

Minutes of: CORPORATION

Date: 5th December 2019

Time: 5:00pm

Place: The Conference Room, The Lodge

Present: Ms M Cook
Mr P Cook (Principal)
Mr W Horne
Mr R Jones
Ms J Lewis-Bell
Mr I Pursglove (Chair)
Mr D Skinner
Mr J Smith
Mr C Todd (Vice Chair)

In attendance: Ms J Ferguson (Vice Principal, Safeguarding and Pastoral Care)
Ms R Herbert (Vice Principal, Quality and Curriculum)
Ms D Reynolds (Vice Principal, Finance and Resources)
Mrs Y Doherty (Clerk to the Corporation)



19/12 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Ms K Ainge, Mr S Brand, Mr M Maffey and Ms L Miervaldis.

19/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

19/14 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting (circulated, document Dec 19/1) held on 17th October 2019 were considered.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the minutes of the meeting held on 17th October 2019 be approved.

19/15 MATTERS ARISING

19/6.2 Safeguarding Update October 2019

It was confirmed that the percentage of the total learner cohort with safeguarding issues was 63%.

Safeguarding Policy

It was reported that this had been issued electronically. No feedback or amendments were identified and Governors had confirmed approval of the policy.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Safeguarding Policy be approved.

19/10 Any other business

Education Inspection Framework and Governance

It was reported that responses received had included the following suggestions:

1. Reporting against 'on-the-ground' college engagement e.g. learning walks and meetings with link departments. This provides operational visibility to the strategic decisions made at board meetings. The reporting templates may require revision to ensure the capture of the correct information.

2. With regard to the Ofsted framework consider being explicit about what decisions are made within each of the four themes. This could be built into the cover page for each report in the same way we do for risk management (i.e. relevant to Ofsted theme...)
3. The use of a spreadsheet to record details such as
 - Action / Event
 - Expected/Actual benefit (e.g. well-being, £) and anticipated duration (e.g. single instance, continuous)
 - Dates (proposal, implementation)
 - Responsibility (individual)
 - Theme/objective the action related to
 - Evidence (location)

It was emphasised that it was important to ensure that where supporting paperwork was to be returned following involvement in College activities that this be done as soon as possible afterwards, whilst giving due regard to the need to ensure that the content was comprehensive and would be effective in supporting the College and governance.

19/16 STANDING AGENDA ITEMS

16.1 Principal's Report

The Principal provided a report to members of the Corporation with a brief update on recent curriculum developments (circulated, document Dec 19/2).

This included:

- Construction Offer
- Forest School
- Spencer's Retreat
- Accessible Apprenticeships
- Premier Inn
- Aspire
- Warwickshire Provision
- Staff Christmas Gift Vouchers

It was advocated that the new initiatives would add substantially to the College offer and the potential for learner recruitment.

Attention was drawn to

- Construction Offer

This would add to the practical curriculum offer.

Research had confirmed that this was delivered by other providers (most attending Coventry College), and the College was in contact with a local provider.

- Accessible Apprenticeships

Work was progressing with a potential partner with the aim of launching the offer in January 2020. It was advocated that this presented significant support to, and evolution of, the existing internship offer.

Discussion points included:

Would the accessible apprenticeships be sector based?

It was confirmed that these would cover a number of areas but mostly retail and administration. It would also be learner dependent. The due diligence process was in progress.

Construction – staffing issues?

It was reported that the College had a number of qualified teachers with good skills who had expressed an interest in training to deliver the provision. It was acknowledged that there were known difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff, and that it was important that they had an understanding of the learner cohort.

It was proposed that staff would be upskilled via the local provider.

What would be delivered?

It was confirmed that it was expected that the offer would include plastering, tiling, painting and decorating.

It was commented that this also provided a potential link to the horticulture via landscaping.

Forest school.

Detail was provided on what this offered.

Aspire – recruitment issues

It was queried if this presented an opportunity for upskilling existing staff or the offer of a pre-employment programme.

It was confirmed that existing staff had been offered opportunities with the Aspire group where possible.

There was discussion as to whether the AEB budget could be utilised to offer training to individuals who were interested but without the required skills. It was suggested that this could also potentially support engagement with the local community.

It was agreed that the Vice Chair and Principal would have follow up discussions with regard to this.

Resource implications?

It was reported that these were considered minimal.

In relation to the construction offer there was existing space that could be used, subject to required modifications. Any anticipated issues were expected to be related to the teacher recruitment. It was confirmed that the initial provision was expected to be Level 1 and Level 2.

New provision required investment – had there been modelling on the return on investment in terms of aspects such as time, equipment etc.?

