



Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on Monday 9 July 2018

Present: -

- Mr Mervyn Jones (Chair)
- Ms Abigail Appleton (Principal)
- Professor Robin Baker
- Ms Stevie Callender
- Mrs Lynn Forrester-Walker
- Mr Neil Hadfield
- Dr Elizabeth Halford
- Mr Jordan Knight
- Ms Alison McLean
- Miss Mairead McVeigh
- Mr Tim Newsholme
- Mr John Nicol
- Mr Mike Rookes
- Mrs Kay Sandford-Beal
- Ms Katie Seekings
- Mr Oliver Tomlinson

In attendance: -

- Mr Tim Williams (Finance Director)
- Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Governors)
- Mr Ben Gamble (Head of FE)
- Mr Justin Gregory (Head of HE Designate)
- Ms Jennie Hermolle (Head of Communications)
- Miss Hannah Jones (Student Governor FE 2018/19)

The meeting was quorate as sixteen Governors were present during the meeting.

1. Appointment of Student Governors and Staff Governor (FE)

The Chair welcomed new Governors to the meeting followed by introductions. Hannah Jones and Jennifer Hodgeman were appointed as Student Governors, FE and HE respectively, from 1 September 2018 for the period whilst they remain students of the College. Feryl Smith had been unable to take his place on the Board. Stevie Callender was appointed as Staff Governor (FE) with immediate effect for a 4-year term in office. These appointments would be subject to eligibility as per the Instrument of Government.

The Board agreed: -

- To appoint Hannah Jones (Student Governor FE) and Jennifer Hodgeman (Student Governor HE) with effect from 1 September 2018
- To appoint Stevie Callender as Staff Governor (FE) with immediate effect for a 4-year term if office

2. Process of the Meeting

- I. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Scott Rolfe.
- II. The Chair remarked that this was the last meeting for several Governors; namely Lynn Forrester Walker who had chaired the F&GP Committee for several years, Oliver Tomlinson, Mairead McVeigh and Jordan Knight. Wendy Tolley had resigned from the Board since the last meeting. Appreciation was recorded.

- III. Declarations of interest were received from Mervyn Jones and Alison McLean regarding appointment of Chair and Vice Chair 2018/19.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

- I. The minutes of the last meeting held on 23 April 2018 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a true record.

The action list showed progress of actions. The Principal would provide a report on graduate employability within her report at the October meeting

ACTION: PRINCIPAL.

It was noted that Governors' approval by special written resolution might be necessary as part of the process for strategic development between Board meetings.

The speed dating session with groups of staff to discuss their work areas was informative and extremely useful. This had included discussion about ethnicity in Herefordshire compared to other multi-ethnic areas and how this could be perceived by applicants.

- II. Matters arising from the minutes had been addressed.

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the minutes

4. Principal's Report

- I. The Principal presented her report drawing Governors' attention to key areas. The first FE student awards' evening was held as a celebration of students' work; the Chair would like to attend next year. Governors were encouraged that HE student firm acceptances for September 2018 had increased; these marginally exceeded the current year's recruitment. The Principal expressed caution that general intelligence had indicated that the financial vulnerability of other institutions may create instability to HE firm acceptances in institutions. Marketing initiatives were outlined with appreciation recorded to the Head of Communications and her team for their continued hard work. Unconditional offers will be introduced from 2019 at the discretion of Course Leaders based on specific criteria. The AQ&S Committee confirmed that it had discussed this in detail. There was a suggestion to investigate installations at the railway station. The Principal responded that the College is looking to develop graduate incubation space and developing exhibition spaces in the city.

'Synthesis 2018', the end of course exhibitions, had been a success with the HE prospectus launched several weeks earlier in time for Synthesis. The College is preparing to launch its new website mid-September. The Staff Governor asked if it would be possible for some staff to see the website in its development stage.

ACTION: PRINCIPAL

The OfS application had been submitted with further data analysis requested. Initially the access and participation plans and CMA had identified some aspects for further development; there was an option to commission guidance if necessary. The Principal commented that she would respond promptly to OfS requests and reiterated that key staff would be asked to be available during the summer to respond to any further requests from OfS.

ACTION: PRINCIPAL

Governors commended staff and students on the 2017/18 GCSE English and Maths achievement rates which had been monitored by the AQ&S Committee throughout the year including regular reports on strategies embedded to improve achievement and its effectiveness.

An all staff festival had taken place last week with positive feedback and staff collaboration. The option to invite Governors to part of the event could be considered next year.

Accommodation negotiations continue with RNC, landlords for CRC. The College is also in discussion with Herefordshire Council to develop student accommodation for 2020. The land is adjacent to the railway station and would provide 200 student rooms. The Local Authority would fund the development subject to commitment from the College to underwrite rooms. There was a question if the property developers would understand the importance of meeting the timescale for student accommodation, particularly as this would need to be advertised. Planning permission would need to be confirmed before the accommodation offer could be advertised, ideally before the UCAS deadline for 2020 recruitment.

- II. RAG rated progress towards achieving the KPIs had been provided. Initial work to introduce a transparent staff pay and reward procedure had commenced. This is a complex process which will be reported at the next meeting.

ACTION: PRINCIPAL/FINANCE DIRECTOR

- III. Risk Management Report and Register showed key risks which had been discussed by Committees and during dialogue on the Principal's report.

The Board agreed: -

- To note the reports

5. **College Strategy: Strategic Plan 2018/23**

The Principal gave a presentation reminding Governors of the timetable to prepare the strategic plan during the year. The revised strategic plan incorporated comments raised by Governors and staff following consultation. Text had been reduced to become more succinct and images would be added.

In addition to the pillars of development key points to underpin and drive the strategy were outlined along with headline KPIs. A Governor suggested connecting the mission statement to the KPIs.

- Scale: grow student community
- Quality: regulatory moderators
- Student experience: NSS scores (caution was expressed as institutions have different values meaning that development of an internal model could be more accurate)
- Financial and other value: annual surplus
- Impact: measure impact of collaborations and partnership

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the strategy plan 2018-23 and publish on the website
- The Principal would prepare an operational plan dovetailed to the strategic plan

ACTION: PRINCIPAL

6. FE Digital Development

The Head of FE gave a brief presentation on the proposal to develop an FE digital curriculum and its rationale which had been discussed by the AQ&S Committee and F&GP Committee. The Committees had supported the proposal which was presented to the Board for approval.

The proposal was founded on local research which the College had commissioned identifying a gap in the market for digital futures courses which confirmed that this was likely to recruit a different group of students.

In discussion the process to publicise the course to prospective students and year 11 was outlined. This would be part of the Digital Champion's role who would visit schools. It was acknowledged that parents can be influential in decision-making for their children and that the graphic showing job opportunities would be a useful tool to share with prospective students and their parents. There was a question if projected numbers took account of the demographics noting that these had not included the increase in school leavers next year.

It was possible that the bid could attract investment for capital investment such as equipment or software from the LEP and a suggestion was made to approach the LEP as a priority.

ACTION: PRINCIPAL/FINANCE DIRECTOR

The Board agreed:

- To approve the proposal, including costs, for FE digital development, which would be implemented for recruitment in September 2019

ACTION: PRINCIPAL/HEAD OF FE

7. Finance Report and Budget Planning 2018/19 to underpin the Strategic Plan

- I. 2018/19 College budget and 5 year financial forecast was presented by the Finance Director explaining that the College is required to submit a budget and financial forecast to EFSA by 31 July 2018. The F&GP Committee had discussed the budget in detail, acknowledging investment was required to progress strategic priorities. The Committee also recognised that it would be crucial to monitor the objectives against budget and forecast.

The 5-year financial health is calculated using ESFA performance indicators predicting that it would decrease from outstanding to satisfactory in 2019/21 before improving to outstanding in 2021/22. Additional investment in new staff posts would decrease the EBITDA and pay as a percentage of income. The cash balance was forecast to decrease to £1,026M in 2021. The budget did not include sponsorship or borrowing for capital developments which could be explored. The forecasted decrease in financial health was likely to trigger intervention from the ESFA.

A summary of FE and HE income, including new courses, and pay and non-pay costs, was outlined with the assumption that HE tuition fees will remain at £9,000 for 5 years.

Questions followed which were duly answered. It was concluded that the budget would require proactive leadership to embed necessary changes to ensure the future sustainability of the College.

- II. Management Accounts to 30 April 2018 had been issued by email showing the year-to-date position had improved from a budgeted deficit on £295,000 to a deficit of £167,000.

The Board agreed:

- To approve the 2018/19 budget and 5 year financial forecast

- To note management accounts to 30 April 2018

8. Governance

- I. RSM's Internal Audit Strategy 2018/21.
- II. Mazars' Audit Strategy Memorandum to 31 July 2018.
- III. AoC Code of Good Governance: principles and values
- IV. Business timetable 2018/19
- V. Chair and Committee Chair's peer appraisals
- VI. Health and Safety Policy
- VII. Board's self assessment
- VIII. Appoint Chair and Vice Chair 2018/19 (Mervyn and Alison left)

The Board agreed: -

- To approve RSM's Internal Audit Strategy 2018/21
- To approve Mazars' Audit Strategy Memorandum to 31 July 2018
- To appoint Mervyn Jones and Alison McLean as Chair and Vice Chair 2018/19 respectively
- To approve the Health and Safety Policy
- To note other papers presented for information

9. Minutes and Summary of recommendations from Committees

- I. Audit Committee: 11 June 2018
- II. Search and Governance Committee: 25 June 2018
- III. Finance and General Purposes Committee: 25 June and 4 July 2018
- IV. Academic Quality and Standards Committee: 18 June 2018

The Board agreed: -

- To note the minutes with recommendations previously approved during the meeting

10. Any Other Business

On behalf of the Board the Principal reiterated appreciation to Governors who were leaving the Board, acknowledging their commitment and support, and sending them best wishes.

11. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Board meeting on Monday 22 October 2018 commencing at 4.30pm followed by a Governors' dinner.

Signed as a true record of proceedings

Chair: Date: