

NOTTINGHAM COLLEGE

CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2019

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|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Present: | Carole Thorogood (Chair) |) | |
| | Mary Carswell |) | |
| | Philip Crompton |) | |
| | Andrew Dickinson |) | External governors |
| | Jonathan Hawley |) | |
| | Andrew Unitt |) | |
| | Michael Wisher |) | |
| | John van de Laarschot |) | Chief Executive Officer |
| | Becki Pate |) | Staff governor |
| | Liam Perkins |) | Staff governor |
| Shauna Hipkiss |) | Student governor | |

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| In attendance: | Ian James | Clerk to the Corporation |
| | Philip Briscoe | Principal (Curriculum & Education) |
| | Jo Clifford | Principal (Finance) |
| | James Whybrow | VP Partnerships, Apprenticeships & Enterprise |
| | Tom Dick | Executive Director Curriculum Delivery & Development |
| | Lauren Waters | Interim Executive Director Academic, Adult & Quality |
| | Zoe Butler | Director of Customer Experience |
| | Karen Sanders | Interim Director of OD/HR |

PART 1

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

74 Apologies were received from Anja Beriro, Richard Donovan, Michael Green and Neghat Khan. The Chair reported that, due to changes in her work circumstances, Melanie Pope had tendered her resignation from the Board.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

75 There were no declarations of interest.

MINUTES

76 **Resolved** that the minutes (Part 1) of the meeting held on 14 October 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair

SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT & QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

77 At their away day, held immediately prior to this Board meeting, the governors had conducted a review of the draft Self Assessment Report & Quality Improvement Plan. A number of amendments had been requested and noted for inclusion in the final version of the documents.

78 Attention was drawn to the year on year trends reported for each faculty area where some had improved since 2017/18 and others had declined. To an extent, the grades had been affected by the revised approach to inspection in the latest Education Inspection Framework but management were satisfied that the grades were accurate.

79 The Chair enquired in particular about the 'A' level provision where achievement levels had been satisfactory but retention had been poor and she asked for one of the Board's pre-meeting spotlight sessions to focus on this issue.

80 A governor asked whether the management was confident that the QIP would be effective in improving the overall self-assessed grade from 3 to 2 and was assured (by the Principal of Curriculum and Learning) that the action plan and performance improvement measures were designed to that end.

81 The staff governor asked whether additional resources were being made available to support the QIP and it was acknowledged that there were some key areas for attention in terms of continued development of IT infrastructure and recruitment of teaching staff in some curriculum areas. These would need to be prioritised carefully against the financial position of the College.

82 **Resolved** that, subject to the amendments requested by the Board, the Self Assessment Report & Quality Improvement Plan be approved

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS POST INDUSTRIAL ACTION

83 The Board received a report setting out the recovery plans for Faculty/Faculty Areas to address the impact of the recent industrial action and to minimise the disruption to the student experience. The student governor had asked what support could be provided for students to mitigate the effects of the strike action taken by some teaching staff.

84 The report set out the extent of lost hours in each Faculty/Faculty Area together with the estimated costs of recovery totalling £87k although it was explained that there may be additional costs in terms of sessional staff, non-pay costs in the exercise of catching up on missed teaching, learning and assessment. A contingency had been allowed for such expenditure.

85 A detailed account was provided of the actions proposed in each area to recover lost time and to support students with their studies. This included changing the Functional Skills awarding body to City & Guilds which provided a more flexible and responsive approach to examinations. In discussion, the governors asked for the following to be considered:

- Whether the examination boards would regard the impact of the strike action on students as a 'special consideration' for which some allowance could be made
- What allowance might be made by UCAS in terms of university entrance requirements

86 Governors asked how the success of the proposed measures would be monitored and were advised that this would be scrutinized at weekly meetings with Heads of Faculty. A query was raised as to the effect of the industrial action on retention of students and this would be clarified in the next two weeks. The Board asked for update reports at each meeting so that they could monitor progress.

87 The staff governor queried the impact of the recovery plans on the workloads of teaching staff and an assurance was given that such staff would not be asked to work beyond the hours in the workload agreement. Attention was drawn to the fact that there were fewer students than the College had planned and staffed for and therefore some flexibility in terms of staff deployment should be achievable. A timetabling panel was due to be established soon at which UCU would be represented.

88 **Resolved** that the Faculty/Faculty Area recovery plans be endorsed

ESFA FINANCIAL PLAN ASSESSMENT

89 The Board received the ESFA's response to the College's financial plans submitted in July 2019. The College's self-assessed financial health assessments had been agreed by the ESFA and these were 'Good' for the 2018/19 financial outturn and 'Requires Improvement' for 2019/20. The latter grading was caused by the College's gearing related to the level of debt. Nevertheless, this was a positive outcome in terms of the ESFA's response.

90 Asked at what point the disposal of properties became critical in terms of the College's cash position, the Principal (Finance) advised that a prudent view had been taken as to the timing of capital receipts and that there were no issues related to cash in the next 12 months. The timescales for sales were expected to be relatively short given that offers had been received for the properties currently being marketed. A more significant issue for the College's financial position was the savings to be made on running costs which were of the order of £500k per annum.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

4.30pm On Monday, 9 December 2019

Chair

Date