



CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporation held on Tuesday 12th December 2017 in the Boardroom at John Ruskin College, Selsdon Park Road, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 8JJ commencing at 6pm.

Present:	Anne Smith Peter Papanastasiou Cllr Helen Pollard Grace Marriott Laurence Markham Abbee Cole Anna O'Brien Jack Giannasi Mohammed Ramzan	Vice Chair Principal
In Attendance:	Jo Frith-Williams Michael Gainlall Barbara Maude	Vice Principal Chief Operating Officer Clerk to the Corporation

Item	Agenda Description	Action
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence & Declarations of Interest Apologies had been received from Alec Stow, Chair (as noted at the last meeting), Ashley Fernandes, Genstacia Bull, Derek Galloway and Angel O'Dwyer. The apologies were agreed.</p> <p>In the absence of the Chair, and as previously agreed, Anne Smith, Vice Chair would chair the meeting.</p> <p>No member declared an interest in any item on the agenda.</p>	
2.	<p>Timing of the Agenda and Items of Urgent Business The indicative timings on the agenda were duly noted and there were no items of urgent business.</p>	
3.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 7th November 2017 were reviewed. The Corporation asked that the minutes be revised to reflect the Board's disappointment at the outcome of the recent OfSTED inspection. Save for that addition the minutes were agreed and approved for signature by the Vice Chair.</p>	
4.	<p>Matters arising The Principal advised that the College had been unsuccessful in its tender for</p>	

	<p>non-levy apprenticeship funding but had received £200k for new starts up to March 2018.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that the post of Parent Governor was still vacant but it was hoped that by attending the College's Parents Evening in January 2018 it may be possible to speak to parents direct to generate interest in the role.</p> <p>In terms of the OfSTED Inspection, the Principal confirmed that the 8 key points identified by the Board at the last meeting for action were to be referred as follows: points 2 to 7 to fall within the remit of the Quality Improvement Board, the first action point was a key theme (why are we below benchmark?) which was fully encapsulated by the Quality Improvement Plan (which now incorporated the OfSTED Post Inspection Action Plan) and point 8, which related to receiving differentiated data had already been actioned by SLT as evidenced within the current College Progress Report submitted to members for this meeting.</p>	
5.	<p>Audit Committee Recommendations & FSA Management Letter and Report & Financial Statements fye 31st July 2017</p> <p>The Chief Operating Officer advised the Corporation that Chris Cairns, Lead Auditor of the External Auditors, Alliotts, had presented the FSA Management Letter for the year ending 31st July 2017 to the Audit Committee, at its meeting held prior to the Corporation meeting.</p> <p>The main points to note related to the level of materiality for making adjustments to the financial statements which had been calculated at £90,000 (i.e. the size of an error in financial terms that would impact the accounts); six actual adjustments had been made to the accounts during the course of the audit and five uncorrected misstatements had been noted during the audit but not adjusted.</p> <p>The FSA Management Letter set out details of prior year recommendations, all of which had been implemented and also highlighted 2 new recommendations which had been made during the audit to improve the effectiveness of the College's accounting and financial control systems. One recommendation related to aged provisions and accruals and had been graded 3 (observations which merited attention but were not as significant as Grade 1 or Grade 2 observations). The second recommendation related to governor confirmation of interests with the recommendation that the annual statement is enhanced to require governors to include a list of entities in which they are involved. This would allow the College to check this list to its suppliers and demonstrate active monitoring of a sensitive area. This was classified as a grade 3 recommendation. It was proposed that the Clerk would revise the current Register of Interests declaration and an updated form would be circulated for signature by all members in March 2018 in accordance with the usual governance cycle of business.</p> <p>A point of note within the Report and Financial Statements included under "future prospects" the Area Review Process and the direction of travel was for the College's to continue as a standalone sixth form college working in collaboration with other partners.</p> <p>Other key points included the College generating a deficit before gains and losses in the year of (£26,629k) with total comprehensive income (formerly the Income and Expenditure account) of (£57k) for the year; the Balance Sheet (including deferred capital grants) at £12,735k; the judgements applied in the accounting policies; and identified key management personnel. In terms</p>	

	<p>of the College they remained as in the previous year, the Senior Leader Team, namely the Principal, Vice Principal and Chief Operating Officer. The financial health score target for the year was good and the actual achieved for 2016/17 was outstanding.</p> <p>The auditor's opinion was set out on pages 21 and 22 of the Report and confirmed that in their opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the College's affairs as at 31st July 2017 and of the College's deficit for the year then ended; and that the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the appropriate accounting standards and practice.</p> <p>The Corporation also approved, in the absence of the Chair, the signing off by the Vice Chair of firstly, the Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31st July 2017 and then the letters of engagement for the Financial Statements Auditors including the representation letter from Alliotts in connection with the audit of the financial statements for the year ending 31st July 2017, and the Regularity Assurance engagement letter also for the year ending 31st July 2017.</p> <p>The Corporation then reviewed the Annual Report of the Audit Committee, noting on page 6 of the report, the Committee's opinion that the Corporation's assurance arrangements, framework of governance, risk management and control processes for the effective and efficient use of resources, solvency of the institution and the safeguarding of its assets were both adequate and effective.</p> <p>The Committee had also undertaken a performance review of the external auditors (FSA), Alliotts and were recommending that they be re-appointed for a further year.</p> <p>The Corporation resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 To approve the Report & Financial Statements for the year ending (fye) 31st July 2017; and 2 To approve the FSA Management Letter fye 31st July 2017; and 3 To approve the Annual Report of the Audit Committee dated 12th December 2017 (including revised Terms of Reference (Appendix 1)); 4 To authorise the Vice Chair, Anne Smith, to sign off the Report and Financial Statements fye 31st July 2017 and all appropriate letters of engagement; 5 To confirm the re-appointment of the external auditors, Alliotts for the audit of the Report and Financial Statements for the year ending 31st July 2018. <p>The Corporation commended the Chief Operating Officer on achieving a final landing position of (£26k) against a projected deficit of (£286k). This was, in the view of the Corporation, a tremendous effort on behalf of not only the Chief Operating Officer and his team but also of the College as a whole for ensuring the projected deficit was so significantly reduced by the year end.</p>	
	STRATEGIC ITEMS	
6.	College Progress Report & Executive Summary The Corporation received the College Progress Report & Executive Summary	

which also included the 2016/17 Final KPIs Outturn and a progress update on the Strategic Quality Improvement Plan.

The Principal gave a brief summary of the key points set out in his report, highlighting national, regional and local issues of interest.

On a national level, the headline news was in respect of the volatility in apprenticeships starts following the introduction of the employer levy. Figures released by the Department of Employment (DfE) showed that in the first three months following the introduction of the levy, starts fell by 61% (69,400) compared to the same period in 2016. However, since August “experimental” data from the DfE showed a large increase in apprenticeships starts at higher or degree level (an increase of 424%). If accurate, this may suggest that employers will use levy funding to provide higher level courses for older and existing employers rather than lower level courses for young people looking for their first full-time job.

The ETF had also reported that the numbers on initial teacher education courses for FE had fallen dramatically with the report also highlighting the increasing number of teachers leaving the sector, with an estimated one third reduction since 2010.

The DfE had published its T- Level Action Plan which set out the new qualifications and how they would be developed and delivered. There were 15 routes, each of which were intended to bring together related occupations in a particular sector. Within each route there were three to five ‘pathways’ which would be specialisms clustered together in a straightforward way so that young people could see a “clear path to the occupation of their choice”.

On a regional level, the Principal also reported on the themes raised at the AoC Conference and the submission of nominations to the National Centre for Diversity annual awards, with a nomination submitted on behalf of Anne Smith, Vice Chair.

On a College level, a bid had now been submitted to the ESFA to access funds through the Strategic College Improvement Fund, with the College working in partnership with Portsmouth College.

In addition, the Corporation were asked to consider the annual staff pay rise. Although a 1% pay rise had been built into the budget, the College had not met its recruitment target and a deficit budget had been set for 2017/18. Both the AoC and SFCA recommended a 1% increase where Colleges could afford it.

The Corporation were cognisant of balancing affordability against retention of staff. After significant debate, the Corporation asked that the item on the annual staff pay award should be deferred to the next meeting and should then be brought back as an agenda item with a supporting paper. Within that report, SLT were asked to provide details of the number of staff who receive an incremental as opposed to those that do not; details of the cost of making an award and a deficit budget monitoring analysis with identified opportunities to reduce the deficit in-year.

The Principal confirmed that a Quality Improvement Board had been established, and that three governors, namely Anne Smith, Grace Marriott and Helen Pollard had agreed to attend three of the scheduled review meetings during the course of the present academic year.

Members were also reminded that the College would have a Support and Challenge visit in March 2018 and this would be overseen by David Martin HMI.

In reviewing the outturn figures for the KPIs for 2016/17, members queried apprenticeship achievement rates for subcontracted (88.2%) compared to direct delivery (56.9%) and asked for an explanation as to why direct delivery provision was so significantly behind the College target (75/60 for overall/timely 2016/17). The KPI for 2017/18 was 80/65 and members questioned SLT over firstly, the identified weaknesses in that area of provision and secondly the rationale behind setting such an ambitious target for 2017/18. After discussion, SLT agreed to review this specific KPI for 2017/18.

In terms of the curriculum overview, the Vice Principal highlighted some key points in her report. Firstly, the College had been awarded the whole College Matrix accreditation, which was the quality kite mark for information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) and the Corporation commended all staff and learners for this significant achievement.

The Vice Principal also gave an oral update on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the College touching on formal performance management of staff, professional development of teachers, quality assurance and the improvement of assessment and feedback.

Professional learning groups had been introduced this year, and these were duly noted together with the External Quality Reviews (EQR) which used peer review to share good practice between member colleges. The reviews were undertaken by curriculum areas, unlike OfSTED who inspected by study programme. There were 5 trained EQR reviewers and they had completed 2 reviews at other colleges this term and having identified good practice they would be sharing and implementing this across the College.

The Corporation then reviewed in detail attendance data including cross college Functional Skills English and Maths class attendance. Concern was expressed that current cumulative attendance was 88.8% compared to 89.7% for 2016/17 for post 16 provision. This represented a downward trend and members were anxious that this should be reversed as a priority. In reviewing the attendance data provided for the various Functional Skills English and Maths classes, members expressed concern over the discrepancy in attendance between the classes and challenged SLT on what they were doing to eradicate the difference.

Whilst it was not for the Corporation to review attendance at individual student level it was an issue for the Corporation to know and understand attendance by courses. The Board challenged SLT with a series of strident questions and requested that updates be provided at subsequent Corporation meetings on the progress of attendance on this provision; the identification if possible of “truly” authorised absences and a comparison of attendance across all subjects compared to attendance for English and Maths.

In terms of post 16 learner recruitment, members asked that SLT bring forward comparative data for learner recruitment. Members asked for high level comparative data for future meetings. SLT were also questioned on what strategies were in place to recruit more learners in a highly competitive market and an update on the Schools Liaison Strategy might be considered helpful.

In terms of apprenticeship recruitment, whilst it was noted that a lead

	<p>generation company had been engaged, members asked for some further information on the levy paying employers versus lead generation issue, such as what were the risks, the wins and how to achieve the right balance.</p> <p>In terms of the financial review, the Chief Operating Officer gave a summary of the main points contained in his report. For the period ending 31st October 2017 the College had achieved an operating surplus of £103.77k. The outturn forecast was (£572.26k) which was the same as the budget. There were no variances to report against budget.</p> <p>On a separate note, the Chief Operating Officer advised members that an incident had taken place at the College involving a member of staff. Following advice, the matter had been reported under RIDDOR which was the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. These regulations required employers to report specified workplace incidents. An investigation was ongoing and the Corporation asked to be kept closely informed.</p> <p>Finally, the Corporation reviewed and noted progress achieved, where applicable, against the Strategic Quality Improvement Plan 2017-2020.</p>	
7.	<p>College Self Assessment Report 2016/17 and Quality Improvement Plan The Corporation received the College Self Assessment Report for 2016/17 and Quality Improvement Plan which incorporated the OfSTED Post Inspection Action Plan.</p> <p>The College Self Assessment Report (SAR) 2016/17 was in line with the recent OfSTED report. It had been validated and graded as Requires Improvement (RI). Areas of development would have an action plan against each point and would be monitored by SLT. Once approved by the Corporation, the SAR would be uploaded onto the Gateway and would be used as the College's overall post inspection plan. The validation panel had been chaired by Richard Moore and had included governor representation.</p> <p>The Corporation resolved: To approve the College Self Assessment Report 2016/17, the final review of the 2016/17 Quality Improvement Plan and the 2017/18 Quality Improvement Plan.</p>	
	COMPLIANCE ITEMS	
9.	<p>Policy Watch After review, the Corporation resolved: To approve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appraisal Scheme for College Staff; and 2. Redundancy Policy 	
10.	<p>Governance The Corporation received for information purposes a copy of the letter from Peter Lauener, Chief Executive of the ESFA addressed to Chief Executives and Principals of all Colleges in the FE Sector dated 17th November 2017. The letter set out certain findings of the ESFA from their work with colleges, some points arising from funding audits on the management and quality of data about learners and changes in the top level of management at ESFA itself.</p>	

	Members also received a Corporation meeting evaluation form which they were asked to complete and return.	
11.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Clerk had included within the Board papers a copy of the poem written by former student governor, Khatija Abdul Latif and which had been presented at the Learner Awards Ceremony in the summer for information for those members that had been unable to attend. The poem charted her journey at JRC. Members welcomed sight of the poem which was an eloquent and poignant tribute to the College.</p> <p>There were no other items of business.</p>	
12.	<p>Date and Time of Next Meeting:</p> <p>It was agreed that the next meeting of the Corporation would take place on Tuesday 23rd January 2018 at 6pm.</p>	