

Minutes of the Board meeting held in the Board Room at the Derby Road site on Thursday 10th March 2016 at 5.00 pm

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Kate Allsop
Ian Baggaley
Tim Clarke
Nevil Croston
Terry Dean
Jamie Fryatt
Nick Golubs
John Holford
Dame Asha Khemka DBE, Principal and Chief Executive
Jean Marriott
Cllr Diana Meale
David Overton
Colin Sawers

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
Patricia Harman, Deputy Principal: Teaching and Learning
Andrew Martin, Deputy Principal/Director Finance
Thomas Stevens, Executive Director: Capital Projects and Estates
Andrew King, Director Strategy and Innovation
Louise Knott, Director Communications, Marketing and Learner Engagement
Tracy Thompson, Director of Human Resources
Sacha McCarthy, Director of Employer Engagement

ACTION by whom	DATE by when

16.22 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded those present to declare any interests on items to be considered. No interests were declared.

16.23 WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Malcolm Hall, Hari PUNCHIHEWA, John Robinson and Chris Winterton.

16.24 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28TH JANUARY 2016

The minutes were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2016.

There were no matters arising.

16.25 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

Members reviewed the action progress table and were happy to note the current position.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.26 MID-YEAR REVIEW OF COLLEGE STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE

The Principal and Chief Executive introduced this item and confirmed that what was to be discussed today was intended to build upon the discussions which took place at the Governors' Development Session on 24th February 2016. Key matters to consider are:

- a) Financial;
- b) Quality, to be reviewed on an area by area basis;
- c) Marketing and promotion.

She reminded members of the key milestones agreed regarding preparation for the area review:

- March is the mid-year forecast and review.
- April will involve a review of the College's infrastructure and space utilisation.
- May – there will be a detailed plan presented in relation to apprenticeship delivery and the College's response to the levy. She confirmed that work is already underway and good progress is being made. The Midlands Engine for Growth is progressing well. Membership is strong. She confirmed that there had been a very productive meeting of this Group earlier in the week, this is a Group that she chairs.
- June – residential will see the 3 year business plan presented including the College's response to the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.
- July will focus on quality.
- September will look at options appraisal.
- November – is when the area review begins.

In relation to the June residential, she confirmed that several speakers have already been confirmed and that they will include the Chief Executives' for the two local authorities, there will be a LEP representative and an SFA representative. John Cridland CBE has been secured as the after dinner speaker.

She confirmed that there has still been no publication of any of the wave one reviews and therefore there is limited progress that she can report following the Governors meeting which took place several weeks ago.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

Her presentation provided a number of key items:

- 1) Local context, this includes
 - Merger – she confirmed that consultation is currently out in relation to the merger of the two Nottingham colleges.
 - Inspection outcomes – in terms of the area review group that the College will form a part of, all of the colleges are graded as good.
 - Financial position – she confirmed that the 2014/15 financial accounts have now been obtained for all of the colleges within the group and every college, except WNC, reported a deficit position for the 2014/15 academic year.

- 2) What is important to the College
 - Exceptional quality - this includes success rates, teaching and learning, employer engagement etc.
 - Financial stability and strength.
 - High staff morale.
 - Student feedback – it was acknowledged that by and large this is very positive.
 - Strategic positioning – the role of the College needs to be local and a focus on localness.

- 3) Standards and quality
 - Classroom success rate is
 - a) Overall for 2014/15 84.9%.
 - b) National rate for 2013/14 was 84.7%. She explained that the sector as a whole is still waiting for the 14/15 position/national benchmark data to be released. Colleges have been advised that this will be available by the end of the month.

- 4) Retention comparison to previous year

16-18 14/15 position in February was 96%, 15/16 position at February is 96%.

Adults 14/15 position in February was 96%, 15/16 position at February was 96%.

HE 14/15 position at February was 90%, 15/16 position at February 85%.

It was explained that the decline in retention for HE relates to some two year programmes where students withdrew at the end of year one. It was explained that the College will not be able to improve upon this position during the remainder of this academic year.

- 5) Apprenticeship comparison to previous year
 - Overall timely at 15/16 February for partner delivered is 67%. It was explained that two partners are being performance managed.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

They have significant numbers and once transition arrangements are in place this position will improve. The prior year position was 77%.

- College delivered shows improvements, 79% compared to 74% in the prior year and 64% when compared to 35% in the prior year. Sacha McCarthy explained that the key difference is that in 14/15 there were a high number of rollover students which impacted upon the numbers. Her prediction for the year-end position is 82% overall and 69% / 70% timely.

6) Maths and English – the Principal acknowledged that this is an issue both here and in other colleges. Success rate for 2014/15 in relation to functional skills English was 71.2% which is in line with the rest of the country. 14/15 success rates for functional skills Maths was 44.3%, this is below the national position. All areas are holding except for Maths and this is mostly at level 2. All agreed that retention levels for Maths were looking positive. It was noted that attendance levels for Maths and English GCSE are in the 80%. The Board all agreed with the assertion that Maths and English has to be the Colleges focus. A number of actions have been taken to try and improve performance, these include:

- a) Staffing – managing performance.
- b) Improving teaching and learning.
- c) Interventions to support achievement.
- d) Trying to address the difficulty in recruiting good staff.

7) Teaching and learning – the Principal indicated that the target should be 100% of teaching and learning at good or better, however there are always pockets that require improvement. The current position is 83.3% good or better. Out of 221 observations in College 30 were grade 3 and 7 graded 4. There have been 22 re-observations which were specifically in relation to those previously graded at 3 or 4. Assurance was given that the College rigorously follows up all re-observations. All staff are supported. If staff do not improve following support then the teaching and learning process links in with Capability Procedures. In terms of the partner observations the Board all expressed some concern at the 22.9% graded as 3 and the fact that 25% of lessons observed were graded 3 or 4. Sacha McCarthy confirmed that it is still an area to address but provided assurance that this is actually an improvement upon the 14/15 position. The Board questioned how partners react to re-observations. It was explained that generally this is a very positive process and partners welcome improvement advice. The College is unable to sanction partner staff but can sanction partners through the contract. The Board were reminded that Ofsted inspectors no longer provide a grade following lesson observations, therefore their view is even more subjective.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

8) Finance

- a) ESF has been delayed and the financial impact of this is a loss of £60k from the forecast budget. The sector is advised that the tender programme remains imminent. It was confirmed that once released the College remains well placed to lead on this.
- b) 16-18 - there has been an under recruitment against target, 2746 learners versus 2940. No current year impact but there will be a lag reduction of £700k in 16/17.
- c) Adult skills budget – adult apprenticeship forecast has been reduced by £1.7million. It will be still be a challenge to deliver the reduced forecast. Impact will be circa £340k on the bottom line.
- d) Pay costs – under spending continues which is linked to 1) under recruitment of 16-18 year olds & 2) under delivery of apprenticeships
- e) BKS B continues to deliver well.

Financial reforecast for the 15/16 year is that:

- Income for the year will be £53million (budget £55.2million) this is for the reasons previously outlined and in particular the reduction in EFS contract has had a significant impact.
- Operating surplus of £1.25million (budget £1.42million). College will show a £135k deficit. BKS B will be surplus of £1,432k which is slightly better than forecast, Vision Apprentices will show a £24k deficit. In relation to Vision Apprentices the Board were all agreed that a full review in relation to the operation of this organisation needed to take place.
- Financial health stable (140 points) which is the same as 14/15. This will be a 'satisfactory' rating. The College cannot get higher than this because of the level of loans taken out to fund the capital projects.
- Full commitment of capital investment for HE and internal refurbishment.
- Assumed usage of £1million of the £3million HE facility.

9) Estates and accommodation

- October 2015 saw the relocation from Ransom Hall to Ashfield House and also the £6.5 million university Centre construction commenced, this is on schedule and budget.
- February 2016 – the College committed £1million to refurbish Derby Road.
- September 2016 will see the internal Derby Road refurbishment complete, opening of the University Centre and achievement of 85% of the estate being in condition A/B. The Principal indicated that in January 2017 she was intending to arrange a high profile opening of the whole campus.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

Adult apprenticeships – given the significant under performance to date against contract allocation assurances were provided to the Board that the College is working hard to:

- Engage with new partners.
- Enhance the marketing and promotion strategy.
- Development of a detailed action plan to maximise activity.

She explained that the College was making presentations to large levy payers. Initially the College is targeting employers that they already work with and is also looking at targeted sponsorship opportunities. The Board agreed that it was critical to set detailed milestones so that these can be clearly monitored by the management team and the Board. The Principal confirmed that these were being developed and would be brought back to the Board at the May meeting.

SM

May 2016

10) 16-18 applications for 2016

- The College has seen a 5% downturn in year 11 school leaver applications. 3 schools of learning are of particular concern, these are care and education, sport and public services and creative industries.
- Acceptances are tracking at previous years' levels. In particular a number of areas are doing well, these are A Levels, Lifestyle, Construction and Engineering.
- In roads have been made into North Nottingham conurbation +2% (Arnold, Redhill and Daybrook), in these areas the College is increasing its market share.
- Conversion target is an increase of 2%. Conversion rate for last year was 90% so the target this year is 92%.

11) Marketing and promotion

a) HE

- HE promotion plan is in progress and includes on-line PR and media focus on professional and high level apprenticeships and commercial. The focus is on identified employer needs. The intention is to attract adult returners and loan students, particularly the female returner market. In terms of student loans it was acknowledged that the College is still not where it wants to be. These initiatives will be launched during adult learner week.
- Acceptances are 49% up, this specifically relates to general HE. New programmes for HE come online in May. It was confirmed that the College is obtaining some external advice on this.
- Positive feedback from employers with positive leads.

b) Apprenticeships – the College is looking at better use of existing employer relationships (cross-selling). It is undertaking presentations to large public sector employers.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

It is working to develop relationships with professional service providers (banks etc), it is also looking to engage with work placement providers and targeted sponsorship opportunities. Assurance was given that work is in progress to support the planned apprenticeship increase.

Vision Studio School – so far the College has seen:

- a) Year 12 applications at 41 against a PAN of 75.
- b) Year 10 applications at 16 against a PAN of 75. All agreed that year 10 was a concern. The target is to hit PAN by May and at this stage year 10 looks to be very challenging. There is a focus and a lot of targeted marketing promotion.
- c) DFE monitoring visit – the outcome of this visit is that the inspector feels that the school has made significant improvement.
- d) New Principal is now in place.

BKSB continues to go from strength to strength. It was awarded the accolade of best IT company at the BETT show. The Board all felt that this was a significant achievement and asked that the Chair convey the Board's congratulations to the team at the celebration dinner planned for tomorrow. It has continuing success in core markets and is also developing new products for GCSE, particularly Maths and English. GCSE Science is in development. Income is approaching £3million with operating profits of £1.4million. Sales up by 11% in the first half of the year. International continues to perform well, particularly Australia with £200k revenues. India remains a challenge and the company is looking for a joint venture partner who can help to take this initiative forward. The skills conference hosted this week by BKSB was an exceptional event with 445 delegates attending.

12) Staff

- 59% of colleagues completed the IIP staff survey, this was part of the revalidation process. The college is currently waiting for feedback from the IIP assessor. Overview will be shared when received and analysed. It was acknowledged that the response rate was high and that the College was really pleased with this position.
- Absence has stabilised at 3.6%, this is just over target but under benchmark. The HR Director confirmed that she would be presenting her 6 monthly HR report to the April meeting.
- Short term absence trigger volumes have halved which shows that the process is working really well
- VBSS employed 40 staff at 31st January and continues to grow.

13) Students – on campus students surveyed showed a 93% satisfaction rating. 93% of apprentices agreed that training and assessment was positive.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

- 14) Employers – 95% of employers reported positive communications and 98% of employers communicated positive satisfaction.

The focus for the remainder of the year includes:

- Meeting the revised apprenticeship target.
- Continue to focus on quality and outcomes.
- Meeting the 16-18 HE targets.
- Continued financial control.
- Complete the HE Centre and Derby Road refurbishment.
- Position ourselves positively for area reviews. In terms of the area reviews it was acknowledged that the Board and the senior team know the strengths and weaknesses and assurance was given that all was being done to address any areas for improvement required.

The Board took the opportunity to thank the senior team and staff for the amazing job that has been done.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

16.27 **COMMITTEE MINUTES**

- A) Audit 11th February 2016.
- B) Finance, Resources and Estates Committee 23rd FEBRUARY 2016
- C) Standards Committee 24th February 2016.

AGREED: to note the content of the minutes provided.

16.28 **GOVERNOR APPOINTMENT**

The Clerk took the opportunity to put forward the proposal made to appoint Mark Williams as a Governor. She drew members attention to his short biography provided at page 19 and also provided an update on his interview with the Principal and herself earlier in the month. The Board were all supportive of the appointment proposed.

AGREED: to appoint Mark Williams as an independent Governor from 10th March 2016 to 10th March 2020.

16.29 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk confirmed that the next scheduled meeting was 21st April 2016.

16.30 **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE HELD ON 11TH FEBRUARY 2016**

These were noted.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

16.31 **VISION BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES**

A) Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd February 2016

The content of these were noted.

B) Subsidiary Company Terms of Reference

The Clerk presented Terms of Reference proposed by the Board of Directors. It was agreed that these would be approved.

AGREED: to approve the subsidiary company Terms of Reference presented for Vision Business Support Services.

16.32 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of additional business.

Meeting concluded at 6.05 pm.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date: