

Easton&OtleyCollege

CORPORATION

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on Wednesday 18th January 2017 commencing at 9.30am in the Chadacre Room, Otley campus, Otley, Suffolk

Present

S Bendall	SB	Independent Member & Chair
D Henley	DH	Principal
B Feltwell	BF	Independent Member
C Hard	CH	Staff Governor
D Noble	DNo	Student Governor
D Nunn	DNu	Independent Member
G Pilcher	GP	Independent Member
D Redhead	DR	Independent Member
P Richardson	PR	Independent Member
R Sheasby	RS	Independent Member
E Sweetman	ES	Staff Governor
P Thirkettle	PT	Independent Member

In Attendance

R Robson	RR	Acting Clerk to the Corporation
M Ferguson	MF	Vice Principal
M Wilkinson	MW	Director of Finance
C Nix	CN	Director of Estates
C Dyble	CD	Director of Enterprise and Marketing
L Wilson	LW	Curriculum Director
D McAuley	DM	Director of HE
K Honeywood	KH	PA to the Principal

Action

Prior to the commencement of the agenda the Corporation received a presentation from Greg Smith and Kate Forster of the RNAA on the Food and Farming Discovery Trust and the Education Strategy. A copy of the presentation slides and overview are in the minute book.

DR left the meeting

1. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

SB welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Fran Baugh, Mark Coleman, Sandra Dinneen, Mark Pendlington, Deanna Provis and John Whyman

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 previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30th November 2016 were **confirmed** (subject to a typographic error on page 2) as a true record of the meeting for signature by the Chair.

1.5 **Actions and Matters Arising**

The two outstanding open actions were **agreed** to be complete.

There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

2. **GOVERNANCE BUSINESS**

ES left the meeting for item 2.1

2.1 **Appointment of Staff Governor**

RR advised the Corporation that an election had taken place amongst the staff at the Easton campus to elect a new staff governor as the term of office of Colin Kerrison had come to an end. Four nominations were received leading to a vote taking place amongst Easton staff via Survey Monkey. This process resulted in the election of Ellie Sweetman. Ellie is a Program Manager (Landbased).

Resolved: to confirm the appointment of ES **Unanimously agreed** by all.

ES returned to the meeting.

SB congratulated ES on her appointment to the Corporation.

2.2 **Approve Minutes of Final Meetings of Committees**

Following the implementation of governance changes the draft minutes for the final meetings of the Finance & Resources Committee, the Curriculum & Standards Committee and the HR & Remuneration Committee were **confirmed**.

2.3 **Use of the College Seal and RIDDOR Incidents**

The occasions and reasons for the use of the College Seal for the period 20th July 2016 to the date of the meeting were noted. It was noted that there had been no RIDDOR reportable incidents in the academic year to 9th January.

2.4 **Link Governor Reports**

The Corporation reviewed the Link Governor Reports submitted for visits undertaken in the autumn term. The Chair thanked all governors who had undertaken a visit and

submitted reports, she highlighted that this would become a standing item on the Corporation agenda. A member enquired how governors should expect to receive feedback on points raised in reports. It was confirmed that the act of bringing reports to the Corporation was a part of the process of governors holding the college to account and would create a forum for discussion, feedback and follow-up. Additionally any points of concern should always be raised with the Principal.

3. STRATEGIC PLANNING

3.1 Monthly KPI Report for December 2016

DH provided members with a summary of the report circulated with the meeting papers.

A member raised a concern on the attendance of HE students referred to in the report as 'poor'. DM confirmed that data for the current month showed an improvement (now 93%) on the period referred to in the report (81%) and could no longer be described as poor, he emphasised that attendance amongst HE students was not compulsory and that the nature of the courses meant that some students preferred to work independently on occasions. A member asked for an explanation as to why attendance in construction was poor. MF and LW advised that there had been staffing issues in construction at lecturer and manager level, it was hoped that a change in structure would resolve these issues and therefore lead to improved student attendance.

LW gave some insight and update on the November English and maths resit outcomes. A member reflected that the percentage of grade C or above passes seemed low and asked for the reasons behind that. LW confirmed the November resits were voluntary and that the students that took those exams had only been at EOC for 6 weeks by the time the exams were sat, some re-marks are awaited.

The Chair expressed concern over the learner progress KPI and the gap between actual and target. MF highlighted the problems that had been experienced changes to assessment criteria from awarding bodies that had, in turn, led to delays with the use of Markbook. The Chair asked if staff were now more aligned to Markbook. MF confirmed that they were and that he hoped an increase would be shown in this KPI as recording the data was being prioritised.

A member sought clarification that students who left the college represented a permanent loss of income reflecting on the withdrawal rate referred to in the report. MW confirmed this to be the case and referenced the impact of lagged funding. Another member asked what could be done to reduce the attrition rate next year. It was accepted that an element of attrition was inevitable but that the retention this year was too low. A member reflected that a reduction in the number of students would lead to the need to reduce costs.

3.2 Monthly KPI Report for Apprenticeships for December 2016

MF and CD highlighted the main areas of the report to members. They confirmed that KPIs below target are being followed up.

3.3 Monthly KPI Report for HE for December 2016

DM summarised the report.

4. ENSURE CONTINUED FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF THE COLLEGE

4.1 Management Accounts – December 2016

The accounts were presented to the Corporation by MW. He referenced the discussion that had taken place under 3.1 above around retention and the resulting financial impact. The cost of agency staff and the overall impact of those factors on the forecast were highlighted. A member asked if agency costs were challenged and was it possible to negotiate the cost of agency staff. LW confirmed that the cost of agency staff was reducing as vacant posts were filled. Where agency staff were employed the cost is negotiated where possible, but where a particular skill set is required that can be difficult.

4.2 Sub-Contracted Business

MF took members through the paper on sub-contracted business. Members noted the existing arrangement with Inspire and the expansion of that provision. Quarterly reports will be provided to the Corporation.

The approval of the Corporation was requested to sub-contract to NCC Professional the delivery of English and maths functional skills to adults in employment. A member sought clarification of the risk to the College. MW confirmed that there was no financial risk. MF clarified that there is a potential reputational risk to the College as it will have overall responsibility for the quality of the provision; checks carried out on NCC have confirmed that they achieved a 95% success rate last year. The contract will have a lead manager who, together with other EOC staff, will monitor progress and carry-out on-going quality checks. These controls will be externally audited. A member asked what sanctions were in place if quality was not maintained by NCC. MF confirmed that EOC could then withdraw from the contract. A member sought confirmation as to where delivery would take place. MF confirmed that this would be on site in the workplace.

Resolved: to approve to sub-contract to NCC Professional the delivery of English and maths functional skills in employment **Unanimously agreed** by all.

5. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

5.1 SAR Update

MF confirmed that, following the previous Corporation meeting, the SAR had been externally validated by Kevin Kendall, consultant. The validation confirmed the grading within the SAR. Some recommendations had been given and incorporated into the report.

5.2 Kendall Review of HE

DH confirmed that the Kendall Report, distributed with the meeting papers, was presented at this point for information and digestion. Kevin Kendall will attend a future Corporation meeting to present his finding and answer members' questions. The recommendations within the report are currently being reviewed by the Leadership Team.

A member expressed disappointment that the report did not include new thinking on the introduction of 2 year degree courses. DH confirmed that the validating partner dictates the College offer and remains committed to 3 year courses. The reference in

the report to expanding the offer to include particular new subjects was queried by a member. DH confirmed that these recommendations were based on existing available resources.

5.3 Minutes of HE Joint Board of Study held December 2016

The minutes were noted. DM highlighted the main points of discussion.

DR re-joined the meeting

6. NEEDS OF RURAL BUSINESS

Considered under an item in the Part II Confidential Agenda

7. AREA BASED REVIEW

7.1 Update

DH provided the Corporation with an update on the Area Based Review (ABR) meetings to date. He confirmed that the next meeting was a workshop on options for Chairs and Principals of the 10 colleges being held at the Easton campus on 20th January. To date there was no suggestion that EOC would be recommended to merge with another college. A member asked for confirmation that nothing discussed at ABR meetings was binding on colleges. DH emphasised that the College would receive a recommendation for the Corporation, as an independent legal entity, to confirm or reject.

7.2 Market Analysis Report

CD presented a report providing an analysis of the data provided via the ABR process. She highlighted that the data provides an insight into a competitive landscape and provides potential areas for development for the College. A member asked why Suffolk One was not included in the ABR. DH confirmed this was an anomaly of the process, Suffolk One was not included as legally it is a school.

8. AOB

The Chair confirmed that she had received a request that a response is sent on behalf of the Board to the Norfolk Food Hub Consultation. After some discussion it was **agreed** that the Chair would consult with CN and DH and submit an appropriate response on behalf of the Corporation.

9. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 29th March 2017 at 9.30am at the Easton campus.

The Chair closed the non-confidential meeting at 12.28pm.