



GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of Meeting on Thursday 8 March 2018

Present:	Mr J Kirk (<i>Chair</i>)	Chair of Governors
	Mr J Bagley	Principal
	Ms N Cuffy	Governor
	Ms S Gannon	Staff Governor
	Mr S Holderness	Vice-Chair of Governors
	Ms O Moyo	Student Governor
	Ms J Rossa	Governor
	Ms A Touseef	Student Governor
	In Attendance:	Ms N Martin
	Mr H Ravat	Vice-Principal
	Mr R Mansfield	Clerk

Ref.		Action
B/18/01	<p>Item 1 – Attendance and Membership Matters:</p> <p><i>1.1 Apologies for Absence</i> Apologies for absence were received from Harnish Hadani, Patsy Hamer, Riyaz Laher, Harshad Solanki and Ralph Wood. The meeting was declared quorate.</p> <p><i>1.2 Declarations of Interest in Agenda Items</i> Sarah Gannon declared an interest in agenda item 5.4.</p> <p><i>1.3 Governor Vacancies and Appointments</i> Robert Mansfield reported that the Search & Remuneration Committee had met on 8 February 2018. The fourth term of office of Margo Moore had expired on 28 February and John Kirk had written to thank her for her long service. The membership of the Board had reduced to 13. A paper would be presented at item 7.5 regarding a possible move towards a 'Carver' board, and in the light of this the Committee had recommended that in the short term future candidates should be limited to those with business experience. A further consequence of the retirement of Margo Moore had been the creation of a vacancy for the Safeguarding Governor. The Committee had established that Riyaz Laher</p>	

was eminently qualified to fulfil this role and he had offered to do so. The strength of the Audit Committee had fallen to two, and steps were being taken to try to find another (possibly co-opted) member.

The meeting unanimously appointed Riyaz Laher to serve as Safeguarding Governor.

B/18/02 Item 2 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising:

2.1 Minutes of Meeting on 19 December 2017

The minutes of the meeting on 19 December 2017 were accepted as an accurate record and were duly signed by John Kirk.

2.2 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Sarah Gannon said that she had not reported back whether a paper about future lesson observations had been circulated to staff but was unaware that it had. James Bagley confirmed that the use of RAG ratings in this context had been discontinued and said he would ensure this was recorded in the minutes of the Joint Consultative and Negotiating Committee.

JB

B/18/03 Item 3 – Curriculum and Quality Issues:

3.1 OfSTED Inspection January 2018

James Bagley reminded the meeting that the OfSTED Inspection Report had been recently distributed. There were no questions on this. He then introduced the Post-Inspection Action Plan (PIAP). This had been organized to fit with formal and informal feedback from OfSTED. He assured John Kirk that future reports of progress would follow the model established with the Performance Improvement Group for monitoring the previous PIAP.

Jackie Rossa questioned the source of the impact measures in the PIAP; she felt that their emphasis was weighted towards process improvement rather than impact on learners. James Bagley and Nicola Martin concurred, and said that impact was best evidenced by results, which would not be available until the next academic year. John Kirk suggested that the PIAP should include measures of impact on learners for actions where this was appropriate. Robert Mansfield advised that some measures of impact applied to the PIAP as a whole and urged caution in disaggregating them. James Bagley agreed. He asked the meeting to note also that some actions and measures had more to do with compliance. It was agreed that Robert Mansfield should distribute the PIAP by email to members after the meeting.

RM

The meeting received the Post-Inspection Action Plan.

3.2 Minutes of the Standards & Quality Committee 1 February 2018

John Kirk presented the minutes of the meeting of the Standards & Quality Committee on 1 February 2018 and invited questions. Jackie Rossa said that she was still waiting to receive requested reports on lesson observations. Robert Mansfield said he would ask Frances Rippin to send these at once, although the minutes showed the request as being for these reports to be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.

The meeting received the minutes of the Standards & Quality Committee.

RM

B/18/04

Item 4 – Student Issues:

4.1 Minutes of the Student Affairs Committee 29 January 2018

Ozlinah Moyo and Alishah Touseef presented a short report on matters of topical interest to students. A fund-raising event was to be held on 19 March though a final decision on the charity or charities to be supported had yet to be finalized. Concerns about the catering provided in the Canteen had been allayed after a productive meeting with the Canteen Manager. Following the mixed views expressed at the meeting of the Student Affairs Committee about lesson preparation and feedback there had been a survey of student opinion on five matters. The results were just to hand and provided a clearer picture on which to base local action. Of note was the fact that 33% of respondents did not consider the College gave sufficient printing credits.

Jackie Rossa said that she had been concerned by the comments about feedback on marked work. Alishah Touseef said that she considered feedback given more than one or two weeks after the event was of no value, and that giving feedback in class was inappropriate use of time. It was also unhelpful to be referred back to the teachers concerned. Jackie Rossa then raised challenges about whether students were really being heard. It was explained that the survey just undertaken was an appropriate response as the views expressed had been so mixed. The first step had to be to ascertain the locus of the concerns and how widespread they were. Sarah Gannon said that all subject areas had just received their own results. Jackie Rossa then asked if the Student Affairs Committee served a useful purpose. She was advised that the Committee had responded to the concerns expressed in a representative forum by instructing the action that led to the survey.

The meeting received the minutes of the Student Affairs Committee.

B/18/05 | **Item 5 – Estates, Finance and Staffing Issues:**

5.1 Minutes of the Finance, Staffing & General Purposes Committee 20 February 2018

Steve Holderness presented the minutes of the meeting of the Finance, Staffing & General Purposes Committee on 20 February 2018. The main points of his commentary on the matters considered were as follows. Current student numbers and the profile of those enrolled in the preceding year would cause a reduction in funding in 2018/2019 of about £1.7 million. Actions taken during the current year to improve the student funding profile would not affect funding until 2019/2020. In-year savings of £450K had been predicted, and he had urged a more ambitious target. Pay as a percentage of income had reduced to 66%; this improvement needed to be sustained. A significant negative variance had again been predicted on supply staff costs. He accepted however that the College should do what it could to avoid compulsory redundancies in the summer. James Baglet said that the College viewed this as the very last option. Steve Holderness advised the meeting that sickness absence for both teaching and corporate staff had risen above national benchmarks. It had been reported that for historical reasons class sizes were on average too small and the utilization of teachers too low. This could not be allowed to persist in future years. A four-year financial forecast had been presented (*see item 5.3 below*). This predicted a current year operating surplus of £405K and contained a provision of £180K for restructuring costs. After this the College would operate in deficit for two years. The four-year plan was exposed to five main risks, all of which would need to be carefully managed.

The catering contract was due to conclude at the end of 2017/2018; it was understood that Midshire Catering were interested in continuing to work with the College in spite of disappointing outcomes to date. The sports facilities account had shown a 20% increase in activity in 2016/2017 and a modest surplus. The Committee had received the combined Admissions and Marketing Plan, though details of progress remained to be entered. A report on complaints during 2016/2017 showed that these had generally been managed to appropriate conclusions.

The meeting received the minutes of the Finance, Staffing & General Purposes Committee.

5.2 Operating Results

Hamid Ravat presented the headlines of the operating results to January 2018. Performance was now being compared with the revised forecast for the current academic year. The

Income & Expenditure account showed a deficit of £1K (£35K behind budget). Income was £1K above budget. Pay expenditure was £29K above budget prior to the impact of national pay awards. The main adverse variance related to Supply Staff. Operating expenditure was £10K above budget, the main variances relating to MIS development costs (£10K adverse) and Examinations (£15K favourable, for seasonal reasons). The cash balance was healthy at nearly £2.6 million and was expected to rise by the year end to £2.8 million.

The meeting received the operating results.

5.3 Revised Financial Forecast 2017/2021

Hamid Ravat presented the revised financial forecast for 2017/2021. This had been shared with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), with whom the College was currently in early financial intervention. The revised forecast was a detailed development of the strategic financial plan prepared by Martin Sim. The plan was based upon a phased approach designed to manage the College's future without huge upheaval, thereby retaining the commitment and goodwill of staff. He described the College's plan to grow steadily to a roll of 1,550 students in the face of a slight decline in the local student population over the next few years. The intention was to save £800K in pay and non-pay costs combined through natural wastage, voluntary redundancy and effective control of costs. The plan predicted two years of deficit, funded by using £900K of cash reserves, before returning to modest surplus. John Kirk thanked Hamid Ravat for his accurate, transparent and regular reporting of the College's finances and said that the College now had a clear, if challenging, way forward.

The meeting received the revised financial forecast.

5.4 Teaching Staff National Pay Settlement

Hamid Ravat presented a short paper setting out the terms of the national pay award for teachers, which had been influenced by trade union aims to maintain parity with the schools sector. The award varied slightly from the flat 'across the board' 1% previously discussed. The additional cost to the College was about £5K or 0.13%. Nelista Cuffy urged the meeting to retain compliance with national agreements. John Kirk concurred, particularly as staff had responded well during the recent Inspection.

The meeting endorsed the national pay award for teaching staff.

B/18/06

Item 6 – Admissions and Marketing Issues:

6.1 Admissions and Marketing Plan 2017/2018

Nicola Martin presented the recently combined admissions and marketing plan. This was in the course of further revision to include targets with a particular emphasis on increasing student numbers. Elements included low cost action with feeder schools. She was pleased to report a very positive response to interviews, which had just started. There was further work to do with College management on the College mission, vision and values. Robert Mansfield reminded the meeting that these were matters that required the approval of the Board. Nelista Cuffy said that, given the College's location away from the city centre, it had to work harder to be visible. She supported the emphasis in the plan on going into schools and having candidates visit the College campus. Steve Holderness urged the College to regard all schools without sixth forms across the county as its targets. John Kirk said he had been shocked in recent conversations to discover the level of ignorance about the College's curriculum offer. Nicola Martin reported encouraging feedback via Connexions to the effect that the College was viewed as having high expectations of its students as well as providing excellent support. James Bagley informed the meeting that the College was involved in a pilot project run by the Sixth Form Colleges Association using recent work by the Behavioural Insight Team. John Kirk said he was encouraged to see that the College had a coherent plan.

The meeting received the admissions and marketing plan.

B/18/07

Item 7 – Governance Issues:

7.1 Behaviour for Learning Policy (revised)

Nicola Martin presented the revised behaviour for learning policy. This had been strengthened by the addition of references to rewards as well as sanctions. The policy had been commended by the Standards & Quality Committee.

The meeting received the behavior for learning policy.

7.2 Teaching Learning and Assessment Policy (revised)

John Kirk noted that the revised policy was now entitled the teaching learning and assessment policy. The policy had been commended by the Standards & Quality Committee.

The meeting received the teaching learning and assessment policy.

7.3 Annual Complaints Report 2016/2017

Comment on this item had been made earlier under item 5.1.

The meeting received the report.

7.4 Annual Equalities Report 2016/2017

James Bagley presented the annual equalities report for 2016/2017. It was noted that no external benchmarks had been found. James Bagley said that internal comparisons were often most useful for learners.

The meeting received the report.

7.5 Moving towards 'Carver' Governance

Robert Mansfield presented short papers relating to 'Carver' Governance, a model that had been under consideration for some time by the Search and Remuneration Committee. There appeared to be various versions of this in operation in the FE sector, although specific details were hard to access. 'Carver' governance held out the prospects of better use of time by avoiding duplication of effort and reducing the number of attendances but called for better MIS, a comprehensive data dashboard and a higher quality of contribution from governors. Steve Holderness questioned the need to change the present model, with which he was comfortable. Robert Mansfield said that any changes would be made only after further exploration and through the usual process of discussion and consensus. As a next step John Kirk, James Bagley and Robert Mansfield were to meet with Kevin Finnegan with a view to expanding his remit at the forthcoming training session to include the reports needed to support Carver governance.

The meeting noted this report.

B/18/08 Item 8 – Dates and Times of Next Meetings:

The dates and times of the next meetings were confirmed as:

- Saturday 14 April 2018 at 9.00 a.m. at the College (training session)
- Thursday 26 April 2018 at 5.30 p.m. at the College (Board meeting).

B/18/09 Item 9 – Any Other Business:

There was no other business.

Staff and Student Governors and senior staff members then left the meeting, which remained quorate, prior to consideration of confidential matters.

B/18/10 Item 10 Confidential Items:

10.1 Minute of Confidential Session 19 December 2017

The minute of the confidential session on 19 December 2017 was accepted as an accurate record and was duly signed by John Kirk.

10.2 Minutes of the Search & Remuneration Committee 8 February 2018

The meeting received the minutes of the meeting of the Search & Remuneration Committee on 8 February 2018.