

Minutes of: CORPORATION

Date: 28th March 2019

Time: 5:00pm

Place: Board Room (L3.13)

Present: Mr S Brand (via Skype)
 Ms M Cook
 Mr P Cook (Principal)
 Mr R Jones
 Mr M Lynch (Chair)
 Mr M Maffey
 Ms L Miervaldis
 Mr I Pursglove
 Ms J Rexworthy
 Mr D Skinner (from 5.15pm)
 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)

18/35 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A Hunt and Mr J Bull.

18/36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

18/37 SEARCH and GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Further to the email issued by the Clerk on 20th March 2019, the Chair confirmed that, having received applications from Ms Kristy Ainge and Cllr David Skinner, the Search & Governance Committee had met to interview them on 18th March 2019.

The Committee had concluded that Ms Ainge and Mr Skinner had appropriate skills and expertise to meet the current needs of the Board, with the detail having been provided in the email from the Clerk.

The Search and Governance Committee recommended the appointment of Ms Ainge and Mr Skinner for a four-year term of office with effect from 28th March 2019.

It was noted that Governors had responded to the email to indicate their support of the appointments of Ms Ainge and Mr Skinner¹.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** Ms Ainge and Mr Skinner be appointed as a Governor for a four year term of office with effect from 28th March 2019.

Mr Skinner joined the meeting

¹ Evidence to be filed with signed, hard copy of minutes

18/38 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting (circulated, document Mar 19/1) held on 14th February 2019 were considered.

It was **RESOLVED THAT**, the minutes of the meeting held on 14th February 2019 be approved.

18/39 MATTERS ARISING**18/31.1 Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP) 2018/19**

It was noted that the minutes indicated that the next meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee would consider detail on observations that had been assessed as good/better/outstanding.

This had not been provided at the meeting on 13th March 2019 so would be carried forward to the scheduled meeting on 19th June 2019.

NOTES FROM THE STRATEGY EVENT HELD ON 14th FEBRUARY 2019

The notes from the Strategy Event held on 14th February 2019 were considered (circulated, document Mar 19/2).

The Principal confirmed that the event had been helpful and that the feedback from Governors would be incorporated into the next version of the Strategic Plan.

It was **RESOLVED THAT**, the notes from the Strategy Event on 14th February 2019 be approved.

18/40 STANDING AGENDA ITEMS**40.1 Principal's Report**

The Principal provided a report to members of the Corporation with a brief update on internal and external developments (circulated, document March 19/3).

Detail was provided on:

- *Strategy Day*
- *Work with the University of Birmingham*
- *Industry partners*
- *Rebranding and refurbishment of the residential offer*

Discussion included:

- **Strategy Day/Strategic Plan**

It was reported that the next iteration of the Strategic Plan would be more ambitious with the focus on moving towards outstanding.

The proposed timetable for reporting and monitoring the plan was confirmed:

- There would be an annual cycle of reporting that would begin with a two year plan presented for approval in the summer term, this would provide detail of first year actions including an action plan for monitoring
- The action plan would be approved during the summer term and a review of progress reported in the Spring term, most likely February.
- The second year of the plan would be less detailed and would be reviewed and adapted as necessary before an annual review in the summer term when it would form the first year of the next two year plan
- The plan approved in the summer term would be for implementation from the September

- [Work with the University of Birmingham](#)

The potential for a research project had been identified, but the funding for such a project now had to be found.

[The College links with other local universities](#) – links were confirmed to be place, but had not developed into anything as tangible as the proposed work with Birmingham.

[It was noted that both local universities continued to have plans to develop their estates.](#)

- [Industry Partners](#)

Further to the recent update with regard to a potential construction curriculum, after review it was confirmed that there was no capacity to deliver this in September 2019 and so it would be considered for September 2020.

- [Rebranding and refurbishment of the residential offer – 52 week provision](#)

Costings indicated that this potential offer was competitive and so it would be progressed. There remained uncertainty with regard to the required staffing levels but there was considered to be a market for the offer.

[The issue of quality was raised](#) – it was confirmed that this was paramount and there would be a preference to utilise existing staff to ensure quality.

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

40.2 Student Numbers

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum presented a report on the Student Numbers (circulated, document Mar 19/4).

- Current forecast numbers for 2019/20 had increased
- The number of total applications was more than at the same point last year
- There was the potential for the total number of learners for 2019/20 to be more than 2018/19

[Discussion points included](#)

- [Residential applications, would the projected figure remain static or could there be later applications](#)
- [Confidence in achieving the forecast numbers](#)

It was reported that it was difficult to predict what the residential numbers would be, although it was anticipated that the eventual number would be slightly lower than for 2018/19.

In terms of the confidence that applications would convert into placements it was recognised that this would be influenced by a number of factors, including funding. It was reported that work continued on those learners that were in the process of transitioning and where appropriate efforts were made to offer progression, subject to funding.

It was confirmed that there was satisfaction with the recruitment processes being followed.

It was noted that there were increased numbers from Solihull Local Authority (LA) and that applications were still being received and interviews still to be held.

[It was requested if the report could also include the breakdown of numbers by LA. This was agreed.](#)

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

40.3 Data Dashboard 2018/19

The Data Dashboard was considered (circulated, document March 19/5).

It was reported that there was little change since it was last considered (February 2019), with the VPs having no specific issues to highlight to Governors.

Discussion points included:

- It was noted that the data for the staff appraisal rate 2017/18 was now considered final.
- Distance Learning Achievement Rates Amber
Was this an area of concern or was it envisaged that it would improve
It was confirmed that this was being monitored closely, not least due to AEB devolution to the WMCA.
The processes associated with identifying and enrolling learners was discussed.
It was suggested and agreed that more detail on this issue be reported to the next meeting of the Corporation on 16th May 2019.
- Would the 100% target of staff in support roles being observed be achieved?
It was reported that this would be the case.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Data Dashboard 2018/19 update report be noted and received.

18/41 STRATEGIC PLAN – Complex Learner Provision

The Principal presented a report on the Complex Learner Provision (Aspire) (circulated, document Mar 19/6).

Points highlighted in the report included:

- The quality of the Aspire provision must be the overriding factor in its development and expansion.
- The College should restrict the total Aspire learner cohort numbers for September 2019 in order to guarantee it had adequately experienced staff suitable for the provision.
- The educational character of the College would be preserved as long as this discrete provision was well managed.

Discussion points included:

- The provision had been established 12 months in advance of expectations.
- The potential further growth and impact of the provision.
- The need to recruit appropriately qualified and experienced staff.
- An increase in the cohort following the Easter break.
- The need to restrict the growth of the provision to ensure it could be effectively managed and delivered.
- The suggestion that a limited increase to the cohort could possibly be managed from September 2019, dependent on the recruitment of staff. The potential for existing staff to be allocated to delivery of the provision, if the vacancies created could be recruited to.
- Consideration of the educational character of the College would necessitate the need to balance the provision to ensure the College continued to attract learners in line with the current and future offer.
- The support of the LAs for the provision.
- The need for a cautious approach to the increase of the specialist complex provision.

- **Confidence to support the additional cohort for entry after the Easter break was queried.**
It was confirmed that this could be done.
- **Accommodation**
It was reported that expenditure on accommodation had been managed from within original budgetary resources.
- **A variety of points associated with the expansion of the provision were highlighted and the need for a cautious approach to the further development of the provision for complex learners was supported.**
- **It was acknowledged that nonetheless this was an exciting development that offered great potential for the future, whilst recognising the need for balance in developing the College as a whole and its educational character.**

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the update report on Complex Learner Provision be noted and received.

18/42 SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENT

The Vice Principal Safeguarding and Pastoral Care presented a Safeguarding Update Report (circulated, document Mar 19/7).

