

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION
Held on Tuesday 30 January 2018
At Trowbridge Campus, Wiltshire College

The meeting was preceded by Safeguarding and Prevent Update training for governors provided by Linda Westmore, Head of Student Services and Tutorial. This included a review of safeguarding and Prevent-related engagement for students, together with consideration of the types of issues and cases which had arisen over the past year. The College had observed a significant percentage rise in the numbers of students involved in child sex abuse cases over the past year.

Present	Helen Birchenough, Harry Adam, Carolyn Godfrey (until item 15), Amanda Burnside, Jon Downing, Ben Newbury, Lawrence Roe, Venetia Summers, Jack Wills (from item 8)
In Attendance	<i>Adrian Ford, Deputy Principal Corporate Resources, Iain Hatt, Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality, Heather Cross, Clerk to the Corporation. Linda Westmore, for item 4.</i>

	Minute	Action
2017-18 5/1	Apologies for absence	
	Apologies for absence were received from Martin Clark, Alannah Stoker, Gennette Fowler, Iain Hutchison, Mark Lello, Debbie Sexton-Dyer and also from Jack Wills for lateness.	
2017-18 5/2	Declarations of interest	
	None	
2017-18 5/3	Chair's opening remarks	
	The Chair wished everyone a happy new year and commented that there was much to do and to look forward to in the coming year. It was probable Ofsted would inspect the college in this calendar year. She thanked governors for their strong contribution to and support of the college.	
2017-18 5/4	Safeguarding Policy	
	<p>The safeguarding Policy, including Prevent had been circulated previously. There were no major changes to it but the requirement was noted that the Board should review it for suitability at least once a year.</p> <p>It was reported that an external safeguarding audit had been taking place that day, conducted by Gloucestershire College, which Linda Westmore reported had been very positive. No-one had been prepared in advance for the audit in order that it gave a sense of routine activity. Good initial feedback had been provided and the report would be received in the near future.</p> <p>The policy of wearing of lanyards by all on college campuses was being strongly enforced.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Policy was proposed by Carolyn Godfrey, seconded by</p>	

	Harry Adam and was unanimously approved.	
2017-18 5/5	Presentation – What constitutes outstanding governance	
	<p>The Clerk gave a presentation on what external organisations in the sector considered to be good and outstanding governance, with the principal focus on the qualities and activities identified by Ofsted. Her presentation identified the grade descriptors for governance relating to 'outstanding' in the leadership and management grade. Governors focussing unflinchingly on bringing about improvement and supporting but challenging and questioning management were seen as key components. A technique of 'Powerful Questions' which was described in an Association of Colleges report included on Board Intelligence was touched upon.</p> <p>The intention was to explore more in this area at the Governor Awayday at the end of April.</p> <p>The Chair commented that where a college was outstanding it should be palpable and you should expect to see and feel this quality when you walked in the door. It would be helpful for colleagues to focus on the strategies and traits to make this a reality for this college. In response to a question asked about the impact of an outstanding grade on business success, the Principal and Deputy Principal commented that the reputational effect locally would draw students and it unlocked opportunities to bid or to take part in programmes for certain funding sources. It was agreed that to spend more time exploring these characteristics and targeting them at the Awayday later in the year would be beneficial.</p>	
2017-18 5/6	Review process for the strategic plan	
	<p>The Principal had provided a report to enable discussion with the Board on the review process for the Strategic Plan. The activity in the first year of deployment was identified and a series of proposed activities in the current year, the second year of deployment, were suggested.</p> <p>Governors considered the proposed activities for the 2017/18 year in reviewing the Strategic Plan and broadly approved the timetable. There was some discussion about a possible all staff conference in May, potentially replicating the highly successful event which had originally taken place to develop the plan. The possibility of this would be considered by the Senior Leadership Team.</p>	SLT
2017-18 5/7	Update on the LEP Capital Projects	
	<p>Adrian Ford gave a presentation on the development of the schemes at Salisbury and Lackham including an update on progress. The finalisation of the scheme at Salisbury had been concluded and the components were shown in a slide show. Building massing was being reduced, there would be lively communal areas including a restaurant near the entrance and users would be drawn into the building by long vistas. The design concepts were aimed to create the same feel as Chippenham. Cladding was intended to be used effectively externally to reduce glazing, thus reducing the cold as well as solar gain.</p> <p>At Lackham the work was to be delivered through 4 different packages – the house refurbishment; hub and agri-tech classroom; dairy milking parlour; animal care and horticulture.</p> <p>A considerable challenge in both schemes was due to be carrying out the work and relocating activity on a live site. User groups were starting to work on this</p>	

	<p>Adrian thanked the Project Board and Jon for his work there.</p> <p>It was proposed that the Project team give a full presentation of the schemes at the next Board meeting (<i>although subsequently it was decided to postpone this until the following meeting</i>).</p>	
2017-18 5/8	Principal's Report	
	<p>The meeting received an update report from the Principal, including on the following topics – New SMT structure; Work Placement Capacity Funding awarded; Further NHS Trust wins; ESFA funding challenges; Greenhouse group activity; Institutes of Technology; HE Developments and progress with strategy; positive feedback on the new teaching, learning and assessment framework (replacing graded lesson observations); requests to Lloyds bank to support developments; The Colleges' Partnership – progress with bids and AITA contract; Implications of GDPR.</p> <p>The ESFA funding challenges were briefly discussed. The College's income had been impacted by the new methodology for apprenticeship funding. The Principal commented that the ESFA had undertaken that the college would receive all its funding, but this was affected by computerised calculations. The Deputy Principal commented that the system for generating apprenticeship income had been made much more complicated by the substantial admin in registering an apprentice before any income claim could be made.</p> <p>The meeting's attention was drawn to the circulated letter from the FE Minister, inviting the college along with all other good and outstanding colleges to become a provider of the first T level qualifications. In discussion it was agreed that it was preferable for others to be the trailblazers here. Following a request, it was agreed that a briefing on T levels be given at the next meeting, which would also have a marketing presentation.</p> <p>The Principal reported on her work with the LEP and Swindon College to make sure a bid for an Institute of Technology in Swindon did not compromise the offer.</p> <p>A launch event with Oxford Brookes would be taking place shortly to which governors would be invited.</p> <p>The current political context of funding was discussed and it was noted that the situation was not improving. In spite of a concerted national request from FE Colleges for extra funding for 16 to 18, there was no support for this. The sector continued to be experiencing many initiatives and a very tough funding environment.</p> <p>The Deputy Principal spoke about the current financial position of the college. Maintaining 4 campuses remained a challenge when turnover was below £40m. There was no opportunity to assist in year funding through windfall land sales any longer. Income was expected to be £464K down on budget, pay was under considerable pressure and non-pay was on track but offered little scope for further savings.</p> <p>The income position was discussed. Wilkes Academy would not generate any income until the following year, as a result of lagged funding. The local authority top up for LSDS funding (previously ALS – additional learning support) had reduced. High needs had not grown during the year because</p>	DPCQ

	<p>fewer students had been taken on. The numbers for these students were outside the college's control and income had fallen by £600K. Recruitment was highly dependent on whether families made successful cases to go out-county to residential settings.</p> <p>Apprenticeship income looked positive through recruitment, but had not as yet been realised. For prudence this had not been built into the budget.</p> <p>Student accommodation occupancy was down – students were becoming much more cautious about their spending and the rates against their occupancy in the week.</p> <p>Pay budgets were under severe pressure, with pension increases still anticipated in-year and sick cover from agencies also very considerable. Some options for reducing pay were discussed. It was acknowledged if necessary that some courses may no longer be able to be continued but of course learners would be supported. Management was encouraged to continue taking action in the areas which would have the most impact.</p> <p>It was reported that the current budgetary pressures would not impact on the college's financial health at this stage, but some curtailment of capital infrastructure may be necessary in the near future.</p> <p>5 Bids for new contracts had been made under the Colleges Partnership and the Principal thanked Jack Wills for his helpful advice and support in this considerable work.</p> <p>The meeting thanked the Principal for her report.</p>	
2017-18 5/9	Key Performance Indicator Targets/Balanced Scorecard	
	<p>The Balanced Scorecard which had been circulated was discussed. Marketing activity in particular was discussed. The College's rank score of social media hits looked artificially low in the recent figures because other colleges had been affected by snow closures where many of their students would have gone online simply to check whether sites were open. It was commented that the Chippenham site seemed to be more visible in publicity. This would be fed back to the team and discussed to see if it was borne out in practice.</p> <p>Other performance indicators discussed included moodle usage, staff turnover and average group size.</p> <p>The balanced scorecard was noted.</p>	
2017-18 5/10	Management Accounts	
	The management accounts for December 2017 had been circulated previously. The key financial issues had already been discussed under the Principal's report. It was noted that conversations were taking place with the college's banker concerning a loan or overdraft facility which was anticipated would be needed around February or March for a short time.	
2017-18 5/11	Risk Register	
	The latest copy of the Risk register which had been circulated was considered and noted.	
2017-18 5/12	Minutes of the last meeting	

	The minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2017 which had been circulated previously were agreed as a true record.	
2017-18 5/13	Membership issues	
	<p>The Chair reported that James Bilzon had submitted his resignation earlier in the day with immediate effect. A number of developments in his professional life made it increasingly difficult for him to attend Corporation meetings and to carve out the time needed to be an effective governor. The Board recorded its thanks to James for the time and insight he had provided during his time on the board. Progress was reported in identifying a possible land-based governor and the Clerk was to follow this up. The Clerk reported that possible governors with an accountancy or finance background were being sought and she had spoken with the Business Development team about possible candidates with employers.</p> <p>It was commented that the possibility of a finance group as a working group for governors was under active consideration and any proposals would be brought to a meeting in the near future.</p> <p>The Chair commented that Board membership would be a key focus for her between now and July when her tenure ended.</p>	
2017-18 5/14	Appointment of the Chair of the Audit Committee	
	<p>With the recent resignation of James Hayes who had been the Chair of the Audit Committee, consideration had been given to the long term chair of this committee. Jon Downing had indicated he would be prepared to be appointed. His skills and experience were entirely appropriate for the role and the chair thanked him for agreeing to take on the role.</p> <p>Jon Downing was proposed by Jack Wills, seconded by Venetia Summers and was unanimously agreed for appointment. Jon thanked the meeting for their support.</p>	
2017-18 5/15	Chair of the Corporation from 18 5/18 – update on the process	
	The Clerk reported that following the invitation circulated to governors for the position of Chair with effect from 1 August 2018, one candidate had applied – Martin Clark. The formal deadline for notification was up at the end of the month. The appointment of the Chair was intended now to be an item on the agenda at the February meeting.	
2017-18 5/16	College visits/events attended	
	Governors commented on the visits they had made recently. The Chair spoke about her attendance at a student liaison meeting recently where she had been very impressed by the tone of the meeting. She had also attended a project board meeting and undertaken a learning walk. She and a number of governors had attended the open days at college sites recently. The student governor had been present at the Trowbridge event and commented that he would like more involvement. The Chair suggested that she and the Clerk meet with him soon to discuss this. It was noted that QRR meetings were scheduled in February.	
2017-18 5/17	Emerging issues and aspirations/AoB	
	None at this meeting	

2017- 18 5/18	Date of next meeting – Trowbridge on 22 February 2018	
	This was as agreed.	