

Minutes of the Board meeting held in the Board Room at Derby Road on Thursday 23rd November 2017 at 5.00 pm

GOVERNORS PRESENT: Kate Allsop
Tim Clarke
Nevil Croston, Chair
Jamie Fryatt
Malcolm Hall MBE
Dame Asha Khemka DBE DL
John Robinson
Mark Williams
Lee Radford
Alison Breeden
Jane Hawksford
Luke Walters
Lewis Maskery

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
Tom Stevens, Executive Director: Capital Projects and Estates
Louise Knott, Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement and Student Experience
Tracey Thompson, Vice Principal: Human Resources and Organisational Development
Amanda Jogela, Director: Quality and Performance
Julian Smith, Director: Learning and Innovation
Gavin Peake, Director: IT
Lucy Howes, Head of School (until 5.35 pm for agenda item 5)

ACTION by whom	DATE by when

17.102 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded Governors present to declare any interests that they may have on items to be considered. No interests other than standing items were declared.

17.103 WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Ian Baggaley, Terry Dean, John Holford, Martin Rigley MBE and Andrew Martin. Apologies were also received from David Overton who is unfortunately in hospital, the Board all asked that their best wishes be passed on to David and his family.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

17.104 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19TH OCTOBER 2017

The minutes were reviewed and it was agreed that they were an accurate record of discussions.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19th October 2017.

There were no matters arising.

17.105 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

The Board reviewed the table and were happy to note the update provided.

17.106 PRESENTATION FROM THE SCHOOL OF SPORT, PUBLIC SERVICES AND ACADEMIC STUDIES

Lucy Howes provided a presentation to the Board which included 16/17 performance, summary of improvements made, current position and the focus for 17/18. Key matters noted were:

- Context – there are circa 600 students in total within this School of Learning and 44 members of staff.
- The A Level 16/17 self-assessment grades provision as a 2 overall. Sitting underneath this most aspects are a 2 except for outcomes for learners and 16-19 study programmes. She explained that A2 value added has dipped slightly which is why outcomes for learners is a grade 3, however there were good results in terms of A Levels and AS. The current cohort doing A Levels showed strong performance at AS last year and therefore it is expected that the A2 position will improve for 17/18.
- A Level headlines – the Board were reminded that data has been impacted (as is the case nationally) by the fact that exams are now linear and there is no longer the ability for students to undertake resits. Within the statistics science subjects have really improved which is pleasing to note as this was identified by Ofsted as an area requiring improvement. There is really pleasing value added and the average grade was a B.
- Improvements in 16/17 covered all aspects including leadership and management, teaching learning and assessment, personal development behaviour and welfare and outcomes for learners. The Board were advised that three students applied to Oxford and Cambridge.
- Focus for 2017 includes:
 - a) Heightened focus on achieving aspirational target grades – this is as well as minimum target grades being set as required by the government.
 - b) TLA assessment for learning, stretch and challenge and skills development.
 - c) Learning consultant support.

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Date:

- d) Mental health – specifically linked to exam pressure.
- e) Work placements and enterprise.
- f) Revised recruitment process – this is how the School attracts and welcomes students.
- Sport and Public Services 16/17 self-assessment – the overall SAR grade is a 3, however underneath this there are grade 2s in personal development behaviour and welfare, adult learning programmes and a grade 1 in terms of provision for learners with High Needs.
- 16/17 headlines in relation to Sport – generally the results have dipped but the Board were given assurance that work to address this has already commenced.
- Improvements in 2016/17 cover all key areas.
- 16/17 headline position for Public Services – again it was disappointing to see the performance dips, assurance was given that this is being addressed. A key improvement has been the excellent links that the College now has with the armed services.
- Focus for 17/18 includes:
 - a) Strong and dynamic management team.
 - b) Maths and English.
 - c) Teaching, learning and assessment for learning, stretch and challenge and skills development.
 - d) Learning Consultant.
 - e) Work placements and enterprise.
 - f) Recruitment of new learners and progression of existing.

