



Minutes of the Meeting of the CORPORATION

held in the Boardroom, Fawcett Building
Willesden Campus
at 5.30pm on Wednesday, 10th February 2016

Present: Judith Williams (Chair)
Jan Knight (Vice-Chair)
Vineeta Manchanda (vice-Chair)
Andy Cole
Martina Porter
Peter Child
Tony Johnston
Mick Gallagher
Diane Kennedy
Priscilla Angelique-Page
Berta Martinez
Donald Palmer

Present [12 of 16]
[75%]

Vacancies [0]

In Attendance: Fiona Chalk, Clerk to the Corporation
Bob Deed, Interim Vice-Principal (Finance & Resources)
Ray Shilling, Assistant Principal (Enterprise and Employment)
Mike Welsh, Vice-Principal (Curriculum, Teaching and Quality)
Anna Openshaw-Lawrence, Vice-Principal (People and Planning)
Grethe Woodward, Assistant Principal

15/073 A1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (A1)

Apologies for absence were received from Tracey Connage, Jeff Lee, Abdul and Najma. Introductions were made and new members were welcomed.

15/074 A2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (A2)

Tony Johnston and Martina Porter declared an interest in item B5 Partnership Reporting.

15/075 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (A3)

It was resolved that the following minutes be approved: Corporation minutes of 16 December 2015 (including confidential), and Special Corporation meeting of 16 January 2016.

15/76 MATTERS ARISING (A4)

Student Support KPIs. The report by Ben Humpage which details the DPIs being used to measure headline performance in each individual support area, was noted. The Chair advised she had some questions on the report and would email the college for answers.

Chair to Action

15/077 STRATEGIC COLLABORATIONS AND AREA REVIEWS (B1)

See confidential Minute.

15/078 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS (B2)

The Management Accounts to 31st December 2015 were noted, key points being:

- (i) Operating surplus of £503k against a year to date budget of £1.1m
- (ii) ASB funding contract is 60% met – this is a considerable shortfall
- (iii) Agency costs are £201K above target but support staff costs are down by £151k
- (iv) Permanent staff costs are below target (55% of costs against 62% budget)
- (v) Non pay expenditure is £143k above year to date budget.
- (vi) Budget Outturn is 1.64
- (vii) Cash days in hand 314 against budget of 330
- (viii) Cash balance is £7.4m but includes £1.7m payable to SFA
- (ix) Software licenses are above budget as haven't been able to be reduced as anticipated
- (x) Partnership subcontracting costs are up by £277k due to costs increased use
- (xi) Mid-year review will be sent to the SFA by the end of February
- (xii) Re-allocation of funds between budgets is being agreed

Members expressed concern over the shortfall in the ASB budget and asked where the gaps are. Members were advised that over the last 3 years, the ASB budget has not been met, even though it has been reduced through the planning process and a pessimistic view point has been taken. This is largely due to a change in behaviour of adult learners as a result of the 24+ loans. Historically, London colleges have been strong on delivering ASB but collectively, London is now failing to meet these targets. Demand is suppressed because of the perception that you have to take out a loan – students aren't even enquiring about courses, although loans are not required for all courses. Members suggested the marketing message needs to be stronger to give clarity and the cut in the marketing budget could be having a negative effect on recruitment numbers, therefore this budget needs to be revisited. Member also expressed concern that the website is not competitive – it was noted that this is now being improved by external experts. One key area showing a drop in numbers is IT.

It was resolved that a report be submitted to the next Corporation meeting showing where shortfalls in numbers are occurring.

GW to action

FEES POLICY (B2ii)

The Fee Policy was noted. Members asked if students receive a refund if they leave after one term. It was advised that currently they do not, however under the loan scheme, they would. It was

requested by members that the next report of Fees should be more comprehensive to show comparisons to other institutions.

It was resolved that the Fee Policy, incorporating a recommended 1% increase on last year's fees, by approved.

Clerk to Action

15/079 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT – SAR AND QIP (B3)

Members noted the reports that are usually provided in December but are later due to Ofsted. It was noted that the new structure of the report and that it has been aligned to the new CIF. The full report is available on the Governors portal.

It was resolved that the key judgements, subject sector grades, key strengths and areas for improvement for 2015/16 be approved. The report will be posted on the SFA portal

MW to Action

15/080 PROPERTY STRATEGY UPDATE [B4]

Members noted that the final draft of the FE Capital Funding Agreement from the LEP has been received and will be signed off this week. This gives the college £6.5m from the London Enterprise Panel, assigned for the new build. VM and PC were on a panel to appoint a multi-disciplinary team to carry this project forward. Tibbalds CampbellReith have been appointed.

15/081 PARTNERSHIP REPORTING [B5]

Members noted the contents of report and the Subcontract and Partnership Strategy. It was noted that a recent Audit of this area had taken place and this provision was deemed Satisfactory. It was noted that this area is a strong area and is growing, with the SFA asking the college to partner some providers where previous partnerships have not worked out.

It was resolved that the Subcontract and Partnership Strategy be approved, that new contracts be entered into for Ensis Solutions and Cute Dog Consulting and that a review of the funding allocation be reviewed with a view to asking for a request for growth based on estimated funding from period 7 to 12.

RS to Action

15/082 WINTER CONFERENCE FEEDBACK [C1i]

The Chair thanked all members who have carried through with their actions arising from the Conference, particularly the ambassadorial role for governors, meeting with students and staff, improving social media etc. It was suggested that governors make themselves available in Starbucks when they are in the college and continue to develop their ambassadorial role through their outside networks to promote the college and generate income. The particular contribution by the student governors was noted and much appreciated.

It was resolved that MG will give a briefing to the next meeting on 'Governors as Ambassadors'.

MG/JK/Clerk to Action

15/083 CURRICULUM VISITS

Members visit reports and actions were noted.

15/084 REVIEW OF THE INSTRUMENTS AND ARTICLES [C2i]

Members noted that following the 'in principle' decision at a previous meeting to amend that Articles to allow the authority to dismiss be delegated to Senior Managers (as opposed to just designated Senior Postholders), AOL has consulted with the Trade Unions, staff and managers. The reasons for this action were noted, namely the decision by the Corporation last year to phase out the appointment of designated Senior Postholders and therefore the difficulty faced by

management when dismissing staff, in view of the lesser number of people currently holding these posts.

The key point made by the Trade Unions was that ideally the person hearing the potential dismissal, should not have overall responsibility for the area where the person works. Currently this is not possible as there are only 2 persons available, therefore this amendment to the Articles will help to address this concern.

It was resolved that point 11 of the Articles be amended to include: ‘the Principal may delegate his/her power to dismiss a member of a staff to any holder of a designated Corporation Senior Postholder or any member of Senior Management’. The Disciplinary Procedure will be amended to reflect this change the addition of the wording ‘Wherever possible, the Chair of the hearing where dismissal might be an outcome, should not have overall responsibility for the area in which the employee is employed’.

Clerk/AOL to Action

15/085 STANDING ORDER AMENDMENTS [C2ii]

Further to recent amendments to the Instrument and Articles, members noted changes to the Standing Orders to bring them into line with these changes.

It was resolved these amendments be approved.

Clerk to Action

15/086 REVIEW OF THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE [C2iii]

Members noted the report and its recommendation for the Corporation to consider a return to a Committee structure as opposed to the Unitary structure it currently has in place. It was noted that previously there had been a lack of skills at Committee level to ensure adequate scrutiny. Targeted recruitment over the past 12 months has addressed this issue. The Corporation also acknowledged the extra time now needed at Board level over strategic issues, area reviews and property strategy, thereby not leaving adequate time for discussion on other issues. It was noted that by operating committees, members have the opportunity to focus on a particular area to gain further knowledge and give significant challenge and support to the Executive in those areas.

It was resolved that the governance structure revert to a committee structure from September 2016. The Clerk was asked to revisit the presented committee remit to ensure all areas are adequately placed and to present a meeting schedule for 2016/17 at the May Corporation meeting. Members are to contact the Clerk advising of any particular areas they wish to engage in.

Governors/Clerk to Action

15/087 GOVERNOR APPRIASALS [C2iv]

Members noted that Paul Butler, National Leader of Governance, has been asked to undertake work for the Board, continuing its theme of Effective Governance. This work is fully funded by the Education and Training Foundation and will involve Governor appraisals (similar to those undertaken by Jan and Judith last year) and a review of the skills, training needs and areas of expertise of the Board in order that members can make the most effective contribution to the college. A report of the findings will be submitted to the summer conference for consideration.

It was resolved that Paul Butler contact Vineeta and Donald for an appraisal and all other governors for skills/training review.

Clerk/Governors to Action

15/088 OFSTED FINAL REPORT [C3]

The final report’s grading of ‘Good’ was noted and members expressed their thanks to the Executive for their efforts.

15/089 DECLARATION OF BUSINESS TO BE TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL (E1)

Item B1 Strategic Collaboration/Area Review, item F1 Vice-Principal Finance and Item F2 External Auditors are deemed confidential

15/090 FUTURE BRIEFING REQUESTS [E2]

It was resolved to have briefings on Governors as Ambassadors and National Colleges/HE.

15/091 EVALUATION REPORTS [E3]

Members to complete.

15/092 UPDATE ON VICE-PRINCIPAL FINANCE RECRUITMENT [F1]

See confidential minute.

15/093 EXTERNAL AUDITORS [F2]

See confidential minute.

15/094 AOB

Members noted Jeff Lee’s term of office expires in March. Due to work commitments, it was noted that Jeff can no longer attend all the meetings but wishes to remain in contact with and make contribution to the college. It was proposed Jeff be co-opted to the Board as an Apprenticeship advisor, possibly through the Curriculum committee.

It was resolved to appoint Jeff Lee as a co-opted member to the Corporation as an Apprenticeship advisor, from March 2016.

CLERK TO ACTION

Members were asked to support anyway they can, the Senior Management who are very stretched currently as a result of the Area Reviews and Strategic discussions.

15/095 DATE & TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Corporation meeting on Wednesday 23rd March at 5.00 p.m. for briefing and 5.30 p.m. meeting commencement.

Signed:

Date:.....