

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION HELD ON 25 FEBRUARY 2015

1. PRESENT

Mr P Cropley (Chair), Miss G Edwards, Ms I Lebedowicz, Mr S McCracken, Ms J Mitchell, Mrs A Mosek, Ms S Richards and Mr P Scarlett,

Also in attendance: Mr P Collins (Director of Business Development), Mrs F Grady (Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality), Mrs J Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation) and Mr K Tharby (Director of Workforce Development)

Meeting attendance: 53%

2. Apologies for absence were received from Mr M Gallagher, Mr D Hanson, Mr A Reynolds, Mr K Smith and Mrs H Wright

Apologies not received and did not attend: Ms O McMahon and Mr M Stubbs

Minutes were taken by Mrs J Webb (PA to Principal)

5. APPOINTMENTS

Peter reminded members that Bob Walder had retired from the Board for personal reasons and thus a new Vice-Chair needed to be appointed. David Hanson had been put forward as a nominee and there being no further nominations, Members voted unanimously that he should be appointed. Janet Hemmant was asked to write to him informing him of the decision made. ●

3. MEMBERSHIP

Members read through and considered the respective curriculum vitae for four prospective governors recommended by the Search and Governance Committee. Members unanimously approved all four applications.

Chris Pett and Gerry Tawton joined the meeting.

Peter congratulated them on their appointment and said he hoped they enjoyed their time with Boston College.

Discussion had taken place with some, but not all, of the new members regarding their expected membership of one of the Committees. Andy Atkins had agreed to membership of the Audit Committee, which it was felt would be welcomed by Adrian Reynolds; Gerry Tawton had agreed to membership of the Finance and Resources Committee. Members agreed to both of their appointments. It was agreed that Committees for the remaining new members should be discussed during their induction. ●

4. STUDENTS QUESTION TIME

Amanda Mosek reminded Members that they had requested the opportunity to interact with students and be able to ask them questions about their college experience hence the small panel of students invited to the meeting today. The Principal had provided

sample questions but also invited Members to ask their own questions should they so wish. One member of the student panel was unable to attend due to a health issue, however she had sent an email which was read out. The students then introduced themselves. The panel comprised of Jordan Corcoran (Level 3 Music), Rowan Dalton (Level 1 Real Skills for Work {Catering}), Chris Hill (Level 3 Electrical Installation) and Gabriele Kovalskyte (Level 2 Uniformed Public Services).

A number of questions were posed to the students and discussion took place on how they had first come to be aware of the opportunities at the College, how they had found their experience both on entering and throughout their courses, the relationship which they had with staff, how they were supported with their aspirations and their views on apprenticeships. Students felt that College had been a very positive experience in all of these areas. One of the students did comment on some of the furniture within the Enterprise Zone which was not fit for the use his group wanted to put it to. Amanda replied that she took on board his comments about practicality and could understand the issue but that the tables had been chosen because of their modern design which it was felt students would like.

The Chair thanked the students for their time and input into the discussion.

6. **REVIEW OF ACTION LOG**

Members reviewed the action log and Janet Hemmant gave a verbal update on it.

7. **MINUTES**

- Corporation – 10 December 2014

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 December 2014 were read and approved as an accurate record and there were no Matters Arising.

- Standards Committee – 21 January 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 January 2015 were reviewed. Steve McCracken sought clarification with regards to performance issues within the Construction curriculum area to which Fiona Grady responded, assuring Members that the area is being fully supported by the Quality Team although challenging staffing issues remain within the department. Amanda commented that the College is mindful of the forthcoming Jobs Fair in April, advertising is also taking place within the Stamford area where it has come to light that there may be an opportunity to recruit and also relationships with the University of Lincoln are being explored further to assist recruitment. Steve McCracken gave details of the Rolls Royce Science initiative to introduce engineers to teaching.

- Search & Governance Committee – 15 January 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 January 2015 were reviewed and the contents noted.

- Search & Governance Committee – 9 February 2015

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 February 2015 were reviewed and the contents noted.

- Audit Committee – 21 November 2014

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 November 2014 were reviewed. Gerry Tawton enquired whether the College had both internal and external auditors. Amanda responded by saying that although it is no longer a legal requirement to have internal auditors the College had decided to continue with this service.

8. REPORTS

a) Principal's

Members received a report from the Principal.

Members were asked to note the content therein and Amanda gave background information to the new Career Hub which is being set up in Boston in conjunction with Lincolnshire County Council and the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB). The Hub will be a place specifically targeting young people who will be able to get impartial advice as to what post 16 provision is available in the area. Local secondary schools have also signed up to the initiative.

Phil Scarlett informed Members that the Springfields Shopping Centre would be supportive in offering mobile advertising space in the windows of closed units and he was thanked for his support. Amanda agreed to follow this up.

It was pleasing to note that Boston College had been identified as the best performing college within the Greater Lincolnshire area in the recent FE Choices Learner Satisfaction Survey.

Discussion took place regarding data within the Quality and Standards Key Performance Indicators.

Phil Scarlett made comment on the series of videos that have been made and are available to view on the College website. He said they were very professional and needed to be promoted more widely and suggested that they be provided on a memory stick to employers and local electrical retailers where they could be shown on their in-house media.

Chris Pett said that from a local employer perspective with regard to apprenticeships, there is a need to train the trainer as a good many trainers need upskilling in how to train apprentices. Amanda asked that Paul Collins note this issue and take it forward.

b) 16-19 Student Programmes – English and Maths

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Curriculum and Quality.

Fiona Grady drew Members' attention to the significant changes that are taking place from last year to this in relation to Maths and English. She explained that the Government's strategy is to improve standards in Maths and English amongst young people and this has led to a funding conditionality being applied to the 16-19 Study Programmes. Students aged 16-18 who do not have a Grade C or above at GCSE level will need to continue studying Maths and/or English until they achieve. If they do not enrol on approved qualifications, all funding for their study programmes will be withdrawn. She explained the challenges that are

being encountered to meet this criteria.

c) College Performance against 2014-15 Business Plan

Members received a report from the Principal.

Amanda Mosek gave an overview of her report and said that good progress is being made against each of the six key strategic priorities although it is a little too early to be confident that all targets will be met. There are a number of concerns such as staff recruitment difficulties, failure to meet 16-18 targets which will impact on future funding and possible failure of the College's bids to the LEP for capital funding.

d) Finance

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services.

Janet Hemmant circulated headline information as agreed. She said that the accounts were looking quite sound and were currently showing a slightly increased surplus following a reforecast. The College is also in a sound cash position. A bid had been submitted for additional 16-18 Apprenticeships funding which had not been included in the reforecast and the result would not be known until March. Catering remains a concern and is being reviewed by Finance and Resources Committee. Janet also said that it is proving challenging to collect tuition fees from all sources and gave a scenario of one student's difficulties with a 24+ loan issue.

e) Property

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services.

Janet Hemmant informed Members that:

- The Astro turf at PPPC is due to be officially opened on Thursday, 19 March 2015 at 11.00 am to which all Governors are invited.
- The Post Occupancy Review for the Second Renewal Grant is currently being completed and will be circulated to Members. The deadline is the end of March.
- Janet and Peter gave feedback following their meeting with the landlord of the Skegness premises in London with Grimsby Institute. Grimsby Institute are currently carrying out further work on the possible resolution and it is hoped there will be a positive outcome although there will be some cost involved. It is also noted that there is a small window before the next rent review.
- De Montfort site planning application will be submitted imminently. Communications had been received from the purchaser regarding the site viability and Section 106 costs including notices about ground conditions and infrastructure.
- For the lease of the Spalding Restaurant, all has been agreed in principle and tenants are likely to be in shortly. It is hoped that they will at least be up and trading by the 20 March which is when the Sausage Judging Competition takes place.

Discussion took place regarding capital funding and it was noted that the Finance and Resources Committee had raised concerns regarding funding for the

College's bid for refurbishment of the EMAT Centre and Shodfriars Hall, which have both been rejected by the LEP. The relationship between the local LEP and the College were discussed in detail and Steve McCracken commented that in his opinion the LEP worked best in urban areas.

Members then discussed the forthcoming CPD event to which a representative from LCC was invited and which might prove an opportunity to raise issues with the speaker.

Phil Scarlet cited the recent issue of the A16 transport links with which he had been involved in and said the only way for movement and change was for lobbying to be continual and focussed.

f) Governance

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Corporate Services.

Janet Hemmant reminded Members that they had an opportunity to respond to the Code of Governance Questionnaire that the AoC were consulting on, the details of which were in her report.

Steve McCracken gave feedback following his attendance at a recent East Midlands Governors Network event. He said it had been informative and that he thought it would be good practice if the same governor attended future meetings, of which there are four per year, so that there was some continuity and understanding of issues raised. He said he would be happy to continue to do so in his current capacity until he leaves.

9. **COMPLAINT**

Amanda Mosek informed Members of a current ongoing issue regarding a student. The content of recently received correspondence was discussed and agreement was reached that Peter Cropley would respond to the ex-student direct. Amanda will ensure that a copy of the reply is circulated amongst all Members for information purposes.

10. **TRANSPORT**

Peter raised the issue of the local authorities ruling of providing transport for learners to their nearest College, which if living in Spalding and taken literally, is actually Boston and not Stamford, the designated college. The Authority had made a change to their ruling and the content of a letter received from them and provided by Phil Scarlett was read out to Members. This confirmed that transport will be provided to Boston for students living nearer to Boston than Stamford. Thanks were expressed to Phil Scarlett who had addressed this within the county.

10. **DIARY DATES**

- CPD/Planning Session – 6 March 2015
- Corporation Meeting – 13 May 2015 (Spalding)