

MINUTES

Corporation No 121

Date: *14/07/2015 (Tuesday)*

Time: *18:00–20:00*

Venue: *Bowland Suite*

Committee: *Corporation*

Notes: *Refreshments will be available from 5.30pm.*

Present: *Adrian Boreham, Allan Foster, Ann Turner (Principal), Clare Platt, Garry Payne, Gerry Corless, Ian Douglass, Ian Higginbotham, James Hodgkinson, Jean Yates, Jessica Moore, Jolyon Dodgson, Marion Nuttall, Robert Robinson and Steve Rigby (Chairman)*

Attending: *Alison Robinson (Vice Principal), Jennifer Eastham (Deputy Principal) and John Wherry (Deputy Principal)*

Clerks: *Ron Matthews (Clerk) and Susan Whiteside (Deputy Clerk)*

Guests: *Naveed Sharif (Co-opted Member)*

Apologies: *Ishwer Tailor (Co-opted Member), Stuart Heys (Vice Chairman) and Tony Hindle*

Public Minutes

Item number: Item description:
(and category)

37.15 Attendance of Co-opted Members of Committees and College Management

Decision

Standing Order 13 states that:

As a matter of policy all meetings of the Corporation and its committees will be held in private. The agendas and minutes and supporting papers of its public business will be made available to the general public.

However:

(a) The Principal shall be authorised to invite members of staff to attend in their employed capacity for both public and confidential business as appropriate and in accordance with Standing Order 25.

(b) The Corporation however, may exclude members of staff from attending any business that it deems necessary.

(c) Attendance by any other person shall be at the discretion of the Corporation following advice from the Principal or the Clerk.

Resolved:

That members of the senior management team be invited to attend the meeting.

38.15 Apologies for Absence

Record

Apologies for absence had been received from Stuart Heys, Tony Hindle and Jolyon Dodgson.

39.15 Public Minutes of Previous Meeting

Decision

The public minutes of meeting number 118 held on Tuesday 17 March 2015 were confirmed and signed as a true and correct record.

40.15 Declarations of Interest

Record

There were no declarations of interest

41.15 Chair's Opening Remarks

Information

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and on behalf of the Board presented Jennifer Eastham DP Finance & Funding with a gift and flowers. Jennifer was attending her last Governor meeting and leaving Myerscough to take up the post of Vice Principal at Blackburn College. Members wished her well and thanked her for the outstanding financial management of the College throughout her time at Myerscough. They

also commented on the good working relationship she had maintained with the Board. Jennifer responded appropriately. He also referred to the success of the recent Graduation and Awards Ceremonies and the Queen's visit to the College

Resolved:

That the Chairman's opening remarks be received.

42.15

Decision

Student Voice

Corporation gave consideration to the Myerscough Student Union (MSU) End of Year Report 2014 / 2015 prepared by the outgoing Student President.

The report contained details of social and sports activities. Funds had been raised for the MSUs charity of the year, the North West Air Ambulance. In terms of social sport the re-formation of the Northern Counties league, led by Myerscough students who had linked in with Sports makers at other Colleges, had been well received amongst the participating Colleges. A variety of sports were played and Myerscough College came out as season champions.

A new permanent post, Student Liaison Officer had been created to support the Union and give continuity. The role of Student President continued but with the position filled by an elected student currently studying at the College rather than a sabbatical post as had been the case in recent years. The Myerscough Student Union Constitution and Terms of Reference had been updated to reflect the changes.

Resolved:

- I. **That the Myerscough Student Union End of Year Report be approved.**
- II. **That the amended Myerscough Student Union Constitution and Terms of Reference be approved.**

43.15

Consultation

Government Documents

Corporation gave consideration to the:

The FE Commissioner's Letter and the report it referred to, '**Department for Business, Innovation and Skills- current models of collaboration – post 14 further education**'.

As budgets tighten across the sector more Colleges were looking at rationalisation and collaboration. The letter referred to a review of

established and successful collaborations listing the key conclusions. Detail was available in the full report.

Corporation commented on the report taking into consideration strategic direction of Myerscough and its current strong financial position.

Resolved:

That the Government Documents be received.

