



HUDDERSFIELD NEW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

Corporation Meeting held on Thursday 8th December 2016 from 5.30pm.

Confirmed Minutes

Present: Ms L Summers (Chair), Mr J Dawson, Ms T Wright, Ms L Swinden, Mr K Webb, Mr I Barnett, Mr A Nelson, Ms H Haigh, Ms A Thompson, Ms K Fleming, Mr J Hood, Ms M Boryslawskij and Ms A Williams (93%)

In attendance: Mr P Kennedy and Mr A Shaw

Clerk: Mrs C Coupland

1. Apologies for Absence/ Declaration of Interests

Apologies of absence were submitted by Ms P McGuire.

Declarations of Interest were provided by Ms Haigh, Ms Wright and Mr Nelson for agenda item 10.

2. Minutes from Meeting held on 16th November 2016

Resolved:

- **That these be accepted as a true record of the meeting**

3. Matters arising

Horizon Scanning Report

The Clerk confirmed that all Governors had received the final version of the West Yorkshire Area Based Review Report.

Safeguarding Policy

The Clerk confirmed that all Governors had been issued the 'Keeping children safe in education part 1: Information for all school and college staff'. The Clerk thanked Governors for their prompt confirmation emails that they had indeed received and read it.

Finance and Resources: Pension related matters.

Mr Shaw presented his Horizon Scanning report to Governors. Mr Shaw explained in detail how the continued squeeze on public sector funding, turbulence in the financial market and in particular the pension related issues all continue to have some significant impacts on College costs.

Governors thanked Mr Shaw for the helpful update on the national financial climate. All present agreed that the F&R Committee are to be kept abreast of further financial developments and its impact on the college.

Resolved:

- **That the Financial Horizon Scanning Report be received.**
- **For the F&R Committee to continue to receive regular updates.**

4. Horizon Scanning Report.

The Clerk presented the horizon scanning report. Governors continue to agree that this is an efficient way of keeping abreast of local, regional and national developments which may have an impact on the academy conversion decision taken to date.

Ms Summers also advised the Corporation that the Principals and Chairs of the 3 local colleges are to continue to meet with the Local Authority; post Area Based Review. They have agreed that it would be useful for a collaborative horizon scanning session to take place in order to share intelligence and discuss broader issues that impact upon all three colleges. Ms Summers confirmed that this meeting is to be scheduled for the new year.

Resolved:

- **That the report be received.**

5. Self assessment Reviews 2015/16 and Quality Improvement Plans 2016/17.

i) Governance Self Assessment Review (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

The Clerk encapsulated the discussions had at the Search & Governance committee to justify the recommended self-assessment grade of a secure 'Outstanding. The Corporation remains confident that governance should again be assessed as Outstanding in respect of supporting and challenging the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the college as well as monitoring and reviewing the quality of the college's provisions in terms of student outcomes, teaching and learning. The Corporation also acknowledged that the effectiveness of the Governance arrangements had been externally tested and verified by the College's recent Ofsted Inspection which concluded, that "Governors take an effective lead in planning, and provide strong support and challenge to senior leaders to ensure that they maintain the drive for improvement". HMI Inspectors assessed 'Effectiveness of leadership and Management' as outstanding.

The Corporation supported the judgements within the self assessment review and agreed that robust evidence had been included within the SAR to demonstrate the rigour of the governance arrangements and to support the grade judgement reached.

The Corporation endorsed the Quality Improvement Plan as proposed by the Search & Governance Committee. All Governors were in agreement that the key areas for development had been identified in order to sustain outstanding governance going forward. Ms Summers drew Governors' attention to the development priority on succession planning. All present recognised the merits of creating on-going opportunities for continuous professional development in order to maximise on Governors' skill sets and experience. All Governors were therefore asked to express any interest in taking on roles with greater responsibility and leadership in the Corporation (e.g. Link Governors as well as Corporation and Committee Chair / Vice Chair positions) to the Clerk who could then organise shadowing opportunities and/or individualised CPD training schedules.

Resolved:

- **To assess Governance as Outstanding**
- **To approve the Governance Self Assessment Review and Quality Improvement Plan.**
- **For individual Governors to express interest in CPD opportunities to the Clerk.**

ii) College SAR and QIP

Following on from a healthy debate Governors were satisfied that the summary report provided a fair and accurate assessment of the current position of the college. The Corporation was confident that the self assessment grades for 2015/16 were a true reflection of the Colleges performance and that sufficient evidence had been incorporated into the report to support the headline assessments and grade profile summary.

The Corporation were satisfied that the areas identified for improvement within the overall Self assessment Report had been properly reflected in the Quality Improvement Plan for 2016/17. Governors agreed that the Quality Improvement Plan continues to be based on challenging targets to help sustain the areas of consistently good performance as well as continue to drive forward outcomes for learning in underperforming subject areas. The Corporation also agreed the development priorities highlighted within the QIP appropriately identify how the College is to ensure that the Linear A Levels and new BTEC qualifications are introduced successfully (Including appropriate enrolment to these courses) and that the entry criteria for 2017 and 2018 cohort is subject to review to take account of grading changes at Key Stage 4 in order to maintain the inclusive nature of the college.

Governors also considered the identified changes to the student profiles. It was noted there had been a steady decrease in the overall male student population from 50% male and 50% female in 2013/14 to 45% male and 55% female this current academic year. Ms Williams also drew governors' attention to the disclosed Learning Difficulties and Disability data. The figures at the census date show a steady decrease from 21% in 2013/14 to 16% this year. However, staff remain concerned that young people are potentially being left vulnerable upon enrolment given that obstacles to learning are still not being declared or information is not being shared by schools in a timely manner to ensure that appropriate support plans are in place and that resource and staffing implications are known in advance. It is therefore a growing concern for the college as to how best to manage the increasing number of students requiring special exam arrangements – this will need to be closely monitored and reviewed given the move to linearity.

Governors commended the senior management team on the robustness of the self assessment process at Huddersfield New College.

Resolved:

- **The Corporation approved the College Self-Assessment Report and endorsed the Self-Assessment Grades awarded for 2015/16**
- **The Corporation approved the College Quality Improvement Plan for 2016/17.**

6. Targets and Performance Measures.

Mr Kennedy reminded the Corporation that in autumn 2015 a discussion paper 'Addendum to Outcomes Report' was presented to Governors outlining the new performance measures that are

being introduced nationally, to be published (at least in part) in January 2017. Mr Kennedy explained that subsequent inspection and a review of target setting rationale suggests to the Senior Leadership Team that the use of success rate remains the key indicator of performance for Sixth Form Colleges. Especially considering that success rates continue to be focussed on throughout inspections as the key indicator to evaluate raw performance and the DfE via the Data Service continues to produce the National Achievement Rate Tables (NART) which ranks colleges according to retention, Achievement and Success Rates.

Governors agreed that to objectively assess the performance of the College - success rates are at present the best single indicators of performance, especially when taken together with Value Added indicators. It was therefore agreed appropriate for the Corporation to continue to set targets for raw performance based on success rates until such a time that they are not used by either OfSTED or the DfE to judge performance.

The proposed targets for 2017-19 were duly considered and subsequently approved by the Corporation. It was agreed however that the targets set must remain under continual review, as a clearer national performance picture and measures regime emerges.

Resolved:

- **That the proposed performance targets for 2017-19 be approved and transposed into the existing Strategic Plan.**

7. Audit Annual Report 2015/16

Mr Nelson (Chair of Audit Committee) advised the Corporation that the report is a summary of all the activities of the Audit Committee for the financial year 2015-2016 and covers all reports for that period.

The report confirms to the Corporation that the Committee's work has involved the consideration of detailed reports from the College's internal and external auditors, and has provided challenge, sought assurances and monitored progress. The focus of the report is on the main conclusions and issues arising from key documents.

Mr Nelson also advised the Corporation that it is the opinion of the committee, that the College has adequate and effective arrangements in place for risk management, control and governance, and for securing economy and effectiveness (value for money). Furthermore, based on the work of the Audit Committee during the year and the External Audit review, it is the members' opinion, that the Corporation's responsibilities, included in the financial statements have been satisfactorily discharged

Resolved:

- **That the report be received.**
- **For the signed Audit Committee Annual Report to be forwarded onto the EFA**

8. Financial Statements and Members Report

Governors were informed by Mr Nelson that the Financial Statement and Members Report to 31st July 2016 had been jointly considered by the members of the Finance and Resources and the Audit Committee. It was noted that the Auditors gave a clean report and it is recommended that

the Financial Statement is to be approved by the Corporation and that the Chair should sign the approved document before it is submitted to the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

Mr Shaw confirmed that the Annual Report and Financial Statements had also been reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team, before submitting to the full Corporation for approval. Key points of the report were brought to the Governors' attention including the full compliance corporate governance statement and the unqualified audit opinion from the external auditors.

The Corporation upon the advice from the committees and the Senior Leadership Team, was therefore satisfied that the college has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control, and has fulfilled its statutory responsibility for the 'effectiveness and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the body and the safeguarding of their assets'.

The Corporation wished to again record their thanks to Mr Shaw for his continued robust financial planning and control enabling the college to remain proactive in its response to external financial pressures and factors.

Resolved:

- **The Corporation approved the report and agreed for it to be forwarded onto the EFA**

9. Final Audit Findings Report and Management letters for Financial Statements and Regularity

Mr Nelson advised the Corporation that the Final Audit Findings Report (a further joint item with the F&R Committee) summarises Wylie & Bisset's key findings in connection with the audit of the financial statements of the College and the regularity audit of the College in respect of the year ended 31st July 2016.

As a result of work undertaken, unqualified audit opinions were received from Wylie & Bissett showing that:

In relation to the financial statements, they

- give a true and fair view of the state of the College's affairs as at 31 July 2016 and of the College's results for the year then ended and
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice and in accordance with the requirements of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and directions made thereunder by the Skills Funding Agency and the Education Funding Agency.

And that

- Proper accounting records have been kept; the work papers that were provided to Wylie & Bissett for their audit were reported to have been of a good standard and increased the efficiency of their audit testing.
- The financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records

In relation to Regularity, it is the opinion of the Auditors that the College's Statement of Regularity, Propriety and Compliance is fairly stated in respect of whether the transactions underlying the College's financial statements are in all material respects regular for the year ended 31 July 2016

The Corporation was satisfied that the audit approach adopted provided them with the required confidence that a thorough and robust audit had been carried out.

Resolved:

- **The Corporation approved the Final Audit Findings Report and agreed for it to be forwarded onto the EFA**
- **For the representation letters to be signed by the Chair of the Corporation and the Principal.**

10. Student Voice ‘What’s on top’

Mr Barnett informed the Corporation that elections for the Student Union President and Executive are to take place upon return from the Christmas break. Expressions of interest have already been submitted – an opportunity for all students to vote shall again take place during tutorials, given the success of last year’s elections.

Resolved:

- **That the report be received.**

11. Search & Governance Committee (meeting held on 4th November 2016)

Governors were briefed on the business of the Search & Governance Committee.

Ms Summers informed everyone that the policy approval route (appended to the Board’s Scheme of Delegation) had been updated to track the review cycle for each policy requiring committee or corporation approval. Furthermore, the Committee members had deemed it useful for the approval route to also include the review cycle for all executive reports presented to Committee and/or Corporation meetings throughout the academic year. The Corporation was also asked to note the Training and Development Programme agreed for 2016/17. The Clerk confirmed that copies of the updated policy approval route and the Training and Development Programme had been circulated to all Governors.

Ms Summers informed the Corporation that the revised Procedure for Removing a Governor from Office is recommended for approval by the Committee. Governors agreed that the procedure was transparent in its purpose and supported the Corporation should it ever need to remove a governor who acted contrary to the best interests of the College and/or the Corporation. The Corporation approved the appointment of Ms Drury as an External Governor for a period of up to 4 years and agreed it appropriate for her to continue to serve on the Remuneration Committee.

Mr Nelson, Ms Haigh and Ms Wright were asked to leave the meeting at this point.

As recommended by the Committee, the remaining Governors also approved the re-appointment of Mr Nelson, Ms Haigh and Ms Wright as External Governors for a second and final term of office for up to 4 years.

Mr Nelson Ms Haigh and Ms Wright re-joined the meeting.

Resolved:

- That the Training and Development Programme be received
- That the policy approval route be received.
- That the Procedure for removing a Governor from Office for reasons other than statutory disqualification be approved.
- That Ms Rebekah Drury be appointed as an External Governor for a period of up to 4 years (term of office to expire at the end of the Autumn Term 2020) and for Ms Drury to continue to serve on the Remuneration Committee.
- That Mr Nelson, Ms Haigh and Ms Wright all be appointed as External Governors for a second and final term of office for up to 4 years, as of 30th June 2017 until the end of the summer term 2021 (to run consecutive to the current term of office).

12. Finance & Resources Committee (Meeting held on 28th November 2016)

Mr Dawson informed Governors on the additional business of the Finance and Resources Committee

Resolved:

- That the Minutes be received.

13. Audit Committee (Meeting held on 28th November 2016)

Mr Nelson informed Governors on the additional business of the Audit Committee

Resolved:

- That the Minutes be received.

14. Any other Business

Building Resilience (reserved item).

15. Learner Impact Reflection

The impact of discussions and scrutiny of the College's work in improving the outcomes and experience for all learners was considered and the following agreed:

Resolved:

- **Critical review of annual performance ensures that focus, scrutiny, challenge and support in sustaining and improving (where necessary) the outcomes and progress of all students is accurately targeted.**
- **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound targets underpin the College quality improvement plans in order to maintain or improve (where necessary) the positive outcomes and experiences for all students.**
- **The Corporation has satisfied itself that the college has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control, and has fulfilled its statutory responsibility for the 'effectiveness and efficient use of resources, the solvency of the institution and the body and the safeguarding of their assets'**
- **Assurance received that the Audit Committee has fulfilled its statutory and delegated responsibilities**

- The College has strong governance and financial management as demonstrated by the clean External Audit Annual Report (no recommendations included).
- Assurance that the College remains an inclusive sixth form college and continues to successfully offer post 16 opportunities to a diverse range of students
- Assurance that the college is maintaining strong financial procedures to ensure funding is allocated to the most appropriate areas, to maximise the student learning, experience and outcomes in a reducing funding external environment.
- Ability to financially support all elements of the strategic plan for the college, potentially impacting on all areas of student learning, experience and outcome.
- An informed Board of Governors is effective in its scrutiny, challenge and support of the senior leadership team, thus ensuring positive outcomes and progress for all students
- To ensure that HNC continues to succeed and is able to continue to deliver a high quality of student outcome and experience.
- By reviewing membership and agreeing succession planning strategies, the Corporation continues to have the required mix of skill sets to effectively undertake its business in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- The Corporation is committed to ensuring that every governor develops the skills they need to be effective and to make an active and valuable contribution to the work of the governing body.

16. Determination of confidentiality

It was agreed that the discussion and supporting paper for agenda item 14 be determined as confidential.

17. Date of next meetings:

- Friday 10th February 2017 Governor Strategy Day 10am – 4pm
- Thursday 9th March 2017 Corporation meeting from 5.30pm.