WEST NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE
CORPORATION BOARD

Minutes of the Corporation Board meeting held in the Board Room, Derby Road site on Thursday 30th January 2014

GOVERNORS PRESENT:	Kate Allsop Ian Baggaley Chris Bodger Tim Clarke Nevil Croston (Chair) Terry Dean Malcolm Hall John Holford Amy Kendal Smith Asha Khemka Mike McNamara Diana Meale Beverley Nita David Overton Hari Punchihewa John Robinson (until 6.05 pm) Colin Sawers
ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:	Maxine Bagshaw, Clerk to the Corporation Patricia Harman, Deputy Principal Tom Stevens, Executive Director Capital Projects & Estates Andrew Martin, Deputy Principal Louise Knott, Director Communications, Marketing & Learner Engagement Graham Howe, Vice Principal Business Development Tracey Thompson, Director HR Andrew King, Observer Vicky Martin, Observer

		ACTION by whom	DATE by when
14.01	**DECLARATION OF INTEREST**		
	The Chair reminded those present to declare at the start of the meeting any interests in matters to be considered. Standing declarations of interest were noted. It was agreed that none of the declarations prohibited participation in discussion.		
14.02	**WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**		
	Apologies for absence were received from Marie Oakton and Chris Winterton. The two observers, Andrew King and Vicky Martin were welcomed to the meeting.		

Signed : ______________________________Chair   Date:

The Chair took the opportunity to offer huge congratulations to Asha Khemka on becoming a Dame. All agreed that it was a magnificent accolade and justly received.

14.03 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2013

AGREED:	that the minutes were a true and correct record and were signed by the Chair.	Chair	30 Jan 2014

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

14.04 ACTION PROGRESS REPORT

Members reviewed the schedule and all agreed that matters were progressing as required.

14.05 FUNDING DEVELOPMENTS

The Director of Finance introduced this item and confirmed that this year was particularly unusual, as the College and the sector have no indicative allocations yet. He confirmed that there was an expectation that they will be received within the next few months, but that this is in the context of some controversial policy changes.

The Director of Finance made a presentation to the Board and the following was specifically noted:

- Context leading into 2014/15 – a) continued emphasis on public spending reductions, perhaps with more vigour. The sector is seeing quite a long tail of impact, with Government having a 'completing the job mentality', b) a number of policy developments looking at new ways to support Apprenticeship engagement, c) policy commitments and protection continues to be aimed at schools and not 16-18 provision. The protection is very narrowly focussed and the FE sector will not benefit.
- Apprenticeship proposal, a) removal of the advanced learning system for 24+ level 3 apprenticeships. Recent news is that the level 3 loans will be removed, however, this will not lead to significant impact, as only a few hundred applications have been made nationally, b) assumption is co-funding but not yet confirmed – in this area learners are in a bit of a vacuum at the moment, c) Richard Review has yielded 1) Trailblazers, development of new frameworks. It was explained that the qualification framework is changing and there will be no gap in relation to funding. 2) Funding routed through employers, 3) 2017 likely implementation.
- Funding for 16-18 learners, a) perhaps most eye-catching policy is funding for 18 year old students, b) 18 year olds will be funded at a rate of 17.5% lower than 16 and 17 year olds, c) impact on the College is £300k or 2.5% of the 16-18 participation funding, d) implementation in September 2014, e) a genuine cut to income. All

agreed that the impact on College will be significant and for students it will be serious as it will be the most vulnerable students who are hit by the cuts. It was acknowledged that the impact will be more significant for colleges rather than sixth forms.

- Adult funding a) no clear announcements yet – awaiting the Skills Funding Statement, b) likely that further savings will be required nationally, c) adult apprenticeship track record will be key to limiting the impact. If this is the case, the College is well placed but there are still some risks. The belief at the current time is that organisations who are delivering high volume will suffer less of a cut, but all savings will be relative. d) Employability performance may be used - in respect of job outcomes, but unlikely as there is a very low job outcomes rate nationally (5%), e) uncertain whether the loan system will be altered by age or level, but there is a real possibility.
- Implications – a) currently no funding allocations have been issued for 2014/15. What is, however, assumed is that income will be fairly flat, b) expect at best a no growth position on 16-18 provision due to the policy change, c) adult skills budget will be determined by the allocation methodology and benefit the College`s delivery profile, d) learner support funds will be determined by individual characteristics, as per current practice – no major changes in this area.