44.15

Consultation

Governor Involvement

Those members who had attended events, training and / or College meetings reported verbally to Corporation. They had found the engagement to be positive and helpful in providing some underpinning knowledge and understanding of the College and its stakeholders.

Resolved:

That the verbal update on Governor Involvement be received.

45.15

Decision

Report of the Audit & Governance Committee of 21 April 2015

The Vice Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee reported on an item requiring Corporation approval and a number of items for information.

Membership of Corporation – Co-opted Governor Ishwer Tailor

The current term of office for Ishwer Tailor as a Co-opted Member of the Audit & Governance Committee was due to expire on 31 July 2015 at which time he would have completed two, one year terms of office.

Following due consideration and recommendation by Audit & Governance Committee it was

Resolved:

That Ishwer Tailor be re-appointed as a Co-opted Member of the Audit & Governance Committee for a further one year period commencing 1 August 2015.

Matters for the Information of the Corporation

Audit & Governance Committee had given consideration to the following matters and expressed satisfaction with responses to questions, content and management actions.

Internal Audit Report – February 2015

The following areas had been audited:

1. **Information Technology Control Environment Assessment** - Two medium priority and four low priority recommendations were made concerning back up options, disaster recovery testing, security, policy reviews and procedures around leavers' accounts.
2. **Student Records - Additional Learning Support (ALS) and High Learner Needs (HNL)** - Two low priority recommendations were made relating to administration.
3. **Student Bursaries** - One low priority recommendation was made relating to dissemination and updating of policy documents.

Internal Audit Progress Report – Baker Tilly

The report provided an update on progress against the internal audit plan for 2014 / 2015. There was one further assignment to complete - Income Generation.

Internal Audit Progress Report and Summary Report Of 34

recommendations 27 had been implemented, 4 were on-going, 2 were not yet due and no items were outstanding. A number of longstanding items had been cleared.

Risk Management Summary Plan 2014 / 2015 The report focused on the key risks on the Risk Register. The major concerns related to funding risks. Scores had not changed. Additional comments had been added to notify Committee of Management actions.

Skills Funding Agency – Notice of Financial Health

A letter from the Skills Funding Agency confirmed the College's Financial Health as 'Outstanding'. The College's underlying financial health grade had been assessed as 'Good' based on the College's financial plan for 2014 / 2015 to 2015 / 2016 but following a review of the College's audited financial statements the underlying grade was now assessed as 'Outstanding'.

Data Returns Report

The College had met all necessary submission deadlines for statutory data required by the funding bodies.

Money Laundering

At the time of the Audit & Governance meeting, College had not received the report from the Inspection undertaken by HMRC in February 2015.

Governor Recruitment

The process and Interview Panel had been agreed.

Governor Training

An update was provided on the proposals for the Governor Training event to be held on 16 June 2015.

Corporation Quality Improvement Plan

Committee had expressed satisfaction on progress with the Corporation Quality Improvement Plan.

Corporation, Committee and Chairs Appraisals

It was agreed to continue the format of surveying Governors following the summer cycle of meetings.

Code of Good Governance

Reported on separately Corporation minute 51.15 refers. Audit & Governance Committee had recommended that Corporation adopt the Code.

Resolved:

That the items for information from the Audit & Governance Committee of 21 April 2015 be received.

46.15

Consultation

Report of the Finance & Resources Committee of 9 June 2015

The Finance & Resources Committee Chair reported on a number of items for information.

The Principals Strategic Plan Progress Report - Targets were mostly being met and exceeded with overall financial performance strong and in line with the Strategic Plan.

Financial Position Statement for Period Ended 30 April 2015 - The statement showed College generating a 7.1% surplus as a percentage of income Pre-FRS17 which was ahead of target to date. The balance sheet remained healthy with, a current ratio of 1:1.35 and cash days of 69.95.

Capital and Revenue Cash Flow for Period Ended 30 April 2015 - Cash levels exceeded the forecasted levels as some planned projects had not yet occurred.

Capital Expenditure Report for Period Ended 30 April 2015 -

Expenditure was within the agreed 3% tolerance of the plan. Projects were on schedule to be delivered to planned time frames.

