

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION MEETING

HELD ON TUESDAY 8 OCTOBER 2019

Present:

Pat	Brennan Barrett	Principal	✓
Sharon	Bunker	Staff Governor	Apologies
Ellen	Buttler	Governor	✓
Bill	Chalker	Governor	✓
Shane	Crouch	Student Governor	Apologies
Robert	Davey	Governor	✓
Tracey	Griffiths	Governor	✓
Philip	Hilton	Governor	✓
Gabriele	Makaraite	Student Governor	✓
Mark	Robbins	Governor	✓
Geraldine	Schofield	Governor (Chair)	✓
Helen	Scott	Governor	Apologies
David	Smith	Governor	✓

The quorum for the meeting was six Members.

In attendance:

Steve Rankine	Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs
Patrick Leavey	Deputy Principal
Phil O'Hara	Vice Principal
Jenny Thorpe	Assistant Principal – Teaching Learning and Quality
Gary Brough	Vice Principal (Resources)
Mark Owen	Head of Student Services
Julie Brasier	Clerk to the Corporation

The meeting was held in the Boardroom and started at 6.00pm.

1		Welcome and Apologies	Action
	1.1	Gabriele Makaraite was welcomed to her first Corporation meeting. Apologies were received from Sharon Bunker, Helen Scott and Shane Crouch.	
2		Declarations of Interest	
	2.1	The Chair reminded Members to declare their interests as and when necessary on the agenda. Governors present completed pecuniary interest forms and eligibility declarations.	
3		Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held on 14 May 2019 and any matters arising	
	3.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2019 were agreed as a correct record, subject to the amendment to minute 9.4 (Management Accounts up to	

		31 May) - the EBITDA figure was £2.1million and not £7.1 million as stated, and signed by the Chair.	
	3.2	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>Minute 7.4 – Learner Data Monitoring – Retention, Attendance and Progress</p> <p><i>Is there a reconciliation/comparison of actual results against BRAG data and targets?</i></p> <p>Yes, this will be reported at the next meeting. Any variance between actual outcomes and targets is looked at closely.</p>	Deputy Principal
4		Determination of Any Other Business	
	4.1	There were no any other business items.	
5		Annual Safeguarding Report - 2019	
	5.1	The Head of Student Services presented his report. There had been a small increase in the number of external safeguarding referrals but a decrease in the number of internal referrals. The report set out the areas of concern that the Student Services team were looking at overall and the data for vulnerable students. Key issues emerging were broadly the same as last year and included suicide risk and poor mental health including self harm. There had been a drop in homelessness but an increase for the first time in several years in cases of neglect.	
	5.2	The report included data on staff referrals. All were dealt with by internal procedures as no escalation was required.	
	5.3	PREVENT, for Northamptonshire, continued to be an issue, seen mostly in far right groups, children from care from other countries and inappropriate behaviour towards mixed race families. The College was working with the Police on this and also the risk posed by gangs.	
	5.4	<p>Priorities for 2019/20 were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop understanding of the PREVENT agenda including in industry and apprenticeship providers • Continue to develop student understanding of PREVENT within the local area • Develop curriculum opportunities for students to learn more about the consequences of gang involvement/violent behaviour through work with Northamptonshire Police • Develop opportunities for students to learn more about on line safety. 	
	5.5	The Head of Student Services also drew attention to the changes to the statutory guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. Upskirting was now a criminal offence and the College's policy had been updated to reflect the changes in the guidance.	
	5.6	<p><i>With the increase in cases of mental health matters, has there been training for staff?</i></p> <p>There is a programme for staff training. It has been increased this year. The College was working with St Andrews hospital to achieve a charter mark in this area.</p> <p><i>How do trends compare with other colleges?</i></p> <p>They are broadly the same.</p> <p><i>Are there outcome measures? Do we measure the impact the College or other agencies have?</i></p> <p>This can be added into future reports</p> <p><i>How is safeguarding monitored on work placements?</i></p>	Head of Student Services

		<p>The Head of Student Services oversees this. All staff in the work placements team have had safeguarding training and there is a work experience lead for this.</p> <p><i>Will this be affected by T Levels?</i> Yes, but it is not yet clear to what extent.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[41/19] The Corporation resolved to note Annual Safeguarding Report for 2019.</p> <p><i>The Head of Student Services was thanked for his report and left the meeting.</i></p>	
6		Staff Development	
	6.1	<p>The Assistant Principal, Teaching Learning and Quality presented her report. It covered the training done by staff both internally and externally. There had been positive feedback from staff for both the professional development days and the teacher conference. The focus was on teaching learning and assessment, as picked up on learning walks.</p>	
	6.2	<p>The Teacher Conference in June had looked at digital skills including accessibility, mental health and resilience. Staff had the opportunity to attend show case sessions looking at different types of assessment. The appraisal process was checking that identified training needs were being met.</p>	
	6.3	<p><i>To what extent is the College implementing the Digital Teaching Professional Framework?</i> Activities will be mapped against this. The JISC survey is being used to identify skills gaps.</p> <p><i>How many staff know the framework?</i> Not many.</p> <p><i>Are you using evidence based informed practice?</i> Yes, there are a lot of real examples of this.</p> <p><i>Is there mindfulness training?</i> Yes – staff feedback is very positive on this.</p>	
	6.4	<p><i>Is training coming in house driven by budget constraints?</i> The College was looking at the most efficient methods of delivery. It was more cost effective for a trainer to present at the College to a larger group of staff than a small number of staff to attend an external course.</p> <p><i>The professional development day sound really good – was there cross fertilisation of ideas with staff visiting different curriculum areas?</i> Yes. Evidence was not formally captured, but anecdotal feedback indicated that staff had shared lots of ideas with each other.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[42/19] The Corporation resolved to note the Staff Development Report.</p> <p><i>The Assistant Principal, Teaching Learning and Quality was thanked for her report and left the meeting.</i></p>	
7		Health and Safety Annual Report and Statement	
	7.1	<p>The Vice Principal (Resources) presented his report. The Audit Committee had requested a review of the Health and Safety consultancy arrangements. A new consultant had been appointed. He had done an audit of the College's approach against ROSPA standards. The report was positive and this developed into an action list. Most areas were satisfactory but there were</p>	

		<p>some low risk areas to address. Most of these had now been completed. The College was in a good position from a Health and Safety perspective.</p> <p>Areas of focus were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the times for evacuating the building – there would be more fire drills • First aid reporting would now be online, this would mean quicker intervention and response times • The security team were now the first call for first aid – this led to a quicker response time 	
	7.2	<p><i>Were there any themes that informed the report sheets and plans drawn up?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving existing good fire evacuation practice • Risk assessment reviews – risk assessments are all in place, but there is a need to ensure regular review. <p><i>Are there any themes to incidents?</i></p> <p>These are usually cases of illness rather than accidents.</p> <p><i>Is there a 'lessons learnt' exercise after incidents?</i></p> <p>Yes, if there is a need for an investigation. This is discussed at the Health and Safety Committee and with curriculum teams. If relevant any issues are shared with Policy and Strategy Committee.</p>	
	7.3	<p>Insurance claims were at a very low level. These have tailed off over the last 6 – 7 years. This means lower premiums for the College. The Insurers fund an annual half day Health and Safety Visit.</p>	
	7.4	<p>The target areas for action in 2019 -20 were set out in the report.</p> <p><i>What does posture relate to?</i></p> <p>How staff sit at computers.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED C[43/19] that the Corporation note the Annual Health and Safety report for 2018 -19 and approve the signing by the Chair of the Health and Safety Statement.</i></p>	
8		Annual Estates Report	
	8.1	<p>The Vice Principal (Resources) presented the Annual Estates Report for 2018 – 19. The main focus had been the construction of ACE Centre and the refurbishment of Cherry Building. Both had been successfully completed. IT equipment had been upgraded.</p>	
	8.2	<p>Installation of LED lighting was implemented to save on running and maintenance costs. Maintaining the fabric and appearance of the College buildings was important.</p> <p><i>Are Cleaning and Maintenance in house activities?</i></p> <p>Maintenance is in house, Cleaning in covered in item 9.</p>	
	8.3	<p>There had been some increase in utility costs. Less water was being used but the low rainfall meant that the storage tank was not full. Security incidents were few and declining. There had been good CCTV investment. There was some theft, but this was often due to students not following the advice given.</p> <p><i>RESOLVED C[44/19] The Corporation resolved to note the Annual Estates Report for 2018 -19 and thanked the Estates team for their work in maintaining the site and buildings.</i></p>	
9		Cleaning Contract Renewal	
	9.1	<p>The Vice Principal (Resources) presented his report which set out the details of the tendering process followed for the renewal of the Cleaning contract. It was</p>	