It was advocated that the level of investment was so small not to require this. The offer would be incorporated in the existing provision presenting a minimal financial risk.

Warwickshire provision – further detail was requested on the location.

This was provided, including that it was a rental agreement and again of minimal cost.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Principal's update report be noted and received.

16.2 Student Numbers

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum presented a report on the Student Numbers (circulated, document Dec 19/3).

- Recruitment was currently lower than at the same point last year
- The position was being monitored by the SLT
- The number of offers was increasing

Discussion points included:

Trend data?

It was reported that this was very difficult to identify, with the example of previous years being provided. However, it was acknowledged that numbers were low at this point.

Activity to engage with applicants between application and enrolment?

It was reported that there were a number of methods used including vocational showcase events, contact from the Admissions team and transition events.

With regard to residential learners this also included visits and overnight stays where appropriate.

There was discussion of and detail provided on the Distance Learning provision.

It was emphasised that although distance learning numbers were high it was only a small proportion of the overall provision and income.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Student Numbers update report be noted and received.

16.3 Data Dashboard 2019/20

The Data Dashboard was considered (circulated, document Dec 19/4).

It was reported that there had been some technical issues that had impacted on the availability of data for the report.

Discussion points included:

Attendance rates – reasons for the 9% non-attendance?

It was reported that this had improved to 92% since report was distributed (from 91%)

As per the analysis provided in the Self-Assessment Report, this remained attributable to a small number of learners this year, with reasons including ill-health and transport issues.

Attendance was subject to consistent monitoring.

Catering Service – decline?

This was attributable to the poor service that had resulted in the tender exercise completed in 2018/19 and the appointment of a new provider.

The student governors confirmed satisfaction with the service, though considered that it could be expensive at times.

Classroom based safeguarding training?

This was confirmed as referring to face to face training as opposed to online.

Appraisal rate?

This was confirmed as referring to the completion rate for the 2018/19 appraisals (96%), and that there were only a small number outstanding.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** Data Dashboard 2019/20 update report be noted and received.

19/17 FINANCE AND RESOURCES

17.1 Audit Committee Meeting – 25th November 2019

A report was received to provide the Corporation with an update on the work completed by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 25th November 2019 (circulated, document Dec 19/5).

Business considered included:

- Committee Terms of Reference
- Audit Committee Annual Report 2018/19
- Internal Audit Service Plan 2019/20

- Financial Statements for year ended 31st July 2019 (see minute 19/17.2)
- External Audit Findings Report and Letters of Representation (see minute 19/17.2)
- Students' Union Accounts 2018/19 (see minute 19/17.3)
- Internal Audit Service Annual Report 2018/19
- Progress against the Annual Internal Audit Plan 2019/20
- Annual Risk Management Report 2018/19 (see minute 19/17.4)
- Risk Management Policy (see minute 19/17.5)
- Strategic Risk Register 2019/20 (see minute 19/17.6)
- Annual Value for Money Report 2018/19

The Chair of the Committee commended the Vice Principal Finance and Resources and the Finance Team for the clean accounts.

The Corporation was asked to **APPROVE**:

- The Audit Committee Terms of Reference

The Corporation was asked to **ACCEPT**:

- The Audit Committee Annual Report 2018/19

The Corporation was asked to **APPROVE**:

- The Internal Audit Service Plan 2019/20

Audit Committee Terms of Reference (circulated, document Dec 19/5, Appendix 1).

It was reported that the Committee had reviewed and agreed its compliance with the Terms of Reference. It was highlighted that following the ESFA letter to Chairs of Governors, July 2019, regarding Bournville College, the content was expected to impact the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Committee.: The Audit Committee would consider over this academic year how the ToR were to be updated and present the proposed revision for Corporation approval.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Audit Committee Terms of Reference 2019/20 be approved.

Audit Committee Annual Report 2018/19 (circulated, document Dec 19/5, Appendix 2).

It was noted that the Audit Committee had considered the contents of the Audit Committee Annual Report to the Corporation, including the reports provided by the internal and external audit service.

The main points of the report were:

- The Committee's opinion **was** that the College had adequate and effective audit arrangements and processes with regard to governance, risk management and control and for achieving economy, efficiency and effectiveness, the solvency of the institution and safeguarding of its assets.
- The Financial Statements Auditors had provided an unqualified opinion.
- Regularity Audit – the auditors concluded there were no issues of concern arising from the audit.
- Governor attendance at Corporation meetings was 72%.

Detail was provided on the findings of the internal audit reviews, other relevant reviews, Risk Management, the Internal Audit Service Opinion 2018/19, the financial statements and the regularity audit.