Myerscough Ventures Report for Period Ended 30 April 2015 - The income contribution, excluding the Farm was on profile. With the addition of the Farm the contribution fell £18k short of target.

Trade Debts Levels – Corporation noted the current level of debt, the policies being employed to recover debt and outstanding debt. The Credit Control and Debt Management Policy remained fit for purpose.

College Investments – The total cumulative interest to 30 April 2015 was reported and it was agreed there be no change to the listed agreed banks. It was agreed the DP Finance & Funding should continue to invest monies according to the parameters laid down in the Treasury Management Policy and Procedure and utilise the more favourable rate identified at Lloyds Bank. Finance & Resources Committee had endorsed the change in the Treasury Management Policy which allowed investment of up to £2.5m in Lloyds bank. In other respects the Policy remained fit for purpose and reflected the College's attitude to risk.

FRS 102 - The new FE / HE SORP Reporting Standards

FRS 102, the main new UK GAPP (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) standard was replacing the current reporting standards. FRS 102 impacts on the SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice) which defines how Colleges and Universities must present their accounts. The key differences had been demonstrated through provision of copies of the 2013 / 2014 Income & Expenditure account, balance sheet and the ratios in both the old and new formats. The new standard would be applicable for the 2015 / 2016 accounts.

Financial Health – Good financial management was acknowledged, the skills Funding Agency had confirmed the College's Financial Health as 'Outstanding'. The underlying grade had been predicted to score at 'Good' but was also judged to be 'Outstanding'. A planned drop to 'Good' for the next two years would allow financing of the agreed Capital Plan.

Student Bursary Funds Allocation 2015 / 2016 - The bursaries which served to recruit, support and retain students who faced barriers to participation and were eligible for financial support were agreed. Processes and criteria were similar to previous years. The sum involved was close to £1M. The following were agreed:

1. **FE Bursary Fund Policy 2015 / 2016**
2. **FE Bursary Fund Application Form 2015 / 2016**
3. **FE Bursary Continuing Application Form 2015 / 2016**
4. **HE Bursary Fund Policy 2015 / 2016**
5. **HE Bursary Fund Application Form 2015 / 2016**
6. **HE Duchy of Lancaster Application Form 2015 / 2016**

7. Scholarship Application Form 2015 / 2016

Higher Education Access Agreement – The Office for Fair Access had approved the statutory College Access Agreement which set out the tuition fees and financial support arrangements for students entering higher education programmes at Myerscough College that were contained in the direct contract with HEFCE from 1 September 2016.

Human Resources Report for the Period Ended 30 April 2015 - The Human Resources Statistics report provided information on staff turnover, stability index and levels of staff sickness together with areas for improvement and a report on actions taken and their impact. The most common reason for staff leaving was recorded as promotion and salary level. It was also pointed out that some movement of staff was healthy to the organisation. The outsourcing of the Residential Services had taken effect from March 2015, this had resulted in a reduction in the College sickness statistics, although long term sickness was just missing target.

Health and Safety Report for the period ended 30 April 2015 - The Report provided an analysis of accident statistics over the period together with other Health and Safety activity including policy updates, staff training, free health checks, auditing and inspections. Two RIDDOR reportable accidents had occurred in the period but with no further investigation. Slips, trips and falls remained the most reported accidents at 43% of total. The overall number of accidents was down on the same period last year. Corporation expressed satisfaction with the management of the various aspects of the College's finances, Human Resources activity, and Health & Safety matters for the period ended 30 April 2015 and was pleased to note that overall the finances of the College remained in a healthy state.

Resolved:

That the above matters of information from the Finance & Resources Committee meeting of 9 June 2015 be received and actions endorsed.

47.15 Decision

Report of the Audit & Governance Committee of 30 June 2015

The Vice Chair of the Audit & Governance Committee reported on items requiring Corporation approval and a number of items for information.

Financial Statements Audit and Regularity Audit Annual Plan for the Year Ending 31 July 2015.