		<p>not economical for this function to come in house. Following the receipt of tenders and the scoring process, 2 contractors were invited to interview. Following the interview, the recommendation was that the new contract be awarded to the current provider. The contract was for 2 years with renewal options for 2 further period of a year each.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[45/19] The Corporation resolved to approve the award of the Cleaning contract to Norse.</p>	
10		Principal's College Overview Report.	
	10.1	The Principal presented her report. The report signposts where more detailed information was available. Green indicated when particular areas would be complete or targets achieved. For ongoing areas from the previous year, some items had moved from red to amber.	
	10.2	<p><i>Maths and English are now amber (from red)?</i></p> <p>The national policy was that all 16 -18 year olds had to take qualifications in English and Maths if they had not achieved GCSE grade 4 or above. This policy had been strongly challenged by the FE sector; it was however a condition of funding. Following significant investment, curriculum development and staffing training for the delivery of these subjects, the College was now achieving above the national average for FE colleges in GCSEs. Its performance was credible with a dynamic and diagnostic approach which was having an impact on other subjects. There was a link in the success rate across other subjects and the improvement in English and Maths results.</p> <p><i>1.1 – areas of improvement – does this include catering?</i></p> <p>The structure of the catering qualification had changed; there were now end tests which were not present before. Should this be an issue next year it will be picked up then.</p> <p><i>1.3 – Stretch Challenge and Inspire students – this is already shown as green?</i></p> <p>The College has been meeting its targets year on year and is now more confident of its delivery.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[47/19] The Corporation resolved to note the Principal's College Overview Report.</p>	
11		Update on Current Outcomes including English and Maths	
	11.1	The Deputy Principal presented his report. Some of the data was still preliminary at this stage. The final ILR would be submitted later this month. Curriculum teams continued to work with students so that further results could be added. There had been KPIs for retention and pass rates. The KPI for pass rates had been exceeded. It was hoped that Achievement rates would increase again, which would mean a 6 year trend of improving results.	
	11.2	<p>The data reported was at headline level. Once the ILR was submitted, the performance of individual groups would be analysed. GCSE English and Maths results continued to be good and credible within the FE sector. In English the number of high grade passes had improved. Functional skills qualifications in English and Maths remained a stepping stone towards higher qualifications and were an important part of the English and Maths strategy.</p> <p><i>In terms of life chances, if students achieve their vocational qualification but not English and/or Maths at grade 4 or above, what difference does it make to jobs etc?</i></p> <p>It depends on the progression route. All universities will require English and Maths and apprenticeships have an English and Maths element. Under the</p>	

		<p>current system it was important that study programmes supported strong English and Maths outcomes.</p> <p><i>These are good results, but slight downward trend for Maths and English?</i> The GCSE grade boundaries increased this year and functional skills have been revised.</p> <p>There will be now be further analysis of all results and this will then feed into the SAR which will come to the next meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[48/19] The Corporation resolved to note on Current Outcomes, including English and Maths.</p>	
12		Student Recruitment – 2019 -20	
	12.1	<p>The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented his report. ILR reports were awaited for Adult Budget and apprenticeship numbers. Fulltime recruitment was mainly complete and this had increased compared to last year. Final numbers were calculated after 42 days. The report contained a breakdown of recruitment by subject area and funding stream. In some subjects 1 teaching group had been planned but demand had meant that 4 groups were put on.</p>	
	12.2	<p>ESOL numbers were lower, but these increased over the course of the year. Foundation numbers were lower, but the College was offering more level 1 courses and multi skilled construction courses. All other areas are robust.</p>	
	12.3	<p>There was a 30% increase in numbers at Daventry compared to last year. In some subject areas where numbers were lower, this was due to competition with schools. More subjects were also being offered on the Daventry Campus.</p> <p><i>Can Daventry numbers be reported separately?</i> Yes – this will be in the next report.</p> <p><i>Where have the forensic science teachers come from?</i> These are the science teachers already employed by the College.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[49/19] The Corporation resolved to note the report on Student Recruitment 2019 - 20</p>	Exec Dir of Finance and Corporate Affairs
13		Management Accounts to July 2019	
	13.1	<p>The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented his report. The accounts presented to the meeting would be close to the year end figures. EBITDA now stood at 9.2% which meant that the College had achieved outstanding against this measure. In 2018 -19 additional funding had been receiving across several areas, including funding to implement work placements in T levels, ALS and Maths and numeracy. Pay costs were below budget. Non pay costs were ahead of budget but these had been covered by the additional funding received. The surplus position had improved, meaning the College remained in a strong financial position.</p>	
	13.2	<p><i>What is the position regarding LGPS pension charges? Is there anything that we can do to get better visibility on this?</i> The accounts show what has been allowed to date for FRS102. Further actuarial figures are awaited. This has to be shown as a liability on the balance sheet. The ESFA recognise the impact of pension liabilities and these are excluded from EBITDA.</p> <p><i>What is the impact if pension liabilities put a college into a negative reserves position? Do the ESFA disregard this?</i></p>	

		<p>It was also noted that the balance sheet also shows capital grants as liabilities which also adversely affects the net reserves position. The ESFA use adjusted ratios to look at financial health, which excludes these distortions.</p> <p><i>Are there any other colleges flagging up technical insolvency?</i> 40 Colleges are subject to financial intervention. The ESFA should not penalise for a pension figure. The College's LGPS scheme was 85% funded at the last valuation.</p> <p><i>Where are the savings for staff costs from MIS shown in relation to staff numbers?</i> The Executive Director of Finance and Strategic Affairs would look at this further.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[50/19] The Corporation resolved to note the Management Accounts up to July 2019.</p>	<p>Exec Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs</p>
14		Tuition Fees and Charges Policy	
	14.1	<p>The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented the policy. Charges could be made for non compulsory items and there were bursaries to support students as appropriate. Refunds were discretionary and each case was looked at in the light of the individual circumstances. The 2020/21 policy would come to the Corporation for approval in April.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[51/19] The Corporation resolved to approve the Tuition Fees and Charges Policy.</p>	
15		Subcontractor Arrangements	
	15.1	<p>The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented his report. All subcontracting arrangements had to be approved on an annual basis. The College wished to continue the current arrangements with A provider Results 2018 - 2019 were high. The proposed contract value would be up to £500,000. The College also worked with the local NHS Trust to deliver Health Care Apprenticeships. This contract would not exceed £100,000 and would only be for the current year. These sums could only be spent on the respective subcontracting arrangements.</p> <p>RESOLVED C[52/19] The Corporation resolved to approve the subcontracting arrangements for 2019 – 20 with Learning Curve up to £500,000 and the local NHS Trust up to £100,000.</p>	
16		Insolvency Regime	
	16.1	<p>The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented his report on the Insolvency regime for Colleges. The AOC guidance was included within the report. This guidance highlights key ratios and metrics to help governors better understand the financial health of a college.</p>	
	16.2	<p><i>What happens if Governors have followed all the relevant guidance correctly but through no fault end up with a pension liability that causes a deficit?</i></p> <p>The Executive Director of Finance and Strategic Affairs would contact the AOC on this point.</p>	<p>Exec Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs</p>

		RESOLVED C[53/19] The Corporation resolved to note the Insolvency Regime report.	
17		Financial Regulations	
	17.1	The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Affairs presented the updated Financial Regulations. The changes related to dates, authorised signatories and titles. There were no procedural changes. RESOLVED C[54/19] The Corporation resolved to approve the revised Financial Regulations.	
18		Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee	
	18.1	The minutes of the meeting of the Quality, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee held on 25 June were circulated and noted. It was also noted that Warwick University had been part of the pilot for the new Ofsted framework for teacher training which would come into force in January 2020. Student Voice would be part of the TEF for HE providers. RESOLVED C[55/19] The Corporation resolved to note the report of the Quality, Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee.	
19		Audit Committee	
	19.1	The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 9 July 2019 were circulated and noted. The meeting had considered the Internal Audit plan and the arrangements for the external audit. RESOLVED C[56/19] The Corporation resolved to note the report of the Audit Committee.	
20		Governance Committee	
	20.1	The minutes of the meeting of the Governance Committee were circulated and noted. The Committee had considered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity against the agreed Governor priorities for 2018 -19 • The proposed Governor priorities for 2019 -20 • Revisions to the Instrument and Articles of Government, Standing Orders and the Code of Conduct • Revisions to the Committee’s terms of reference to take account of the requirements of the Office for Students 	
	20.2	The revised Instrument and Articles and Standing orders would be sent to the College’s lawyers for review before coming back to the Corporation for approval. RESOLVED C[56/19] The Corporation resolved to <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. note the report of the Governance Committee 2. approve the Governor Priorities for 2019 -20 3. approve the Code of Conduct 4. approve the revised terms of reference for the committee 	
21		Committee Chairs and Membership	
	21.1	The Corporation reviewed the current committee and task and finish membership and chairing arrangements. Revisions were agreed.	

		<i>RESOLVED C[57/19] The Corporation resolved to approve the revised committee and task and finish membership and chairing arrangements.</i>	
22		Chair's Actions	
	22.1	It was noted that the Chair had approved a visit of 2 staff to China to observe Maths provision. This was part of a joint working project with another college.	
23		Date and Time of Next meeting	
		The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 10 December 2019 at 6.00pm in the Board Room at Booth Lane. The meeting finished at 8.40pm.	

Julie Brasier
Clerk to the Corporation
Northampton College

Signed by the Chair:	
Date:	