

BOSTON COLLEGE**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION ON 24 OCTOBER 2018**

1. PRESENT

Peter Cropley (Chair), Stephen Brown, Steve Crozier, David Hanson, Jo Maher, Helen Mather, Steve McCracken, Chris Pett, Ann Savage, Harley Smith, Gerry Tawton, Ben Webb, Nick Worth, and Helen Wright.

Also in attendance: Janet Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Rachael Baker (Director of Planning and Performance), Richard Chambers (Head of Curriculum), Paul Collins (Director of Business Development) and Debbie Holland (Director of Finance).

Meeting attendance: 87.5%

Apologies for absence were received from Andy Atkins and David Earnshaw.

The Chair welcomed Harley Smith and Rachael Baker to their first meetings of the Corporation.

2. INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.

Jo Maher explained the latest position with regard to the Institute of Technology developments and reminded members of the red lines which they had established to allow this to move forward. Currently the College was applying for capital funds which did not have a revenue match. The proposal is to renovate the old workshops in the Rochford building and the floors above the workshops. This area would have a separate entrance and there would be a licence agreement in place with the Institute of Technology. Jo advised members that she would be able to circulate drawings of the proposals to them. Students are likely to split their time between the EMAT centre and the refurbished area.

It was noted that there had been no breach of the Corporation's red lines and that one of the partner colleges had pulled out of the proposal. It was agreed that the Finance and Resources Committee could look again at the proposals if this was needed because plans were moving very quickly and a submission had to be complete by 21 November.

Peter Cropley asked about the form of licence to offer the Institute of Technology curriculum and it was confirmed that this did not give them the right to occupy the premises. Steve McCracken asked about student recruitment and members were advised that a prospectus had been drafted already.

The capital investment will go onto the College's balance sheet and then will be subject to depreciation at the land and buildings rate of 2% per annum. Members agreed that it was important that the tangible asset belonged to the College. All of the capital funding will go on refurbishment and equipment.

Steve McCracken asked about the market for this offer, Jo Maher advised that the College had seen growth in Engineering and demand for progression of students at Level 3 into HNC Engineering. Steve McCracken enquired where the College would be able to find staff for this venture and Jo Maher advised that the EMAT development would help the College to attract a different market but there would be a need to look at pay levels for staff.

Members were advised that students undertaking the Institute of Technology courses would be funded through student loans. Richard Chambers advised in response to a query from Helen Wright that work had already started to raise awareness of Engineering opportunities. Peter Cropley suggested that the College needed to ensure that its long

term position was covered if the Institute of Technology did not continue after the licence period and Jo Maher confirmed that legal advice would be taken on the contract. ●

Jo Maher advised that the final Institute of Technology application would be circulated and it was confirmed that final approval would be agreed at the Finance and Resources committee meeting on 19 November. ●

3. **MEMBERSHIP**

Members were advised that Peter Cropley had received Mick Gallagher's resignation and had written to him to thank him for his services as a member on behalf of the rest of the board.

4. **ACTION LOG**

Members reviewed progress against items identified on the action log.

In response to a question about the expenditure on the Sam Newsom roof which was done after the initial repair work, members were advised that this had not been part of the original programme of work since it was expected that the roof had a longer life in it than subsequently had turned out to be the case.

Members were advised that there was not yet anything further to report on insolvency of colleges and Debbie Holland reported that the insurance question raised at the previous meeting had been covered.

5. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

a) **Corporation – 4 July 2018**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2018 were reviewed and approved as a correct record.

Jo Maher reported that she had received a letter confirming the College's outstanding financial health status. She also reported that the Teaching Excellence Award appeal had not been successful and this issue was going to the Standards Committee. ●

Peter Cropley asked about European Social Fund projects. Jo Maher said that the College had not bid for these funds because of the potential impact on financial health. She advised that she had recently been appointed to the LEP's ESIF committee and it was noted that extra funds were potentially coming up in the near future.

In response to a query about maths centres of excellence it was reported that Stamford College had been successful. Boston College had not been aware that Stamford were bidding for this.

A discussion took place about the lack of progress on the lease in the Spalding Campus. Jo Maher reported that there was a need to grow Higher Education in the Spalding Centre and that managers had reviewed the facilities and identified that the space which had been proposed to be leased could make useful Higher Education space. Jo Maher advised that the lease had offered good value at the time when it was first proposed but things had moved on and negotiations had taken far too long. It was reported that costs of the move were being an issue. Members agreed that they would not proceed with the planned lease of the premises. ●

b) Search and Governance Committee – 3 October 2018

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2018 were reviewed.

It was noted that the committee had submitted planned changes to membership of the corporation's committees. Steps were also being taken to recruit further members and a potential governor would be interviewed in the following week.

c) Finance and Resources Committee – 3 October 2018

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2018 were reviewed.

d) Audit Committee – 21 June 2018

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2018 were reviewed

Gerry Tawton asked about the recommendations on the risk audit and Debbie Holland outlined what these recommendations were. Jo Maher explained how the recommendations were being implemented. It was noted that one of the recommendations of auditors was that the Audit Committee should receive a report on DSAT reviews in the future.

