

Boston College

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION ON 6 JULY 2022

1. PRESENT

Peter Cropley (Chair), Daran Bland, Ruth Catlett, David Earnshaw, David Fannin, Claire Foster, Kelly Harris, David Parnell, Chris Pett, Helen Rumbold, Axel Sedgwick, Paul Tomlinson, Sandra Williamson and Nick Worth.

Also in attendance: Janet Hemmant (Clerk to the Corporation), Debbie Holland (Vice Principal: Finance & Corporate Services), Adrian Humphreys (Executive Director: Business, Innovation & Partnerships), Heather Marks (Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality) and Tim White (Assistant Principal: Curriculum). Rachel Hunn (Curriculum Leader: Access to HE, EFL & A Levels) and Lili Mitchell (Progression Coach for HE) attended only for the presentation.

Apologies for absence were received from Andy Atkins, Heather Lee and Gerry Tawton.

Meeting attendance: 78%

Heather Marks was welcomed to her first Corporation meeting.

2. PRESENTATIONS

Members received three presentations:

a) Learning beyond the qualification and next steps readiness

Rachel Hunn and Lili Mitchell delivered a presentation on the support given to learners through the college's careers service and enrichment opportunities.

David Earnshaw pointed out that volunteering is helpful for development of the learners' CVs. In response to a query from David Fannin, Lili confirmed that elements of the careers service are available for learners to opt in to but there are also some key sessions delivered within the MAD curriculum. As the Careers Governor, Chris Pett commented that he had recently attended a careers meeting and had been encouraged to see how the service linked up with external stakeholders.

Rachel showed examples of enrichment activities which were aimed at developing the broader knowledge, skills and behaviours that learners need to thrive within and beyond their programmes of study. Rachel explained that the range of activities focussed on what would have the greatest impact on learners.

b) End of year case studies – making a difference to learners' lives

In the absence of Sharon Posey, Kelly Harris delivered the presentation which looked at some case studies where students had needed and been given support to enable them to attend college and study.

Daran Bland asked whether the college has resources to meet these needs. Kelly explained that a triage system had been introduced to ensure appropriate referrals are made for support. David Parnell asked what the trajectory of levels of need for support was and whether this was likely to remain higher than pre-Covid. The view was expressed that it was likely to continue to grow. Kelly explained that learners are now much more aware of mental health and a range of issues are coming through.

c) Ofsted Update

Kelly Harris delivered an update on Ofsted inspection arrangements.

3. **ACTION LOG**

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

4. **MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**

a) Corporation – 18 May 2022

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2022 were reviewed and approved as a correct record.

b) Corporation – 17 June 2022

The Minutes recording a decision made on 17 June 2022 were reviewed and approved as a correct record.

c) Finance and Resources Committee – 13 June 2022

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2022 were reviewed.

d) Search and Governance Committee – 13 June 2022

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 June were reviewed.

e) Audit Committee – 22 June 2022

The Minutes recording a decision made on 22 June 2022 were reviewed. Members endorsed the committee's approval of the Internal Audit Plan and Strategy and RSM's audit plan and noted the agreement that a separate Fraud and Corruption strategy was not required.

f) Standards Committee – 22 June 2022

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2022 were reviewed.

5. **REPORTS**

a) Principal's

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

Members noted that the retention of students on their core aims had become a concern. David Earnshaw asked which areas this involved and it was confirmed that the current concern was about 16-18 year old learners but adult learners were also affected.

Tim White advised members that there had been a significant increase in the number of learner disciplinary cases post-Covid and there has also been an effect on the learners' approach to work. The college is working to resolve these issues.

b) Finance

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Finance and Corporate Services on a number of financial matters including the 2022/23 budget, CFFR return and management accounts.

The detailed information on the 2022/23 budget and CFFR was reviewed. Debbie Holland told members that forecast performance would produce a 'Requires Improvement' outcome under the proposed new Financial Health calculation. Nick Worth commented that the budget was clearly challenging and asked what had been allowed in respect of increased costs. Debbie explained the approach taken and contingency measures.

David Earnshaw asked when the next review of pension contributions would happen. Members were advised that the LGPS review is this year, but significant cost increases are not currently expected.

Members noted that Gerry Tawton had raised a number of queries previously which had been addressed. There was still some detailed work to be done on depreciation in 2023/24.

Members agreed to approve the budget for 2022/23 and, subject to the completion of the work on depreciation, the CFFR statements and commentary to be submitted to the ESFA. The Finance KPIs were also approved. ●

Management accounts for the period ending 31 May 2022 were reviewed. It was noted that there had been no further progress regarding the Italian debt.

c) Safeguarding and Prevent Update

Members received and discussed a report from Sharon Posey, Interim Head of Learner Services, which was presented by Claire Foster.

Changes to the Keeping Children in Education guidance were noted. Clarification was sought about a case where a referral to the Local Designated Officer for Safeguarding at the County Council had been made.

Nick Worth asked about the process for referring learners to a disciplinary panel. Tim White explained the current process which was being reviewed and likely to see some changes.

d) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Adrian Humphreys presented the annual EDI report which had been prepared by Rebecca Clark and Jen Durrant. The contents of the report were reviewed and noted.

e) Governance

Members received a report from the Clerk to the Corporation proposing meeting dates for 2022-23 and a change to the Audit Committee constitution to reflect an audit recommendation. Both of the proposals were approved.

f) Learner Views

Members received a report from the Assistant Principal: Performance and Quality on survey outcomes.

Kelly Harris outlined areas where learners' responses were positive and where concerns had been identified. Changes are to be made to induction for apprentices as it was felt that learners missed face-to-face inductions. English and maths had particular challenges which were being addressed. A discussion took place about the use of Smart Assessor and, following a query from Axel Sedgwick, it was noted that progress tracking was a focus for development.

David Parnell asked how valid the data was with a low response rate. Kelly confirmed that this was an issue the college was concentrating on. Tim White advised that some learners are not in college to chase for survey completion and the college is not happy with the response rates.

Nick Worth asked what the targets were and if they could be shown on the analysis. This was agreed. Ruth Catlett asked if apprentices had any IT barriers the college could assist with. Kelly explained the approach to this and commented that issues tended to be around passwords. ●

g) Subcontracting Policy 2022-23

Members received a report from the Vice Principal Finance and Corporate Services on the proposed sub-contracting policy which would allow the delivery of LGV training. The policy was approved.

h) OfS Reportable events

It was confirmed that there was nothing to report.

6. STUDY PROGRAMMES

Claire Foster advised members of the late notification of a change to study programme funding requirements. The college is working to add 40 delivery hours to study programmes to meet new requirements.

7. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Having been duly nominated, Peter Cropley was appointed as Chair of the Corporation for 2022/23. It was noted that this appointment would end in May 2023 when Peter's term of office was complete.

8. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Having been duly nominated, Nick Worth was appointed as Vice Chair of the Corporation for 2022/23.