

PUBLIC MINUTES

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation of Yeovil College Held on Thursday 09 November 2017 at 16:30 In the Boardroom, SMT Suite, Yeovil College

Members: Sam Best; Mike Brinson*; Ken Comber*; Jacquie Dean [Chair]; John Evans [Principal]*; Dave Gladding*; Stephanie Gold [Student]; Maxwell James [Student]*; Clare Johnston [Student]*; Mark Lawrence; Debbie Matthewson; David Mills*; Paul Morey [Staff]*; Jagtar Ner; Gayle Pogson [Staff]*; Paul Roy*; Scott Roy*; Peter Thomas [Vice Chair]*

Attendees: Emma Cox [Vice Principal Finance & Resources]*
Nikki Sendell [Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality]*

Clerk: Jo Farrant*

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 Members Sam Best, Jacquie Dean, Mark Lawrence, Debbie Matthewson and Jagtar Ner.

The meeting remained quorate throughout.

Declarations of Interest: None declared on this occasion.

2. MINUTES OF CORPORATION MEETINGS

The Board **APPROVED** the following minutes as true and accurate records of the meeting held on:

- 12 October 2017 Public
- 12 October 2017 Confidential

Both sets of minutes were signed by the Vice Chair.

3. MATTERS ARISING

The action and query sheet was reviewed, updated and **noted**. Actions were either complete, included elsewhere on today's agenda or being appropriately tracked and carried forward. The Board will receive an update in respect to the Buildings Conditions Tender for the Kingston Building at its meeting in January 2018.

Head of
Estates

4. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Board **noted** the Chair's Report which included headline updates on:

- **AoC Governance Conference 19 October 2017** attended by the Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk. Attendees at this conference received the latest sector updates in respect to Technical Education and the implementation of the Post-16 Skills Plan as well as receiving key advice on the new Insolvency Regime expected to be in force for the start of the 2018/19 academic year. Particular reference was made to Governors' duties as charity trustees and the key features of the Special Administration Regime. The importance of the Clerk's duty to ensure accurate and detailed minutes was

reiterated to the Board, particularly with regards to recording the rationale for decisions taken collectively by the Corporation in respect to all financial matters. The presentation slides from the Conference are expected to be circulated by the AoC in due course. The Clerk will forward these to all Board Members for information.

- **Informal Finance Group Meeting 02 November 2017**

Members of this informal group had met to review the 3 year financial plan that had been prepared by the Vice Principal Finance and Resources. Notes had been taken by the Clerk which would be distributed to all Board Members. In addition to the forecast for the next 3 financial years, the plan also illustrated seemingly realistic projections of both “best” and “worse” case scenarios of the various income streams being/not being realised. The Principal informed the Board that it would receive reports addressing class sizes and single points of failure for lengthy debate at the Corporation Strategy Day in January 2018.

- **Informal Strategy Group Meeting 02 November 2017**

The main focus of this meeting was to address the measures being taken to ensure the College is doing everything it possibly can to maintain and increase its market share. Notes had been taken by the Clerk which would be distributed to all Board Members.

**VP C&Q /
Director of
Staff and
Student
Experience**

Member David Mills arrived at 17:15.

5. FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Board discussed the related financial commentary within the September Management Accounts in addition to noting a verbal update from the Vice Principal Finance and Resources. Particular points noted during the review of the SOCI included:

- Apprenticeships – learner starts for the two months to September 2017 are in line with the budgeted starts.
- Advanced Learner Loans – concern with the significant negative variance. A soft approach from tutors is being taken in the first instance to encourage learners to submit applications.
- Pay in line with budget with just -£1k variance

The Board then reviewed the KPIs which had been presented in a more visually friendly manner. The graphs clearly showed income (by type) against forecast and budget. The Board agreed that the table showing learner numbers should be replicated in the same format as the income graph for consistency.

The Board were reminded that the Audit Committee would meet on 23 November and would be asked to consider the Financial Statements for year ending 31 July 2017 ahead of the Board being asked to formally approve at its meeting in December. The Board were informed that the external audits of the financial statements and regularity had gone very well and subject to the satisfactory conclusion of the remaining audit work to be done, the College can expect the auditors to issue an unqualified opinion.

6. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

The Corporation **noted** the Principal's Report. On this occasion there was particular emphasis upon:

- ESTA
- Buses
- Somerset Business of the Year
- Institute of Technology
- General Sector Updates – particularly noting the requirement for Governors to receive necessary training on sexual exploitation and the laws around sexting.

National Leaders Programme

The Board were asked to consider and support the Principal's intention to submit an

application to join the National Leaders of FE Programme. Successful applicants will provide mentoring and support as well as sharing best practice with institutions across the region. The only reservation the Board alluded to was the amount of time this would take out of the day job of those involved. The Board was reassured that much of what the College does already, for example the Work Placement Pilot, is sharing best practices so the impact and additional work should be minimal. The College would remain in control and decide to opt out at any point. The Board **agreed to support** the submission of an application. Should the application be successful, the Board would expect to receive updates within the Principal's Report at least every 3 months.

The Board then noted the Operating Statement which had been updated since the previous meeting. The Board asked for further information on the action that had been allocated a red RAG rating in respect to the development of digital mechanisms for sign up and monitoring of apprenticeships progress. The Director of Employer Engagement would be asked to report on this at the January Board meeting.

**Director of
Employer
Engagement**

7. **TEACHING AND LEARNING REPORT**

Vocational Results

The Board reviewed the data that had been circulated prior to today's meeting detailing the results of vocational courses for 2016/17. Particular points referenced included:

- Level 2 16-18 learners saw a decrease of 2.5% compared to last year's performance. Curriculum areas that contributed to this slight dip have robust improvement plans in place.
- Level 2 19+ learners have maintained a steady improvement (4% increase on previous year) with high outcomes.
- Level 3 for both 16-18 and 19+ learners have seen sustained improvement over a three year period, driven by increasing retention rates which are now exceptionally high at 95.5%.

Valued Added

The Board then reviewed the Value Added data. The functions of the ALPS system, used to set individual targets and monitor learner's progress were explained to the Board. The Board reviewed data that summarised the overall percentage of learners achieving and exceeding their target grades for A Level, AS and Vocational courses.

Overall there has been some positive movement in a small number of courses but the data demonstrates only very small improvements. Actions are in place with a high focus on improving value added across A Levels and Vocational courses. There will be significant narrative in the SAR concerning value added.

Subject area(s) of concern

The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality informed the Board that further information would be brought to the January Board meeting with information on the curriculum area(s) under review.

VP C&Q

Learner Numbers

The Board reviewed a report that had been prepared by the Director of Schools, Partnerships and Innovation which detailed the number of learners enrolled at the College from the various secondary schools within the area, both local and further afield during 2016/17 and 2017/18. The report clearly showed that the College had held its market share of the local feeder schools but that there is still plenty of scope remaining to increase the market share further. This information had already been reviewed by the Board's Informal Strategy Group.

8. **LEGAL, POLICY and REGULATORY MATTERS**

Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy

The Board **APPROVED** the Quality Assurance and Improvement Policy which had only a few minor amendments made to it in respect to changes to job titles. The policy was signed by the Vice Chair.

Student Union Accounts

The Corporation **APPROVED** the Student Union Accounts which covered the period from 01 September 2016 to 31 August 2017 and reported a substantial year end surplus. These accounts had been audited and validated by the Head of Finance.

Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity (SED)

The Board **noted** a verbal update on Safeguarding and E&D presented by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality. Particular points noted included:

- 24 safeguarding incidents had occurred since the start of this academic year
- An expected delay in submitting the Safeguarding Audit as system is currently locked, update at next meeting
- Head of Student Experience is arranging an informative Prevent event, information to be cascaded in due course
- Fundraising event – School in a Bag
- International Men’s Day 19 November 2017 – mental health awareness
- Anti-bullying video being produced

Student Voice

The following points were raised by the two Student Governors in attendance:

- The new structure of Student Voice Meetings are a lot more coherent
- Concerns with the new catering outlet, not delivering on everything that was promised (expensive meal deals). The Vice Principal Finance and Resources would follow up on these concerns
- There had been some difficulty registering for the Top-up Degree with one of the partnership universities
- Good feedback from many students on the success of the Graduation Ceremony
- Counselling Community Course – well attended with positive feedback

Staff Voice

The following points were raised by the two Staff Governors in attendance:

- Staff Voice meeting would be taking place the following day
- Study Review Programmes will all be RAG rated by the end of tomorrow
- Two Colleges that had recently made a visit to the campus as part of the Work Placement Pilot had both commented on how impressed they were with the College making particular reference to the running of the reception area and the Davinci Restaurant.

9. NEW BUILD / COLLEGE ESATES

The Principal gave an update in respect to the two new builds:

Davinci: official opening noted as 15 January 2018

Construction: working towards a finishing date of 01 December with an official launch on 01 February 2018. More details to follow in due course.

The Board will receive a report from the Vice Principal Finance and Resources at its next meeting in December in respect to an over spend against the original budget.

Holcote House

The Board were informed that the buyer for Holcote House had withdrawn the offer, therefore the property has gone back onto the market and the previous tenders contacted. The Board will receive further updates on developments at its next meeting.

VP F&R

Principal

10. RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

On this occasion there were no risks or internal control matters arising from today’s business that haven’t been covered elsewhere on the agenda.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other items of business on this occasion.

12. NEXT ORDINARY MEETING

16:30 Thursday 07 December 2017

The main meeting closed at 18:55

Confidential minutes of limited distribution item 13 were recorded separately. Attendees (other than the Clerk), Staff Governors and Student Governors were asked to withdraw.

APPROVED 07 DECEMBER 2017

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