

## Minutes of the Corporation Meeting

held on Wednesday 23 March 2016

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| <i>Present</i>       | Leslie Williams ( <i>Chair</i> ), Keith Bate ( <i>Principal</i> ), Karen Cocker, Andrew Hanson, Mark Johnson, Helene Jones, Harvey Owen, Alison Perks   |
| <i>In attendance</i> | Jacquie Carman ( <i>Director of Finance and Corporate Services</i> )<br>Joanne Williams ( <i>Director of Learning and Teaching</i> )<br>Geraldine Swanton ( <i>Shakespeare Martineau</i> )<br>Lee Fletcher ( <i>Learning Manager</i> )<br>Jennifer Sunter ( <i>Clerk to the Corporation</i> ) |

The Chair welcomed Geraldine Swanton, Lee Fletcher and Harvey Owen

*Members agreed to amend the order of the agenda for items 5.1, 5.2 and 9.1*

### 1 Apologies

Apologies were received on behalf of Jane Chan, Geoffrey Elliott, Ian Jewkes Allison Matthews and Peter Mitchell

### 2 Declarations of Interest

Jacquie Carman and Joanne Williams declared their interest under agenda items 5.1 and 5.2 Designating a Deputy Principal.

### 3 Corporation Minutes

The Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held 24 February 2016, including the confidential minute, were approved as a correct record.

The Clerk updated members on the status of actions listed for March 2016.

### 4 Introducing College Solicitors – Shakespeare Martineau

Leslie Williams introduced Geraldine Swanton from the newly appointed College solicitors.

Geraldine Swanton explained the approach of the Shakespeare Martineau Education Team, the relationship with the College and outlined key areas of work, with options for training and support. In addition to the examples provided, further areas of consideration included students as consumers, learning disability students and the Modern Slavery Act. The College had also identified work areas relating to developing shared services and review of the senior post holder disciplinary and grievance procedures, with the associated governance framework and training needs.

**Action 4a** It was agreed that the Clerk would act as liaison to establish a programme.

## **9 Students, Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

### **9.1 Learning Resources Review**

Lee Fletcher outlined a number of key points arising from the review of learning resources. The College continued to support students under the Student BYOD Scheme, with 503 funded through the Learner Support Fund. There had been a reduction in use of online resources, however, there had been a shift in the type of usage, with more engagement in activities. Targeted and teacher led use of BKSB (Basic Key Skills Builder) assessment was supporting differentiated teaching and support.

Review of support and data analysis had led to reconsideration of the impact of learner resources for future application. This included levels of online delivery, high quality blended learning materials, responding to student voice and equipping staff and students to work in a more digital orientated work environment.

Leslie Williams asked how the team would be able to translate the data and anecdotal responses into effective outcome measures. Joanne Williams responded that the collection of information on student activity, particularly in using resources outside the lesson, could be related back to outcomes and grades.

Lee Fletcher emphasised the importance of staff training and support and Mark Johnson noted that this had been highlighted during the strategic planning meetings. Lee Fletcher provided examples of training and support for staff, such as using Moodle and that expectations and appropriate training needed to be advanced. Training staff to cascade support and the utilisation of new staff with advanced IT skills were noted.

It was agreed that the annual review for 2016/2017 would aim to address outcomes from both qualitative and quantitative data.

The report was received.

## **6 Audit and Assurance Committee**

### **6.1 Minutes of the Audit and Assurance Committee 8 March 2016**

The minutes of the Audit and Assurance Committee held 8 March 2016 were received.

### **6.2 Risk Management Mid-Year Update 2015/2016**

Leslie Williams asked about risk regarding the Area Based Review process. Jacquie Carman noted that whilst this was currently included in the risk register, that impact would be more fully assessed as the Black Country Area Review unfolded.

The Risk Management Mid-Year Update 2015/2016 was received.

## **7 Strategic Overview**

### **7.1 External Review**

Keith Bate explained that Daniel Grant was scheduled to meet with members on 4 May to take the process of external review and support forward.

### **7.2 RAISEonline New Level 3 16-19 Study Programmes Inspection**

The Corporation noted the report and agreed that this be built into subsequent external review and preparation arrangements for the Corporation in moving the College to an 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating.

### **7.3 The Black Country Area Review**

In addition to the information provided for members Keith Bate reported that a visit from two staff from the FE Commissioner's office would take place at the College on 3 May 2016. A Black Country Steering Group meeting with chairs and principals had been scheduled for 2pm on Friday 29 April 2016. The meeting would be chaired by the FE Commissioner.

### **7.4 Multi Academy Trust**

Keith Bate reported that the Chair had been appointed as a member of the Trust and that the Principal was being recommended as a Sponsor's Trustee/Director of the Trust.

### **7.5 Student Recruitment 2015/16**

The suite of reports detailing student applications including comparison with the previous year, by previous institution and the equal opportunities profile, were noted.

### **7.6 Financial Statements 2014/15**

The update confirming continued outstanding financial performance was noted.

### **7.7 Budget Planning 2016/17**

Leslie Williams noted that whilst not new information, it remained pertinent to note the fall in income projection and challenges to achieve the planned for surplus for 2016/2017. Keith Bate emphasised the importance of maintaining an operating surplus.

## **8 Monthly Performance Information**

### **8.1 Finance**

The RAG rated report was noted as illustrating that the College was meeting its requirements.

The Corporation noted that the College was meeting all of the covenants related to bank loans.

## **8.2 Student Applications, Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Joanne Williams reported that English and maths mock exams had continued. Whilst there were larger cohorts of students, the College was currently on course to maintain the previous year's pass rates.

## **8.3 Staffing and Accommodation**

Keith Bate explained the budget impact of addressing current and proposed rises to the national living wage. Meeting the £9 per hour threshold by 2020 constituted a major challenge.

Andy Hanson asked about associated pension increases. Jacquie Carman explained that there would be an effect but that this remained unknown until October 2016.

The monthly performance information was received.

## **10 Finance Reports**

### **10.1 Value for Money Annual Report**

Jacquie Carman reported that the historic information provided evidence of strong performance on value for money by the College.

The Corporation noted the value for money performance and emerging factors regarding performance against contract.

### **10.2 Review of Revenue Budget 2015-2016**

The College remained in a strong position and was on target to meet the financial ratios and to achieve an increase in the level of surplus. Increased costs such as pension contributions were recognised. Learning Support Fund money, in relation to the previous year's expenditure, had been received and incorporated into the model. Both the increase in tuition fees and the reduction in the level of bad debts were noted.

Potential issues surrounding increases to the pay budget to address the Living Wage and under the pension schemes were further highlighted. Jacquie Carman also explained that under the new International Accounting Standards pension information would be consolidated within reports.

**Action 10.2a** A more detailed report on SORP (Statements of Recommended Practice) would be provided for the Corporation in April 2016.

**The Corporation resolved to approve the Review of Revenue Budget 2015/2016 dated March 2016.**

### 10.3 Budgeting Policy

Jacquie Carman provided the policy for setting the budget for 2016/2017. The process was seen as an opportunity to challenge and explore alternatives.

Karen Cocker asked about risk and budget trajectory. Keith Bate emphasised that the 2017/18 profile as outlined in the Financial Plan would become clearer following student enrolment and that there were a number of unknown factors, including the Area Based Review and the West Midlands Combined Authority.

**Action 10.3a** It was agreed that a key review report would be provided for the Corporation in August or September 2016.

**The Corporation resolved to approve the Budgeting Policy for 2016/2017 as provided, dated February 2016.**

### 11 Any Other Business

The Clerk highlighted that the next AoC West Midlands Governance Workshop was scheduled for Saturday 30 April 2016.

### 12 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 27 April 2016 at 6pm.

*Jacquie Carman and Joanne Williams withdrew from the meeting having an interest under agenda item 5.1 and 5.2.*

### 5 Search and Governance Committee

#### 5.1 Minutes of the Search and Governance Committee Special Meeting held 21 March 2016

The minutes of the Search and Governance Committee Special Meeting held 21 March 2016 were received.

#### 5.2 Designating a Deputy Principal

Leslie Williams reported on the process and the recommendation of the Search and Governance Committee.

**The Corporation resolved that Joanne Williams be redesignated Deputy Principal with effect from 1 April 2016.**

The meeting closed at 7.30pm

| <b>Actions from meetings</b>                     |  |                              |                    |
|--|--|------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Ref</b>                                       | <b>Agenda item and action</b>  | <b>Date/item for review</b>  | <b>Reported by</b> |
| <b>Corporation Meeting 25 November 2015</b>      |  |                              |                    |
| <b>6.1</b>                                       | <b>College Self-Assessment Report and Development Plan</b><br><br>It was agreed that revised reporting should more clearly illustrate movement in performance, to be addressed within the Faculty Director reports provided within the annual cycle of business. | July 2016                    | KDB                |
| <b>Corporation Meeting 9 January 2016</b>        |  |                              |                    |
| <b>4</b>   | <b>Implementing the Strategic Plan and Priorities for the Corporation 2016–2017</b><br><br><b>Strategic Priorities for the Year Ahead</b>  |                              |                    |
| <b>4b</b>  | It was agreed that the senior management team would address the strategic review outcomes in light of the Area Based Review and return a report to the Corporation.  | Summer 2016                  | KDB                |
| <b>4d</b>  | Reflection on development, contraction and working differently: Joanne Williams to prepare a report for Corporation on analysis of areas regarding opportunities, problems and viability.  | April 2016                   | JWi/KDB            |
| <b>Corporation Meeting 23 March January 2016</b> |  |                              |                    |
| <b>4a</b>  | <b>Introducing College Solicitors – Shakespeare Martineau</b><br><br>It was agreed that the Clerk would act as liaison to establish a programme of work and training   | April 2016                   | JSu                |
| <b>10.2a</b>                                     | <b>Review of Revenue Budget 2015-2016</b><br><br>A more detailed report on SORP (Statements of Recommended Practice) would be provided for the Corporation in April 2016.  | April 2016                   | JCa                |
| <b>10.3a</b>                                     | <b>Budgeting Policy</b><br><br>It was agreed that a key review report would be provided for the Corporation in August or September 2016.   | August/<br>September<br>2016 | JCa                |