

Minutes of: CORPORATION

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Time: 5:00pm

Place: The Conference Room, The Lodge

Present: Mr S Brand  
Ms M Cook  
Mr P Cook (Principal)  
Mr W Horne  
Mr R Jones  
Mr M Maffey  
Ms L Miervaldis  
Mr I Pursglove (Chair)  
Mr D Skinner  
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)  
Ms J Taylor-Farren (Finance Manager)  
Mrs Y Doherty (Clerk to the Corporation)

**The Chair welcomed Ms Taylor-Farren to the meeting. Ms Taylor-Farren had been invited to observe as she would be attending future meetings as part of the interim arrangements to cover the role of Vice Principal Finance and Resources until a permanent appointment was made.**

**19/22 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Ms K Ainge and Ms J Lewis-Bell.

**19/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**19/24 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting (circulated, document Feb 20/1) held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019 were considered.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2019 be approved.

**19/25 MATTERS ARISING**

19/16.2 Principal's Report – an update on the potential training of ILS staff was requested. It was confirmed that this had been given further consideration and that a potentially appropriate apprenticeship framework and provider had been identified. It was agreed that that this could potential assist with recruitment to the roles.

**19/26 STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**

**26.1 Principal's Report**

The Principal provided a report to members of the Corporation with a brief update on recent curriculum developments (circulated, document Feb 20/2).

This included:

- Student Applications
- Warwickshire LA 14-16 provision
- Business Breakfast and Careers Engagement
- Ministerial Visit
- Communication improvements

Attention was drawn to

- Student Applications

These had been lower than expected over the first term, but that there was now evidence of a steady increase. Warwickshire LA had introduced a new process which was involved consultation based on an EHCP, which was provided in advance of an application. The position was still subject to monitoring by the SLT.

There remained concern with regard to residential learners, with a decline in numbers continuing.

A paper would be presented to the next meeting with regard to a number of options.

- 14- 16 provision

Discussions had been held, and investigations into the prescribed requirements were in progress. It was agreed that whilst further exploratory work could progress in this area, any agreement to proceed into this area would be subject to further papers to the Board and further approval.

- Ministerial Visit

The event had been a success and provided an opportunity for media exposure. It was now intended to use this as a 'springboard' for further marketing initiatives.

- Communication

Management were working on an action plan to address identified issues which had been shared with staff, and detail was provided of where improvements had been made.

Discussion points included:

EHCP consultations: was the revised process of consultation a technicality if the College was named in the EHCP?

It was confirmed that in the majority of cases the EHCP did identify Hereward as the provider, but the LA had considered that the revised process might reduce the time taken to process a placement without a full appreciation of the need for the College to meet with the individual and complete an assessment.

Some of the EHCPs submitted for consultation were for learners with complex presentations, and were speculative as a provider had yet to be identified.

It was queried if the College had questioned the introduction of the revised process.

It was stated that it had taken some time to receive an explanation and understand the process.

14 -16 provision

The Chair reported that he had discussed this separately with the Principal and that the paper to be presented to the next meeting of the Corporation was welcomed as it would provide the basis for Governors to consider a potential strategic change that would require approval.

Initial discussions had included concern as to where such provision would be located and potential disruption to the College; and the advantages to the LA to providing the capital resources with the College supplying the staff and expertise.

It was acknowledged that this would also address any potential safeguarding issues. Further discussions were planned for early March 2020.

The position of other LAs in relation to 14-16 provision was queried. It was reported that there were issues for other LAs and there had also been recent discussions. It was requested that the report to the next meeting include detail on discussions/developments with all LAs concerned.

The decline in residential placements was raised. It was again confirmed that this related to LA funding and the localism agenda, however, the College had seen an increase in placements from regional LAs.

52-week provision – an update was requested. It was reported that a number of issues had been identified which needed further exploration, and in particular the need to ensure the required expertise to provide for the learners that such provision would attract.

Modelling had been completed on the basis of 4 learners but this now required review and revision, especially as the degree of management time required had been confirmed to be more than had been anticipated.

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

## 26.2 Student Numbers

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum presented a report on the Student Numbers (circulated, document Feb 20/3).

- Recruitment was currently lower than at the same point last year
- The position was being monitored by the SLT
- The data in relation to the new 'consultation' process was included

Discussion points included:

Applications by Pathway

It was confirmed that the Explorer Pathway had the most level of interest.

Predicted decrease in residential learners – financial modelling to address the loss of income. It was reported that previous modelling had been completed but that it needed to be refreshed. It was emphasised that there was no cross-subsidisation.

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

## 26.3 Data Dashboard 2019/20

The Data Dashboard was considered (circulated, document Feb 20/4).

Discussion points included:

% of teachers observed

It was reported that although the data indicated that this was RAG rated, observations were on target with the current position being attributable to long-term sick absence and maternity leave.

It was suggested that as the reasons were known should consideration be given to whether the data reported was overly critical.

% of observed lessons where learning support is identified as good or better

It was acknowledged that this was currently 3%c below the outcome for 2018/19 against a stretching target. This was being monitored.

% of observed lessons where effective consideration is given to Equality and Diversity.  
It was reported that this could be difficult to quantify and could be subject to over critical assessment. The approach taken was that where it was not *highlighted* as a positive strength then the performance indicator was not considered to have been met.

It was queried as to whether this was the most appropriate criteria and if it needed to be adapted, e.g. 'leaners needs met'

It was confirmed that the performance indicator had been adapted over a number of years and that it continued to be reviewed to ensure that it was effective.

Distance Learning retention rates – was this attributable to previous recruitment processes?

It was reported that it was as a result of much more robust management processes e.g. ensuring timely completion.

AEB allocation – good performance was noted.

Staff turnover and sickness absence rate – good performance against the performance indicators was noted.

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

## 19/27 STRATEGIC PLAN – Delivery Plan Update

The Principal provided an update report on the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2019 - 2021 (circulated, document Feb 20/5).

Points highlighted included:

- *Point 2.3:* the actions being taken to upskill college staff to meet the ever more complex needs of the changing learner cohort. This area would continue to be a challenge for some time.
- *Point 2.7:* summary of the curriculum developments to meet employer and learner needs
- *Point 3.3:* the significant amount of work completed to secure an effective relationship with an apprenticeship provider
- *Point 4.4:* Staff welfare is a very important issue for the College with detail of the actions to address this provided.

Discussion points included:

### 2.1 External review of Teaching Learning and Assessment

It was confirmed that the engagement of an Ofsted inspector to complete this was scheduled for the end of the Spring term/beginning of the Summer term.

### 2.1 Improved grade profile

It was confirmed that there had been an increase in the number of observations assessed as at the required standard and so not requiring re-observation.

### 2.4 Introduction of Higher Level Teaching Assistant role

It was reported that this initiative had been introduced at the end of the last academic year to reduce agency staff costs and to develop ILS staff. This had proved successful with improved response from learners in the absence of teaching staff.

### 3.3 Apprenticeship provider – students?

It was confirmed that the students would be registered with the providers and the College did not have a contract to deliver apprenticeships. The College would offer the access to work support.

### 3.3 Apprenticeship provider – financial impact

It was reported that this had not been established as the project was only at the inception stage.

It was emphasised that it would be good practice to ensure the involvement of the finance team from the beginning.

The initiative to invest in and develop staff was welcomed.

### 4.4 Staff Welfare Policy

Discussion of the separate provision of Mental Health support to staff and learners.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** Strategic Plan – Delivery Plan update report be noted and received.

## 19/28 FINANCE and RESOURCES

### 28.1 Monthly Management Accounts

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented the Monthly Management Accounts for Month 3 (circulated, document Feb 20/6).

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

A summary of the position at the end of December 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.

The AEB was now split between the West Midlands Combined Authority and the ESFA. The current forecast is that the College will earn the full allocation and be slightly over. A bid to the WMCA would be put together to receive an extra allocation to allow further recruitment.

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.

Discussion points included:

Confirmation that actions taken to deliver the financial position were included in the 2018/19 accounts. The good financial stewardship was noted and commended.

Other income – performance against target and associated risks

This was recognised as a high-risk area, but the position continued to improve and was subject to regular monitoring. It was also accounted for in the overall forecasting process.

Income and Expenditure:

Staffing costs/vacancy rate

It was reported that there would not necessarily be a linear relationship between the two due to issues such as variances in pay rates

Transport and Professional Fees

Explanation for the variances was provided.

Key indicators – use of amounts rather than percentages

It was suggested and agreed that it would be advantageous to include both in future reports.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Month 5 Management Accounts be noted and received.

## **28.2 Integrated Financial Model for Colleges (IFMC)**

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented a paper on the IFMC (circulated, document Feb 20/7).

Explanation of the introduction of this return by the ESFA was provided, and in particular the intention that it would assist governors to identify instances of financial trouble at an earlier stage.

It was reported that the IFMC had presented some considerable difficulties, with detail provided that included:

- significant challenges in terms of the format
- the return covered four years
- setting a budget for 2020/21 at this stage of the year
- the assumptions
- confirmation of what had been set and the financial health of the College for 2020/21 and 2021/22
- check list for the supporting commentary

**It was highlighted that the final submission would need to be issued to Governors when completed (anticipated to be w/c 17.03.20). Governors would then need to confirm their approval within 24 hours of receiving it to ensure compliance with the ESFA deadline of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020.**

Discussion points included:

Would the final report be significantly different

It was confirmed that there would be little change as the figures would remain the same.

It was commented that there was agreement with the prudent approach adopted and an appreciation of the difficulties experienced in delivering against the requirements. It was also acknowledged that although the assumptions used were explained there was an understanding that the position could vary dependent on a number of factors including the mix of the learner cohort.

The Corporation expressed its thanks to the Vice Principal Finance and Resources and Finance Manager for what had been achieved.

It was **RESOLVED THAT**

- i. the IFMC report be noted and received;
- ii. when complete the final commentary would be issued electronically for approval;
- iii. Governors would to respond within 24 hours

### 28.3 HR – Autumn Term Report

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented the HR Autumn Term Report (circulated, document Feb 20/8).

Detail was provided on:

- Staff Turnover, which was below target;
- Number of Employee Relations Issues;
- Vacancy Rate;
- Core Training;
- Sickness absence rate;
- Appraisal completion rate;
- Policies and procedures;
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- Buddying scheme;

Discussion points included:

Staff turnover – data with regard to leavers, was this of concern?

It was advocated that this was not considered to be the case as this was the first year that work had been completed to develop processes to deliver better analysis.

Staff turnover - vacancy rate

It was confirmed that this was reported on a rolling 12-month basis, and that it was under the previous college average.

Staff turnover – exit questionnaires

It was confirmed that work was in progress to be more proactive with regard to this.

Sickness absence rate

It was highlighted that this was over the rate reported by the AoC but under the College target. It was also noted that there were no staff on long-term sickness absence.

It was noted sickness absence triggers were utilised for sickness management processes and it was requested that more data be provided in the next report.

It was **RESOLVED THAT**

- i. the HR report be noted and received;
- ii. future reports be developed to include high level data in relation to triggers of the sickness management processes

### 28.4 GDPR/Data Protection Update

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented a Data Protection update report (circulated, document Feb 20/9).

An update on progress included:

- The work of the Data Protection Group;
- No reported breaches;
- 9 Data Subject Access Requests, with detail
- Issues dealt with by the DPO
- Training data
- Progress against the Action Plan for 2019/20

Discussion points included

Third party processing.

Detail was provided.

Data process outside of the EU  
It was confirmed that this was in progress

Training – completion by Governors  
It was noted that some governors had yet to complete the online GDPR training. It was agreed that the Clerk would follow up with the individuals and a further update on this would be presented to the next meeting.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the GDPR/Data Protection update report be noted and received.

### **28.5 Procedure for the Administration of 16-24 Bursaries**

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented the reviewed Procedure for the Administration of 16-24 Bursaries (circulated, document Feb 20/10).

It was noted that the amendments were highlighted and that the contents were based on the ESFA rules

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Procedure for the Administration of 16-24 Bursaries be approved.

### **28.6 West Midlands Pension Fund 2019 Valuation**

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented a report on the revaluation of the LGPS (circulated, document Feb 20/11).

Highlights included:

- An increase in contribution rates from the current 19.2% to 21%
- The removal of the past service deficit payment (currently £108,000 per year)
- The net impact is that the College will be better off in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the West Midlands Pension Fund 2019 Valuation report be noted and received.

## **19/29 SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT**

### **29.1 Safeguarding Update Report**

The Corporation considered a Safeguarding Update Report (circulated, document Feb 20/12).

The report provided detail on a number of aspects:

- Operational MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team)
- Clinical MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team)
- Safeguarding Committee
- Safeguarding Quality Assurance Process
- Safeguarding External Audit
- Safeguarding Data
- External Referrals
- Internal Safeguarding concern categories
- Staff and Governor Training.

Discussion points included:

Allegations against staff

It was confirmed that this was close to resolution and was not considered to be serious.

It was requested that future reports should provide data on any allegations against staff, anonymised appropriately.

Training – completion by Governors

It was noted that some governors had yet to complete the online GDPR training. It was agreed that the Clerk would follow up with the individuals and that a further update will be provided at the next meeting.

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

### **29.2 Personal and Social Development Policy**

The Corporation considered the reviewed Personal and Social Development Policy (circulated, document Feb 20/13).

It was noted that there were minimal amendments which were highlighted.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Personal and Social Development Policy be approved.

### **29.3 Fitness to Study Policy**

The Corporation considered the reviewed Fitness to Study Policy (circulated, document Feb 20/14).

It was noted that there were minimal amendments which were highlighted. It was also confirmed that the Fitness to Study Committee met on an ad-hoc basis. It had met once this academic year

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Fitness to Study Policy be approved.

### **29.4 Positive Touch and the Use of Reasonable Force Policy**

The Corporation considered the reviewed Positive Touch and the Use of Reasonable Force Policy (circulated, document Feb 20/15).

It was noted that the amendments which were highlighted.

Discussion points included

The introduction of a post incident debriefing and the inclusion of ‘positive touch’, the meaning of which was explained, were constructive developments.

The lack of a definitive timescale for instances of informing third parties was queried.

Factors affecting this were explained.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Positive Touch and the Use of Reasonable Force Policy be approved.

## **19/30 QUALITY AND STANDARDS**

### **30.1 Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP) 2019/20**

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum reported on the Quality Improvement Plan (circulated, document Feb 20/16).

The following points were highlighted:

- A range of new employers had been identified (page 1/2).
- Intended refurbishment of the Lodge ‘Café’ (page 7)
- Successful transition of specific learner with complex presentations (page 8)
- Impact of the pilot use of tablets (page 15)
- Establishment of a health and well-being cross college group (page 19)
- Communication improvement plan (page 20)
- Outstanding governor training (page 20)

Discussion points included:

Loss of 11 learners (page 13) – did not re-join as expected or were withdrawals since September 2019, impact on retention?

It was confirmed that some may contribute to the retention data.

Introduction of Mental Health First Aiders for staff

It was confirmed that discussions continued.

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

### **30.2 Complaints Report Autumn Term 2019/20**

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum reported on the Complaints Report – Autumn Term 2019/20 (circulated, document Feb 20/17).

The report summarised the key headline data from complaints received by the College during the Autumn term 2019/20

The number of complaints received continued to decline and had reduced by three in comparison with the Autumn Term 2018.

Comparative data was provided.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Complaints Report Autumn Term 2019/20 be noted and received.

### **30.3 Governor Learning Walks**

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum provided an update on Governor participation in Learning Walks, arranged as part of the IQR process.

Two Governors had participated in Learning Walks prior to the Christmas break. This had included a number of classroom visits as well as experiencing seasonal events that were taking place.

The Governors involved confirmed that it had been a positive experience and that the learners had been engaged.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the update on Learning Walks be noted.

## **19/31 GOVERNANCE**

### **Governor Link Scheme Autumn Term 2019/20**

The Corporation considered a report on the Link Scheme Autumn Term 2019/20 (circulated, document Feb 20/18).

Detail included:

- Four Governors (from a possible eight) completed autumn term link visits.
- All Governors have provided feedback;
- All Managers provided feedback on the link visits completed for the autumn term;
- Feedback is positive, including confirmation of better understanding of the work of the departments/areas.

It was suggested that feedback from the scheme and any actions/impact should be used as part of the self-assessment process.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the report on the Governor Link Scheme Autumn Term 2019/20 be noted and received.

**19/32 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- Retirement of the Vice Principal Finance and Resources

The Chair confirmed that this was the last Corporation meeting that Ms Reynolds would attend before her retirement in March

Members expressed thanks and appreciation for Ms Reynolds hard work and commitment to the College and again commended her for her exemplary financial stewardship.

Members extended their best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

There was no other business for consideration.

**19/21 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date of next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020.

**Signed:**

**Chairman**

**Date:**