The Director of Finance confirmed that the College has gone through a process of curriculum planning based upon certain assumptions and expected allocations are anticipated by the end of March. He explained that the SFA funding letter delays are national and in fact HE is in a similar position. Whilst it was acknowledged that all organisations were in the same position, it was accepted that this is not a particularly good sign.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

14.06 <u>PRINCIPAL'S REPORT</u>

The Principal introduced her written report and drew a number of points to members` attention:

- New Years Honours – the Principal confirmed that she was deeply humbled to be recognised in the Honours List and expressed a huge thank you to the Board and the Senior Team for their support. She indicated that the recognition was not a single achievement, but was the summation of a lot of people's hard work.
- Visit to India January 2014 – she explained that during January she had accompanied the Minister for Skills, Matthew Hancock MP, on his second visit to Delhi. The purpose was to enhance the UK India partnership on education and skills, promote the use of the latest mobile learning and to encourage English as a key skill for employability. She explained that the trip, which coincided with notification of her award as a Dame led to significant publicity, which was very helpful. She also confirmed that bksb is taking shape with improved recognition of the business in the country. She expressed

the desire to get ministers and Bollywood stars to attend the opening event.

- HS2 College announcement – the Principal confirmed that the College has written to Matthew Hancock MP to express an interest in being involved with this development. A meeting has been arranged through the LEP for 6 February 2014 to meet with Mr Hesseltine and Mr Hancock. The intention is also to use this opportunity to discuss the proposal in relation to a university campus in Mansfield.
- Tristram Hunt, Shadow Education Secretary visit in December 2013 – it was a privilege to welcome the Shadow Education Secretary to the College just before the Christmas break. He has sent a very positive letter back and quite clearly enjoyed his time at College.
- TES awards 2014 – the College is delighted to announce that Gogglebox Live, the interactive TV programme written, produced and presented by Level 3 media students has once again been shortlisted for a national award.
- Events 2014 – the Principal took the opportunity to draw a number of events to members` attention. She confirmed that the official opening of the Vision University Centre would be conducted by the Duke of Devonshire.
- Star awards 2013 – all agreed that this had been an excellent event and helped to keep staff motivation and morale high. It was noted that the winner of this years Principal's award was bksb in honour of their ongoing success and the fact that they continue to grow and thrive into an international business.

14.07 **PROPERTY STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Executive Director: Capital Projects & Estates introduced this item and drew members` attention to a number of items:

- Cladding six-storey tower – installation is around 90% complete and work is still on schedule. Design for the sail is finalised, but a date for delivery is still to be confirmed. The six-storey tower will be complete (excluding installation of the sail) by 25 February 2014. Depending upon date for delivery of the sail, the scaffolding should come down in March 2014.
- The Science Laboratory – contract issued for installation. Installation week commencing 27 January 2014, for completion end of February 2014.
- Link bridge – weather permitting – work to refurbish the bridge will commence on 17 February 2014 and take 8 weeks to complete. He explained that a consequence of this work would be that there is no foot or car access under the bridge and therefore alternative arrangements are being organised.
- Engineering Innovation Centre – steel for the installation of the mezzanine arrived as scheduled week commencing 21 January 2014. Completion of the first stage of the project and refurbishment of the fabrication and welding curriculum by 25 April 2014 is subject to installation of gas and electricity by 10 March 2014. He explained

