

**Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation of Yeovil College
Held on Thursday 11 October 2018 at 16:30
In Room A109, Kingston Building, Yeovil College**

Members: Sam Best*; Mike Brinson*; Ken Comber*; Jacquie Dean [Chair]; John Evans [Principal]*; Lee Harwood*; Clare Johnston [Student]; Mark Lawrence; Rebecca Marshall*; Debbie Matthewson; Netta Meadows*; David Mills*; Paul Morey [Staff]*; Jagtar Ner*; Gayle Pogson [Staff]*; Scott Roy*; Peter Thomas [Vice Chair]*

In attendance:

All items: Mark Bolton [Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality]*; Emma Cox [Vice Principal Finance & Resources]*;

Item 2 onwards: Kaz Corbett [Clerk]*

Item 3 only: Mary Payne [Director of Employer Engagement]*

1. MEETING PRELIMINARIES

In the absence of the Chair of the Corporation, today's meeting was chaired by the Vice Chair, Peter Thomas.

Apologies for absence were received from Jacquie Dean, Mark Lawrence and Debbie Matthewson. Netta Meadows made a request to withdraw from the meeting at 6.40pm. Rebecca Marshall joined the meeting at 5.00pm.

The meeting remained quorate throughout.

No **Declarations of Interest** were made on this occasion.

2. APPOINTMENT OF THE CLERK TO THE CORPORATION

The Corporation **APPROVED** the appointment of Kaz Corbett as Clerk to the Corporation, and welcomed her to the meeting.

3. SUBCONTRACTING FEES AND CHARGES POLICY 2018/19

The Board had previously **noted** the updated 2018/19 Subcontracting Fees and Charges Policy at its July 2018 meeting. Mary Payne, Director of Employer Engagement, gave a comprehensive explanation of the reasons for the updates within the policy including amendments to:

- reflect ESFA funding rules
- include changes to guidance used
- update on management fee criteria and delivery costs
- update the Risk Rating matrix

The Board were asked to consider whether they were happy to publish the Policy on the College website. Members questioned the implications of publication; Mary reassured the Board that there were no concerns to the College commercially.

The Board **APPROVED** the 2018/19 Subcontracting Fees and Charges Policy, and its publication on the College website.

Mary was also asked to give an update on the signing of the Leonardo Subcontracting Agreement, which is an outstanding item on the Action and Query sheet. Mary explained that the College had sent an annotated copy to Leonardo in July but hadn't yet received a final version. Mary is due to meet with Leonardo in the next week with the agreed aim of getting the final version signed by the end of October.

Mary Payne was thanked and left the meeting at 4.50pm.

4. MINUTES OF CORPORATION MEETINGS

The Board **APPROVED** the following minutes as correct records and the public minutes for website publication:

12 July 2018 Public

12 July 2018 Confidential

Both sets of minutes were signed by the Vice Chair.

5. RECRUITMENT OF FE STUDENT GOVERNERS

The Vice Chair informed the Board that the recruitment process was underway, with the hope to identify a new student governor for appointment at the December meeting.

Rebecca Marshall arrived at 5pm.

6. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Board noted the Chair's report; presented by the Vice Chair. This included an amendment to the HE Fees Policy 2018-19 and 2019-20 which had been added to the agenda as a matter of additional business. Given the short notice of this item, Members had not received the policy for scrutiny ahead of today's meeting. The updated policy was viewed on screen and the VP Curriculum & Quality was asked to give a brief explanation of the amendment; which related to the cost of resubmission for HE students and ensured compliance with the OFS policy on resitting.

The Board **APPROVED** the HE Fees Policy 2018-19 and 2019-20.

The Vice Chair then shared headlines from today's earlier Search and Governance Committee:

- The Committee had discussed the future composition of the Corporation, and the noticeable increase in Committee obligations. The Committee were investigating increasing the number of Board Members to account for this.
- The Board **APPROVED** the recommendation to reappoint Debbie Matthewson for a further 4 year term of office commencing 17 March 2019 (subject to Debbie's agreement).
- The Committee had today conducted a self-assessment of the Board's performance against The AoC Code of Good Governance for English Colleges which the College had voluntarily adopted in August 2015. The Committee felt the Board was performing **very strongly** and had identified only two areas for improvement. The full report of the self-assessment would be reviewed by the Board at its next meeting.
- Board Members were asked to send to the Clerk the names of any contacts they felt could be interested in joining the Corporation.

One member stated that they felt a formal induction period for new Governors would be beneficial, and would help with recruitment.

7. MATTERS ARISING

The action and query sheet was noted, reviewed and updated. The Principal updated the Board regarding action ref 10C – "*Issues with website navigation to course information to be resolved*". As the College website would be undergoing a total refurbishment shortly, any issues would be rectified. All other actions were either complete, included elsewhere on today's agenda or being appropriately tracked and carried forward.

8. TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Board noted the draft minutes from the Quality and Assurance Committee Meeting which had taken place on the 20 September 2018 and detailed:

- 2018/19 student numbers
- 2017/18 learner outcomes
- A Level Policy change.

The Board were delighted to note the significantly increased number of enrolments, especially in a year where there are 124 fewer school-leavers than previous years. The positive news continued as the VP Curriculum & Quality informed the Board that 16-18 achievement rates are forecast to hit 88%, which is an increase of 4% in just one year and hopefully places the College in the top 10% of the country. Members commented on the years of hard work that had been invested by the staff, and how pleasing it was to see the results come to fruition. The Vice Chair commended the hard work of the students and staff in achieving such outstanding results.

Clerk

The VP C&Q moved on to talk about the delivery of A Levels at the Gryphon Sixth Form, and how excellent they have been to work with. The process has been much less problematic than envisioned, and learner feedback is also positive. The College is advertising for a full-time bus driver to transport the learners, as this is more cost effective than taxis and means a more stable experience for the learners.

The Board then discussed the contents of a paper that had been prepared by the VP C&Q, which detailed the outcomes of two student surveys conducted during 2017/18.

FE Choices Student Satisfaction Survey

Particular points noted:

- Overall learner score has improved from 7.6 to 8.2; this score forms the student satisfaction KPI in the FE Choices scoring matrix, and is also used as 1 of 4 metrics in the FE Week's league table.
- Average score in the other 7 questions has either dropped or stayed the same, which is disappointing
- Action plan has been created to ensure the survey is well managed and learner participation is increased

HE National Student Survey

Particular points noted:

- Overall satisfaction results have improved significantly to 80% from last year's 50.63%
- National Average result for overall satisfaction is 83.4%
- Learning Resources (67.59%) is the only survey point which is below the National Average result (85.4%), and has significantly impacted the overall satisfaction result
- Although results are much improved this is skewed due to the very low satisfaction reported last year, and still require further improvement.

Members questioned the improvements that could be made to learning resources, given the limited budget available. The VP C&Q informed the Board that the HE offering is currently being developed to bring it in line with the needs of the local demographic. Full-time programmes will move to a placement-driven model, enabling learners to benefit from the resources offered by their placement. Part-time courses will focus on career enhancement; with 90 credit modules timetabled to accommodate learners with work and/or family commitments.

In the meantime a targeted questionnaire would be useful to find out the resources desired, as some adjustments may not be of large cost.

The VP C&Q gave a brief update on plans for Underperforming Course Panels for the year, which would be looked at in detail by the Quality and Assurance Committee.

VP C&Q

9.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Board noted and discussed the July Management Accounts and draft minutes of the first meeting of the Finance and Remuneration Committee which had taken place on 4 October 2018 and detailed:

- Financial Statements
- Lloyds Bank Update
- Building Conditions
- Learner Numbers 2018/19

Further details on this item are recorded separately in a confidential set of minutes.

On the recommendation of the Finance & Remuneration Committee, the Board **APPROVED** a Bad Debt Write-off of £5421 in accordance with item 3.3.7 of the College's Financial Regulations which states "*any write off over £5k must be approved by the Corporation.*"

BUILDINGS STRATEGY

10.

The Vice Chair updated the Board on arrangements for the newly formed Informal Estates Strategy Group which will meet for the first time on 18 October 2018 and will look at Phase 1

of the Buildings Strategy, and the latest correspondence from Lloyds. Governors were invited to attend.

Post-meeting Note: Meetings of the Informal Estates Strategy Group have been postponed to December 2018/January 2019.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

11. The Corporation **noted** the Principal's Report (there were no strategic actions within the report that required Board approval). On this occasion there was particular emphasis upon:

- AoC/DfE Work Placement best practice day
- Car Parking update
- A Level CAM vacancy
- A Level Joint Delivery
- Aviation Skills Partnership
- King Arthurs IEB
- Social Media Update
- Level 4/5 in Partnership with SSDC
- Devolved AEB delivery
- Strode College
- David Warburton visit
- DFE T Level visit
- In Year Progress

The Principal informed the Board that Ofsted Inspectors would be visiting the College on 17th October to observe the areas of Hospitality, Hair and Beauty, and Construction as part of a research project around the operational implementation of the new Common Inspection Framework. Their report would not be shared externally, and offered an opportunity for the selected areas to receive quality feedback.

The Board noted the first adaption of the Operating Statement for 2018/19.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-21

12. The Board had already **APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE** this item in July 2018; however, further challenge was needed on appendix 3 of the report in respect to Success Rates, Teaching, Learning and Assessment. This challenge was delegated to the Board's Quality and Assurance Committee, who reviewed the targets in appendix 3 at their 20 September 2018 meeting. The VP C&Q had been asked to further amend the targets, and the final version had been circulated to the Board ahead of today's meeting. Members challenged the finalised targets, especially where these were lower than current achievement rates. The VP C&Q gave a detailed response explaining the reasoning for these targets which reassured the Board. It was also noted that as the 16-18 achievement rate is currently so high, aiming for 90% and maintaining this would be sufficiently challenging. Setting targets over 90% would be unrealistic.

The Board **APPROVED** the Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

LEGAL, POLICY and REGULATORY MATTERS

13. **Treasury Management Report**

The Board **noted** the Treasury Management Report which detailed treasury activities undertaken during 2017/18 as prescribed in the Financial Regulations. No short/medium term investments were made during this period. Cash flow will continue to be monitored closely by the Finance and Remuneration Committee, and a Financial Plan will be brought to the Board's December meeting.

Netta Meadows left the meeting at 6.40pm.

Finance and Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference and Work Programme

The Board **reviewed and APPROVED** the Terms of Reference and Work Programme of this newly-formed Committee.

F&R
Chair / VP
F&R

Equality and Diversity Policy v2

The Board **APPROVED** the minor changes to this policy.

Annual Safeguarding Audit

The Board were informed that the online self-assessment audit was ready and would be submitted to the Support Services Education by mid-November. The Board will be asked to approve the audit documentation at its meeting in December 2018.

Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity (SED)

The Board noted a verbal report given by the VP C&Q, supported by a tabled report, summarising 9 of the more serious incidents/concerns logged this term. The Board were pleased to hear from the VP C&Q and a Staff Governor (who is also a Safeguarding Officer) that the new My Concern portal is proving to be an excellent tool and has revolutionised the Safeguarding process. All members of staff are now able to log an incident/concern quickly and easily, and staff directly involved with Safeguarding are kept up to date with current issues.

Lead Governors Voice: Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity (SED)

Sam Best, Safeguarding Lead Governor added her positive comment regarding the new My Concern portal.

HE Update

The VP C&Q informed the Board that currently HE enrolments are down by around 20. Extra enrolments are anticipated with the launch of the distance learning Engineering course which will hopefully make up this deficit. The introduction of a new Social Work degree is looking positive.

Whistleblowing, Health & Safety and Fraud

The VP F&R informed the Board that there were no Whistleblowing or Health & Safety instances to report. There was one incidence of suspected Fraudulent Activity. Following investigation the VP F&R is satisfied that this was not an actual Fraud, and was in fact due to policy not being followed correctly.

Staff Voice

The Board were informed that the newly opened staff car park at Mudford Rec. is being used by the majority of staff, and feedback has been extremely positive. Staff/students wanting to park on site are now able to find a space without difficulty, which is an excellent outcome.

Student Voice

No Student Governors were in attendance at today's meeting to give an update.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

14. The Board were asked to note the business of the Audit Committee which had last met on 26 September 2018.

Internal Audit Annual Report 2017/18

Mazars LLP had presented their Internal Audit Annual Report 2017/18 to the Committee which summarised the internal audit work during 2017-18, providing its annual opinion, benchmarking information and an assessment of the performance of Internal Audit. External benchmarking by Mazars showed Yeovil College compared favourably against their external FE college base. A total of 10 Internal Audit visits took place during the year with the majority providing adequate assurance.

The overall assurance opinion of the Internal Audit Service for 2017-18 was:

“On the basis of our Audit work, we consider that Yeovil College’s governance, risk management and internal control arrangements are generally adequate and effective to manage its achievement of the College Objectives. Certain weaknesses and exceptions were highlighted by our audit work, but none were considered fundamental. These and all other matters have been discussed with management, to whom we have made a number of

recommendations. All of these have been, or are in the process of being addressed, as detailed in our individual reports.”

External Audit Engagement Letter

Following the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Board **APPROVED** the Engagement Letter issued by Mazars LLP. The Chair of the Corporation would sign the Specific Service Agreement indicating the Board’s acceptance of Mazars LLP Engagement Pack and Terms & Conditions of Business for the audit of the College’s annual financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2018 and a limited assurance engagement on regularity.

Regularity Audit Questionnaire

Following the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Board **APPROVED** the completed Regularity Self-Assessment Questionnaire (RSAQ) and noted that the related evidence would be made available to the auditors. The RSAQ would be signed by the Principal and Chair.

Audit Committee Minutes 26 September 2018

The Board noted the draft minutes from the 26 September 2018 meeting. The Board noted that the Audit Committee had self assessed and graded its performance as “good”. The areas of focus at the next Audit Committee meeting (21 November) will be *Failure to improve Value Added Score in A Levels and Vocational Programmes across Yeovil College and Financial Statements*.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

15. There were no other items of business on this occasion.

NEXT ORDINARY MEETING

16. Thursday 6 December at 4.30pm

Meeting closed at 18:55