

BOSTON COLLEGE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CORPORATION ON 10 MAY 2023

1. PRESENT

Peter Cropley (Chair), Daran Bland, Gavin Booth, David Earnshaw, Daniel Elkington, David Fannin, Claire Foster, Kelly Harris, Heather Lee, David Parnell, 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), Heather Marks (Vice Principal: Curriculum & Quality) and Sharon Posey (Interim Head of Learner Services. Wendy Poole (Director of Learning: Adults & Apprenticeships) attended for item 3 only.

Apologies for absence were received from Kimberley Jones, Jurate Matulioniene, Katy Priestley, Helen Rumbold and Paul Tomlinson

Meeting attendance: 65%

2. MEMBERSHIP

Recommendations were received from the Search and Governance committee for the appointment of a new governor. Having reviewed the application and recommendation, members agreed to appoint James Brindle for a four-year term commencing on 5 July 2023.

3. PRESENTATIONS

Apprenticeship journey to gateway case studies

Members received a presentation from Wendy Poole..

Wendy advised members of apprenticeship processes and outcomes and gave some case study examples. Heather Lee asked if off-the-job training was only college attendance and Wendy explained that it could include other activities which demonstrated the acquisition of new knowledge and skills such as work shadowing. In response to a query from David Earnshaw, it was confirmed that the college runs 15 apprenticeship programmes. Daran Bland commented on the schools' appreciation of apprenticeship programmes. In response to a query about progression, it was confirmed that the apprenticeship survey identifies types of progression and the data on this can be shared. ●

Wendy Poole left the meeting at this point.

Restructure

Claire Foster gave a presentation on the Curriculum Restructure which had taken place.

Information was provided on the background, cost and implementation of the new structure. Claire advised members that newly appointed postholders were working really well. Heather Marks commented that it had been a painful process but the right decision giving more accountability on data and finance. Having learning in job titles is important and there is an increased focus on issues such as attendance and retention.

David Earnshaw asked what metrics will demonstrate success in 12 months time. Claire ● suggested that the impact would be seen in the accuracy of curriculum planning and

improved performance. Staff satisfaction should also improve by next year. She offered to repeat the presentation in a year's time.

Sandra Williamson asked if there had been any feedback from learners. Claire reported that there had been some negativity in the early days but not more recently. Kelly Harris advised that learner views in surveys are generally positive. Sandra asked what difference it had made to learning and Kelly provided an example of positive impact. Heather Marks commented that the relationship with the Deputy FE Commissioner has been very positive.

In response to a query from David Earnshaw about any residual HR issues, Jen Durrant advised that issues were worked through with the staff.

4. ACTION LOG

Members reviewed progress made against items in the action log.

It was noted that the acronyms list is now available on Teams.

5. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

a) Corporation – 15 March 2023

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2023 were reviewed and approved as a correct record.

b) Audit Committee 20 March 2023

The Minutes recording the written resolution taken on 20 March 2023 were reviewed.

c) Audit Committee 23 March 2023

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2023 were reviewed.

Gerry Tawton asked about the position on the IT Backup policy. Debbie Holland advised that the required actions are complete but the policy needs updating.

d) Search and Governance Committee – 27 March 2023

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2023 were reviewed.

e) Finance and Resources Committee – 27 March 2023

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2023 were reviewed.

f) Standards Committee – 26 April 2023

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2023 were reviewed.

6. REPORTS

a) Strategic Plan and Annual Accountability Statement

Members received a report from Claire Foster on the Strategic Plan 2023-2025 and Accountability Statement 2023.

It was noted that a working group of governors had assisted with development of the strategic plan. In response to a query from Gerry Tawton, Claire explained the improvement and stretch targets in the plan. Reporting on performance will come to the Corporation and David Earnshaw commented on the need for committee chairs to align their performance targets with the strategic plan targets. Sandra Williamson asked whether there will be feedback from stakeholders and how this would be captured. Claire advised that this is being considered by the Executive Leadership Team.

Members approved the Strategic Plan and Annual Accountability Statement.

b) Principal's

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

David Parnell asked about the management of artificial intelligence. Claire Foster advised that this is an area requiring careful management and needs innovative ways for checking learning. The Head of Digital Learning is leading the college's work on this.

David Earnshaw asked about the position with T levels and information was provided on plans and numbers for courses starting in 2023.

It was suggested that Ofsted refresher training for governors would be helpful. ●

c) Mayflower Project

Claire Foster gave an update on the Mayflower development. Contractors have been asked to look at value engineering and interviews with the Property Group will take place later in the month.

d) Finance

Members received a report from the Vice Principal: Finance and Corporate Services which included March management accounts.

Members were advised that the March accounts showed an improved position. Performance against the Adult Education Budget is being closely monitored. Work is progressing on the budget for next year and the budget briefing CPD session will be delivered at the June meeting of the Finance and Resources committee.

Gerry Tawton asked about pay costs and AEB clawback. Claire Foster advised that pay costs have been reduced by backfilling posts. Peter Cropley asked about shortfalls in contribution levels and whether there was a likelihood of these being increased. Losses at some catering outlets were noted and strategies for dealing with this were discussed.

Daran Bland asked about pay awards. Debbie Holland explained that pay awards are determined locally and that the college abides by the National Living Wage. In response to a query about variation in pay across local colleges, Claire advised that there are some local variations but the college tries to provide a place where people will want to work.

Members noted the letter from the Education and Skills Funding Agency confirming the college's financial health grade.

e) Safeguarding and Prevent Update

Members received a report from the Interim Head of Learner Services giving an overview and assurance of Safeguarding and Prevent procedures.

Sharon Posey's report included details of one complaint. Gavin Booth asked if there was anything to be learned from this and Sharon advised that it had given a lesson on how processes are used.

Sandra Williamson asked if there were any trends in safeguarding referrals and Sharon identified that mental health issues had increased and this feeds into action setting. Members asked to be provided with information on the level of growth particularly the movement over time.

Darren Bland suggested that the My Concern software making it easier to report issues could produce a spike in referrals. Sharon advised that there is a working group looking at these issues. In response to a query from Sandra about timescales, Sharon advised that, starting with existing cases, the implementation of the new software should make it ready for September. Sandra suggested that a risk assessment for this is needed. Heather Lee asked about notification to parents about concerns. Sharon told members that decisions to contact parents are contextual but there is no defined age for contacting learners' emergency contacts if necessary.

Members approved the safeguarding actions proposed.

f) Governance

Members received and discussed a report from the Clerk to the Corporation on committee vacancies.

It was agreed that Gavin Booth should join the Finance and Resources committee and that David Parnell and Gavin Booth should join the Search and Governance committee.

It was noted that the External Review of Governance report had been received and would be considered by the Search and Governance committee at its next meeting. A copy of the report is available on Teams.

g) OfS Reportable Events

Heather Marks confirmed that there was nothing to report to date but the change of Chair will be reported.

7. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Members were advised that Nick Worth was unable to stand for election as Chair due to an unexpected change of circumstances. The other candidates who had put themselves forward for the Chair and Vice Chair positions were David Earnshaw and Heather Lee.

It was agreed that David Earnshaw should be appointed as Chair of the Corporation and Heather Lee as Vice Chair of the Corporation with these appointments running until July 2024.

8. PETER CROPLEY

Claire Foster thanked Peter for his many years of outstanding service to the college. Peter responded by thanking members for their good wishes and gifts and particularly thanking David Earnshaw and Heather Lee for agreeing to step up to their new roles.

9. NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Corporation would take place on 5 July 2023.