6. REPORTS

a) Principal's

Members received a report from the Principal on a number of strategic and College matters.

Jo Maher advised governors that the recent college's week had gone well and that the petition seeking better investment in colleges had now got over 50,000 signatures. Boston College had featured in the Guardian and another article would appear in the Times Educational Supplement. She anticipated that it was unlikely that there would be an uplift in funding in the budget this year. It had been suggested that the Department for Education would find initial funds to support the pension cost increases.

Jo reported to members that College enrolment of full time learners was above the contract level and forecast to hit contract (after 6 week withdrawals). Modelling work is being carried out on the Adult Education Budget. One partner organisation, Skills UK, is noted to be closing and a discussion took place about the strategy for delivery of the Adult Education Budget.

b) Finance

Members received a report from the Director of Finance on a number of financial issues.

Debbie Holland presented anticipated year end figures for 2017-18 which were now unlikely to change. The fieldwork on the audit had gone well.

c) Governance

Members received a report from the Clerk to the Corporation on governance issues and performance monitoring.

Janet Hemmant drew members attention to the changed format of reports which had been approved by the Search and Governance committee.

Members were asked to review performance against the Corporation and Finance and Resources Committee targets for 2017-18 and to consider targets for 2018-19. Members approved the targets proposed by the Finance and Resources Committee and agreed that the Corporation targets for 2018-19 should be:

- 80% attendance including development days
- All governors to make at least one curriculum or business support visit during the year
- Oversight of the quality of teaching and learning assessment learner progress and learner progression
- Progression of collaborative options such as participation in shared Institute of Technology
- Oversight of the EMAT development
- Maintain £1 million minimum cash reserve

Members received proposals from the Search and Governance Committee for updates to committee constitutions and particularly changes to the proposed membership of committees. All of the proposals were agreed and it was noted that the Standards Committee would temporarily be above its membership of 6 until the next committee member left. It was agreed that Ben Webb would move from the Standards Committee to the Finance and Resources Committee.

Members reviewed confidential papers issued during 2017-18 and agreed which should be released to the public domain and confirmed their satisfaction with the Corporation's decision making processes.

d) Human Resources Annual Report

Members received a report from the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development which was presented by the Principal.

Jo Maher drew members attention to the improvements in some of the data and to some of the challenges on staffing in which electrical staffing is particularly difficult. Staff utilisation was noted to be high. Jo advised members that there is a need to look at room utilisation to improve efficiency.

e) Health and Safety Annual Report

Members received a report from the Director of Business Development on Health and Safety.

Paul Collins presented a range of information and advised members that 23 managers had gone through Health and Safety training with more to follow. He advised that the managers who had undertaken the training saw the value of it and this was producing welcome challenge at the Health and Safety Committee.

Paul advised that the data presented compared well across the sector. There had been some negative feedback about the surface of the car park and the College was looking at how this could be addressed. Ideally this would take place alongside the EMAT development. David Hanson asked about the Health and Safety risk on the risk register which was a comparatively high risk. Paul Collins advised that this was in part due to the raised profile of Health and Safety.

f) Risk Management

Members received a report from the Director of Finance on Risk Management.

Debbie Holland reported on the approach to managing risk. Peter Copley asked about changes in the identified top ten risks and Debbie and Jo Maher explained how the changes had come about. A debate took place about whether the risks of student achievement and poor inspection outcomes should be exchanged because of their relationship to each other. It was noted that some risks are out of College control but their impact can be managed.

7. **FREEDOM OF SPEECH**

Jo Maher presented a draft Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Expression which would need to be shared with the Office for Students. This was part of the governance queries raised by the Office for Students which were being dealt with by the Executive Team and the Clerk. Jo advised that the Code of Practice was based on the Eversheds model and the governors agreed that it should be approved for adoption.

Steve Crozier asked about policies applying to governors and it was noted that a number of policies applied specifically to governors whereas some applied to all members of the College community.

8. **STEVE MCCRACKEN**

Peter Copley pointed out that Steve McCracken would be leaving the Corporation at the end of the meeting having served for 21 years on the governing body including 11 years as Vice-Chair and as many years as Chair of the Finance and Resources Committee and also serving for 10 years as Chair of the Search and Governance committee. On behalf of members Peter expressed his gratitude for the work Steve has done for the College over the years. Peter asked members to note that a dinner would be held on 29 November to mark Steve's contribution. Steve McCracken commented that it had been a privilege to serve on the Board and it had been an interesting challenge to understand the sector.

9. **DATES OF MEETINGS**

It was noted that the next meetings of the Corporation would take place on:

5 December 2018
 1 March 2019
 8 May 2019
 3 July 2019