There was discussion of the need to improve attendance as far as possible to ensure effective governance, whilst acknowledging the impact of current membership vacancies.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Audit Committee Annual Report 2018/19 be accepted.

Internal Audit Plan 2019/20 (circulated, document Dec 19/5, Appendix 3).

It was noted that the Internal Audit Plan had been issued electronically for consideration following the last Audit Committee in June 2019. The Audit Committee formally noted its approval of the plan.

Two of the planned reviews had been completed and the reports considered by the Audit Committee.

The Committee had resolved that the proposed Internal Audit Plan 2019/20 be **recommended** for approval by the Corporation.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Internal Audit Plan 2019/20 be approved.

17.2 Financial Statements 2018/19

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented the Financial Statements 2018/19 and the External Audit Findings Report, which included Letters of Representation (circulated, document Dec 19/6).

It was reported that the Financial Statements had been reviewed by the Audit Committee which had confirmed that they were a clean set of accounts with no recommendations.

Key features of the Annual Accounts that were highlighted included:

- The retained surplus
- The impact of FRS 102 and the treatment of pension liabilities
- The Total Comprehensive Income for the Year, taking into account the actuarial loss in respect of defined benefit pension schemes
- Total net assets which were impacted by the Local Government Pension Scheme being treated as a long term creditor
- The bank covenants were met
- The College financial health assessment remained 'Good'
- Cash reserves that supported the assessment of the College as a Going Concern
- It was a clean, unqualified audit

Going Concern

- The Board was required to form a view in approving the accounts of whether the College remains a "going concern".
- The key consideration for the Board was whether there were cash flow forecasts and monthly budgets covering at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements.
- The financial plan indicated continued compliance with the bank covenants in 2019/20.
- Cash reserves remained high and sufficient to meet liabilities over the next 12 months.

Therefore, the recommendation was that the College continued to be a "going concern".

There was discussion of the impact of impact of the pension liability, with explanation provided as far as was possible given the complexity of the issues. It was summarised as:

- A debt of unknown quantity
- What it would cost if there was need to pay everyone's pension, immediately and in full.
- The position did vary as it is based on factors such as scheme membership numbers and age profile.

It was emphasised that this was not a cash transaction, and that changes to the format of the accounts also complicated the understanding of the position. Explanatory notes were provided within the accounts.

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources acknowledged the high standard of work in the accounts and confirmed that credit should be given to the Finance Manager, Ms Taylor-Farren, and her team.

External Audit Findings Report 2018/19

The Corporation agreed that the appendices (Emerging Issues) were particularly helpful for Governors.

The detail with regard to the reduction in the funding rates since 2011, and the detail on ESFA oversight were noted.

It was confirmed that the Auditors has reported to the Audit Committee that the quality of the financial management and the accounts meant that there was little work for them to do.

It was **RESOLVED THAT**

- i. the assessment that the College remained a 'Going Concern' be agreed;
- ii. the Financial Statements and Letters of Representation for the year ended 31st July 2019 be approved and signed.

17.3 Students' Union Accounts and Annual Report 2018/19

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources reported on the Students' Union Accounts and Annual Report 2018/19 (circulated, document Dec 19/7).

It was reported that these were separate to the college accounts, and were produced with support from the Finance Team.

It was noted that a small surplus had been achieved from the deficit position of 2017/18.

Detail was provided on the events that had taken place during the year.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Students' Union Accounts and Annual Report for year ended 31st July 2019 be noted.

17.4 Annual Risk Management Report 2018/19

The Vice Principal reported on the Annual Risk Management Report 2018/19 (circulated, document Dec 19/8).

- It was noted that the report was in the same format as previous years and had been considered by the Audit Committee.

Highlights included:

- annual review of the Risk Management Policy, approved by the Corporation in December 2018
- the SAR process included an analysis of risk which identified the Operational Risk Register for each department
- updates on progress had been provided to the Committee and Corporation throughout the year
- analysis of categorisation of risks for 2017/18 and comparison with 2016/17 (details provided).
- 23 strategic risks identified for 2018/19 , the same as for 2017/18

The report provided further information on actions taken within the year in relation to mitigating risk, referencing the risks to performance against the agreed KPIs from the data dashboard as appropriate, and detailing any additional actions taken.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Annual Risk Management Report 2018/19 be noted and received.

17.5 Risk Management Policy

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources reported on the Risk Management Policy (circulated, electronically).

There were no revisions to the policy.

It was confirmed that the policy had been considered by the Audit Committee and was recommended for the approval of the Corporation.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Risk Management Policy be approved.

