

# PUBLIC MINUTES



## Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation of Yeovil College Held on Thursday 12 October 2017 at 16:30 In Room A309/10, Kingston Building, Yeovil College

**Members:** Sam Best\*; Mike Brinson [Item 2 onwards]\*; Ken Comber\*; Jacquie Dean [Chair]\*; John Evans [Principal]\*; Dave Gladding\*; Stephanie Gold [Student – Item 3 onwards]\*; Maxwell James [Student]; Clare Johnston [Student – Item 3 onwards]\*; Mark Lawrence\*; Debbie Matthewson\*; David Mills [Item 2 onwards]\*; Paul Morey [Staff]\*; Jagtar Ner; Gayle Pogson [Staff]\*; Paul Roy; Scott Roy\*; Peter Thomas [Vice Chair]\*

**In attendance:** Emma Cox [Vice Principal Finance & Resources]\*; Jo Farrant [Clerk]\*; Nikki Sendell [Vice Principal Curriculum & Quality]\*; Mark Bolton [Director of Employer Engagement – Item 4 only]\*; Craig Cullen [Head of Estates – Item 5 only]\*

### 1. MEETING PRELIMINARIES

**Apologies** for absence were received from Members Maxwell James, Jagtar Ner and Paul Roy. Mark Lawrence made a request to withdraw from the meeting at 6pm.

The meeting remained quorate throughout.

**Declarations of Interest:** None declared on this occasion.

### 2. APPOINTMENTS OF NEW CORPORATION MEMBERS

Based on the recommendations of its Search and Governance Committee, the Corporation **APPRIVED the appointments of:**

- **David Mills** as a new Corporation Member for a 4 year term of office from 12 October 2017 and as a member of the Audit and Search & Governance Committees (subject to the usual conditions)
- **Michael Brinson** as a new Corporation Member for a 4 year term of office from 12 October 2017 and as a member of the Audit Committee (subject to usual conditions)

David and Michael were welcomed to the meeting.

### 3. APPOINTMENT OF HE STUDENT GOVERNORS

The Board **APPROVED the appointments of:**

- **Stephanie Gold** as HE Student Governor from 12 October 2017 until the 31 July 2018
- **Clare Johnston** as HE Student Governor from 12 October 2017 until 31 July 2019. The Board were reminded that Clare had acted as the HE Student Governor on the Corporation during the previous academic year and had since decided to extend her studies. For continuity purposes, the Board were keen to reappoint Clare for a further term office.

The Board supported the recommendation for Stephanie and Clare to share this role due to their family and study commitments. Between them they would draw up a rota of which meetings they would cover to ensure there is HE representation at every meeting.

Stephanie and Clare were welcomed to the meeting.

### 4. SUBCONTRACTING

The Board **noted** a report that had been prepared by Mark Bolton, Director of Employer

Engagement in respect to subcontracting arrangements for 2017/18.

Governors were reminded of the Governments initial intention during the apprenticeship reform to remove subcontracting as an operating model, however the response from employers and providers reversed this intention and as such cleared subcontracting as a legitimate way of delivering training.

Particular points from the report were referenced:

- The number of subcontractors would increase from 5 in 2016/17 to 13 in 2017/18 with a further increase expected over the next few months as new levy paying employers complete tender exercises. The College is currently in discussions with 6 additional levy payers and it is hopeful that they will choose the College as their partner.
- A Subcontractor Partner Toolkit is in its final stages of development to assist new subcontractors who do not have the knowledge to manage and administrate apprenticeship training and funding.

The Board then **APPROVED** the recommended subcontracting levels for 2017/18 having considered and noted the following values:

- Predictions attached to levy partners relative to planned starts for 2017/18 indicate a value of £521,240 worth of funding of which £387,003 will be paid to contractors for delivery. The College will therefore retain £134, 237.

One member questioned the College's obligation to oversee quality of subcontractors. The Board were reassured that the Colleges processes were compliant with ESFA guidelines and that this was evidenced during an internal audit of subcontracting undertaken by Mazars LLP.

The Board then **noted** the Subcontracting Procedures Manual 2017/18.

Mark Bolton was thanked and left the meeting at 5.30pm.

## 5. NEW BUILD UPDATE

The Board noted an on screen presentation from Craig Cullen, Head of Estates on the developments to date in respect to the two new builds. The following points were noted:

- **Davinci Restaurant**
  - on course to open and be fully operational immediately after half term (30 October 2017)
- **Construction**
  - white cladding to maintain synergy with other estate buildings
  - Motor Vehicle to move on site after Christmas

In addition the Board also learned the outcomes of the ESFA Fire Risk Assessment and Cladding Survey. The Board were reassured to learn that following an assessment of the Kingston Building, Yeovil College was not affected by any regulations primarily due to the building being under 5 storeys in height.

Craig Cullen was thanked and left the meeting at 5.45pm.

## 6. CHAIR'S REPORT

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

- The resignation of Amanda Broom
- Headlines from today's earlier Search and Governance Committee (no Board approvals required). The Board were informed that 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. This was the first assessment of this kind against The Code and was the only recommendation made by the internal auditors during the Corporate

Clerk

Governance internal audit back in March 2017. The Board was reassured by the outcome of the self-assessment that confirmed the Board is performing very strongly against the values and principle responsibilities set out in The Code with only two areas of non-compliance found. The full report of the self-assessment would be shared with the Board after today's meeting and the two areas of non-compliance investigated further.

- Headlines from the Informal Strategy Group Meeting which had taken place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017. The Board referred to the notes that had been recorded by the Clerk as an aide memoire.

Confidential minutes in respect to this item are recorded separately.

## 7. MINUTES OF CORPORATION MEETINGS

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

- 06 July 2017 Public
- 06 July 2017 Confidential

Both sets of minutes were signed by the Chair.

## 8. MATTERS ARISING

The action and query sheet was noted, reviewed and updated. Actions were either complete, included elsewhere on today's agenda or being appropriately tracked and carried forward.

In respect to the action recorded at the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2017 meeting concerning the level of investment the College aspires to make on updating its existing buildings, the Board were informed that a Buildings Conditions Tender had been submitted at a cost of £30k. The Board would receive full outcomes in due course.

The Board should also expect to receive a report from the Head of Estates in respect to the condition of the Kingston Building. This report is expected at the December meeting.

## 9. TEACHING AND LEARNING

The Board noted the draft minutes from the Quality and Assurance Committee Meeting which had taken place on the 25 September 2017 and detailed 2016/17 learner outcomes, subject areas of concern and 2017/18 student numbers.

The next Committee meeting would be scheduled to take place in February 2018 and all Board members will be invited to attend. This meeting will review conversion rates.

The Board then discussed the contents of a paper that had been prepared by Nikki Sendell which detailed the outcomes of a range of student surveys that had been conducted during 2016/17:

**September 2016** Induction Survey  
**October 2016** Ofsted Survey  
**February / April 2017** FE Choices Survey  
**April/June 2017** College Survey

Particular points noted:

- Induction Survey demonstrated a very positive position with many responses exceeding scores recorded the previous year.
- Volume and content of the Ofsted Survey (opened for learners to complete over the time from the notice of the visit to the end of the inspection) was generally positive.
- Following positive FE Choices results for employer and destination surveys, the decision was made to reinstate the survey however the timing did not result in the positive outcome the induction survey had indicated. The results for adult learners

Principal

Head of  
Estates

- were significantly more positive than those for the 16-18 learners.
- The outcomes of the final college survey (April/June) were disappointing. Lower scores were recorded in areas which had been under scrutiny during the year.

A list of actions to address the areas of poor outcomes was noted. Benchmarking against other colleges will be measured in the SAR.

Mark Lawrence left the meeting at 6pm. The meeting remained quorate.

## 10. FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Board discussed the related financial commentary within the July Management Accounts in addition to noting a verbal update from the Vice Principal Finance and Resources. Outcomes of discussions were recorded separately in a confidential set of minutes.

For the benefit of new members, the Board were reminded that the Financial Statements for 2016/17 would be signed off at the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017, following audit fieldwork by the College's external auditors during week commencing 16 October 2017.

The latest KPIs were then reviewed in detail. The Board were informed of changes to the format of presenting the KPIs. From October onwards, these would be included within the management accounts.

The Board were then asked to note a revised Banking Facilities letter following the changes to the overdraft facility as detailed in a confidential set of minutes from the Board meeting held on 06 July 2017. The letter had been signed by the Principal and the Vice Principal Finance and Resources in acceptance of the facilities.

## 11. INSURANCE PREMIUMS 2017/18

The Board **APPROVED** the insurance arrangements for 2017/18 in line with section 20.1 of the Financial Regulations 2017.

The Board noted three areas of cover where premiums have increased significantly:

- Property Damage (including computers) – an increase due to inflationary uplift on building and contents
- Employers Liability – premiums rated on income, wages and salaries
- Professional Indemnity – substantial increase due to claims

The Board were also made aware that the College is entering its final year of a long term agreement with Marsh and will therefore be subject to a re-tendering process for 2018/19 and subsequent years.

## 12. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

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

- Learner Outcomes 2016/17
- Learner Numbers 2017/18
- School Partnership update
- 14-16 Developments
- Work Placement update
- Somerset University update
- Somerset Business of the Year
- DFE – T Level concept testing
- General Sector updates

There were no strategic actions within the report that required Board approval. The Board were informed that the College plans to submit a bid for the National Leaders Programme funded by the Strategic College Improvement Fund (SCIF). Principals will be required to

supply evidence of a track record of improving standards. The Board was supportive of this intention as long as involvement does not interfere with the day job of those involved.

The Board noted the first adaption of the Operating Statement for 2017/18. This will be reviewed at each Board meeting and RAG rated accordingly.

### **13. LEGAL, POLICY and REGULATORY MATTERS**

#### **Children's Centre Policy**

The Board **APPROVED** the Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Policy. This policy relates to the Yeovil College Nursery. The policy sets out how the Nursery complies with statutory responsibilities relating safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who attend there.

#### **Treasury Management Report**

The Corporation **noted** the Treasury Management Report which detailed treasury activities undertaken during 2016/17 as prescribed in the Financial Regulations. No short/medium term investments were made during this period. The Board were also reminded of the changes to the overdraft facility effective from 01 August 2017.

#### **Annual Safeguarding Audit**

The Board were informed that the online self-assessment audit 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 2017.

#### **Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity (SED)**

The Board **noted** a verbal update on Safeguarding and E&D presented by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality. In particular, the Board noted that 18 incidents had occurred since the start of this academic year and are more complex than ever before and that in the region of 150 new learners had been identified as vulnerable.

The CSE case in Yeovil is expected to make the headlines in mid-November which has the potential to put Yeovil in the spotlight for all the wrong reasons.

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

Sam Best, Safeguarding Lead Governor informed the Board of the robust counselling service that has been offered at the College since January 2015 which now has a team of 7 counsellors, 3 of them fully qualified. 39 clients had received counselling during 2016/17. Sam informed the Board that the Lead Counsellor Co-ordinator would soon be leaving the role and expressed her concern on the impact this may have on the service. Sam will further discuss this with the Principal outside of today's meeting.

#### **Student Voice**

The Board were informed by the HE Student Governor that the enrolment process this year had run effortlessly. The Board were delighted with this announcement.

#### **Staff Voice**

The Board were informed that staff morale was high with a real sense of team work with many staff getting involved in the enrolment and open evening events. The Board were also informed that the Macmillan Coffee Morning held on the morning of 29 September 2017 had raised £770.

### **14. RISK MANAGEMENT AND INTERNAL CONTROLS**

The Board were asked to note business of the Audit Committee which had last met on 27 September 2017.

#### **Internal Audit Annual Report 2016/17**

Mazars LLP had presented their Internal Audit Annual Report 2016/17 to the Committee which summarised the internal audit work during 2016-17, 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 substantial assurance; Recruitment and Retention (Substantial);

Health and Safety (Substantial); Safeguarding and Prevent (Substantial); Compliance; Payroll and Expenses (Adequate); Follow up; Risk Management and Corporate Governance (Substantial); Learner Numbers Follow up and Compliance part 2.

The overall assurance opinion of the Internal Audit Service for 2016-17 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. Certain weaknesses and exceptions were highlighted by our audit work. Where these were high priority, our follow up work has found that these recommendations have now been fully implemented. All 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."

#### **Internal Audit Plan 2017/18**

Following the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Corporation **APPROVED** the Internal Audit Plan for 2017/18.

The key auditable areas in 2017/18 were noted as **Sub-contracting** (review of compliance with contractual obligations and legislative guidance set by the ESFA); **Apprenticeship funding** (an advisory audit on forecasting accuracy processes) and **HE Funding** (Verify operation of controls)

#### **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 signed 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 2017 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 was signed by the Principal and Chair.

#### **Health and Safety Annual Report 2016/17**

The Committee **noted** the Health & Safety Annual Report 2016-17 which has been completed by the new Health and Safety Officer, Paul Loveridge. The Committee made a request that future annual reports include a section under RIDDOR which details the number of working day lost.

#### **Audit Committee Minutes 27 September 2017**

The Board noted the draft minutes from the 27 September 2017 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 (23 November) will be a further review of learner numbers and the risk of failure to implement the apprenticeship reform.

### **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no other items of business on this occasion.

### **16. NEXT ORDINARY MEETING**

16:30 Thursday 09 November 2017

*Meeting closed at 18:55*

**APPROVED 09 NOVEMBER 2017**