that delayed installation could potentially delay completion of the first stage of the project. This was noted as a risk to the current timetable.		
• Visual Arts – tender documentation issued to shortlisted contractors. Mid tender review with building contractors scheduled for Wednesday 22 January 2014. Three of the original shortlisted contractors withdrew from the process at the offset. Two new building contractors have been selected from the long list and they have confirmed that they will submit tenders. The tender return date has been extended to 14 February 2014. It was confirmed that a report was planned for the March Board meeting, but was dependent on tenders received and reviewed at that date.	ED: CPE	6 Mar 2014
• Studio Schools – plans for refurbishment of Chesterfield Road have been costed. The building refurbishment is within the £599,090 plus VAT budget, and Kiers have confirmed delivery. Total Studio School funding of £1,115,907 plus VAT including allocations for ICT and furniture, fittings and equipment is to be allocated subject to EFA approval. Planning permission has been obtained to remove the trees at the front of the building. Work is scheduled for completion by 1 September 2014. However, it should be noted that the timetable is very tight to complete. Draft Heads of Terms for the Studio School were approved by the Corporation Board on 21 November 2013. A lease is in preparation and is targeted to be completed shortly. It was noted that all documents are with the EFA to finalise. Members were advised that, unfortunately, the lease could not be completed and available for review at the time of this meeting and, as a consequence, the recommendation was made to give delegated authority to the Principal to enter into a lease agreement. It was confirmed that the lease was expected any time. It was acknowledged that the lease was discussed in detail at a prior Board meeting. Members were happy to give delegated authority, subject to the caveat that any significant changes in the Heads of Terms be brought to their attention.		
Governors all acknowledged that a number of timetable risks had been brought to their attention today. They requested that a risk report be provided to the next meeting of the Finance Committee.	ED:CPE	27.2.14
AGREED: a) To note the update provided. b) To provide delegated authority to the Principal to enter into a lease agreement for Chesterfield Road and its use by Vision Studio School.		
In discussing the Chesterfield Road lease, it was acknowledged that use of the building is restricted to provision of education and, on that basis, there is some protection provided in the unlikely event that the Secretary of State chooses to sub-let to some other organisation.		

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14.08 FINANCE REPORT DECEMBER 2013

The Director of Finance introduced this item and explained that the current top line position is very much influenced by VWS and because of this it is important to strip out this line to better understand the 'old' College performance.

Members` attention was drawn to the detailed report and the following was noted:

- The financial performance for the College and Group remains significantly affected by the trading performance of Vision Workforce Skills, as the task of rebuilding the business is taking longer than expected and incurring greater losses than planned.
- Excluding the result of VWS, the College Group (old) has generated an operating surplus before interest and depreciation of £677k for the first five months of the year. This compares to the budget of £1,003k and the prior year result of £408k.
- The old Group position is being driven by the poor performance of Work Place Learning within the College, which is £898k behind budget. This is partly offset by the continued strong performance of bksb, which generated a £521k surplus before depreciation. Including VWS, the College Group result before interest and depreciation is a loss of £1,552k, with the VWS loss of £2,284k in the five months to date.
- The College has generated a surplus of £124k before interest and depreciation in the year to date, which is below the £600k budget, but an improvement on the prior year loss of £353k.
- As reported to the Board previously, this is primarily as a result of the performance of the Work Placed Learning School and the softening of margins within franchising (approximately £240k lower than expected for the year to date), a secondary factor is the weaker than expected performance by two of the Schools of Learning.
- Financial review is on-going within the school of Business and Continuing Education in order to understand the appropriate course of action and changes required.
- College income was £2.516m worse than budgeted at £22.342m for the year to date. The main adverse variance being 16-18 apprentices which underperformed by £3.269m generating only £2.516m of income. College own delivery has improved and is now just above phased budget at £704k. The main problem being VWS which has delivered only £398k compared to a phased target of £3.185m.
- The SFA has produced the funding submission software and it appears to be materially accurate although there are still some issues. It is expected these will gradually be removed over time.
- The adult skills budget income exceeded budget by £808k. This, however, was due to partner adult learner responsive activity, which had a favourable variance of £1.145m at £1.541m, though this is not a key target area and is unlikely to be able to be sustained with any additional contract allocation for the year. Overall adult learner responsive income at £3.250m is£1.939m above phased budget. NVQ

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activity delivered by the college at £146k is substantially below the year to date budget of £1.085m.