17.6 Strategic Risk Register 2019/20

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources reported on the Strategic Risk Register 2018/19 (circulated, document Dec 19/10).

It was confirmed that the Strategic Risk Register had been updated for 2019/20, which included revised RAG ratings where appropriate. Changes were highlighted in yellow and reflected the current position of the College.

- The review had increased the number of strategic risks at 25 (from 23) to include Brexit and the DSA Centre
- Increased the significant risks to 7 (from 6)
- The number of risks assessed as contingent remained as 13
- 5 risks were assessed as house-keeping

The proposed Strategic Risk Register 2019/20 had been considered by the Audit Committee and was recommended for approval by the Corporation.

Discussion points included:

- The update local media
- The assessment of Risk 14 as significant even after the controls and mitigation

It was advocated that Risk 14: Failure to ensure the ongoing financial viability of the college remained a significant risk year on year as a result of the funding uncertainties.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Strategic Risk Register 2019/20 be approved.

17.7 ESFA Financial Health Assessments and Financial Dashboard

The Corporation considered the ESFA Financial Health Assessments and Financial Dashboard (circulated, document Dec 19/11).

The report confirmed the financial assessment of the College for 2018/19 and 2019/20 as 'Good'.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the ESFA Financial Health Assessments and Financial Dashboard be noted and received.

17.8 Monthly Management Accounts

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented the Monthly Management Accounts for Month 3 (circulated, document Dec 19/12).

The report detailed the forecast outturn position based on the first three months of the year and assumptions about the remainder of the year.

A summary of the position at the end of October was provided.

Detail of key issues included

- Forecast operating surplus
- The Financial health assessment
- Performance against target for other income
- Underspends, with detail provided
- Student numbers
- The cash balance at the end of the period
- Work completed against the capital budget

Detail of key risks was provided which at this stage included earning AEB income.

It was confirmed that the management team were confident with regard to the forecasts and what was being presented and that historically forecasting had proved to be accurate.

There was discussion of the AEB and that if the allocation was achieved if the College would seek extra funding.

It was confirmed that this would be the case as long as it was to fund provision that met with the priorities of the WMCA.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Month 3 Management Accounts be noted and received.

17.9 Anti-Money Laundering Policy

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented the Anti-Money Laundering Policy (circulated, document Dec 19/13).

It was reported that this was a new policy required within the existing suite of financial policies and procedures.

Discussion points included the cash threshold at which the regulations became applicable and the identified Money Laundering Nominated Officer (MLNO).

It was confirmed that the Vice Principal Finance and Resources was the nominated (MLNO).

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Anti-Money Laundering Policy be approved.

19/18 Safeguarding and Prevent Update

The Vice Principal Safeguarding and Pastoral Care presented a Safeguarding Update Report 2018/19 (circulated, document Dec 19/14).

The report provided detail on a number of aspects:

- Operational MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team)
- Clinical MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team)
- Prevent Steering Group
- Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Working Group
- Coventry Police and Schools Panel
- Safeguarding Data
- External Referrals
- Internal Safeguarding concern categories
- Staff and Governor Training

In terms of the data presented there was an increase of approximately 25 learners as at this point in the previous year.

Further detail was provided on the internal safeguarding categories, and that most of the behaviour incidents had related to low level misdemeanours under the Code of Conduct and the support offered to those learners with mental health issues.

Discussion points included:

Clarification was sought with regard to the internal safeguarding categories, specifically if the data on bullying also included harassment, as bullying was considered to cover a number of aspects of behaviour.

It was suggested that the student governor meet with the Vice Principal Safeguarding and Pastoral Care to look at the reporting systems and to feed back to the next meeting in February 2020.

The allegation against staff was raised.

Further detail was provided and it was confirmed that this did not relate to an employee of the College.

It was commented that the report provided a strong level of assurance.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Safeguarding Update Report be noted and received.

19/19 QUALITY AND STANDARDS

19.1 Quality and Standards Committee Meeting – 25th November 2019

A report was presented on the Quality and Standards Committee Meeting – 21st November 2018 (circulated, document Dec 19/15).

It was noted that the after consideration by the Committee a number of the items of business were now presented to the Corporation for consideration and approval (see later minutes).

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the update report from the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee held on 25th November 2019 be noted and received.

19.2 Retention, Achievement and Pass 2018/19

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum reported on the Retention, Achievement and Pass rates 2018/19 (circulated, document Dec 19/16).

Points highlighted included:

- Retention on one particular Pathway had improved by 13 percentage points.
- Overall r rates for the provision were:

Achievement:	89%
Pass:	93%
Retention:	95%
- Detail on withdrawals was provided.
- Mental Health was a key focus for the College, with work continuing to support positive mental health

Discussion points included:

Assurances with regard to retention and the links to income.

It was reported that there was an 'at risk' list that was considered by the SLT on a weekly basis.

The time taken to show a withdrawal from a programme.

It was explained that this was a result of continuous work over a period of time to adapt the programme to the learner needs. Ultimately the result had been withdrawal from the qualification programme, after work had commenced on a RARPA programme.

Discussion and explanation of retention, achievement and pass and how they interact in terms of reported outcomes.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the report on Retention, Achievement and Pass 2018/19 be noted and received.

19.3 Self-Assessment Report 2018/19

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum reported on the Self-Assessment Report 2018/19 (circulated, document Dec 19/17).

It was confirmed that the report had twice been considered in detail by the Quality and Standards Committee with suggested revisions incorporated in the document presented.

Members were requested to have particular regard to the self-assessed grades.

Points highlighted included:

- Key area for improvement – significant progress was being made to further develop relationships with employers and decrease dependency on the charitable sector (pg. 9).
- The support of Job Coaches for learners in preparing to meet employer need (pg.13).
- Additional detail provided linked to retention, achievement and success and reference to skills and standards (pg. 20).
- *Grade 3: leaders engage with their staff and are aware and take account of the main pressures on them. They are realistic and constructive in the way they manage staff including their workload.* This was evidenced via the responses to the staff survey.

Discussion points included:

What action was taken when the SAR was approved

It was confirmed that it was published and shared with Ofsted.

The potential value of highlighting to staff that the College recognised the survey outcome with regard to engaging with them to take account of the pressures and to be realistic and constructive in the way this is managed.

It was suggested that there was the potential to be over critical, that it was unclear where there was insufficient engagement (management or staff) and this was only one aspect of well-being. It was reported that this had been considered in detail by the SLT and the pressures on staff were acknowledged.

The timing of the survey

It was confirmed that the survey had been conducted late in the academic year (June) and was the first completed for a number of years.

Work had been completed to garner more detail with regard to some of the outcomes from the survey.

It was commented that it was agreed that there could be an element of being over critical, however it was to be commended that further work had been completed to try to identify, understand and address the issues.

It was suggested that it was an area where rapid improvements could be made, and that consideration should be given to the value of communicating with staff.

It was reported that the results of the staff survey had been published with a commitment to publish the progress against the outcomes. Detail was provided (staff breaks/lunch).

Future actions – it was suggested that consideration be given to completing a full staff survey earlier in the year (March).

It was suggested that members could agree with the report and the evidence, however, going forward there needed to be more consideration the new Education Inspection Framework and the evidence of impact – how was this being captured?

It was confirmed that this was under consideration, including the use of a baseline assessment and evidence of distance travelled.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Self-Assessment Report 2018/19 be approved.

19.4 Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP) 2019/20

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum reported on the Quality Improvement Plan (circulated, document Dec 19/18).

It was confirmed that the Quality Improvement Plan was based on the findings of the SAR, and had been considered in detail by the Quality and Standards Committee which had resulted in some suggested amendments.

It was noted that the report format was the same as that used previously.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Quality Improvement Plan 2018/19 be approved.

19.5 Destinations

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum presented the Destinations Report (circulated, document Dec 19/19).

Points highlighted included:

- The report provided more detail than the SAR
- A high percentage of leavers in 2018/19 had a positive destination when leaving College
- 20% of leavers secured paid employment following completion of their programme of study
- 152 leavers returned in September 2019 following completion of their programme in June.
- Positive progression through the curriculum was supported
- A breakdown by curriculum pathway was provided
- Data with regard to destinations was provided
- Comparative data was provided

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the report on Destinations 2018/19 be noted and received.

19.6 Equalities Data 2018/19 for Publication

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum reported on the Equalities Data (circulated, document Dec 19/20).

It was noted that the format was the same as in previous years, and presented the diversity profile of learners and staff.

It was confirmed that work was progressing with regard to addressing identified discrepancies, and particularly the need to better match the learner and staff profile.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Equalities Data Report 2018/19 be approved for publication.

19/20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Remuneration Committee

It was confirmed that a meeting of the Remuneration Committee needed to be convened. The membership of the Committee was not at full complement and Governors were requested to consider volunteering to join the Committee.

The Clerk would email all Governors in due course.

- Response rates

It was noted that a number of recent issues had required response to emails issued by the Clerk. In order to increase effectiveness and efficiency, members were asked to try to ensure that they responded to such requests from the Clerk as soon as possible, and in instances where this was not possible to send a 'holding email'.

19/21 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 13th February 2020.

Signed:

Chairman

Date: