

NOTTINGHAM COLLEGE
CORPORATION MEETING

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2018

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| Present: | Carole Thorogood (Chair)) Anja Beriro) Mary Carswell) Trevor Clay) Andrew Dickinson) External governors Richard Donovan) Neghat Khan) Gill Lane) Andrew Unitt) Michael Wisher) John van de Laarschot Chief Executive Officer Becki Pate Staff governor |
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| In attendance: | Ian James Clerk to the Corporation Jo Clifford VP Finance James Whybrow VP Partnerships, Apprenticeships & Enterprise Tom Dick Executive Director Curriculum Delivery & Development Emma Woods Executive Director Academic, Adult & Quality Simon Kirby Director of Marketing and Communications Ffyona Baker Director of OD and HR |
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PART 1

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

75 Apologies were received from Liam Perkins, Eseose Okotako Zoe Butler Matthew Varley and Jane Peacock (ESFA).

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

76 There were no declarations of interest.

APPOINTMENT OF STUDENT GOVERNOR

77 **Resolved** that Helen Hopkinson be appointed as a student governor for a term of office lasting until 31 July 2019

MINUTES

78 **Resolved** that the minutes (Part 1) of the meeting held on 1 October 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair noting that, in minute 56, the intention was for the student numbers mentioned to be attracted to enrol at the College

IT Issues

79 The Board had previously been made aware of issues affecting the College's IT networks and the adverse impact this was having on the work of both students and staff. In order to address these difficulties as quickly as possible, the College had engaged the services of a specialist, Peter Turner, as Interim Information Manager. Mr Turner used a PowerPoint presentation to provide an account of the current position of the College's IT provision, the improvements made so far and the work remaining to be completed.

80 The governors asked the reasons behind the current difficulties and were advised that this was partly a result of the merger but also due to some under-investment by the pre-merger colleges. A further query was the number of calls each day received by the IT Help Desk and this was not immediately available but would be notified to governors after the meeting.

MINUTES OF GOVERNANCE & SEARCH COMMITTEE

81 The minutes of the Governance & Search Committee held on 1 October 2018 were received for information together with the governors' attendance data for 2017/18. The Committee had also recommended the approval of a revised version of the Code of Conduct for Governors.

82 **Resolved** that the revised Code of Conduct for Governors be approved

POLICY REVIEWS

Public Value Statement

83 The Board received the Public Value Statement which was due for review and re-approval. The governors asked for the word 'many' to be deleted in the first line under the heading The College's Value to Business.

84 **Resolved** that, subject to the above change, the Public Value Statement be approved

STRATEGIC PLAN TASK & FINISH GROUP

85 The Board received a report on the work of the Group together with a document "Excellence in Education and Employment in Nottingham" for approval setting out the emerging strategic ambitions of the College. Some textual changes requested by the Vice-Chairs would be accommodated in the document.

86 The governors were minded to approve the document although they asked for the diverse nature of the College to be reflected more accurately in the photographs used and wherever possible for more emphasis to be placed on the students. It was noted that the job titles under the 'enablers' section would be removed from the external version of the document.

87 **Resolved** that, subject to amendment of the document to accommodate the comments made by governors, the strategic ambitions document Excellence in Education and Employment in Nottingham be approved

CURRICULUM & QUALITY REPORT

Achievement outcomes 2017/18

88 The Board received a report updating the latest student achievement data noting that, for classroom based provision, the overall achievement rate for 2017/18 was 84.1%, an improvement from 83.5% in 2016/17.

89 The overall achievement rate for apprenticeships showed a decline from 2016/17 mainly attributable to a fall in the performance of partner organisations. The Vice Principal Partnerships, Apprenticeships & Enterprise explained that there would be no new starts with partners this year as the College was absorbing the apprenticeship provision into direct College delivery which was at a higher level in terms of achievements.

90 Governors drew attention to the fall in achievement rates for A levels and asked for an explanation of this outcome. The Executive Director of Academic, Adult & Quality commented that this was an issue of retention rather than examination results which had in fact showed an improvement on the previous year.

Enrolment

91 Current direct College enrolments stood short of the funded target and College plan. Efforts were being concentrated around retaining as many students as possible and this was proving to be effective although some attrition before the ILR submission date was inevitable. There would be no financial impact in the current financial year from under-recruitment but the 2019/20 funding allocation would be affected. The Executive Director of Curriculum Delivery and Development advised that the income position in each faculty was being discussed with the faculty heads with a view to achieving the necessary expenditure reductions where there was under-recruitment.

92 The governors were concerned about the under-recruitment and asked whether the College collected data on the number of enquiries received compared to enrolments. This data was being gathered and would be reported to the Board together with data on the progression of students within the College. It was suggested that the enrolment process should be brought forward so that students could be offered conditional places as early as possible without waiting for an enrolment period just before the commencement of the academic year.

93 Recruitment to HE courses was currently below target and any under-recruitment in that area would have a financial impact this year. Recruitment to apprenticeships looked promising at this stage.

Higher Education

94 The Board received a report updating them on the College's successful application for registration as a higher education provider with the Office for Students (OfS), the regulatory body for HE in England. The College would be subject to the OfS regulations which were the same as for universities and consequently more challenging for FE colleges. The Association of Colleges were aware of this issue and were seeking to address it nationally.

95 The report also contained the disappointing outcome of the National Student Survey for HE which had been examined by the College down to course level so that interventions could be put in place. It was thought that the results could have affected the recruitment to courses as the survey outcomes were available in August. A new head of HE was now in place who was working on improvements to the provision including peer reviewing with other FE institutions and universities.

FINANCE

Management Accounts P2

96 The VP Finance presented the management accounts to 30 September 2018 which, at this early stage in the year, showed that the College was marginally ahead of budget with most income variations being accounted for by timing differences. One area of concern was HE fees which, while ahead of budget at present, would be affected by under-recruitment to courses this year.

97 Pay expenditure was in line with budget and it was noted that expenditure on sessional staff was significantly lower this year. Non-pay expenditure was also on track and the cash position was strong due to draw down of LEP funding in advance of expenditure on the City hub.

ESFA ASSURANCE REVIEW OF 2017/18

98 The Vice Principal (Finance) submitted a report on the outcome of the recent ESFA audit. While the final letter had not yet been received a clean audit was expected with no material financial consequences.

ESFA FINANCIAL PLAN ASSESSMENT

99 The Board received a report setting out the ESFA's assessment of the College's financial health following the submission of the Financial Plan in July detailing the financial forecast for 2017/18, the 2018/19 budget and the 2019/20 projected plan.

100 The ESFA's analysis assessed the College's financial health as Good for both 2017/18 and 2018/19 moving to Satisfactory in 2019/20 reflecting the College's commitments to the construction of the City Hub.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Meeting with UCU representatives

101 The Chair provided feedback on a recent useful meeting between herself with the CEO and the Vice-Chairs and representatives of UCU. A wide range of topics had been discussed including:

- IT issues
- enrolment process
- staff motivation
- the 'Love our Colleges' campaign
- the future of the College
- communication issues

102 A further meeting was to be planned for early 2019.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING - Monday, 26 November 2018 (governors away day)

Chair

Date