- There were also adverse variances within HE income, £64k, other funding council income £84k and other income £99k. The ESF NEET programme which was performing better than anticipated in the early part of the current financial year has now ended although is replaced with a new programme.
- Pay costs were £317k below budget due to good cost control within administration and central services, where there was a £652k favourable variance, which covered the budgeted pay saving of £405k. This, however, incorporates the release of the contingency budget. Overall teaching staff (teaching staff and sessional teaching staff) was just above budget at £4.834m. Work Placed Learning, however, in spite of an underperformance on income, overspent by £145k on teaching costs.
- Non-pay costs are better than budget by £1.821m as a result of a favourable variance on franchise provision costs of £1.933m. Excluding franchise costs, non-pay is £112k worse than planned, the main overspend being in teaching (£84k adverse, but improving), administration and central services (£214k adverse), Exams (£79k adverse) and premises costs which in total are £107k overspent.
- The most significant favourable variance is other support where support funds have been spent more slowly than expected.
- Most Schools of Learning are now showing favourable variances, notably Academic, Public Services & Sport Studies which has a £182k favourable variance with a 46% contribution.
- Of concern are: the 27.0% contribution made by Business Professional & Continuing Education, £68k below budget and the 26.0% contribution of Lifestyle Academy. All other Schools of Learning made contributions between 27.5% and 35%.
- Vision Workforce Skills performance continues to be substantially behind budget (a loss of £2.289m) mainly as a result of the lower than planned 16-18 apprentice income, whilst fixed costs retained to deliver these courses remain high (electricity, gas, rent and rates were £1.179m after dowry release related to these items).
- The company is developing alternative income streams, predominantly adult focused and in the workplace. These courses deliver much lower income per assessor hour and do not require the majority of the fixed cost infrastructure it was originally planned to retain.
- As part of this process the Company has elected not to retain the Croydon site and moved activity to Romford which had previously been mothballed.
- bksb continues to perform well as a result of consistent growth and strong cost control. The surplus for the year to date at £501k is £130k above plan.
- Total Income at £1,036k is £53k below plan as a result of renewals being £99k behind plan and new business £38k above plan.
- Direct costs are at £630k are £129k lower than expected and head office costs £53k better.

- Vision Apprentices has made a £32k surplus, £19k better than plan due to the release of bad debt provision for the Charnwood debts which have now been paid.
- The Balance Sheet includes borrowing associated with the new build programme with a total value of £13.5 million as at the end of December 2013, a draw-down of £5m since last financial year end. This has incurred interest costs of £215k in the first five months of the year.
- Group short term solvency has improved from year end (by £ 2.166m) as a result of the financing drawn down of £5m and recognition of £1.503m of deferred capital grants more than off-setting the capital expenditure of £2.407m and group loses for the year to date of £1.552m.
- Cash balances excluding VWS are at £14.304m and are £7.586m higher than forecast.
- Cash balances for the group at £14.672m are higher than forecast by £7.954m) mainly as a result of funds received from funding councils on profile but not yet earned. The Group now has £18.682m of accrued liabilities and deferred income on the balance sheet, an increase of £2.297m from year end.

In response to a number of questions, the following was clarified:

- All capital funding is hedged, therefore, there are no interest rate risks.
- The College has approximately 25,000 – 30,000 Students at any one time and of these 5000 are full time with the rest predominantly part time and often in work.
- The College is looking at redundancies in the Work Based Learning department. These are separate and distinct from VWS staff.
- The Director of Finance confirmed that the March Board meeting will have a mid year reforecast and that the draft of this would be presented to the Finance & Estates Committee meeting in February. The Director of Finance gave some assurance that no significant further 'shocks' are expected, or major differences seen as a result of the SFA funding software resolution.

AGREED: to note the content of the update provided.

14.09 **<u>24+ ADVANCED LEARNER LOANS UPDATE</u>**

The Director of Finance introduced this item and confirmed that following the introduction of the advanced learner loan facility in September 2014 the Board requested an initial evaluation of the impact on the programme, particularly in terms of the volumes of learners, any adverse impact on participation and the number of enrolments and funding earned compared to planning assumptions. He confirmed that analysis can now be presented on the number of learners who have now enrolled on all funded courses by subject area, with a comparison to the number of enrolments for similar age students in the year preceding the new policy introduction.

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Key points drawn to members` attention were:

- The risk identified when introducing the new policy has materialised. Both numbers and the financial contribution was down. However, this has to be taken in the context that it is only a small cohort.
- The College has attracted 173 qualifying learners for the advanced learner loan, generating tuition fee income of £331,734 for the 2013/14 financial year.
- A direct comparison for the 2012/13 financial year indicates that, for learners who would have qualified for the adult learner loan, the College had 467 enrolments, and income through a combination of public subsidy and tuition fees of £752,299. This represents a 63% fall in enrolments and a 56% fall in College income.
- As the biggest provider of Adult Level 3 courses, the Access to HE programme has been impacted the most from the changes of the source of funding for the over 23 year olds coming into College. Enrolments have fallen from 76 last year to 57 this year and income reducing by over £85k. The larger proportional fall in income results from the College's previous co-funded policy where students paid £350 towards their course of study.
- Childcare has also seen a significant fall off in enrolments with 17 compared to 103 in 2012/13, with a subsequent fall in funding from £103k to £34k. However, further enrolments are anticipated in the remainder of the year, although the impact of funding is still likely to be in the region of 50%.
- It is worthy of note that the over 23 year olds impacted by the policy are not enrolling for `A`Level programmes as they did in the past. It is now likely that adult learners impacted by ALL would steer away from `A` Levels as part of the leisure learning, as the cost would be prohibitive and focus on access courses with a direct destination impact.
- In 2013/14 the College has had no over 23 year old adult learners enrolled to Level 3 Art & Design courses at all. In 2012/13 we received 13 enrolments and £28k of co-funded income.
- Beauty Therapy has experienced a similar impact in 2013/14 with only four enrolments compared to 54 in the 2012/13 year. Industry requirements for qualifications at certain levels appear to be having an impact on the basis upon which students make decisions about the value to themselves as individuals with the attachment of a long-term loan. If a Level 2 qualification is what the industry needs, then students facing the prospect of ALL funding are appearing to reject further learning.
- The ALL system must be put in the context with the rest of the eligibility of public support for young people and adults across the community cohort.
- Learners receive fully funded training at all levels up to the age of 18 and adults up to the age of 23 receive either fully funded training or co-funded training depending on the level of course and their educational attainment. Adults over the age of 23 are eligible for some educational funding up to Level 2 courses dependent on

individual circumstances, including economic and educational attainment.

- The advanced learner loan system affects a relatively small cohort of students but the impact, as evidenced from the data, appears to be driving behaviour which ultimately results in fewer people attaining higher levels of skills.
- Now that the system has been established and reductions in public spending are still required, there will inevitably be a temptation for ministers and officials to seek to extend the loan system, either by level or age, which is likely to present learners with difficult choices.
- So as a College serving our community what can we do to support learners who are impacted by the loan system? Fundamentally the answer lies in the demonstrable impact of the courses of study that are offered, not just in terms of the qualification, but what the qualification experience on the course can help students to achieve. We must convince individuals of the impact of the burden that they are being asked to take on, by ensuring that we can evidence what our courses have enabled students to achieve.

In general discussion it was felt that there was real merit in looking to provide courses at a more affordable level, quite simply as Learners have shown that they are not comfortable taking on debt.

The current impact is that the College is slightly under the budgeted position. However, it was acknowledged that the budget anticipated a significant drop in contribution from this area. It was acknowledged that it was unlikely that these loans would have an impact on HE numbers, as there is already the culture of loans in this particular environment.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

(John Robinson left the meeting at 6.05 pm).

14.10 **<u>INCREASED SHARE CAPITAL</u>**

The Director of Finance introduced his report and confirmed that the paper sets out a request to the Board to increase the current share capital within the subsidiary company balance sheets for Vision Workforce Skills and Vision Apprentices Ltd, from the current level of £1 to a value of £25k, in line with early recommendations made by the College's advisors in relation to bksb.

He explained that for all College subsidiary companies, annual taxable profits are returned to the College in the form of a gift aid payment in order to avoid any corporation tax liability being levied. As a result of the clearance of all accumulated profits that would otherwise be liable to corporation tax each year, the Company's reserves do not build up in such a way as would be expected in a company without such an arrangement in place. The removal of taxable profits results in a balance sheet at the end of the year, which on the face of it appears to be weak

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	and which could, in turn, impact upon the perception of the financial strength of the company. In addition, in some years, taxable profits may be higher than accounting profits due to allowable and disallowable expenses, which can cause an insolvent balance sheet. This then requires a letter of support from the Company owners (the College), which has been necessary in the 2012/13 financial year, and was frequently required for bksb before the share capital was increased in the 2009/10 financial year. At the end of the 2009 year, the College commissioned a review of this problem for its subsidiary companies at the time and sought advice for an appropriate solution. KPMG carried out this work and suggested that the simplest method for ensuring that the Company balance sheet does not appear to be insolvent is to increase the value of allotted share capital. He explained that the current authorised share capital for Vision Workforce Skills Ltd (VWS) is £100 with £100 allotted called up and fully paid. Vision Apprentices Ltd (VA) has £10,000 authorised and £2 allotted, called up and fully paid. For VWS and VA the authorised share capital will require increase through a Company Board resolution (within each Company's Governance arrangements), and the allotting of these shares will be minuted at the same time. Any additional allotted shares will not be fully paid but result in a balance sheet debtor from the College to the Shareholder. All shares will be held by the College. He explained that the increase in allotted share capital would provide greater assurance that, a) sufficient allotted share capital exists within the balance sheet to prevent an apparent insolvent position at the end of each financial year, b) there will be no requirement for a letter of support from the College Board, and c) allotted shares can be issued to the College as Shareholder. The Director of Finance explained that the current request had come about because of some concern from Vision Apprentice Directors, and that what was proposed is a very practical solution to a problem experienced previously. The Board all agreed that it was a practical solution that was required. AGREED: a) To increase the allotted share capital for each subsidiary to £25,000 to West Nottinghamshire College.		
	b) To request that the Company Secretary inform Companies House of the change, using form SH01 as applicable.	Company Secretary	Feb 2014
14.11	**<u>STUDIO SCHOOL UPDATE</u>**		
	The Deputy Principal introduced this item and summarised the current position:		

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- Studio School has appointed its legal representatives. This was a key element before finalisation of the funding agreement.
- Sections of the Education Brief have been updated for inclusion and were reviewed.
- Both the Education Working Group and the Stakeholder Reference Group, which includes employer representation, are set up and both are looking at developments for the Studio School.
- The curriculum at both Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 will be developed focussing on educational provision both at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, and core subjects at Key Stage 4.
- The first project development day will take place this term.
- ICT needs are being looked at to support the students` curriculum development.
- The staffing model is being looked at in more detail with a view to advertising posts in the spring term. Regular weekly meetings have been assigned to finalise and then develop job descriptions and adverts.
- Employer meetings continue with possible new employers as the team look to expand the employer network.
- Legal – Freeth Cartwright have now been appointed as the Studio School's legal advisors for an initial period up to the opening.
- Governance – the project plan had anticipated the appointment of Governors to the Board by the end of 2013 calendar year. However, this has not been achieved, but now will be pursued as a matter of urgency in order to put in place independent Governors to support the Principal Designate in the review and acceptance of the lease and funding agreements. It was noted that, to date, three employers have been approached.
- Learner Engagement – it was confirmed that, as of this morning, the Studio School has received 86 applications, 40 for Year 10 and 46 for Year 12. In addition to this, three applications have been received for a 2015 start.
- Finance – the Studio School is required to submit two financial models, the first is a) full capacity, and b) 75 students. Given that applications are already 86, there is confidence that the Studio School will be given the go ahead to open.
- 14 February is the notional deadline date for the close of applications, after this time the team can confirm viability (+75) and confirm places.

All agreed that this initiative was progressing well.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

14.12 **QUALITY REPORT**

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and drew members` attention to an update provided in relation to observation in Teaching and Learning. In relation to the policy and procedures, she reminded governors that the key elements remain unchanged and all staff will have

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a no notice ungraded observation and feedback from this will form the basis of development plan for improvement. All staff will then have a second graded observation, the notice period for this is notification on a Thursday morning of an observation for the following week, this reflects a similar notice period as in an Ofsted inspection.		
Members were advised that amendments were made to the 2012/13 policy which included two key amendments, ie, any reobservation of a Grade 3 or Grade 4 session to be carried out by joint observation, a clear link between a second Grade 3 or 4 observation and the College capability procedure and higher education sessions to be observed jointly if the allocator observed is not a HE practitioner.		
It was noted that as at 8 January 2014 238 ungraded observations have been completed in relation to on-campus provision, and as at 16 January 2014, 26 graded observations have been completed for on campus provision and 42 within partner provision.		
Members` attention was drawn to the table at section 2.6, where it was noted that 81% of on campus observations were graded good or better, but only 69% of the observations within partners were good or better. Governors all agreed that the partner percentage was very concerning.		
It was explained that the College's Teaching, Learning and Assessment policy also includes themed observations, and to date 355 staff have been reviewed over 26 themes. There has been a significant benefit to these themed observations as they are providing an ongoing view of teaching and learning in contrast to the single point of time-graded observations.		
In terms of external validation of observations, in October 2013 a practising Ofsted Inspector was engaged to conduct graded observations, which validates the College process, provides staff with supportive feedback and gives clear guidelines on how to improve sessions. In 2012/13 a team of observers were engaged to carry out joint observations, this was a company called CLICK and which provide a mini inspection in each area. For the remainder of 2013/14 a similar exercise is to be completed in Hair & Beauty and a future report will be provided in relation to this.	Deputy Principal (PH)	May 2014
Wider Learning Observation Policy 2013/14 – some aspects of the wider learning are currently facilitated by support staff who are not qualified as teachers. The majority of these staff will deliver one off sessions, eg, how to research effectively in the Learner Resource Centre, others would do this on a more regular basis. It is now clear that Ofsted observe learning wherever it takes place and, as a consequence, it has been deemed appropriate to observe these sessions as they form part of the study programme.		
The wider learning observation policy for 2013/14 outlines the procedures, these observations will be ungraded during 2013/14 and staff		

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will receive feedback highlighting areas of strengths and weakness and areas for development.

Curriculum review – Members were advised that a new process of curriculum review has been devised in 2013/14. The review process is completed at curriculum area rather than school level, ensuring a closer focus on a smaller area of provision during each review. Members` attention was drawn to section 5.4 and 5.5 which details emerging issues and action identified to bring about improvements.

It was confirmed that the College Quality Improvement Plan, QIP, was produced taking into account the key cross College areas for improvement. Progress has been made against all actions outlined within the QIP and the detailed report is a standing agenda item at the Standards Committee meetings.

In general discussion, members asked what the response from staff and unions was in relation to the observation process. It was confirmed that positive responses have been received as the process gives great clarity and transparency.

In relation to the concerns raised regarding partner observations, it was confirmed that Learning Consultants are working with them to support and thats. It was noted that the College currently has about 60 partners and assurance was given that if there are any performance concerns, then there are in year impacts, which include stopping or reducing further enrolments.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

14.13 EXCEPTION REPORT – SAFEGUARDING, EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The Deputy Principal introduced this item and drew members` attention to the content of the report, which was self-explanatory. Governors questioned the current status in relation to the allegation of bullying in College notified to them at the end of the last calendar year. It was explained that this case is now in the hands of solicitors and it is envisaged that it will be resolved very shortly. In terms of process, it was confirmed that Diana Meale has met with the complainant in this instance. It was agreed that a further report would be provided to the April meeting.	Deputy Principal (PH)	April 2014

Governors noted that there had been a small fire in a laundry room last week. It was acknowledged that a speedy response by staff had prevented escalation of the incident.

AGREED: to note the update provided.

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14.14 **AOB**

There were no items of additional business.

14.15 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for 6 March 2014 at 5.00 pm.

14.16 **CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**

It was agreed that confidential items would be recorded separately.

Staff and students left the meeting at 6.45 pm.

Meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Signed : ____________________________Chair Date: