

BOSTON COLLEGE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION ON 20 OCTOBER 2021

1. PRESENT

Peter Cropley (Chair), Andy Atkins, Daran Bland, Claire Foster, Kelly Harris, David Parnell, Chris Pett, Helen Rumbold, Ann Savage, Gerry Tawton, Sandra Williamson and Nick Worth.

Also in attendance: Janet Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Jen Durrant (Executive Director: People), Debbie Holland (Vice Principal: Finance & Corporate Services), Adrian Humphreys (Executive Director: Business, Innovation & Partnerships), Vicki Locke (Deputy Principal), and Dawn Telford (Assistant Principal: Learner Experience).

Apologies for absence were received from Ruth Catlett, David Fannin, David Earnshaw, Heather Lee and Paul Tomlinson.

Meeting attendance: 71%

2. PRESENTATION - SUPPORTING BRILLIANCE

Kaley Boothby, Andy Readman, Caroline Parker-Meadows and Adrian Walker-Slade joined the meeting and gave a presentation entitled "Supporting "brilliance – the Why, How, and Wow – getting to know our learners, assessing and supporting their starting points".

The team explained how the college had introduced a 'Make a Difference' system to support learners to ensure that they are self-aware and know about opportunities offered to them when they join the college. The objective is to take learners to their potential and examples of the impact on learners' lives were shown.

Peter Cropley asked if learners were given job interview training. It was confirmed that this would happen as part of a careers choice event and suggested that governors could help with mock interviews. In response to a query from Daran Bland it was confirmed that the MaD system was systemic across the college but was tailored for each area.

The presenting team left the meeting at the conclusion of the discussions.

3. PRESENTATION – DIGITAL AND DTLA

Claire Foster gave a presentation on the college's digital offer and DTLA.

Claire outlined initiatives which were underway including Mayflower, Horncastle and Spalding.

In response to a query from Ann Savage, it was confirmed that discussions had taken place with the NHS about the offer relating to the Mayflower development which included links between health and nutrition. Sandra Williamson commented on the creation of a destination offer for that area of the town.

Chris Pett asked whether the design of the new developments was consciously carbon neutral. It was confirmed that designs had to be BREEAM compliant and every decision takes environmental impact into consideration.

Daran Bland asked about the impact of moving away from the Ingelow Centre. Claire advised that the move would increase inclusivity at the college. Nick Worth commented that Mayflower

is an exciting opportunity and it is good to address health issues he asked whether organisations such as Sport England could bring in extra funding. It was noted that the leisure project is being run by Boston Borough Council and that sharing management costs could help to reduce overheads. Work is continuing to reduce the price to increase the contingency. In response queries from Gerry Tawton and Daran Bland. it was confirmed that the £10 million is capped and has been allocated but a business case has to be submitted to take it to implementation.

Peter Cropley asked how certain the Horncastle timing was and about the implications of any delay incompletion. It was confirmed that the centre would create new provision and will be part of this year's curriculum planning. The plan will provide for a developing curriculum offer and it was noted that a September start is not critical for adult provision.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Members were advised that Kate Folling had resigned as a member of the Corporation.

A recommendation that David Earnshaw be reappointed for a further four year term at the end of his existing term had been received from the Search and Governance committee. Members noted the contribution he made to the work of the Corporation and agreed to approve this reappointment.

5. ACTION LOG

Members reviewed and noted progress made on items listed in the Corporation's Action Log.

6. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

a) Corporation – 7 July 2021

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2021 were reviewed and approved as a correct record.

b) Corporation - 30 September 2021

The Minutes recording a decision made on 30 September 2021 were reviewed and approved as a correct record.

c) Finance and Resources Committee – 27 September 2021

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2021 were reviewed.

d) Standards Committee – 29 September 2021

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2021 were reviewed.

e) Audit Committee – 27 July 2021

The Minutes recording a decision made on 27 July 2021 were reviewed.

f) Search and Governance Committee – 20 September 2021

The Minutes recording a decision made on 20 September 2021 were reviewed.

7. REPORTS

a) Principal's

Members received a report from the Principal on a number of sector and college issues.

Following a query raised by Ann Savage about requirements for wearing masks, it was confirmed that DfE did not currently advocate this. Local Covid numbers are being monitored and Dawn Telford explained the guidance from the public health unit. Jen Durrant confirmed that the college is ensuring that it is responsive to changing circumstances. Vicki Locke advised that for the open event masks had been handed out.

Gerry Tawton asked about impact on higher education outcomes which were reported to be affected by student demographics. Claire Foster explained that the college's higher education students were typically adults and some of these had found it particularly difficult to maintain their studies through Covid. Kelly Harris advised that early attendance indicators for 2021-22 were high.

Chris Pett asked if T levels were an opportunity or a threat for the college. Claire confirmed that they were good for some areas and some elements are being reconsidered. She noted that there was a rise in apprenticeships for Level 3 Engineering which for now mitigated the delayed implementation of T-Level in engineering Manufacturing.

Daran Bland asked about the possible expansion of the Grammar School 6th form. Claire explained that there is pressure on young people to take A levels and the college's job is to make sure that it has an alternative, appropriate and attractive offer for this age group.

Peter Cropley asked about the effect of pockets of low recruitment. Claire explained that funding would not be affected. Some adjustments have been made in respect of smaller groups to ensure that the learner experience is maintained. Vicki Locke explained that staff utilisation was supported by small group funding. Higher education enrolment has met expectations and apprenticeships are doing well.

b) Finance

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Finance & Corporate Services on financial performance and risk management.

Debbie Holland advised that the auditors were currently reviewing the annual accounts. Gerry Tawton asked about potential adjustments in respect of AEB clawback. Members were advised that a business case had been submitted and the accounts would be adjusted once final outcomes were confirmed.

Discussions took place about some detailed elements of the management accounts. It was agreed that the presentation of contribution levels would be reviewed and that it would be helpful to separate out further education and higher education performance. ●

Daran Bland asked how comfortable the college was with the financial outcomes and what the projection of financial performance was over time. Debbie Holland noted that the finances were in recovery heading out of COVID particularly in respect of AEB. Gerry Tawton advised that the budget was sound going forward. Claire Foster confirmed that the College needs to continue to diversify income streams and make the

right offer Gerry expressed the view that the information provided is robust enough to act quickly if a problem is identified. Andy Atkins asked whether the college was able to achieve an Outstanding Ofsted rating with Good financial health and it was confirmed that this is possible.

Sandra Williamson asked where the college anticipated risk pressures. The process for managing risk was outlined and it was noted that risks are monitored in detail by the Audit committee. In response to Sandra's query about the potential impact of red risks it was agreed that further information should be provided at the next meeting.

c) Learner Views

Members received a report from the Assistant Principal: Performance & Quality on learner views.

Information was provided on feedback received from learners. Peter Cropley asked about an amber outcome for what is making a difference for learners. Kelly Harris explained that it was early in the year for reviewing this and that further work and audits will be carried out later in the year. There is confidence that this will move to a green rating after half term.

d) Governance

Members received a report from the Clerk to the Corporation on a number of governance issues.

Janet Hemmant provided members with information on the availability of advice for members and the distinction between governance and management. It was agreed that a note on the distinction should be circulated to members.

Members considered committee appointments following some membership changes. It was agreed that Nick Worth would move from the Finance and Resources committee to the Standards committee, David Fannin would be appointed to the Standards committee and David Parnell to the Finance and Resources committee.

Members reviewed the performance of the Corporation and the Finance and Resources and Standards committees against their 2020-21 targets. The committees' proposed targets for 2021-22 were approved. It was noted that the Audit committee's performance and targets would be reviewed at the December meeting. It was agreed that the Corporation's targets for 2021-22 should be:

- 80% attendance
- All governors to make at least 1 curriculum or business support visit during the year
- Oversight of the quality of education and how well the curriculum positively impacts on what learners know and can do as a result of their learning
- Oversight of the Horncastle and Mayflower developments
- Monitoring of OfS compliance
- Monitoring the impact and management of COVID-19 including the College's approach to supporting missed learning
- Maintenance of £1m cash reserve

Members reviewed documents which had been classified as confidential during 2020-21 and agreed which could be released from confidential status. They also reviewed

the Corporation's decision-making processes and agreed that these remained appropriate.

e) Human Resources Annual Report

Members received a report from the Executive Director: People providing information for the period 1 August 2020 to 31 July 2021.

Chris Pett left the meeting at this point

Gerry Tawton asked if the college was still collecting data on vaccine uptake and this was confirmed. The college is also following up long Covid and focusing on wellbeing.

In response to a query from Daran Bland regarding leavers and length of service, it was noted that if the college can retain staff for more than 12 months, they are likely to be settled. Jen Durrant advised that the College is reverting to face to face corporate Inductions and teaching and learning inductions to support the onboarding process.

Andy Atkins left the meeting at this point

f) Health and Safety Annual Report

Members received a report from the Head of Health and Safety which was presented by the Executive Director: People.

g) Safeguarding

Members received a presentation from the Assistant Principal: Learner Experience on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment which included information on the College's legal responsibilities and approach to this.

Discussions took place about the College's management of these issues and how this joined up with the work of other organisations. It was noted that this was a significant issue for inspection and proposed that it be revisited at the Corporation CPD event after further training had taken place. ●

h) OfS Reportable events

Vicki Locke advised that there was nothing to report on this. It was noted that OfS have issued a change regarding reporting requirements which will be circulated to members. ●

8. ESFA LETTER

Members noted receipt of a copy of a letter dated 22 September 2021 from Interim Chief Executive of the Education and Skills Funding Agency to accounting officers in colleges.

9. STRATEGIC PLAN

An invitation was extended for members to join a small group to review the college's strategic plan.

10. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Nick Worth reminded members of the Corporation's social responsibility and noted that the weekly bulletins provided information on how this was being addressed.

11. NEXT MEETINGS

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

15 December 2021

10 March 2022 (CPD and Corporation)

18 May 2022

6 July 2022