The report provided detail on a number of aspects:

- Operational MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team)
- Clinical MDT (Multi-Disciplinary Team)
- Staff training
- Safeguarding Manager vacancy
- Prevent
- Safeguarding Committee
- Safeguarding Data
- Attendance at the Adult Safeguarding Board meeting

Discussion points included:

- **Safeguarding Manager Vacancy**
The College had advertised more widely than previously, and there had been a slight change of focus for the role in relation to behaviour management.
- **External referrals**
There had been a slight increase but this correlated with the position in general as reported at the Adult Safeguarding Board meeting.
- **Training**
Data indicated a reduction in the percentage of staff having completed the 'face to face' training with the reasons for this understood.
- **Breaches of the Code of Conduct**
These were confirmed to all be minor misdemeanours.
- **Patterns/trends**
There had been an increase in instances of neglect and physical abuse, specific to particular Pathways.
- **Relationship with the Local Authority Designated Officer**
A meeting had yet to take place with the new appointee.
It was suggested, and agreed, that the College would invite the LADO to the College.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Safeguarding Update Report 2018/19 be noted and received.

18/43 QUALITY AND CURRICULUM**43.1 Quality Improvement Plan (QuIP) 2018/19**

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum reported on the Quality Improvement Plan 2018/19 (circulated, document Mar 19/8).

It was reported that this had been considered at the last meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee (13th March 2019).

The following points were highlighted:

- *Retention (page 1)*

A number of learners had been highlighted as 'at risk' but retention levels remained static.

- *Visits to specialist colleges (page 5)*

Further visits were planned for the summer term.

- *Reduce anxiety of learners most at risk (page 9)*

Actions had been identified.

- *Review communication with parents (page 23)*

An audit had been completed.

There was discussion of curriculum planning, additional vocational areas and the involvement of employers.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Quality Improvement Plan 2018/19 update be noted and received.

43.2 Quality and Standards Committee Meeting -13th March 2019

An update from the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee held on 13th March 2019 (circulated, document March 19/9) was received.

The business considered and brought to the attention of the Corporation included:

- *QuIP 'Deep Dive'*

Detailed consideration of actions relevant to the review and development of the Curriculum, by pathway.

There was a common theme of working towards employment.

- *Hereward Training*

Detail on the Distance Learning provision and the available data had been discussed.

- *Employability and Enterprise - Update Report*

Data was provided on the internal and external work placements, and potential new partner employers.

- *Learner Leadership:*

Student Executive Committee

Detail was provided on the issues raised and considered in meetings between the SLT and Student Executive Committee.

LOOP

Detail of the process for 2018/19 and an update on progress against the outcomes from the 2017/18 report was provided.

- *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives*

A progress report was considered, which confirmed that the objectives had been cross-referenced with the QulP, with common themes identified in both.

The remaining business was to be considered as agenda items.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the update report from the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee held on 13th March 2019 be noted and received.

43.3 Internal Quality Review

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum reported on the Internal Quality Review (circulated, document Mar 19/10).

This report had been considered in detail by the Quality and Standards Committee.

The following points from across the Pathways were highlighted:

- Data on the observations of Teaching Learning and Assessment – some outstanding practice had been observed
- Broad improvement with regard to ILS
- Equality, diversity and Fundamental British Values
- Strategies to support non-verbal communication
- Diversity of the range of topics offered

Discussion points included:

- [The inclusion of the Aspire provision in the IQR process](#)

It was confirmed that this would be scheduled into the IQR cycle for completion before the end of the year.

- [Use of the report beyond presentation to the Corporation](#)

It was reported that the Pathway Leaders utilised the summary report to look at Areas for Improvement and planning.

- [It was agreed that the report provided a suitable level of detail and that the commentary was balanced. It was suggested that it be further developed where Areas for Improvement were identified to include what actions was required – in line with the reports produced by Ofsted.](#)

This was acknowledged, and it was stated that redefining the report in line with the new inspection framework was under consideration.