Current position for the School

- Retention 100% (pre 42 days).
- Improved attendance and behaviour at Maths and English classes.
- Swift follow up of learners at risk with excellent support from the support coach.
- Erasmus A Level project started (strategies to reduce exam pressure and anxiety among learners).
- 3 themed curriculum area learning walks completed (first experience, professional standards, stretch and challenge).
- Revised recruitment process implemented in A Levels.
- A Level student enterprise business set up.

Maths and English

- Student numbers for 17/18 are significant and have seen an increase, total enrolments on the 16-19 study programme are 2301, and adult total is 245. Staff are 29.
- SPSA 16/17 self-assessment grade was a 4 overall. The College is continuing its hard work in this area but acknowledges it is not where it needs to be.
- English and Maths improvements in 2016/17 included
 - a) Recruitment and development of a new management team, some of which are on management training programmes.

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- b) Implemented accurate reports of performance and in some curriculum areas monitoring of performance.
 - c) Smart targets that can link to formative assessment.
 - d) Assessment for learning and feedback.
 - e) Differentiation from starting points.
 - f) Improved attendance from 84.4% to 87.2%.
- Focus for 2017/18
 - a) All staff have a shared responsibility and accountability.
 - b) Differentiated approach to exams. She explained that students are to be entered for exams when they are individually ready.
 - c) Improve Maths and English attendance and behaviour.
 - d) Build on the learning points from the first year delivery of the 9-1 GCSE.
 - e) TLA stretch and challenge, assessment for learning and smart targets.
 - f) BKS B fully utilised to support learners' development of skills.

Current position

- Revised enrolment process successfully introduced. The Board were reminded that the College has circa 2,500 students enrolled to undertake Maths and English.
- New devolved structure rolled out.
- Early indicators of improved progress score for Maths and English.

Business planning

- 1) A Levels
 - Development of the science curriculum (FE, HE and apprenticeships) D2N2 growth area.
 - Review and increase A Levels subject offer.
 - Focus on the sixth form brand.
- 2) Sport
 - Development of health science from Level 3 to HE (D2N2 growth area).
 - Potential partnership ventures.
 - Apprenticeship and part time fitness.
- 3) Public services
 - Revised curriculum with focus on preparation for the forces.
 - Outdoor activities apprenticeship.
 - Cobranding with employers.

Q

In terms of the presentation provided the Board questioned what sort of support is provided to students regarding exam stress. It was explained that personal coaches work hard to help students better understand their feelings and how to stay calm.

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There is a guide for students and for parents regarding effective revision techniques.

Frequent meetings with achievement coaches help staff to better plan and be more effective. There has also been the introduction of exam yoga.

Q In terms of student numbers, the Board questioned how many students applied to College but then did not either enrol or stay. And linked to this, how are staff changing things to better ensure enrolment and retention? The Board were advised that this School of Learning has changed its enrolment process altogether and that now it is much quicker to make an offer following a student visit to College. The interview process has been removed so less stressful. What the College offers instead are taster events and the policy is not to turn any student away as there is a place for everyone. In relation to A Levels the tasters are very interactive. The College is also doing more work to support student transition from school to College. Feedback from students shows that if they don't make new friendship groups very early on then they are a high risk of withdrawal. The School also has an extensive 'keep warm' programme in place.

Q The Board questioned whether there is team 'buy in' and whether there is confidence that there are robust systems in place to bring about improvements. She advised that, in relation to academic studies, there is absolute staff buy in with all recognising the need to improve. In Public Services the team is also very engaged.

AGREED: to note the content of the presentation provided.

(Lucy Howes left the meeting at 5.30pm.)

17.107 OUTCOMES FOR LEARNERS

Amanda Jogela provided a presentation summarising the outcomes for learners in 2016/17. As an overview she confirmed that many areas have improved since 15/16 and there has to be recognition of all the hard work that staff and students have put in, however there are still some pockets of provision that need to be improved.

She provided an overview of outcomes:

- Classroom based learning all ages (including Maths and English), College and partners – 92.7% retention, 94.2% pass, and 87.3% achievement. This is a 6.4% achievement improvement.
- Classroom based learning all ages (including Maths and English), College – 90.5% retention (which is a decline) and a concern, 92.0% pass and 83.2% achievement. This is a 3.4% achievement improvement.

