k with all variances clearly tabulated, payroll expenditure adverse c(£42k), non-payroll costs positive; again with all variances clearly tabulated in the detailed Summary of Financial Performance (Key Performance Measures), which they had welcomed. The Borderville performance had been specifically considered later in the FRC meeting. The balance sheet remained positive with a strong cash balance, although slightly lower because of payments profiling. Identified Risks and Opportunities were discussed and all Bank Covenants were noted as in-scope and the revised and recommended covenant (Lloyds) was approved and will be signed in accordance with Bank Mandate. **(Action 4)**

- b. Learner Numbers and Funding Reports. The comprehensive Learner Number/Funding comprised tabulated data for each funding stream and apprenticeship targets for the current year had also been carefully considered by the FRC. Apprenticeships were likely to be over-delivered, although it was unclear whether any additional ESFA funding would be available, however additional AEB funding was welcomed. The positive effect on 2018/19 was recognised.
- c. Risk Register. The RAG rated table of 14 Red Risks was considered, the possibility of adding a risk associated with the privatisation of FE was under consideration; the table was noted.
- d. Fees Policy. The Fees Policy (College Policy Statement 21) had been amended for the coming year; the fully marked up version had been closely scrutinised by the FRC and was attached to inform consideration, changes had been noted and discussed and the Policy had been recommended to the Corporation for approval. The recommendation was accepted and the Policy was approved wie. **(Action 5)**

a. The information was received.

a. Actions had been identified. (See Table 55/17 below.)

51/17 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Business Development Paper had been scrutinised by the FRC the previous day and their comments had been as follows. Contrary to the national trend, there had been an 8% increase in apprenticeship starts at period 7 and this was welcomed. The concentrated work with Levy paying employers was now returning results, with new employer partners (all listed in the paper) now providing apprentices, and work with sub-contractors, planned to increase from September, further widened the profile; additional staff were required, which hopefully would be provided by a new apprenticeship adviser and College apprentices. Appropriate funding had been secured with the possibility of additional growth money later. The unique selling point (USP), which would continue to make a significant contribution, was the close attention to personal contact and individual development; members took comfort from the performance. Associated areas were fully detailed in the paper, they were noted as all positive and the widening contact and networking was welcomed. The RAG rated Apprenticeships Action Plan had been scrutinised and was noted as largely amber and green, reassurance was given that the red items were being addressed.

The information was received

52/17 GOVERNANCE

- a. Appointments. The Principal regularly attended FRC meetings and it was agreed that should now be full membership wie. **(Action 6)**
- b. Draft Meeting Schedule 2018/19. The draft meeting schedule would require some final amendment and would be brought to the next meeting for final approval. **(Action 7)**
- c. Events to note. Forthcoming Corporation and College events were detailed for information.

a. Information was received.

b. Actions had been identified. (See Table 55/17 below.)

53/17 URGENT BUSINESS

Student Union Report. The elected Student Member, Jack Thubbron updated members on SU activities, in particular he explained progress with:

- a. Kooth – the online counselling application;
- c. accessibility around campus for students;
- d. environmental issues, the Eco Group, which was looking at waste/recycling and associated matters; and
- e. The “Green Impact” award.

The SU held weekly meetings, which Jack attended; the SU also worked closely with the DP (C&Q) and the Student Engagement Team on many issues.

The information was received

54/17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be at 1730 on 16 May 2018.

55/17 ACTION TABLE

Please note referenced minute for further detail.		resp	date
Action 1	45/17. Minutes (07.02.18) confirmed for electronic signature.	Clerk	asap
Action 2	46/17. Move to proposed TLS process endorsed.	JM	wie
Action 3	48.17. Chair to write to Anne Milton and PM.	Chair	asap
Action 4	50/17a. Amended Bank Covenant (Lloyds) approved for signature.	AC	wie
Action 5	50/17d. Fees Policy approved.	AC	
Action 6	52/17. Principal to join FRC.	Clerk	16.05.18
Action 7	53/17. Meeting Schedule to be revised for approval.		

Signature: *Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Allison Sunley (Chair)*
Ralph Devereux (Clerk) for Allison Sunley (Chair) (May 21, 2018)

Email: clerk.mpe@btconnect.com

Corporation minutes 21.03.18

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21/05/2018



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