

CORPORATION

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation held on Thursday 14th September 2017
commencing at 8.00am in the Room T14, Otley Campus, Otley, Suffolk

Present

L Butcher	LB	Independent Member
M Coleman	MC	Independent Member
B Feltwell	BF	Independent Member
C Hard	CH	Independent Member
D Nunn	DN	Staff Governor
M Pendlington	MP	Independent Member and Chair
G Pilcher	GP	Independent Member
P Richardson	PR	Independent Member
R Sheasby	RS	Independent Member
J Townsend	JT	Acting Principal (member from item 2.1.2)
P Thirkettle	PT	Independent Member and Vice Chair

In Attendance

A Daniels	AD	Director of HR
R Goodman	RG	Deputy Principal
C Nix	CN	Acting Vice Principal/Director of Estates
R Robson	RR	Director of Governance
M Wilkinson	MW	Acting Vice Principal/Director of Finance

Action

1. PRELIMINARY PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1 Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Stephen Coby, Sandra Dineen, David Redhead, Ellie Sweetman 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:

- GP in relation to RNAA
- PR in relation to Morley

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 August 2017 were **confirmed** as a true record of the meeting for signature by the Chair.

1.5 Actions and Matters Arising

Action 1 – **agreed** complete
Action 2 – to be considered by CRS on 11th October 2017
Action 3 – **agreed** complete
Action 4 - ongoing and now being undertaken by CN.
Actions 5 to 8 - ongoing
Action 9 – **agreed** complete
Action 10 – ongoing
Actions 11 and 12 – ongoing
Actions 13 and 14 – complete
Actions 15 and 16 - ongoing

There were no matters arising.

2. GOVERNANCE

2.1 Search Committee Feedback

2.1.1 Minutes from Search Committee 8.9.17

The minutes from the meeting were received and noted.

2.1.2 Approve Appointment of Acting Principal to the Board

The Chair advised that the recommendation of the Committee was that, as the Corporation had made the decision for JT take on the role of Acting Principal, JT should become a member of the Board in that capacity for the duration of her appointment. He confirmed that JT was agreeable.

Resolved: JT to join the Corporation for the duration of her appointment as Acting Principal in that capacity **Unanimously agreed by all.**

GP joined the meeting

2.1.3 Search Committee TOR

Following the FE Commissioner (FEC) visit and follow up letter the Chair advised that the Committee had reviewed its Terms of Reference. The Corporation was asked to approve the updated TOR.

Resolved: To approve the Search Committee TOR **Unanimously agreed by all.**

2.1.4 Search Committee Membership

The Chair advised that following the recent departures from the Board the Search Committee membership had reduced to three (MP, BF and LB). As the Corporation had agreed to the appointment of JT under item 2.1.2, she would now become a member of the Committee in the Principal role, leaving a further member needed on the Committee. The Chair confirmed that the recommendation of the Committee was that PT be appointed.

Resolved: To appoint PT as a member of the Search Committee **Unanimously agreed by all.**

2.1.5 Governance Succession Policy

The Chair referred members to the comments of the FEC, that clear succession planning was required. The Committee had reviewed the Governance Succession Policy, which sets out steps to be undertaken and kept under review by the Committee at every meeting, to ensure succession planning for chairing roles and membership. The Committee recommended approval of the policy.

Resolved: To approve the Governance Succession Policy **Unanimously agreed by all.**

2.2 New Committees

2.2.1 CRS and Strategic Finance Committees

The Chair noted the decision taken by the Board in 2016 to move to a Carver governance model and retain only the required committees of Search and Audit. In response to the College's current position, recent Ofsted inspections and FEC visit working parties to monitor and progress quality and financial recovery had been established in recent months. The Chair asked that the Corporation now consider establishing Committees with Terms of Reference to undertake that work.

Resolved: To establish a CRS Committee to review and monitor quality recovery, to establish a Strategic Finance Committee to review and monitor financial recovery, to continue with the programme of monthly Board meetings throughout 17/18, to further review the governance structure beyond 17/18 in conjunction with the external review of the Board and of the College **Unanimously agreed by all.**

The CRS TOR was reviewed. The Chair requested that 'monitor and challenge' be referenced at 8.2 in both the CRS and Strategic Finance TORs. Members discussed the relationship between the two committees proposed, noting that the CRS TOR made no reference to the financial implications of quality recovery. Reference to review of curriculum efficiency to be added in 8.2. The proposed membership of the Committee was reviewed.

Resolved: To approve the CRS Committee TOR (subject to amendments agreed) and to approve the membership of the Committee (PT (Chair), MC, PR and JT) **Unanimously agreed by all.**

The Strategic Finance Committee TOR was reviewed, 8.2 to be amended as per the CRS TOR. The proposed membership of the Committee was reviewed.

Resolved: To approve the Strategic Finance Committee TOR (subject to amendment agreed) and to approve the membership of the Committee (GP (Chair), MP, SC and JT) **Unanimously agreed by all.**

2.3 External Board Review

Noted that the Corporation had previously highlighted the desirability for external review. Mike Snell has been identified as providing a Board review process that will provide the challenge required. RR confirmed that she had discussed this option with the FEC in July and that he had been supportive of the choice of provider and the process. A member queried the timetable and the likely cost. RR confirmed members would all receive a questionnaire to complete before the end of the month, Mike Snell will attend meetings in the autumn term and meet with all members individually, his report will be available in December, and the likely cost estimate is £5,000.

Resolved: To engage Mike Snell to undertake the Learning Board process
Unanimously agreed by all.

3. COLLEGE RECOVERY STRATEGY

3.1 College Recovery Strategy (CRS)

JT confirmed the CRS had been updated since the previous meeting; members' comments have been actioned, the governance section reviewed and RAG rating in the finance section now included. All RAG rating is based on impact, actions remain red until evidence of impact is clear.

JT confirmed that Landex have been to the College and the 10 days support offered by them has been agreed (1.1.17), a report on this will come to the Board at the next meeting.

JT

Members were asked to consider the actions and impact reported.

The Chair asked when the Comms Strategy would become available, JT confirmed that this was progressing through staff consultation and would be distributed to staff in September.

A member asked for further clarity to be included on the audience for reports referred to as this is always clear.

Members asked to see the College Calendar referred to at 1.2.2.

RR

Members discussed the grading of teaching (2.1), A member sought clarity on the involvement of Landex in this process. JT confirmed that Landex would be involved in paired observations to provide external validation of how the College is grading.

A member asked that the SWOTS (1.1.5) be distributed to link governors to enable those governors to have discussions on departmental SARs.

JT/RR

A member highlighted that some actions, like lesson grading, will be reviewed throughout the year, review of RAG rating to show progress may not be sufficient. JT confirmed that lesson grading is now a KPI (see item 4 below) so will be reported to members at each meeting. The role of the CRS Committee includes monitoring the progress of actions that will be ongoing in year was noted.

A member sought clarification on 12.5, had this progressed further. MW confirmed that a Head of Finance had now been recruited. A member queried what had happened under 11.2 since 1st September. MW confirmed that progress had occurred and would be discussed under the confidential agenda.

The Chair noted that progress against actions was happening at a fast pace as was necessary. The CRS is the core document driving the College recovery, it is to be reviewed fortnightly via CRS Committee and Corporation and will need to be continually updated to ensure accuracy. He noted that this will be presented to the FEC and that members needed to be satisfied that actions and impact were progressing as required to ensure recovery.

Resolved: Actions and impact to date approved subject to timely updates as required **Unanimously agreed by all.**

3.2 Enrolment 17/18

RG circulated an updated paper to members at the meeting, this provided members with the current figures. He confirmed that enrolment was continuing, including a further 15 that were recruited at the CAD day on 9th September.

The Chair asked when the cut off point for enrolments would happen. RG confirmed that in some instances for 19+ but for 16-18 catch-up was difficult for students who enrolled after the end of the first month so each application would be considered on an individual basis. He also advised members of the re-engagement programme for NEETs with a view to progress on to appropriate courses in the next academic year.

MW highlighted to members that the figures were below those included in the forecast in July and would have significant financial implications.

A member asked if January starts were possible taking students over 4 days per week rather than the usual 3. RG confirmed that the College would look at market demand and respond to what is needed.

A member noted the potential to positively impact the financial position by taking late enrolments but queried the potential negative impact on quality and outcomes. JT confirmed that this issue was being monitored in order to ensure a decrease year on year in withdrawals and ensure quality, the re-engagement programme would help to stem withdrawals and retain students.

The Chair asked for more detail on how potential enrolment figures are modelled. MW confirmed that this was a combination of previous statistics and what is known re current students progressing. Improvement on the impact of other colleges' provision and demographics was needed. JT confirmed that research into enrolment predictions was being undertaken and a report would be brought to the Board.

JT/RG

A member asked how marketing was being used to attract students. JT confirmed that currently staff were still contacting potential students and that the College was still advertising enrolment for a 2017 start.

A member asked if courses were full. JT advised that level 1 courses had high levels of recruitment for 17/18 and other subjects had recruited well (animal care, construction at Easton, a resurgence for arboriculture). A member asked if the College used social media, JT confirmed that this was used and that a paper to advise on what has been done will come to the next meeting.

JT

Members queried the reasons behind the increase in level 1 learners and the role of schools in that. RG confirmed that schools were being required to focus on English and maths and this was at the expense of other subjects in some instances. The College engagement with schools was considered, JT explained that as the College had such a wide 'catchment area' this had to be targeted at the schools where the relationship was beneficial. Meetings with Headteachers were planned to ensure relationships were developed and that the College was providing what was needed to raise aspirations and inspire students.

4. KPIs

JT explained the work that had been undertaken in order to identify the key KPIs for the Corporation to monitor and the questions that underlay those KPIs. The report presented contained no in year data but was brought as an example for approval. Members were asked to consider were these the right questions and would the data be valuable and show impact/progress. A member asked that benchmarking data be included where available to add context. The student progress target was considered, JT confirmed that she was looking to see if data could be produced to show if students were on track to achieve their target grades. JT advised that if she could get the metric to work this would be added, if not Corporation would receive reports in lieu of a KPI.

Resolved: To approve the revised KPIs for 17/18 **Unanimously agreed by all.**

5. FEC Visit

JT confirmed that the visit would take place from 26th to 28th September, a detailed schedule was being planned to ensure that all meetings requested by the FEC were included. She advised that the FEC had asked to visit the Otley campus and would be doing this on Wednesday 27th. It was noted that intervention visits would continue through 17/18.

6. AOB

None

7. Date of the next Meeting

The next meeting was confirmed as Wednesday 27th September 2017 at the Easton campus with a 5.00pm start time.

The Chair closed the non-confidential meeting at 9.18am