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- Classroom based learning all ages (including Maths and English), partners – 95.9% retention, 97.2% pass and 93.2% achievement. This is a 9.8% achievement improvement.
- Classroom based learning by age (including Maths and English), College and partners - 16-18 retention 90.8% which is a decline, 90.8% pass and 82.4% achievement. This is 5.2% achievement improvement. 19+ retention 94.4%, pass 97% and achievement 91.5%. This is a 6.6% achievement improvement.
- Classroom based learning by age (including Maths and English), College 16-18 retention 90.7% which is a decline, pass 90.9% and achievement 82.5% this is a 5.3% achievement improvement.
- 19+ retention is 89.8% which is a decline, pass 96% and achievement 85.7% this is a 1.7% achievement decline.
- Classroom based learning by age including Maths and English, partner – 19+ retention 95.9%, pass 97.3% and achievement 93.3% this is 9.9% achievement improvement. It was noted that there is no 16-18 provision with partners.
- Study programmes classroom based learning 16-19 including Maths and English, College – 90.7% retention which is a decline, pass 90.9% and achievement 82.5%. This is 5.3% achievement improvement. It was explained that the key to success in this area is intervention and stretch and it is pleasing to see such positive improvements.
- A Level performance the 3 year trend for the College - as previously indicated there is a dip in terms of performance at A2, however AS is very strong. Whilst A Levels saw a decline this is not a significant concern as there are only a few subjects where improved focus needs to be.
- Adult learning programmes 19+ classroom based learning 6.6% achievement improvement
- 19+ classroom based learning for the College this saw a slight dip with a 1.7% achievement decline
- 19+ classroom based learning partner - this saw a 9.9% achievement improvement.
- GCSE Maths A*-C all ages – this is an area for significant concern and the key area for improvement. There was a 19.1% decline. It was explained that there were 100 learners who did not turn up for their exams and to address this the College is doing a lot more work this year in terms of ensuring that students only sit the exams when they are ready. Changes introduced include when resits are undertaken and also the exam environment. It was noted that the Maths department had a challenge in 16/17 in recruiting high quality staff. The Board were assured that progress is a focus. Governors were asked to note the significant increase in the number of students enrolled for Maths, numbers almost trebled.

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- GCSE English A*-C all ages - there was a 5% achievement improvement, the Colleges position is better than it was but is still not where it wants to be. There was a huge increase in learners and this gives the College real practical challenges as all of the exams have to be sat on the same day.
- Achievement rates for Functional Skills compared with national rates – in English there was an achievement decline. Analysis has shown that it is the 19-23 year old learners that are the issue as 24+ did well. In terms of Maths some good achievement increases seen with 19+ really improving.
- Apprenticeship achievement College and partner - focus needs to be on the advanced students. The provision for 24+ apprentices requires improvement with subcontractor and direct delivery timely achievement both below the national average of 55%. Subcontracted provision is 4% below and direct delivery 9% below.
- Provision for learners with High Needs – this is an area where the College performs really well and the aspiration is to seek to be ‘outstanding’ next year.
- Higher Education – student satisfaction has improved, NSS overall satisfaction is now 77% which is a 5% improvement. Year 1 retention improved by 2% from 85% in 15/16 to 87% in 16/17. Retention for 2 year courses improved by 7% from 89% in 15/16 to 96% in 16/17. Retention for full time top up courses remains at 95%. Achievement for full time 2 year programmes declined by 1% from 97% in 15/16 to 96% in 16/17. Full time top up achievement improved by 5% from 94% to 99%. High grades improved by 12% from 51% to 63%.

In terms of positives:

- Overall achievement is good - 6.4% improvement and 5.2% above national rate.
- 16-18 achievement is good – 5.3% improvement and 3.4% above the national rate.
- Partner 19+ achievement is very good - a 9.9% improvement and 7.2% above the national rate.
- AS achievement is good - 5.5% above the national rate.
- GCSE English (4-9) pass rate is a 5% improvement.
- 16-18 Functional Skills English achievement is a 10.9% improvement.
- Intermediate apprenticeships are very good – 8% above the national rate.
- 16-18 High Needs achievement is very good at 82.9%.
- Higher Education provision is strong with a 12% high grade improvement and 99% full time top up achievement. It was confirmed that this information will be used in College marketing materials. It was explained that this school of learning does a lot of face to face parents’ evenings and it is very much parents that are interested in the data and performance statistics.