The External Audit representative presented the Audit Plan prepared by Baker Tilly, the College Financial Statements and Regularity Auditors, for

audit work relating to the year ending 31 July 2015. The Audit Plan included details of the fee for 2015. Key areas of audit focus would be income recognition, pension scheme liabilities, going concern, management override of controls, staff costs, accommodation / capital development and key financial controls.

Resolved:

That the Financial Statements / Regularity Audit Plan for the Year Ending 31 July 2015 be approved.

Student Governor Appointments

The Student Body had followed due procedure and appointed Megan Cook as its Student President who would take her place as Student Governor according to the Student Union Constitution and Terms of Reference, and had recommended Rachel Lawson as its second Student Governor. The appointments were for the academic year 2015 / 2016. Both students were studying on Equine honours degree programmes. Corporation noted a policy change, earlier minute 41.15 refers, in that the 2015 / 2016 student President was a continuing student, rather than a sabbatical post.

Resolved:

1. **That Megan Cook and Rachel Lawson's appointments to the Board be ratified.**
2. **That Megan Cook's appointment as Student President be noted**

Timetable of Meetings 2015 – 2016

The Timetable of Meetings for 2015 – 2016 which had been compiled along previous lines was considered. Reference was made to poor attendance at some of the recent Governor Training Events. It was suggested that, apart from the SAR training event in November / December each year, the remaining two training events be cancelled and training be delivered prior to each Corporation meeting starting in September with PREVENT training for Governors.

Resolved:

- I. **That the timetable of meetings be agreed subject to the recommendations above.**
- II. **Governor training be delivered prior to each Corporation meeting.**

Membership of Committees

Consideration was given to the membership of Committees for 2015 / 2016

Resolved:

That the current Committee membership remain.

Other matters for the information of the Corporation

Internal Audit Report – May 2015

An audit of the key controls that support the College's Income Generation framework was undertaken. The review focused on the work of the Skills & Development Team relating to short courses for leisure and industry, external grant bids, and projects undertaken by the Team. There was one low priority recommendation which advised that a Policy and Procedure document be developed to encompass the whole process of identifying, approving, assessing and monitoring short courses.

Internal Audit Progress Summary Report Incorporating Internal Audit

The College's summary showed that of the 24 recommendations proposed, 17 had been implemented, 4 were on-going, 2 were not yet due, 1 was no longer applicable and no items were outstanding.

Internal Audit Assignments End of Year Summary 2014 / 2015

Overall at this stage Baker Tilly had not identified any significant issues which could have an impact upon the statement that the Audit & Governance Committee would be required to make at the end of the year in relation to the College's governance, risk management and internal control systems.

Internal Audit Plan for 2015 / 2016

The agreed Audit Plan assignments for 2015 / 2016 were:

1. Employer Engagement - review of procedures to increase and enhance employer engagement within the College.
2. Student Accommodation – review of the College's compliance with statutory legislation and student compliance with the Accommodation code of conduct
3. Governance – review of the effectiveness of assurances provided to Corporation with linkage to the risk management process
4. Subcontracting and Partnership provision – a review linked around quality, Board awareness and justification

5. Staff Appraisal and Performance Management – the review will include links to lesson observations.

The plan also included provision to test the degree of implementation of actions from the previous academic year which would serve as a quality check on the College's own action tracking process. In addition there was an audit management allocation to be used at Partner, Manager and Assistant Manager level for quality control, liaison and preparation for and attendance at Audit & Governance Committee meetings.

Baker Tilly – Change of Name

The Committee considered a letter received from Baker Tilly indicating that with effect from 26 October 2015 they would be changing their name to RSM now being part of RSM International.

Risk Management Summary Plan 2014 / 2015

The Plan focused on the key risks on the Risk Register. There were a number of questions raised about elements within the summary report and management responded to all matters raised to the satisfaction of the Committee.

Data Returns Report

The Committee considered the report on the above document noting the completion, on time, of all statutory data returns required by the relevant funding bodies.

Joint Audit Code of Practice – Consultation Document

The Deputy Principal, Finance and Funding reported to Corporation that she had received the above document which had just been published, and had sought comments by 17 July 2015. The code was to be implemented with effect from 1 August 2015 and applied to this year's audit of the accounts. There did not appear to be any significant amendments to the previous versions of Part 1 and Part 2 and therefore management did not feel it necessary to reply to the consultation. Corporation noted a full report on the final document would be presented to the November meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee.