- [It was further suggested that it would be of use to include detail with regard to the inspection team, including training and development, to ensure consistency.](#)

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Internal Quality Review report be noted and received.

43.4 Projected Achievement and Pass Rates

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum reported on the Projected Achievement and Pass Rates (circulated, document Mar 19/11).

The following points were highlighted:

- The report provided detail on current retention and predicted achievement rates by Pathway
- The predictions reported for the last academic year had been largely accurate so the same process had been adopted for the 2018/19 academic year
- Retention continued to be carefully monitored
- Retention gaps were closing
- Detail was provided on withdrawals that would impact on achievement rates for 2018/19
- Overall predicted achievement rates based on current retention

There was discussion of retention impacting on two-year programs, the funding processes and the ILR.

It was noted that a report confirming actual performance would be presented at the start of the new academic year.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Projected Achievement and Pass Rates report be noted and received.

43.5 Learner Leadership

The Vice Principal Safeguarding and Pastoral Care reported on the Learner Involvement Activity Autumn and Spring Term 2018/2019 (circulated, document Mar 19/12).

The report had been considered by the Quality and Standards Committee.

Detail was provided on:

- Student Union
- Peer Support Team
- Student Executive
- Events
- The Disability Equality Advisory Panel
- Anti-bullying week
- Safer internet day

There was discussion of the impact of the new appointed Learner Involvement Co-ordinator.

Detail was provided on the work that had been progressed and planned going forward.

It was reported that there had been a very positive impact.

It was noted that the feedback from the Peer Support Team survey identified points for consideration, and the implementation of the suggestions was queried.

It was confirmed that these points were being discussed by the relevant Vice Principals.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Learner Involvement Activity Autumn and Spring Term 2018/2019 report be noted and received.

43.6 Employability and Enterprise Strategy 2019 - 2021

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum reported on the Employability and Enterprise Strategy (circulated, document Mar 19/13).

It was noted that this was the revised Employability and Enterprise strategy 2019 -2021, which had been reviewed by the Quality and Standards Committee. The strategy incorporated six key objectives:

- Objective 1: To embed an employability and enterprise culture within the College
- Objective 2: To prepare learners for life outside College
- Objective 3: To further embed employability within the curriculum
- Objective 4: To expand and extend the Supported Internship model
- Objective 5: To develop clear progression routes
- Objective 6: To implement an effective employer and partner engagement strategy

The purpose of the strategy was to set out a plan that allowed the College to continue to grow the effective delivery of employability, including employer engagement.

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum expressed her thanks for the contribution of the Business Development Manager.

It was confirmed that the Quality and Standards Committee had been supportive of the strategy and had recommended it for approval. It was commented that the document was comprehensive.

Discussion points included:

- [Consideration of careers to feed into employability](#)

It was confirmed that there were links with the 'Prospects' service and this would assist in the development of a careers strategy. This would link to the Gatsby benchmark and employability. It was anticipated that this would be completed by the end of May 2019.

- [Meeting the needs of the WMCA – and could the strategy include other devolved areas as they became operational.](#)

This was acknowledged, however the experience with regard to the Distance Learning provision had been problematic.

It was commented that the strategy was very broad, and it was suggested that as the process of devolution progressed the strategy would need to be reviewed and revised as appropriate. It was recognised that this might require the strategy to be considered at Corporation sooner than the two years envisaged.

- [Monitoring of the implementation plan](#)

It was confirmed that the Vice Principals would complete the monitoring process.

- [Traineeships – was there any ideas of numbers](#)

It was anticipated that numbers would be small and in response to individual need in the first instance. It was proposed that this would be a progression route.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Employability and Enterprise Strategy 2019 - 2021 be approved.

43.7 Behaviour Management Policy

The Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum presented the Behaviour Management and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures (circulated, document Mar 19/14).

The following points were highlighted:

- The Policy had been reviewed by the Educational Psychologist, members of the College management team and SLT.
- It was linked to the agreed values and behaviours.
- Comprehensive training to ensure consistent application and implementation was planned.
- There were proposed amendments to the reward system.
- The disciplinary process was largely unchanged.
- Key changes were highlighted in yellow.

Discussion points included:

- Suspension and investigation time limits, and could this be shortened.

This was confirmed to be the maximum time that would be necessary, and where possible the process would be completed sooner. It was reported that the maximum time limit has rarely been reached during the tenure of the Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum.

- Text of the example correspondence in the appendices – was this appropriate to the learner/recipient

This point was acknowledged, and it was confirmed that consideration would be given to ensuring that the correspondence was appropriate to each individual case.

- The process when suspension/exclusion was applied

It was reported that permanent exclusion had not been imposed during the tenure of the Vice Principal Quality and Curriculum. Where a learner was suspended, contact was maintained.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Behaviour Management and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures be approved.

18/44 FINANCE AND RESOURCES

44.1 Monthly Management Accounts

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources presented the Monthly Management Accounts for Month 7 (circulated, document Mar 19/15).

The report detailed the forecast outturn position at month 7 and assumptions about the remainder of the year.

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

Detail of key issues included

- The anticipated 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
- Monitoring of the risks associated with the AEB, current forecasts indicated that the allocation would be achieved

Discussion points included:

- Figures were very encouraging. Was the reporting of the operational variance specific to within the month and did not include any phasing?
It was confirmed that this was subject to the timing of when cash was received.
- It was really positive, with the work of the Vice Principal Finance and Resources and her team commended.
- Inclusion of the potential extra 'Aspire' learners after Easter?
This would not be actioned until it was confirmed.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the Monthly Management Accounts for Month 7 be noted and received.

44.2 Audit Committee Meeting – 8th March 2019

A report was received on the meeting of the Audit Committee from 8th March 2019 (circulated, document Mar 19/16).

Main items of business considered at the meeting:

- Risk Management
- Audits
 - ❖ Access Centre
- Internal Audit Service Reviews:
 - ❖ Risk Management 01.18/19
 - ❖ Financial Planning and Budgetary Control 02.18/19
 - ❖ Compliance with the GDPR 04.18/19
- Progress against the Annual Internal Audit Plan 2018/19
- Progress against audit recommendations
- Gifts and hospitality
- Policies

The Chair of the Audit Committee confirmed that the cleanliness of the internal audit reviews was to be commended.

There was discussion of the confidence in the audit plan being completed as agreed and that the outcomes would be positive. This was confirmed to be the case.

It was **RESOLVED THAT** the update report from the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 8th March 2019 be noted and received.

44.3 Policies

The Vice Principal Finance and Resources reported on the Policy Reviews (circulated, document Mar 19/17).

The following policies had been reviewed, and had been presented to the Audit Committee.

1. **Finance Regulations**
There were no changes to this policy.
2. **Treasury Management Policy**
There were no changes to this policy.
3. **Whistleblowing Policy**
There were no changes to this policy.
4. **Fraud Policy**
There were no changes to this policy.
5. **Value for Money Policy**
There were no changes to this policy.
6. **Bribery Policy**
There were no changes to this policy.

It was proposed that these policies were reviewed on a biennial basis, unless there was a requirement for any changes in the meantime.

The next review would take place in the spring term 2021.

The Audit Committee had recommended the policies for approval.

It was **RESOLVED THAT**

- i. the policies as detailed be approved;
- ii. the policies be reviewed on a biennial basis unless there was a requirement for amendment in the interim.

Governor Portal – it was acknowledged that some Governors were receiving reports in an electronic format (where requested), and an update with regard to the establishment of the portal was requested.

It was confirmed that work continued in relation to this, with a meeting to monitor the progress scheduled for prior to the Easter break. It was reported that it was intended that the format of the portal would allow Governors to sign in to access reports (as appropriate) and that it would also facilitate the storage of other associated documentation, e.g. approved policies and procedures.

18/46 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 16th May 2019.

Signed:

Chairman

Date: