



WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE CORPORATION BOARD

Minutes of the Board meeting held in the Board Room at the Derby Road site on Thursday 22nd October 2015 at 5.00 pm

GOVERNORS
PRESENT: Kate Allsop
Ian Baggaley
Chris Bodger
Tim Clarke
Nevil Croston, Chair
Terry Dean
Dame Asha Khemka DBE
Cllr Diana Meale
David Overton
John Robinson
Colin Sawers
Shania Henson (until 6.20 pm)

ALSO IN
ATTENDANCE: Andrew Martin, Deputy Principal/Director of Finance
Patricia Harman, Deputy Principal: Teaching and Learning
Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation
Thomas Stevens, Executive Director: Capital Projects and Estates
Andrew King, Director: Strategy and Innovation
Louise Knott, Director: Communications, Marketing and Learner engagement
Tracy Thompson, Director: Human Resources
Sacha McCarthy, Director: Employer Engagement

Stuart Peach, Plastering student
Andy Gardner, Computer Science student
Stefan Hubble, Painting and Decorating student

Before the commencement of the formal meeting the Deputy Principal took the opportunity to welcome 3 students to the meeting. She explained that all 3 had been successful in the regional heats of the skills competitions and would be participating in the UK World Skills final next year. All agreed that this was a fabulous achievement and the Board wished them well in the competition and their future. All agreed that they were very proud of their achievements and passed on huge congratulations.

The Principal and Chief Executive confirmed that the College would provide all the support necessary in what was a fantastic opportunity for all involved. Trophy presentations were provided in relation to skills achievements so far.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

ACTION by whom	DATE by when
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15.35 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Chair reminded those present to declare at the start of the meeting any interest in items to be considered. No interests were declared.

The Clerk took the opportunity to draw members attention to the 2014/15 summary of interests declared included within papers at pages 1 to 5. It was confirmed that these would be recorded as ‘standing’ interests.

15.36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Nick Gollub, Malcolm Hall, John Holford, Hari Punchihewa and Chris Winterton. Shania Henson, the new Student Governor, was warmly welcomed to her first meeting.

15.37 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17TH SEPTEMBER 2015

The minutes were reviewed and agreed as an accurate record.

AGREED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2015. These were signed by the Chair.

15.38 MATTERS ARISING AND ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

There were no matters arising and the content of the action progress report was noted.

15.39 PEOPLE REPORT 2014/15

The Director of HR introduced this item and confirmed that the detailed People Report had been made available on the portal. A presentation was provided with key matters brought to members’ attention:

- There is clear evidence that staff work together well with strong leadership and management. There is evidence of the impact of good people management through a number of areas, these include:
 - 1) BDU Success
 - Excellent success rates for 2014/15 compared to the current national rates;
 - Overall success rates for apprenticeships at 77% are 8% above the national rate;
 - Work place learning, 11% above the national rate at 96%;
 - Structured team, with rigorous processes and high expectations are shared consistently across the team.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

2) Quality Improvements

- 3% improvement on 2014/15 lesson observations graded good or better for College delivered learning;
- Majority of learners state that they are well taught and are excited to be here;
- Confidence in the new curriculum management teams to deliver continued improvements.

3) Financial Stability

- Excellent and strong financial outcome;
- Prepared ourselves financially and mentally for future challenges through relentless and meaningful conversation and consultation;
- Teaching staff voted unanimously to accept increase in teaching hours;
- VBSS established.

4) Sharing our Expectations

- Sustained level of performance management through informal and formal channels;
- Improved performance through effective coaching and tackling poor performers ;
- Increase in turnover;
- Reduction in grievance cases.

5) Employee Engagement

This continues to be strong with the impact of cross-college forums being evidenced. These are described as ‘an invaluable opportunity to network with colleagues and peers as well as gather College updates that are disseminated to the rest of the team’. A positive impact in terms of communication across all levels.

6) Employee Council

Feedback from the Employee Council is that ‘it is vital to cohesive unified communication across the College teams. Staff look forward to each meeting and consider it an important two way channel which helps the team remain connected to the vision and the future of students and the College’.

- Next steps will be the implementation of the People Strategy 2015-18

It was confirmed that the senior team meet regularly with students and without fail they are very impressive. What is evident is consistency regarding the high calibre of students now enrolled. This position is triangulated by meeting students on both an organised formal basis and also on an ad hoc basis in and around College. The College is confident that it has strong staff relationships and engagement so as to be able to face future challenges.

Signed : _____ Chair

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It was confirmed that staff turnover is higher than in previous years but assurance was given that the reasons for this are known and in particular the College has 'raised the bar' in terms of performance expectations and this has inevitably led a number of employees to make the decision that the College is perhaps not the right place for them.

Q The Board questioned how probing the HR team are in relation to exit interviews and surveys. The HR Director confirmed that the team fully review all exit interview and comments and share any points of learning and feedback with managers and other staff as appropriate.

One Governor present confirmed that he had recently attended the Employee Council meeting and had found it very useful and interesting. He confirmed that it was a very open forum and that staff seem fully engaged in the process and dialogue.

It was explained that performance management within the College is now well developed and is focused on aspirations rather than criticisms. Rather being seen as a negative, the College feel that it is beneficial if staff do acknowledge that they cannot meet increasingly high expectations. All staff and students feel a real sense of pride in the College and the environment which builds upon an increasing sense of success. The Board all agreed that staff should be congratulated for the improving performance seen.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

15.40 INSPECTION BRIEFING

The Deputy Principal provided a presentation and confirmed that this was a 'refresh' in terms of the information provided at the June residential. Key matters brought to members attention were:

- a) Type of inspection
 - Short inspections for Colleges graded good at last inspection for overall effectiveness;
 - Risk based approach with a full inspection if performance has declined.
- b) Short inspection
 - Will determine whether the provider continues to provide a good standard of education/training for learners and whether safeguarding is effective;
 - No individual grade judgements;
 - Within 3 years from September 2015 (therefore the window for WNC is anytime from September 2015 to September 2018);
 - If confirmed to be good, there will be a further short inspection approximately every 3 years.

Signed : _____ Chair

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c) Format of short inspections

- Designed to promote constructive challenge and professional dialogue between inspectors, leaders, manager and governors;
- Assumption that the provider remains good;
- Test through inspection activities and ongoing debate during inspection.

The Deputy Principal confirmed that the College SAR is almost complete and that this will be the starting point of evidence to be relied upon at inspection. There is a feeling that there will be less focus on historic outcomes and more focus on what current students are doing with the College being required to prove day to day progress.

d) Purpose of short inspection – main purpose is to evaluate:

- Whether the provider remains good;
- Whether safeguarding is effective or not;
- The capacity of all leaders, managers and governors to drive continual improvement;
- How well the provider has dealt with any areas for improvement identified at the previous full inspection.

In summary the College will be required to prove that it remains good.

e) Role of governors – they will be expected to share with inspectors

- How they and the college sustains and continues to improve the good quality of provision for learners;
- Demonstrate their capacity for driving further improvement;
- Test whether weaknesses or areas needing development have been identified and acted upon.

It was acknowledged that a lot of the information provided to Governors goes through the Standards Committee and that it is therefore important to closely note the content of Standards Committee minutes for any Governors who do not sit on this Committee.

In terms of future inspection briefings, Governors were asked to identify any session topics that they feel would be particularly helpful. The Chief Executive suggested that the next training session could relate to the format and focus of the two day inspection and in particular Governors' roles within this. It was agreed that it would be useful to know where Governors need to be most knowledgeable and articulate. It was confirmed that key Ofsted themes will be work based learning, apprentices, 16-19, leadership and management, Maths and English. The Deputy Principal was asked to explain who leads on this and also provide a copy of the position papers for each area.

Deputy
Principal

December
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The Deputy Principal took the opportunity to also circulate a document which clearly highlights the heightened focus on Governors within the inspection handbook.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

15.41 PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Members' attention was drawn to the Principals comprehensive report. Key matters noted:

- 1) College update – the College is thriving and there is a buzz on campus with classes full, students are positive and enthusiastic about their learning experience.
- 2) Area based reviews – an update is provided as part of a confidential paper later on the agenda.
- 3) Devolution proposal – it was explained that Cllr Diana Meale and John Robinson are deeply involved in the process. They confirmed that things are very close to a deal being done and there is an expectation of an announcement before the spending review. This will be an East Midlands deal with a requirement in place for a directly elected Mayor. Part of the deal process includes the expectation that a Mayor is in place to hold responsibility for a single combined authority. Within this the most challenging budgets to be managed are likely to be DWP and the skills issue. The Board were advised that this is a very complicated agreement to reach as there are 19 local authority leaders currently in place and that a Mayor overseeing a single combined authority would be a huge change in operational arrangements. It was confirmed that even if a deal is achieved there is a large amount of negotiation then to take place regarding how powers might be crystallised. This is a process that everyone involved is currently progressing. If achieved, this will be a core city LEP deal. It was explained that this is out with the D2N2 relationship and that the elected Mayor and D2N2 will need to be developed. It was explained that this deal was about locally influencing how monies are spent for the region and the area. It was acknowledged that this is not 'new money', it is just money being spent in a different way.

The Principal indicated that a concern and a challenge for the College is that a lot of its income comes from other local areas and if other local areas reach similar deals with funds controlled locally this may have an impact upon funding going forward.

- 4) Midland engine for growth – the objectives of the proposal are to contribute directly to the growth of the Midlands economy by tackling specific challenges and the supply of skills.

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To position the FE sector as an active and valuable partner in the Midland Engine for Growth, work across the Midlands and to provide the basis for a more detailed discussion across Colleges. There are 50 Colleges working together with 11 LEPS. It is expected that a submission of the Midlands proposal to the Government will be at the end of November for an official launch in early December.

- 5) Conservative party conference – on Thursday 8th October the Principal was invited to attend the Prime Minister’s reception at number 10 in celebration of black history month. During the reception she was able to speak to the Prime Minister and encouraged him to come to visit the College.
- 6) November AOC conference and skills show – this is a busy time in the year and the Principal has been asked to host a table at the skills show launch dinner inviting the D2N2 LEP Board members and providing another valuable opportunity to showcase the unique and innovative work of the FE sector. On the morning of 20th November the Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, Sir John Peace will be paying a visit to the College Engineering and Innovation Centre and the same afternoon the College will be joined by a delegation from the Ministry of Skills in India who will be visiting the College as part of the tour of vocational and skills delivery here in the UK.
- 7) CBI dinner - the Principal was able to confirm that an incredibly successful CBI dinner had been hosted at College last week, all who attended acknowledged that the staff and students involved in the event were a real credit to the College.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

15.42 KPI UPDATE

The Director for Strategy and Innovation drew members’ attention to the KPI schedules that had been circulated by email. It was acknowledged that, as requested, the black background had been removed. Key points brought to members attention were :

- 1) Total learners – the total number of learners has been broadly similar over the last 3 years. This year there are around 3,000 fewer learners compared to the same point last year, however overall numbers are largely dependent on in year recruitment of work place learners.
- 2) 16-18 full time students – the Colleges target for 16-18 numbers reflected the ongoing decline in the local 16-18 population, however the College is just over 15 learners short of this target and the pattern of the previous year was a further reduction in October. The aim for the College is to try and avoid a known September/October ‘dip’.
- 3) Apprenticeship starts – for this year the College has shifted its measure to ‘starts’ and away from ‘overall volume’.

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The College is currently showing a comparison with previous years but are looking to produce a similar month by month analysis for November. It was explained that the focus is starts rather than actual numbers and that developing monthly trend analysis is important.

CH

- 4) Success rates (classroom based learning) – there has been a fall in overall success rates and significant improvement is required to achieve the 88% target. This is below the national average for 13/14 but the 14/15 average is not due out until early 2016. All Governors acknowledged that this trend needed to be turned around.
- 5) Success rates apprenticeships – there have been improvements in both overall and timely success rates with timely successes being above 14/15 target and well above the latest national average. It was again noted that the 14/15 national rates will be released in early 2016.
- 6) Success rates (work place learning) – there has been an increase in overall success but a fall in timely success. It should be noted that there were less than 850 starts in work placed learning for 14/15 compared to over 6500 apprenticeships and more than 7500 ESF.
- 7) Customer satisfaction – no surveys have been completed and the first employer and work based survey will be completed this term in time for the December Board meeting. Subsequent reports will be available in April and September next year.
- 8) Graded lesson observations – the chart shows the final position for 2014/15. For 2015/16 the team are looking at providing a more holistic judgement of the quality of teaching and learning across College and partners. This will be more in line with the new Ofsted inspection framework. The new measures should be available for the November Board meeting.
- 9) Staff absence – staff absence has increased slightly from the previous year but is still slightly behind the latest sector average. There are currently no HR KPIs available for 15/16 but this will be available for the November Board.
- 10) Financial indicators – the College has retained the operating surplus measure for this year (blue line) but has also added the financial health score (orange bars) that will be updated on a monthly basis as part of the management accounts. No in year financial information is available at this stage but will be updated for the November Board.

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Q

The Board questioned the financial health score measures. The Deputy Principal explained that it is based upon 3 core ratios in relation to current solvency, gearing and operating ratio. The College has got to get to 120 points based on a combination of these ratios to achieve a 'satisfactory' health score. It was explained that this is an SFA measure of performance. It was confirmed that the figures presented in the table were after FRS17 but that the financial health score is calculated before FRS17 and therefore there will be slight difference within the reports.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

It was confirmed that the financial indicators will be measured on the basis of the annual financial statements and also the financial plan approved in July. Assurance was given that these are monitored internally on a month by month basis.

11) Destinations – it was explained that destinations data has not been included in this set of KPIs but that they will be included once the process and coverage of collecting annual destinations is agreed for 2015/16. At this time the College is continuing to update and develop the method of reporting.

CH In terms of the KPI report, going forward the Board indicated that, as well as the tables they would like to see a highlights bullet point summary showing; a) what the College is doing well, b) the areas of concern and c) actions being taken to address areas of concern and areas for improvement.

CH The Board indicated that it was important to see consistency regarding matters reported, particularly the financial information, and that throughout reports they want to be able to compare like with like.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

15.43 **PROPERTY STRATEGY 2015-2020**

The Director: Capital Projects and Estates introduced this item and confirmed that the strategy is a consolidation of a number of reports that have been discussed by the Committee and the Board. The main thrust of the 2020 strategy is to deliver a new University Centre, synthetic turf 3G five aside football pitch and additional car parking on the Derby Road site and relocate administrative staff from Ransom Wood to Ashfield House at Chesterfield road in the 2015-2017 period. This will require circa £7 million capital investment followed by an ongoing programme of internal refurbishment of the Derby Road campus, including refurbishment of the main learning resource centre for the introduction of blended learning. He confirmed that there will be a review of the strategy in 2017, with the team revisiting progress and also context, for example area reviews. Assurance was given that the strategy has been reviewed in detail by the Finance, Resources & Estates Committee and their recommendation is that it is approved. He confirmed that the strategy builds upon previous strategies in place and comes together to provide an overall 2020 College strategy.

A number of specific items were brought to members attention:

- The condition KPI on page 36 has been increased to 90% as a response to comments made by the Finance, Resources and Estates Committee. This is achievable if the College maintains the current level of investment.

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- Page 37 there was some significant debate at the FR&E Committee regarding the difference between good, functional and satisfactory condition, these points have been noted.
- Room occupancy – again there was significant debate on this at the Finance, Resources and Estates Committee and this is an area where the College needs to improve. He confirmed that occupancy and utilisation is being reviewed over time and that there will be a future report to the Board regarding generally how the College uses its estate in March 2016.
- Page 39 and 40 relates to efficiency savings, however it should be noted that this is set against an actual growth in square meterage.
- Page 51 provides a summary of the estate development work in the last 4 years.
- Page 61 provides details of the College properties.
- Page 71 details property conditions.
- Page 83 sets out the strategy for College development of Sport
- Page 101 sets out the environment and sustainability policy. It was acknowledged however, that there is still more work to be done in this area.
- Page 103 provides indicative benchmarks.

Dir CP&E

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In terms of actual estates work currently being undertaken, in relation to the HE Centre it was confirmed that Wild Goose have commenced works and are on schedule. In relation to the relocation from Ransom Hall, this is also going well and to plan and appears to be running smoothly. In addition the open learning centre is in place and is fully operational.

Having reviewed the strategy members were happy to approve the same. It was acknowledged that this will be an active document which will be updated as matters progress.

AGREED: to approve the 2015 2020 property strategy presented.

(Shania Henson left the meeting at 6.20 pm)

Q

The Board questioned how staff are responding to the move to Chesterfield Road. The Principal indicated that staff are positive and understand the context and the need for efficiencies. She gave assurance that the senior team have fully explained the reasoning and rationale for the move and as a consequence staff fully understand this. As a general comment it was confirmed that staff and students tend to be increasingly realistic and understand that there is a need to make economies without compromising on quality and service.

Q

The Board questioned how the general travel plan was working. The Director: Capital Projects and Estates explained that it was only the start of the journey at the current time. There is a requirement at Derby Road to annual review the traffic on local residential streets. Students tend to travel by bus or car and do not cycle.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

The College has altered bus routes to take account of estate consolidation and are trying to manage the bus service as well as it is able, however it was acknowledged that there are some 'pinch points'.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

15.44 **GOVERNANCE**

The Clerk introduced this item and drew members' attention to a number of issues to be agreed.

1) Student Governor Appointments

The Clerk explained that in order to fill the second Student Governor vacancy that exists an election took place. Two candidates stood for the position and the student who received the most votes was Ms Shania Henson.

AGREED: to approve the appointment of Shania Henson as a Student Governor from 22nd October 2015 to 31st July 2016 (or until such time as she ceases to be a student whichever is the earlier).

2) Standing Orders - Annual Review

The Clerk explained that at the recent meeting of the Finance, Resources and Estates Committee the Standing Orders were reviewed with minor amendments proposed and highlighted in red. The Board were happy to approve the recommendation made.

AGREED: to approve the proposed amendments to the standing orders as detailed at appendix b of the documents.

3) Standards Committee Terms of Reference for 2015/16

The Clerk explained that at the recent meeting of the Standards Committee they had reviewed terms of reference and made minor amendments which were highlighted as red on Appendix C. The Board were happy to support the changes proposed.

AGREED: to approve the amendments to the Standards Committee Terms of Reference 2015/16 proposed.

15.45 **FINANCE REPORT 2015/16**

Governors were reminded that a copy of this report was available on the portal. Governors raised no questions to be discussed at the meeting.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

15.46 **COMMERCIAL INCOME REPORT**

The Board were reminded that the report is available on the portal. No questions or items of discussion were raised at the meeting. The Principal invited Governors to re-review this document given that it had previously been the subject of Board discussions and a lot of work has been done to provide assurance to the Board in this area.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

14.47 **STRATEGY 2015 2020**

The Board were reminded that the final version of the Strategy is now available on the portal. Again Governors were reminded to refresh and review given that it has previously been the subject of detailed discussions. No further questions or recommendations were made at the meeting.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

15.48 **EMPLOYER ACTIVITY BUSINESS UPDATE**

The update in relation to this item was available on the portal. Governors agreed that this was self-explanatory and there were no questions raised at the meeting.

AGREED: to note the content of the report provided.

15.49 **EXCEPTION REPORT – SAFEGUARDING, EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AND PREVENT**

The Board were happy to note the content of the report available on the portal.

15.50 **MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16TH SEPTEMBER 2015**

The content of the minutes was noted.

15.51 **MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, RESOURCES AND ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29TH SEPTEMBER 2015**

The content of the minutes was noted.

15.52 **MINUTES OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 1ST OCTOBER 2015**

The content of the minutes was noted.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date:

15.53 **AOB**

There were no items of additional business.

15.54 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Clerk confirmed that the next scheduled meeting was 19th November 2015 at 5pm.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It was agreed that confidential items would be recorded separately.

Signed : _____ Chair

Date: