

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATION
Held on Thursday 13 October 2016
At 5.00 pm at Wiltshire College, Trowbridge

Present	Helen Birchenough (Chair), Mark Lello (from item 2/4), Amanda Burnside, Faith Butt, Hannah Granger, Carolyn Godfrey (until item 2/11), James Hayes, Dan Lomax, Liz McKee (from item 2/4 by Skype), Ben Permutt, Venetia Summers.
In Attendance	<i>Adrian Ford, Vice Principal Resources, Iain Hatt, Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality, Heather Cross, Clerk to the Corporation, Matt Wall (Assistant Principal HR – for item 2/4), Cathy Shahrokni for item 2/8.</i>

	Minute	Action
2/1	Apologies for absence	
	Apologies for absence were received from Harry Adam, Martin Clark, Karl Simpson and Jack Wills	
2/2	Declarations of interest	
	None	
2/3	Chair's opening remarks	
	Helen welcomed the newly appointed students Hannah, Dan and Ben to the Corporation, acknowledged their important potential contribution and encouraged them to take an active part throughout their time as student governors.	
2/4	People Policy – Position Statement	
	<p>Matt Wall, Assistant Principal HR, attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the position concerning human resources in the college, having been at the college for 6 months. He spoke about the view that staff were customers of the HR team, the improvements being made to technology and ensuring that only one version of records was maintained, operating from one database, Select HR. He spoke about the importance of good induction for staff, regular appraisals with the setting of objectives and the tracking of key HR statistics. A leadership and management development programme was about to be launched. In the next six months the focus of attention would be on recruitment, retention, development and reward – as expressed in the Drivers strategic aim.</p> <p>In answer to a question, governors were provided with more information concerning the feedback from staff about the team's customer service; the team was now seen as much more approachable. The Principal commented that the team had really moved forward from the position a year ago.</p> <p>Governors thanked Matt for his presentation and for his good work in continuing to develop the team.</p>	

2/5	Staff Utilisation and deployment	
	<p>The Vice Principal Resources and Principal spoke about the successes in introducing the new curriculum structure. A robust process had identified staffing reductions of 31 FTE posts. Greater efficiency had resulted from having Heads of department analyse the careful use of resources in their areas, with greater knowledge of requirements. It was noted that Learning Coaches were a useful and efficient resource and Skype was starting to be used more widely for appropriate lessons. Many lessons were becoming more student-led.</p> <p>The Vice Principal would illustrate later in the meeting the staffing efficiency tool which was assisting with resource decisions.</p>	
2/6	Area Review update	
	<p>The Principal gave a short verbal feedback on the second meeting of the Area Review Steering Group which had been held earlier in the week. The Chair thanked the Principal for putting together a very strong presentation to that meeting on behalf of all the colleges in the area in which the issues of rurality, small school sixth forms, under-recruitment in UTCs and the need to resolve merger issues in Swindon had been covered.</p> <p>The next area review meeting, to be held in November, would be when options were presented.</p> <p>There was discussion about the recent reductions made in public transport, which was a particular issue which hampered student recruitment in some areas and generally cut down on mobility. The Principal indicated that in due course she would like to bring a cost-benefit analysis to the Board concerning the college putting money into transport, with the aim to work collaboratively with providers and other related services. This intention was welcomed.</p>	P
2/7	Principal's Report	
	<p>The Principal's report had been circulated and addressed the ongoing enrolment picture, the position concerning HE, the relationship with Lloyds Bank and the possible delay to the Sadlers Mead sale.</p> <p>Amanda Burnside spoke positively about the improved enrolment picture in the current year, with the expectation that the EFA target of 3250 would be reached, improved apprenticeship recruitment and a steady growth in pre-16 students.</p> <p>The College had recently won an important contract with Daf to assist in the training of the military in the use and maintenance of a new type of vehicle. The potential the contract offered for significant future work was acknowledged. Staff resources needed to be increased to meet the requirements. Governors welcomed the news of the contract and the potential it offered.</p> <p>The position of HE was discussed, with the external environment much more competitive than previously, with number caps removed. There was a need to look at a revived HE curriculum for the college and student numbers needed to increase. There had been a number of course closures because of recruitment failures or other arrangements having to be made for courses retained because numbers were low. The progress with the contract with Oxford Brookes university was noted. Bath University awaited the college's decision on partnership arrangements for the future.</p>	

	<p>In response to a question from one of the student governors, a comment was made about the infill arrangements to be made for the HE Photography course with Bournemouth university which should provide an improved offer to students and a more accurate course title would assist in future recruitment. There were possibilities for an improved agricultural curriculum at Lackham with the links with the Royal Agricultural University. Growth with three HE providers was being proposed- Oxford Brookes, RAU and Bournemouth, all for different disciplines. An analysis of HE student recruitment would be provided to the next Corporation meeting. Governors commented on the possible recruitment amongst local businesses for areas in which they were seeking employees to be qualified. The College was aiming to examine the scope for more provision with part time in the workplace. The importance of an innovative curriculum was acknowledged. Local reports showed that there was untapped demand for HE in the county as some schools were showing disproportionately good progression to HE whilst others showed poor performance.</p> <p>Governors welcomed the news that 50 members of staff had joined the 'good to outstanding' group.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Principal for her report. The Estate and banking issues were to be picked up by the Vice Principal Resources later in the meeting.</p>	VPC&Q
2/8	Destinations Report	
	<p>Cathy Shahrokni, Director of Student Services, joined the meeting for this item. A report on student destinations had been circulated previously. The College had commissioned a company to collect the data on its behalf which had significantly improved the information collected. The data showed that the college was meeting LEP priorities and broadly fitted its market place. In answer to a question, the circulated report was confirmed as having been very flexible in providing good data.</p> <p>Cathy was thanked for her work, for attending the Board meeting and providing this informative report.</p>	
2/9	Quality Improvement Action Plan	
	<p>The Quality Improvement Plan had been circulated. RAG ratings would be added as the year progressed. The Plan contained the HER (Higher Education) Action Plan and this was noted. Governors expressed interest to be kept in touch with the performance on student fee income in the HE area and the enrolment position.</p>	VPC&Q
2/10	Data Dashboard	
	<p>The latest data dashboard being provided to Heads of Department, allowing them to view their quality and resource measures, was demonstrated to the meeting. This new and powerful measure of staffing efficiency was explained and how this would be used for resourcing discussions. The college target was to reduce staff costs to 60%.</p> <p>Governors strongly welcomed the news that the dashboard was being used as a management tool throughout college management.</p>	
2/11	Annual Accounts preparation progress, bank negotiations and other resources issues	
	<p>The Vice-Principal Resources commented on the positive progress being made in finalising the year-end audit, with no key issues having been made. A clearing meeting had taken place that day and the college had been complimented on the speed of the process this year.</p>	

	<p>Negotiations had been taking place with the college bankers, who now saw the FE sector as a greater risk than had been the previous perception. As the college had made a technical breach of one of its loan covenants, the bank was taking the opportunity to impose the introduction of new rates on some of the college's older loans which had been on preferential rates to date. Additional interest would be incurred but the new rates would not impact on the overall borrowing position. The effect of this was presented to governors and the position was approved.</p> <p>It was proposed by Mark Lello, seconded by James Hayes and unanimously agreed that delegated authority be given to the Vice Principal Resources to finalise the revised loan arrangements for the college, the key features of which had been presented to the meeting.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the revised loan arrangements were not anticipated to affect the college's financial health which was currently assessed as 'good'.</p> <p><u>Sale of Sadlers Mead</u> The Vice Principal Resources advised the governors on the latest negotiations concerning the sale. The developers, Square Bay, had indicated that they had been purchasing on behalf of a third party and had sought to renegotiate the price. It was agreed that the originally agreed price should be maintained and discussions concerning a reduction should not be entertained.</p> <p>It was further reported that the Council planners had suggested at this late stage they might stipulate the original building on site should be retained. Following negotiations with a senior planner, this requirement appeared to have been removed and was being confirmed in writing.</p> <p><u>Pensions</u> Governors commented on the increased pensions contributions which had been flagged following the latest actuarial review. This was acknowledged as an issue for government as it impacted on a national basis.</p>	VPR
2/12	Membership issues	
	The Chair gave a verbal report about work to recruit new governors. Work continued to identify a new staff governor. Two possibilities for additional external governors were currently being explored actively, with meetings set up in the near future.	
2/13	College visits/events attended	
	<p>The Chair reported on a series of visits she had made to various parts of the college. The Vice-Chair spoke about a very informative visit he had made recently to the music facilities at Salisbury campus.</p> <p>The Clerk circulated information on possible dates for learning walks and encouraged governors to book times.</p>	
2/14	Minutes of the last meeting held on 15 September 2016	
	The minutes were approved.	
2/15	Date of next meeting	
	The date of the next meeting was in accordance with the calendar as 22 November 2016 and was to be held at Lackham.	

