

Minutes of the Corporation Meeting

held on 28 September 2016

Present Leslie Williams (*Chair*), Ian Jewkes (*Vice Chair*), Keith Bate (*Principal*), Jane Chan, Karen Cocker, Geoffrey Elliott, Mark Johnson, Helene Jones, Allison Matthews, Monika Zilionyte

In attendance Joanne Williams (*Deputy Principal, Director of Learning and Teaching*)
Jacquie Carman (*Director of Finance and Corporate Services*)
Jennifer Sunter (*Clerk to the Corporation*)

It was agreed that agenda item 8.1 would be taken as the first substantive item and that item 10 would be taken before item 9 under confidential business.

1 Apologies

Apologies were received on behalf of Peter Mitchell and Harvey Owen and Louise Craddock.

2 Declarations of Interest

Senior Post Holders and the Clerk declared their interest in agenda item 4.2 Senior Post Holder Disciplinary Procedure, Grievance Policy and Procedure and Settlement Agreement Policy.

3 Minutes of the Corporation Meeting held 31 August 2016 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Corporation Meeting held 31 August 2016 were approved as a correct record.

The Clerk reviewed actions remaining from previous meetings. All items were addressed through reports on the agenda, with the exception of the key review of budget policy under 4.2a of the Corporation meeting held 23 March 2016. This would be provided for the meeting scheduled for 30 November 2016.

8.1 Report from Faculty Director - A Level Director, Louise Craddock

The report was presented by Joanne Williams on behalf of Louise Craddock and addressed the range of curriculum offer across three schools, student programmes of study, new course developments and successful outcomes for learners, particularly highlighting 2016 achievements. Joanne Williams also highlighted where there had been successful outcomes for learners with high needs and examples of student work experience and community involvement.

It was noted that A Level entry had increased in 2016 and that some students had combined A levels with a Vocational qualification. Transition to linear A levels continued and this required a changing set of skills for students. There continued to be increasing numbers of students taking resits in GCSE English and Maths.

Access student numbers remained buoyant and a new Early Years Access pathway was being trialled. The development of a discrete area in Block 3 for Access was planned.

Joanne Williams reported on intervention meetings regarding subjects under notice, which had resulted in some curriculum changes, including exam board changes and further actions to address performance. Leslie Williams asked how the changes should lead to better outcomes. Joanne Williams explained the difference between AS Photography and Sub Dip Photography, particularly in terms of student preferences and subject application.

Leslie Williams noted that Maths remained under notice and Joanne Williams reported that three new staff had been appointed to this area.

Further scrutiny under tracking and monitoring for 2016/2017 included diagnostic assessments during the induction period, leading to Maths and English targets.

Members noted that under planning for 2016/2017 a Social Work strand would be provided for the Access to Health pathway and that high grades were increasingly difficult under linear A levels.

Jane Chan asked about GCSE resits and the introduction of new GCSEs with 1-9 qualifications. Joanne Williams confirmed that all Colleges were allowed a summer 2016 resit programme under the current qualification. Jane Chan also asked about the College future plans for the GCSE resits under the 1-9 qualifications. Joanne Williams noted that Colleges had been advised that a Grade 'C' equivalent would be Grade 4, however this could change.

Geoffrey Elliott commended the Faculty Director reports as informative noting, however, that more specific data in relation to performance points, including contextual and trend information, being reported would provide governors with a firmer base from which to monitor and challenge.

Action 8.1a Joanne Williams agreed that results to be provided by Faculty Area would provide a different view.

4 Governance

4.1 Search and Governance Committee Minutes – 15 September 2016

The minutes of the Search and Governance Committee minutes held 15 September 2016 were received.

4.1.1 Corporation Appointments – Health and Safeguarding Forum

The Corporation resolved to approve that Helene Jones be the governor attendee for the College Health and Safeguarding Forum.

4.1.2 Search and Governance Committee Annual Report

Ian Jewkes recommended the Search and Governance Committee Annual Report to members.

The Search and Governance Committee Annual Report including governor attendance was accepted.

4.1.3 Assurance Report on the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges

Ian Jewkes introduced the report which had been provided for members as assurance on governance arrangements against the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges.

The Clerk reported on compliance with and variation from the Code as discussed by the Search and Governance Committee.

The Assurance Report on the Code of Good Governance for English Colleges was received.

4.1.4 Corporation Self-Assessment Report

Members discussed the self-assessment of governance and noted the record of evidence.

The Corporation resolved to approve the Corporation Self-Assessment Report for 2015/2016 and associated Draft Development Plan for 2016/17.

4.2 Senior Post Holder Disciplinary Procedure, Grievance Procedure and Settlement Agreement Policy

Keith Bate reported that following the Corporation meeting of 31 August 2016, the revised Senior Post Holder Disciplinary Procedure and Grievance Procedure had been provided for consultation to Senior Post Holders and the Clerk.

The Corporation resolved to approve the Senior Post Holder Disciplinary Procedure, the Senior Post Holder Grievance Procedure and Settlement Agreement Policy.

5 Strategic Overview

5.1 Student Success Rates 2015/2016

Keith Bate reported that success rates had increased steadily, illustrated by the figures for the current year against the previous four years. The data would be included in the Self-Assessment Report, with more detailed information and trends to be reported to the Corporation in November 2016.

The report was received.

5.2 Annual Plan 2015/2016 and Performance

Keith Bate noted that outcomes and progress were very positive against the Annual Plan 2015/16.

Leslie Williams noted that from the RAG rating dashboard, only five of thirty-three areas remained red or amber rated.

With reference to increasing student attendance, Keith Bate highlighted new policy with increased attendance checks and planned rewards for students at the end of each half term. If successful, other rewards may be considered, which could assist in maintaining the momentum on attendance across the year.

The report was received.

5.3 Student Recruitment 2016/17

With reference to student recruitment data, as at 19 September 2016, Keith Bate reported the positive forecast and that the College should meet its funding contract.

Leslie Williams noted that while treating with caution, this was a positive position.

The report was received.

5.4 Multi Academy Trust Developments

Members discussed progress in the arrangements regarding the King Edward and Halesowen Colleges' Academy Trust, particularly demands on senior post holder time, potential support needs and longer term sustainability. Forward planning in relation to the strategic aims of the College was also noted.

The Corporation would continue to receive reports with any further developments returned for review.

The report was noted.

5.5 Shared Services Progress

Members noted that South Black Country Education Limited was established and at this stage addressing catering and cleaning operations.

The report was noted.

5.6 Area Review

Members noted that there was no change with respect to Halesowen College regarding the Area Review report as adopted and that Black Country Colleges' Chairs and Principals meetings would continue.

The report was noted.

5.7 External Review and Corporation Residential Planning

Members considered arrangements in place for the Corporation Residential in January 2017. Keith Bate outlined the enhanced Faculty Review process and the timetable of external review over the Autumn term. Keith Bate also suggested focus on Core Strategy 2, Leading in Diverse, Inclusive and Innovative Learning, Teaching and Assessment, particularly student assessment and tracking and English and Maths. Leslie Williams noted that this together with Self Assessment Review would provide a relevant basis on which to plan.

Ian Jewkes suggested that governor updates on Safeguarding and SEND responsibilities and policies would also be beneficial.

Action 5.7a The Corporation noted the areas for consideration to be developed into an itinerary and agenda for the Corporation Strategic Planning Residential, as scheduled for 13 and 14 January 2017.

5.8 Senior Post Changes Risk Assessment

Keith Bate reported that a review of the risk register in light of the Principal's retirement had been undertaken. The revised ratings were provided in an update for the Corporation.

The Corporation resolved to receive the Senior Post Changes Risk Assessment Risk Update report, noting the increased risks and that these be monitored in accordance with the College risk monitoring procedures, with particular monitoring across the proceeding months

5.9 Review of Pay 2016/17

Members considered the current position including some national comparator pay scales.

The Corporation resolved that

- 1. Any review of the single pay spine operated by the College be deferred until the new calendar year once financial and management arrangements have been clarified.**
- 2. Building on the success of the Mutual Dividend Payment Scheme the Corporation agreed in principle to implement such a scheme for 2016/17, with scope for a one-off payment being made available to staff who qualify for the scheme at the end of the year. A decision on the quantum to be made available within the scheme would be made by the Corporation at the June 2017 meeting depending on affordability and any decisions which may be made in relation to pay scales.**

5.10 West Midlands Combined Authority – Adult Education Funding

Keith Bate provided members with an overview of emerging factors regarding devolution of the Adult Education Budgets from the Skills Funding Agency to the West Midlands Combined Authority. Potential vulnerability of adult funding was noted.

Action 5.10a Leslie Williams responded that while it was too soon to take an assessment of risk it was appropriate to consider any information arising and draw out options at the Corporation Residential in January 2017.

The Corporation noted the potential changes that could affect the Adult Education Budget for the College and that regular updates would be provided on any emerging developments.

6 Monthly Performance Information

6.1 Finance and Resources

Members noted that RAG Rating reporting for 2016/17 would commence for the meeting of the Corporation on 2 November 2016.

6.2 Students, Learning and Teaching

Keith Bate highlighted the intensive induction for students including all students undertaking a full initial assessment.

6.3 Staff and Accommodation

The staff base was reported as strong with some vacancies remaining.

Accommodation improvement activities were noted with the refurbishment of Block 3 being progressed.

The monthly performance information report was received.

7 Finance and Resources Reports

7.1 Draft Outturn for 2015/16

Jacquie Carman presented the draft outturn figures which indicated achievement of an operating surplus in accordance with target. The College had met or exceeded financial targets as reported.

The Corporation noted the expected outturn and final management accounts position.

7.2 Review of Revenue Budget

Jacquie Carman highlighted that the financial targets for 2016/17 were based on new international accounting standards with three financial ratios used to measure financial health. The College should sustain its financial health rating in 2016/17 with slightly increased levels of surplus.

Jacquie Carman also noted a positive position regarding the 2017/18 budget, based on student retention rates.

Key risks to the budget included retention, student fee debt and changes to funding rates.

Karen Cocker asked about the Apprenticeship Levy on which consultation was currently being undertaken. Jacquie Carman confirmed that the College was not excluded.

The Corporation resolved to approve the budget review noting the key risk factors to the indicative 2016/17 budget profile.

(Jane Chan left the meeting)

8 Students, Teaching and Learning

8.2 Student Conduct Report

Joanne Williams reported on the continued trend of good behaviour, with fewer student expulsions, an increase in the percentage of students with good grades for attitude to learning and increased commendations.

With regards to actions, ongoing work on attendance and staff training on managing student behaviour were noted. Also noted was work by the SPIP team in monitoring students in at risk groups, to ensure correct intervention strategies could be deployed.

Members discussed the continued focus to ensure that identity cards are worn on campus.

The report was received.

8.3 Student Destinations Report – Initial HE Destinations

Members considered the changes to student destinations by institution and subject area. While less students applied to Higher Education, the conversion rate to places remained the same as the previous year. Students appeared to be moving to institutions further away, while Nursing and Creative Media courses remained the subjects most undertaken.

Leslie Williams noted that the overall student destination trend analysis was helpful and Joanne Williams confirmed that this was currently being validated.

The report was received.

8.4 Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

The Safeguarding Policy and Procedure had been revised to include more detail.

Members discussed the pace of development regarding types of abuse and how this was being addressed.

The Corporation resolved to approve the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure dated 28 September 2016.

8.5 Special Education Needs and Disability Policy

Members considered the Special Education Needs and Disability Policy which drew together policy and procedure strands into a cohesive document.

An increase in the number of students with high needs was noted and that more training was required.

The Corporation resolved to approve the Special Education Needs and Disability Policy (SEND) (QT0027) dated 3 August 2016.

8.6 Personal and Intimate Care Policy

The College in seeking to formalise its guidance and procedures on meeting the higher level needs of some students had provided the Personal and Intimate Care Policy.

The Corporation resolved to approve the Personal and Intimate Care Policy (QT0028) dated 28 September 2016.

10 Any Other Business

Leslie Williams formally acknowledged the exemplary service of Keith Bate, who in his role as Principal had impacted positively on thousands of students. Members added their commendations to Keith Bate, a Principal held in high esteem.

The Corporation provided full support to Joanne Williams in her role as Interim Principal going forward.

Following consideration of resolution under Standing Order 8 Proceedings at meetings the following withdrew from the meeting: Keith Bate, Allison Matthews, Monika Zilionyte, Joanne Williams and Jacquie Carman.

9 Appointment of Principal (Confidential)

9.1 Appointment of Interim Principal

As per confidential minute.

9.2 Calendar and Arrangements

Ian Jewkes explained the process and outcome in securing recruitment consultants to support the process of appointing a new principal. Ian Jewkes further outlined the proposed selection panel of governors in accordance with the Articles of Government.

Members discussed the draft timetable of dates and process to be determined by the panel.

The Corporation resolved to approve Veredus as recruitment consultants in the process of appointing a Principal.

The Corporation approved the selection panel comprised of;

- Leslie Williams
- Ian Jewkes
- Karen Cocker
- Helene Jones
- Geoffrey Elliott and/or Jane Chan

11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 2 November 2016 at 6pm.

Meeting closed at: 8pm

Actions from meetings			
Ref	Agenda item and action	Date/item for review	Reported by
Corporation Meeting 23 March 2016			
10.3a	Budgeting Policy It was agreed that a key review report would be provided for the Corporation in August or September 2016. Revised date.	Aug/Sept 2016 30 Nov 2016	JCa
Corporation Meeting 18 July 2016			
4.2 4.2a	Annual Plan 2016/2017 Leslie Williams requested that progress updates against each point of the Annual Plan 2016/2017 be regularly provided. It was agreed that monthly monitoring would be provided for the Corporation.	Sept 2016 Nov 2016	KDB
Corporation Meeting 28 September 2016			
8.1 8.1a	Report from Faculty Director - A Level Director Louise Craddock Joanne Williams agreed that results to be provided by Faculty Area would provide a different view.	Sept 2017	JWi
5.7 5.7a	External Review and Corporation Residential Planning The Corporation noted the areas for consideration to be developed into an itinerary and agenda for the Corporation Strategic Planning Residential, as scheduled for 13 and 14 January 2017.	Jan 2017	LW/IJ
5.10 5.10a	West Midlands Combined Authority – Adult Education Funding Leslie Williams responded that while it was too soon to take an assessment of risk it was appropriate to consider any information arising and draw out options at the Corporation Residential in January 2017.	Jan 2017	JWi