Governor Vacancies

Following interviews of three potential candidates, appointments as a Governor or Co-opted Governor were not recommended. The vacancies had been re-advertised and the emphasis of land-based experience removed. Board Members were asked to inform the Clerk and the Principal of potential candidates. The interview and selection panel would remain as previous.

Governance Quality Improvement Plan

All documented actions had been completed.

Internal Audit Performance Review 2014/15

The Committee had agreed the Deputy Principal, Finance & Funding's scoring of the Performance Indicators. The clerk would submit the document to the relevant bodies.

Appointment/Re-appointment/Dismissal and Remuneration of the Internal Auditors for the Year Ending 31 July 2016

The re-appointment of the Internal Audit Services provided by Baker Tilly for the year 2015 / 2016 at the remuneration indicated in their tender documentation was agreed.

Baker Tilly would be commencing the final year of their 3 year contract and, as such, Internal Audit Provider would be an agenda item at the February 2016 Audit & Governance Committee meeting.

Audit Committee Annual Cycle of Business 2015 / 2016

The Annual Cycle of Business for 2015 / 2016 was agreed.

Resolved:

That the above items from the Audit & Governance Committee be received.

48.15

Consultation***Report of the Quality and Standards Committee of 7 July 2015***

The Chairman of the Quality and Standards Committee reported on a number of items of information.

Strategic Plan Progress Report July 2015

The performance indicators related to top level targets around teaching and learning and research and were picked up in more detail throughout the meeting

In Year Performance Data 2014 / 2015:

The reports were detailed and informative containing a wide variety of statistics measured across various parameters.

FE Attendance and Retention Report – Overall College FE retention was expected to hold at 93%. Variants from the norm were noted which included, 16-18 exceptional entrants retention rate at 85.4% and 19 plus retention at 100%.

Corporation noted the actions in the report, including references to GCSEs and valued added measures and around attendance and culture change activities at the Merseyside Centre at Croxteth. Good practice

was highlighted and key areas for improvement and further monitoring would appear in the next report.

Work Based Learning 2014/2015 - The achievement of 16-18 apprentices at period 10 was 75% overall and 60% timely with forecasts indicating final results would fall short of College targets, though these scores would meet and be above national averages. The improved retention over the current year should manifest in the 2015 / 2016 and 2016 / 2017 success rates.

Employer satisfaction rates were high with increased numbers of businesses engaged with the College.

Members asked questions around emerging national issues in the sector concerning apprenticeships, noting expansion as a key Government priority, and were briefed on Management's activities in this area.

In Year Performance Data HE - Overall retention was at 96%, above last year (93%) and 2012 / 2013 (93%). There was a 3% reduction in the need for summer re-assessments. New Masters programmes were being introduced, research income was ahead of target, Myerscough remained in the top slot of the published Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) list, HEFCE funding had been secured for a scholarly activity programme and Myerscough continued to recruit and expand its own directly funded students.

Learner Voice

The Committee considered the results of the four mid-year FE Surveys, Foundation Learning, 14-16 Learners, Further Education full time students and Work-place Learning. Outcomes from Course Representative Meetings and the Golden Rose Awards also received consideration. The Vice Principal explained actions taken, and to be taken as a result of the above feedback.

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The Committee considered the above report which showed trends in performance compared to last year for lesson observations. Lesson observations had taken place, 92% showed 'good or outstanding teaching' (observations Graded 1 or 2) which was 2% up on last year. Grade 1 teaching was up in HE but down in FE compared to last year. The report also provided information on a wide variety of other initiatives and projects which included the recent Teaching and Learning Fair, Staff training, the Improving Teacher Programme, a review of on-line modules, awarding body audits including the rigorous and in depth Enhanced Confirmation Sampling connected to BTEC courses, and the College's virtual learning environment (BLOOM).

Quality Improvement Plan 2014-2015

Most elements of the Plan had either been achieved or were in progress.

Landex Peer Review Report

The Landex Review had focussed on English and Maths, Foundation Learning, Workplace Learning, and Equine. This ensured that areas not included in the Ofsted Through the Lens Project where Myerscough had linked with Reaseheath College were scrutinised. The report outlined the main recommendations arising out of the review and actions already taken and the further actions proposed to address the recommendations.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan - Update

The majority of actions had been achieved within the target date and only those actions not yet due remained to be completed.

College continued to work towards being recognised as 'Leaders in Diversity' and as part of this journey expected to achieve the standard, 'Investors in Diversity Stage 2' by the end of the first academic term.

College Self-Assessment Report (SAR) – Validation

The Chair of the Quality & Standards Committee would attend the validation day with College Management for the full SAR. Following this a training session in December would be utilised to provide opportunity for the full Board to consider the top level SAR before submission to Corporation for final approval.

Annual Cycle of Business 2015/2016

The Annual Cycle of Business for the forthcoming year was agreed.

Resolved:

That the above items be received

49.15

Decision

Appointment of Chair and Vice Chair of Corporation for 2015 / 2016

Following due process it was agreed that the current Chair and current Vice Chair serve for a third one year term in their respective positions.

Corporation Resolved:

- I. **That Stephen Rigby be appointed Chair of the Corporation for a one year term commencing 1 September 2015**
- II. **That Stuart Heys be appointed Vice Chair of the Corporation for a one year term commencing 1 September 2015.**

50.15 ***Appointment of College Patron***
Decision Following consideration of this matter at the last meeting Edwin Booth had confirmed his willingness to continue to serve as College Patron for a further period of four years commencing 1 August 2015.

Resolved:

That Edwin Booth be re-appointed as College Patron for a 4 year term commencing 1 August 2015

51.15 ***Self-Assessment Report 2015***
Information Arrangements were in hand to circulate the Governors Self-Assessment Survey later in the month.
Corporation gave consideration to the results from last year which had been benchmarked with five other North West Colleges and a paper showing each College's results was also included.
A Governor training session was being held on Tuesday 1 December at 6pm for Governors to consider, in greater detail, the full College Self-Assessment Report prior to consideration at the December Corporation meeting.

Resolved:

That the Self-Assessment Report 2015 be received.

52.15 ***Code of Good Governance***
Decision The Code of Governance had been published in the Spring and the Audit & Governance Committee, at its meeting on 21 April 2015 had recommended Corporation adopt the Code. Corporation gave consideration to the final version of the Code together with an analysis by the Clerk on progress, evidence and the actions required for the College to comply fully with the Code.

Resolved:

- I. **That the Code of Good Governance be adopted.**
- II. **That the plan to assume full compliance with the Code be agreed**

53.15 ***Internal Customer Satisfaction Survey***
Consultation Corporation gave consideration to the results of the recent internal customer satisfaction survey completed by staff. The survey included three questions relating to Governance. The Board welcomed the continuation of the programme of engagement activities open to individual Governors.

Resolved:

That the Internal Customer Satisfaction Survey be received.

54.15

Decision

Away Event 2016

Corporation discussed the provisional arrangements that were being finalised by the Clerk, Chairman and Principal for the Governors Away Event. Following comment the event would be held at Garstang Country Hotel and Golf Course on 22 and 23 January 2016. Provision to stay overnight and close after a session on the Saturday morning was being considered.

Resolved:

That the Governor Away Event be held on 22 and 23 January 2016 at the Garstang Country Hotel and Golf Club.

55.15

Decision

Independence of the Clerk

The Clerk to the Corporation must provide independent, unbiased and impartial advice to the Corporation at all times. Adherence to the policy '*Independence of the Clerk*' had enabled him to demonstrate his independence. Corporation Members agreed the current policy '*Independence of the Clerk*' to be fit for purpose.

Resolved:

That the Independence of the Clerk Policy be approved as submitted.

56.15

Decision

Annual Cycle of Business

The Corporation gave consideration to its Cycle of Business for 2014 / 2015. The Governor Extranet would be populated with the dates for meetings and College events.

Resolved:

That the Corporation Business Cycle be approved.

Chairman: Robert Robinson and Steve Rigby

Signed:

Date: