

CORPORATION

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on Wednesday 26th October 2016 commencing at 9.35am in the Chadacre Room, Otley campus, Otley, Suffolk

Present

S Bendall	SB	Independent Member & Chair
F Baugh	FB	Independent Member
B Feltwell	BF	Independent Member
D Henley	DH	Principal
C Kerrison	CK	Staff Governor
G Pilcher	GP	Independent Member
D Redhead	DR	Independent Member
P Richardson	PR	Independent Member
P Thirkettle	PT	Independent Member
J Whyman	JW	Independent Member

In Attendance

R Robson	RR	Acting Clerk to the Corporation
M Wilkinson	MW	Director of Finance
C Nix	CN	Director of Estates
J West	JWe	Director of Funding, Reporting Services and IT
C Dyble	CD	Director of Enterprise and Marketing
L Wilson	LW	Curriculum Director
B Jones	BJ	Interim HR Director

Action

1. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

SB welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Mark Coleman, Sandra Dinneen, Colin Kerrison, Daniel Noble, Robert Sheasby and Malcolm Ferguson.

1.2 Timing of Agenda and items of Urgent Business

The Agenda was accepted and no additional items were received.

1.3 Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were declared:

- PR in relation to Morley
- GP in relation to RNAA
- DR in relation to Tex Holdings Ltd

No other declarations were received in relation to items on this Agenda.

1.4 Minutes of the Meeting of 20.7.2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2016 were **confirmed** as a true record of the meeting for signature by the Chair.

1.5 Minutes of the previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st September 2016 were **confirmed** as a true record of the meeting for signature by the Chair.

1.6 Actions and Matters Arising

The Clerk took Members through the Open Actions Tracker. It was **agreed** that actions 1 to 4, 7 and 9 to 12 were complete. Actions 5, 6 and 8 were **agreed** ongoing. In relation to item 8 GP asked that these dates be reviewed to ensure that they did not clash with either the Suffolk or Norfolk Shows.

DH advised that whilst the minutes in respect of item 3 on the agenda at the previous meeting were a correct record of the discussion he wished to highlight that not all fields on the KPI Report will be populated until the November meeting.

CN updated members on the sale of the Easton dairy herd, as referred to at paragraph 202.7 in the minutes from the meeting on 20th July 2016. JW queried how the prices received compared with the current market price. CN confirmed that the average price received compared favourably. FN congratulated the team involved with the sale.

2. GOVERNANCE BUSINESS

2.1 Appointment of Student Members

RR advised that the Corporation that the Otley campus student body had elected their student member for the 2016/17 year, the student elected is Daniel Noble a Level 2 Forestry & Arboriculture. The Corporation confirmed the appointment. RR was also able to advise that it is hoped that the student governor for the Easton campus will be in place by the time of the next meeting.

SB queried whether student governors would receive an induction, RR confirmed that she would be arranging to meet with both to deal with this. DH asked members what they wanted from student governors. Members confirmed that they want them to be as proactive as they felt able and that they were considered a great help and resource to the Corporation

2.2 Appointment of Independent Member

SB confirmed that at the present time there were three independent member vacancies on the Board. She and DH had recently been made aware that Mark Pendlington (MP), the current Chair of the New Anglia LEP, would be interested in joining the E&O Corporation. As a result SB had spoken with MP to discuss his interest in greater detail; he had confirmed that he has an interest in land based industry and in education and that he wished to make a difference in these areas locally by joining the EOC Board. A copy of MP's CV was tabled.

SB confirmed that she did not wish to establish a precedent in bringing this issue directly to the Corporation rather than via the Search Committee, but no Search Committee meeting is scheduled for the foreseeable future. PT sought to ascertain confirmation that MP was aware of the quality issues facing the College currently, SB confirmed that he is. GP noted MP's commitment and support to date in that he has been an attendee at stakeholder events. The need for MP to declare his interest as Chair of the LEP until that appointment came to an end in 2017 was noted.

Resolved: to appoint MP as an independent member of the EOC Corporation. SB proposed that MP be appointed to the Corporation as an independent member, seconded by BF. **Unanimously agreed** by all.

3. STRATEGIC PLANNING

DH introduced the Report. He highlighted that a better start had been made to this academic year than to 2015/16, the student satisfaction KPI was noted in support of this. DH confirmed that this KPI will be reviewed via a monthly survey of students.

LW advised that attendance was just 1% below the target of 90%, and 12% up on the same period last year. Where course attendance is low this is highlighted at weekly CQMs meeting and interventions are put into place. LW also highlighted that attendance for English and maths is only 2% below overall attendance. DH noted that attitudes of the students are changing, more of them now want to resit the exams and gain the qualifications. LW confirmed that over 200 students at each campus have voluntarily chosen to take the November resits. FB queried whether the number of students opting to take the resits was the optimum, LW reported that very few had decided not to and some were excluded due to the change from IGCSE to GCSE. FB sought confirmation that all staff were now aware of the resit programme being offered as this had not been the experience of all students at enrolment. LW confirmed that all staff had been made aware of what was being offered. GP enquired if the English and maths resit programmes were now running effectively as this had been the case in 2015/16. LW reflected that some 200 students had not been attending the English and maths resit classes that they were required to at Christmas 2015, however this has now reduced to approximately 80 students. She was also able to confirm to members that of the remarks requested by the College from the Summer examinations some 50% had successfully been graded as a 'C' and none had been marked down. JW advised that if a student had been within 9 points of a grade 'C' the College had recommended that the student have the paper remarked. LW confirmed that a position statement has been prepared for English and maths in preparation for the anticipated forthcoming Ofsted inspection, this will be distributed to governors. **LW**

The figures to enable the student staff ratio to be reviewed will be available in the Report at the November meeting. It was noted that class size is a key determination of efficiency. The need to achieve more economically efficient class sizes at the same time as increasing quality was referenced by PR, he suggested that the achievement of both simultaneously would require innovation by the College. DH noted that developing and using technology

efficiently and innovatively was key. He further noted that the infrastructure to enable this was now in place, the next step was to encourage staff to make the best use of ILTs.

Ways of continuing to incentivise students to complete surveys for the student satisfaction KPI were considered. For the data included in this report 578 of 2000 students had responded. CD confirmed that data was available to enable the satisfaction levels to be reviewed by course and to share the best practice of areas where the highest levels of satisfaction were recorded.

CD explained the measure used to arrive at the Digital Visibility KPI is the number of online applications made in a month. In September this was 18% up on the same point in the previous year. It was noted that in September this included some late 2016/17 applications as well as 2017/18 applications. The figure to be reported next month will be 2017/18 applications only.

Members reviewed the Employer Engagement KPI, this records the number of appointments. Cd reported that a number of employer events had been held and work was being done to engage employers in discussions around the Apprenticeship Levy. GP enquired of the College was considering how it could use the funds that it would be required to contribute to the Levy. CD confirmed that this was already being considered, with existing staff being given the chance to access training.

The Schools Engagement KPI was considered. PT queried if a particular school declined to engage with the College could parents/students be contacted directly. CD highlighted the issue of data protection in preventing access to contact information. BF raised the issue of whether a school would be fulfilling its obligations of IAG in those circumstances. DH confirmed that this was an issue that was being highlighted nationally as a concern. CD confirmed that taster sessions all included IAG and are offered to all schools. CD confirmed that Andrew Farley of the Schools Engagement team attends networking meeting etc with Headteachers, where a particular school doesn't want to engage with the College those networks of Headteachers are used to try to get a school to engage. PT enquired whether governors could be used to enable governor to governor contact between College and school governors. CD noted this suggestion.

MW took members through the financial KPIs. He highlighted the impact of the number of students recruited on the Forecast and the cash position. The need to increase the number of students recruited and to improve efficiency were discussed.

3.2 HE Review Project

DH referenced the development of HE as a key strategic thrust, independent consultant Kevin Kendall has been commissioned to carry out a review in 5 key areas. BF raised the possibility of 2 year degree courses, DH confirmed that the College was committed to reviewing this option alongside City College Norwich with UEA. He also highlighted the new interest in higher level/degree level apprenticeships. PR referenced the Area Based Review (ABR) letters in terms of addressing the needs of employers. DH confirmed that this would

looked at in the first ABR meeting. He also commented on the Landex commissioned Report to inform the ABR process on this issue. CD confirmed that work was being done to engage with employers on these issues.

3.3 Lorimer Review

CD updated the Corporation on the outcomes and implementation of the Lorimer Review. She confirmed that the need for marketing and admissions to work more closely together had been identified and was being actioned, curriculum planning was underway earlier to help students make decision and Prosolutions was now being used. BF highlighted an issue that he had been made aware of by a parent, CD confirmed that she would look into that.

3.4 Student Recruitment

CD presented a report to members. She confirmed interventions strategies had been put in place early this year to ensure that students were enrolled on the right courses and that any withdrawals were more timely.

CD confirmed that the crucial period for applications for 2017/18 was up to Christmas. It was then important to convert applications to enrolments. Strategies are being employed to keep those that have applied 'warm' until enrolment.

PT commented on the poor retention in HE and asked for the reasons behind this. It was confirmed that an update on this would be given to the Corporation. Discussion took place on the optimum staff to student ratio at HE and the number of students that would be required to 'break even'. DH confirmed that the work being undertaken by Kevin Kendall would assist with this. The lack of cross over between FE and HE staff to encourage and grow internal progression was noted.

**CD/
DM**

4. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

4.1 Report on English and Maths

This was reviewed under item 3.

4.2 Draft SAR and QUIP

An early iteration was presented to the Corporation. This will come back to the Board at the meeting in November.

The draft judgements were noted. LW confirmed that the Report need to be updated to reflect on the outcomes of the Residential care Ofsted Inspection and the Matrix Report.

DH expressed the need to be honest and transparent about the position of the College so that the required improvements could be employed. He referenced the interventions set out in the QUIP. PT enquired whether it was possible to make the targets in the QUIP 'smarter', DH was in agreement. Governors asked for a position paper in preparation for the forthcoming

Ofsted inspection that clearly sets out the current strengths and weaknesses of the College.

It was agreed to take item 6 at this point.

6. ENSURE CONTINUED SOLVENCY OF THE COLLEGE

6.1 July 2016 Management Accounts

MW presented the accounts. He drew members' attention to the change to FRS102.

He advised that a meeting with the bank was scheduled for 8th November.

6.2 Draft end of year accounts 2015/16

MW confirmed that the KPMG were in College all week undertaking the audit work. The final accounts will be brought to the next meeting and will be in the public domain by the end of the year. He referred members to the change in accounting rules to pensions and confirmed that this was an issue for the sector as a whole. He also may members aware of potential reductions to the deficit reduction period for LGPS and the potential effect of that on college contributions. GP referenced that this problem was compounded by low interest rates.

6.3 Recruitment Headlines

JW took members through the headlines. The variance against target and the impact on income was noted. The potential impact on funding received of the numbers in construction was raised by GP.

6.4 Initial Forecast 2016/17

MW confirmed that the forecast incorporated numbers as they currently stood for 2016/17. The ABR has asked for forecasts to 2019/20.

CN provided an update on the land sale; it was hoped that matters would be at the point of being able to go to the market shortly. Discussion took place on likely market price in the current climate. It was noted that, in accordance with the decisions taken at earlier meetings, DH and SB would now be signing the necessary Section 106 agreements.

GP left the meeting

It was agreed to revert to Item 4.

4.3 Safeguarding Update

This will be brought in November.

4.4 Report on the Results of the Staff Survey

BJ presented members with a summary of the survey and highlighted the key findings. Following the results staff have been asked what could be done to improve the areas that scored low, an action plan has been produced and staff focus groups will now meet monthly at each campus. JW enquired why staff were not more positive about undertaking CPD, BJ confirmed that this had been difficult to access but this was being improved but CPD would need to be targeted to the strategic priorities and be within budget. The role of governors will be added into staff inductions in the hope of ensuring staff are aware. BJ confirmed that questions had not varied from the previous year to enable benchmarking.

5. NEEDS OF RURAL BUSINESS

DH gave members a verbal update on issues concerning the College.

He confirmed that the recent Landex Report on needs of business is still to be published. When it is it will be circulated to members.

DH

He confirmed that the LEP will be very actively involved in the ABR. Members were advised that the LEP has requested a skills plan for food drink and agriculture industries and that DH is involved with that. Corporation will be kept informed of progress.

6.5 Health & Safety Report 2015/16

CN presented the Report. The slight increase in the number of reported incidents was noted. It was also noted that there were no RIDDOR reportable incidents.

6.6 Health & Safety Policy 2016/17

CN confirmed to members that as Corporation has overall responsibility for Health & safety in the College it is best practice for the Health & Safety Policy to come to Corporation for formal approval. Members noted the comprehensive content of the policy.

Resolved: to approve the Health & Safety Policy 2016/17. Proposed BF, seconded PT, all in agreement.

7. AREA BASED REVIEW

DH confirmed the current position with regard to the wave 5 ABR. The first steering group meeting is on 7th December with the College site visit taking place on 5th December. He confirmed that the process was taking a significant amount of management time.

8. AOB

None

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 30th November 2016 at 9.30am at the Easton campus.

The meeting closed at 11.59am