



## Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on Monday 29 April 2019

**Present: -**

- Mr Mervyn Jones (Chair)
- Ms Abigail Appleton (Principal)
- Professor Robin Baker
- Mr Daniel Fox
- Dr Mia Gordon
- Ms Jennifer Hodgeman
- Miss Hannah Jones
- Mr Tim Newsholme
- Mr John Nicol
- Mr Mike Rookes
- Ms Kay Sandford-Beal
- Ms Katie Seekings

**In attendance: -**

- Mr Ben Gamble (Head of FE)
- Mr Justin Gregory (Head of HE)
- Ms Kate Howe (Head of Communications)
- Mrs Linda Watkins (Clerk to the Governors)
- Mr Tim Williams (Finance Director)

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

### **1. Process of the Meeting**

- I. Apologies for Absence were received from Stevie Callender, Alison McLean and Scott Rolfe.
- II. The Chair had no specific remarks or correspondence.
- III. Declarations of interest were made by Katie Seekings and Mike Rookes regarding their re-appointment to the Board.

### **2. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

- I. The minutes and confidential minutes of the Board meeting held on 11 February 2019 were agreed and signed by the Chair as true records.
- II. There were no matters arising from the minutes.
- III. Progress of actions showed that the majority of actions had been completed or were in hand.
- IV. A forward programme of Board discussion topics for 2019/20 was outlined which was supported.

The Board agreed: -

- To approve the minutes

### **3. Principal's Report**

- I. An update was given on applications to the digital futures course which are on target. A Governor asked for assurance that the Course Leader had the relevant skills set to deliver the course which was confirmed. In addition, a Technical Demonstrator will also work with students on the course. A teaching space has been allocated to Digital Futures and equipment

purchased; this had been allocated in the budget. The College has liaised with ESFA who have completed an audit and are confident given the progress that has been made. HE acceptances remain mixed an increase in applications to Artist Blacksmithing. Two Textiles students have received awards. Governors recorded their congratulations.

The Head of Communications outlined a recent marketing campaign and its circulation confirming impact will be measured. Governors agreed that this was bold particularly the strap line 'live the life'.

The Head of HE gave a summary of Critical Studies delivery and content explaining that students' academic and practical experience is varied. Critical Studies is a requirement of BA (hons) courses which will be revalidated so that the most appropriate model is offered to students.

Several platforms are used to obtain feedback from students who are encouraged to raise their views, whether positive or negative. There are multiple levels of engagement with students with a focus to close the feedback loop from the College to students.

The Head of Estates had left post after 19 years. Interim arrangements have been put in place to oversee estates, health & safety with the role reshaped for advertisement. Some staff training has been arranged including online health and safety refresher training in key areas.

The Principal attends the new HE Collaboration Group, its membership including NMiTE, Herefordshire Council and the College, which has replaced the Joint University Delivery Board. A brief summary of its role was provided.

- II. The Principal presented her revised objectives and KPIs for 2018/19. These included additional objectives relating to the OfS and accommodation plans following the change of landlord for the CRC. It was proposed to remove the objective to develop a fundraising plan and activity based on new substantial key priorities and developments.
- III. Strategy implementation monitoring of key progress and milestones against each pillar and cross-cutting enabler of the strategy house was presented. Detailed strategy implementation milestone plans have been developed which will be monitored by the HE Operations and Strategy Implementation Manager and reported to SLT. Governors remarked that 'the headline strategy implementation plan was a useful tool to measure progress of the strategy.
- IV. The management accounts to 28 February 2019 had been discussed by the F&GP Committee. The negative year-end forecast had been anticipated based on investments previously agreed by the Board to fulfil the 5 year strategy.
- V. Office for Students (OfS) correspondence to Chairs about the financial viability and sustainability of the sector was shared with the Board for information.
- VI. ESFA correspondence regarding the financial plan 2017/18 was noted which confirmed the College's financial self assessment.

The Board agreed: -

- To note the Principal's report and strategy implementation monitoring report
- To approve amendments to the Principal's objectives 2018/19
- To note correspondence from OfS and ESFA

#### **4. Access and Participation Plan**

The Principal gave a presentation explaining that OfS challenged universities to eliminate the gap in access and student success of under-represented groups. To evidence how this will be addressed providers are required to submit 5-year Access and Participation Plans (APP) by 1 July 2019. Under-represented groups include BAME, mature students, disability statuses, lower socio-economic groups and care leavers. OfS have provided data sets and key principles to develop the APP and reporting. The College has established a working group to prepare the APP led by the Principal. This is an HE requirement with some overlap to FE, particularly regarding the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP). There was a suggestion as to whether the HE Collaboration Group and Herefordshire Council could be part of this agenda particularly as the College attracts a number of applications locally.

The Board agreed: -

- The Access and Participation Plan will be presented to the AQ&S Committee (combined meeting) in June for advice and guidance. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL**
- The APP will be presented to the Board in July for information. **ACTION: PRINCIPAL**

**5. Accommodation Report [A confidential minutes was recorded]**

**6. Risk Management**

- I. Some of the new key risks identified for discussion had already been discussed during the meeting. The Chair of Audit Committee reminded Governors that the Audit Committee had discussed the risk register in detail which had subsequently been updated for the Board.

The College has a new relationship with Herefordshire Council as landlords of CRC. The College is in contact with several officers at Herefordshire Council to discuss issues in addition to accommodation. These include children's services and Balfour Beatty (who are responsible for property management at CRC). The Finance Director had arranged a meeting with Balfour Beatty.

Discussion progressed to the potential impact of Brexit which was difficult to assess. The College currently has 12 HE and 14 FE overseas students; there are also some domicile students in Herefordshire. It was anticipated that Brexit will affect funding and competition in the HE sector. The impact on students obtaining a visa in the future is unknown with no advice available for universities or colleges.

- II. A copy of a presentation given to Finance Directors by the AoC Deputy Chief Executive was provided showing that all risks identified in the sector were covered within the College's risk register.

The Board agreed:

- To note the risk register, particularly the significant risks which were discussed during the meeting
- The risk register should remain a corporate document with detailed discussion by SLT and the Audit Committee who would highlight significant risks to the Board which are identified in the summary
- Committees would continue to address risk relevant within their remit

**7. Governance**

The Search and Governance Committee had discussed the AoC Senior Staffs' (senior postholders) Remuneration Code and recommended that this should be adopted. This would ensure fair and appropriate remuneration in the sector requiring the College to prepare an annual report from a Remuneration Committee which would be made available to the public. The Committee proposed the formation of a Remuneration Committee with draft terms of reference prepared for consideration and adoption.

The Board agreed: -

- To adopt the AoC Senior Staffs' (senior postholders) Remuneration Code and to approve the formation of a Remuneration Committee agreeing the terms of reference and membership

**8. Policies for approval**

The Board agreed to approve: -

- Freedom of Speech Code of Practice
- External Speaker Procedure
- Guidelines for External Speaker
- External Speaker Approval and External Speaker Referral

**9. Minutes and summary of recommendations from Committees**

- I. Audit Committee: 18 March 2019
- II. Search and Governance Committee: 25 March 2019. The Committee Chair drew Governors' attention to the recommendations from the Committee. He also invited suggestions for potential Governors and Fellows for discussion by the Committee.
- III. Finance and General Purposes Committee: 25 March 2019
- IV. Academic Quality and Standards Committee: 19 March 2019

The Board agreed:-

- To re-appoint Katie Seekings for a further 4-year term in office as an Independent Governor
- To re-appoint Scott Rolfe and Mike Rookes for a further year as Independent Governors; appreciation was recorded to them for willing to remain on the Board.
- To re-appoint Kate Murrie as Co-opted Member of AQ&S Committee (FE) and Graham Briscoe as CO-opted Member of Audit Committee for a further year

**10. Any Other Business**

No items.

**11. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Board meeting on Monday 15 July 2019 commencing at 4.30pm with staff networking from 3.30 pm

[Staff Governors and Managers left the meeting for a confidential discussion which was recorded in a separate minute]

**Signed as a true record of proceedings**

**Chair:** ..... **Date:** .....