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Areas of focus include

- 16-18 and 19+ retention
- GCSE Maths
- GCSE English
- 24+ advanced apprenticeships
- A2
- 19 + high needs
- Progress and attainment – there is a huge focus on students achieving their true potential.

Q The Board questioned whether there were any in-year concerns regarding retention. The Board were reminded that there are no overall trends which are of a concern, but instead there are some specific pockets to address. Monitoring and early intervention really helps with retention. Assurance was given that student feedback is listened to and that the College knows exactly where the issues are.

Q The Board discussed the use of the ProMonitor system and questioned whether there are any negatives. It was explained that the system is only as good as the data that is inputted, and that what the College needs to ensure is that the system is used consistently and effectively. The Principal challenged the senior team and expressed the view that there needs to be improved accountability of teaching, learning and assessment. There are a small number of 'patchy' areas of provision, however by and large students all feel that they have a very positive, and are satisfied with, their student experience.

AGREED: to note the content of the presentation and written report provided.

17.108 **KPIs**

The Director of IT introduced the data dashboards and a number of matters were noted:

- 16-19 volumes including directly delivered apprenticeships - is slightly behind target and the level of withdrawals seen in the first part of the year is disappointing.
- Apprenticeship income split between College and partner delivery College - direct delivery is showing an improving trend on the prior year outturn position but still a way to go in terms of the target.
- Adult education budget – the split between D2N2 delivery locations and otherwise is on track for the year.
- 16-18 attendance - is very close to target for main qualifications, Maths and English is a few percentage points below, although it was acknowledged that some other Colleges in the sector see a much greater difference between main qualification and Maths and English, and in some areas a 10% difference.

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- Apprenticeship achievement rates – the Board were asked to take this data with a ‘note of caution’ as it is so early in the year and that the figures will become more accurate as the year progresses.
- Customer satisfaction – 16/17 and 17/18 cannot be compared on a like for like basis as the 16/17 data was on the basis of 20 responses the 17/18 data so far is based on 242 employers being surveyed. It was explained that the same survey undertaken in the prior year was 20% below the current position. It was explained that this is a sample survey and that it does not go to all employers.
- Graded lesson observations – this is partner observations only. 9 observations have been undertaken with five showing requiring improvement and four good or better. It was explained that the observation schedule has been based upon known risks and that there are 100 planned for the year.
- Financial indicators - in the Deputy Principal’s absence it was noted that he will bring an update to the next meeting in December.
- Study programme main qualification progress - in terms of the information provided it was explained that the score that students aim for is a 0 as this shows that they are on track. A low minus at this stage is not a concern and appears to show a positive start and set of results. The Board questioned whether the College monitors students who are overachieving. It was confirmed that this is captured.
- Study Programmes English and Maths progress – the current position is positive which is what is expected at this time in the year given the topics that are covered, however it is expected that there will be a dip at the next data point.

Deputy
Principal

Dec. 2017

Q

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17.109 PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

The Principal introduced her written report and key data was noted.

- 1) Enrolment and retention
 - As of 13th November 2017 2,600 16-18 year old students had enrolled (against a planned figure of 2,786) this is 93% of planned numbers. The Board questioned why the College was only at 93%. She explained that most areas, except for Health and Social Care have dipped below target and therefore it is likely to be that targets set were too high. Also, withdrawals in the first 42 days have had a significant negative impact. Strategies introduced to improve retention have simply not worked. Focus for the College is in terms of conversion of expressions of interest in to enrolments and student attendance and also to slow or stop early withdrawals.

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- 340 19+ students enrolled against a plan of 372 so this is 91%. It was explained that the College saw 40 learners withdraw.
- HE recruitment is 366 against a plan of 372. 98% of planned numbers. Some HE courses are planned for January start so it is expected that the HE target will be achieved.

Q The Board questioned whether there is any correlation between more flexible enrolment and a higher level of drop out. It was explained that there is no correlation and that it is only the school of Sport, Public Services and Academic Studies who have moved away from interviews prior to enrolment. The Vice Principal: Communications, Engagement and Student Experience indicated that the College has done a lot of analysis in terms of the conversion from acceptance to students turning up at College which is 92%. What analysis shows is that the College loses a third of students from application to acceptance and a lot of work is being done to better understand this. It appears to be the vocational areas where the issues lie. She advised that staff have also looked at the profile of withdrawals. 45 were on A Level provision, therefore it is clear that more work needs to be done early to support them in terms of being happy and making friends. The Board were given assurance that staff better understand the underlying issues.

(Kate Allsop left the meeting at 6.30pm)

2) Apprenticeships

- As at 16th November 2017 there are 302 actual cumulative starts for the period August to November with 169 pending starts. The Executive Director: Capital Projects and Estates expressed confidence that the College can resolve its current position and move forward on a sound foundation. It was acknowledged by all that the current position has been a 'reality check' and what the College now needs to do is move backwards before it can move forwards in terms of its processes and systems. The Board questioned whether there was any idea as to when stability would be achieved. The Board were advised that there is real confusion both internally and externally regarding the new apprenticeship processes and procedures. It has become clear that it simply takes a lot longer to engage with employers than was ever considered previously. He is hopeful that activity can be reignited in the early part of the New Year but that it is important to be sure about systems and delivery first.

Q The Board questioned what morale is like in the Vision Business team currently. They were advised that it is not excellent and that to improve this the sales team need to have confidence in terms of delivery and back up.

- 3) Safeguarding – the year continues to show a significant increase in safeguarding referrals with 200 referrals made which compares with 37 in October 2016.

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It was explained that staff are referring issues through a lot more quickly and this is because training and support to staff is now well embedded. There is an expectation that at the mid-point of the year the number and level of referrals will start to even out.

- 4) Deputy Principal appointment – the Principal explained that four candidates have been shortlisted and will take part in assessment activities on Monday 27th November and will include a formal interview with a Governor selection panel. This panel will then present its recommendation to a special meeting of the Board, which is to be convened by telephone conference, on the evening of 27th November. The Clerk confirmed that Governor availability for this Special Board meeting will be ascertained tomorrow.

- 5) West Nottinghamshire College fellowship – at the graduation ceremony on 18th November Kate Allsop was named the College’s first recipient of an honorary fellowship. This is to acknowledge her contribution to regeneration and the local economy.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

17.110 HE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

The Principal asked for this agenda item to be withdrawn and deferred. She indicated that she was not 100% convinced regarding the robustness of the plan and she wanted the team to have a little more time to ensure that the targets set are realistic and achievable. It was agreed that this item would be withdrawn and rescheduled for February 2018.

Director:
Learning &
Innovation

Feb. 2018

17.111 GOVERNOR MEMBERSHIP AND VACANCIES

The Clerk to the Corporation introduced her written report and put forward recommendations regarding the reappointment of John Holford and also the appointment of a number of Governors as Directors on College subsidiary companies. All supported the recommendations put forward and acknowledged that John Holford plays a key role as the Standards Committee Chairman and that they would not wish to lose his knowledge and skills in this area that have been built up over many years.

AGREED:

- a) to re-appoint John Holford as a Governor from 28th January 2018 to 28th January 2022;
b) appoint Malcolm Hall as a Director on VBSS;
c) appoint Terry Dean as a Director on Vision Apprentices; and
d) appoint Terry Dean as a Director on Vision Workforce Skills.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

17.112 SUMMARY FROM THE FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE CHAIR

The content of the report was noted.

17.113 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2017

The content of the accounts was noted.

17.114 MINUTES OF THE FINANCE RESOURCES AND ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7TH NOVEMBER 2017

The content of the minutes was noted.

17.115 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of additional business.

17.116 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Clerk reminded Governors that on the 14th December there are two meetings scheduled. 4.00 pm is to solely focus on a Vision Business update and 5.00 pm is the normal business that would be considered in December.

17.117 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It was agreed that confidential items would be recorded separately.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date: