

GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 25th January 2016 at Barnstaple Campus

Present: Paul Petrides (Chair), Jeff Andrew (Items 7-19), Martin Chance, Andrew Chapple, Shaun Cooper (Items 7-19), Charlie Curzon (Items 1-18), Ro Day (Items 1-18), Diane Dimond (Items 1-19 (part)), Laura Elliott (Items 1-18), David Gibson, Andrew Mosedale, Lee Thommen (Items 1-18), Eirene Williams.

In attendance: Jane Barton (Items 1-18), Neil Hookway (Items 1-16), Susan Lewry and Pené Prior (Items 1-18).

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Kevin Finan, Martyn Gimber, Andrew Pierce and Paula Stein.

2. Governance

2.1 The appointment of Amy Bayet as Student Governor was confirmed.

2.2 There having been only one nomination for the position as Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, it was proposed, and unanimously agreed, that Andrew Pierce be appointed Vice-Chair of the Governing Body for the remainder of the 2015/2016 academic year.

2.3 Governors noted that minimal revisions had been made to the procedure for the Election of Chair and Vice Chair, which are available in the Board Papers app.

3. Confidential Items

3.1 It was agreed that the confidential minutes of the last meeting (Item 21), the Estates update (Item 14) the HR update (Item 15), Multi Academy Trust (Item 17), notes from the Awayday (Item 18) and the discussion and confidential minutes of the Remuneration Committee (Item 19) would remain confidential to the Governing Body, for the time being.

4. Declaration of Interests

- 4.1 The Principal and the Clerk declared an interest in Item 19, confidential minutes of the Remuneration Committee held on 21st January 2016.

5. Minutes

- 5.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 9th December 2015 were confirmed and signed.

6. Matters arising from the minutes

- 6.1 **Item 12 – Projects** – The Principal advised Governors that the bid to the Home Office in connection with the Prevent Agenda, was not successful.

7. Business brought forward by direction of the Chair

- 7.1 Governors were advised that John Laramy had been appointed as the new Principal of Exeter College.
- 7.2 Governors were advised that Keith Devine, Assistant Principal, Arts and Science, had given notice to retire in July 2016.
- 7.3 Governors were also advised that Pené Prior, Deputy Principal/Director for Quality and Performance, had also given notice to retire at the end of this academic year.
- 7.4 Governors wished to record their thanks and good wishes to Pené and Keith and thank them for their hard work and dedication to the College and wish them well for the future.

8. International Strategy

- 8.1 Received and considered an update on the development of an International Strategy from the Principal.
- 8.2 The Principal outlined the changes in the educational landscape over the past year, in particular the Government's focus on the apprenticeship agenda, which fits with the College's own Strategic Plan, and the revised Tier 4 requirements. It was recommended that, whilst continuing to progress with work on 'internationalising' the curriculum and marketing materials, so that the College is 'open for business' to international learners, the resource given to this area is scaled back, whilst the college will remain alert to opportunities in this area.
- 8.3 Governors approved the course of action proposed.

9. Annual Report to the Community

- 9.1 Received and considered the Annual Report to the Community for approval.

- 9.2 Governors made some small suggestions on the layout of the report and approved it, subject to consideration of the observations made.

10. Strategic Risk Management and Board Assurance

- 10.1 As agreed at the December Board, following the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Acting Director for Finance and Funding presented the Board with a report on the two strategic risks identified for review. The risks identified for review were:
- 10.2 Risk: Curriculum planned and offered does not provide the qualifications and training to meet the local students', local employers' job market needs or LEP priorities or Hinkley C opportunities.
- 10.3 Risk: A failure, or the inability, to invest in the IT infrastructure, the latest learning technologies and staff CPD TEL training.
- 10.4 Governors reviewed the controls in place to assure themselves that adequate controls have been identified to mitigate the risks. Governors were reminded that the Audit Committee would be reviewing the full register at their termly meetings, but that it was agreed that the Governing Body review, say, two risks per term to enable them to concur with the assurance given.
- 10.5 The Acting Director for Finance and Funding, Jane Barton, was thanked for all her hard work in bringing together the strategic risks and board assurance monitoring into one framework.

11. Quality Report

- 11.1 Received and considered the Quality Report from the Deputy Principal/Director for Quality and Performance which focuses on feedback from learners through a number of surveys or forums, undertaken in the autumn term.
- 11.2 The Deputy Principal/Director for Quality and Performance outlined the changes to the timings of surveys, which were made following feedback from learners and which would give the opportunity for a broad mixture of internal and external feedback from the College's learners for the College to use as an improvement tool.
- 11.3 College Management responded to a number of queries on the data provided in the report and, in response to a particular question, Governors were advised that, following enquiries, the Banks would not install cash machines at either Mid Devon or Brannams campus as the footfall would not make it feasible.

12. IT Strategy

- 12.1 Received and considered an update on the IT Strategy from the Director for Resources.

12.2 In response to questions raised by Governors, College Management advised that the IT Strategy presented to the meeting focused on hardware but, in response to questions regarding teaching and learning, Governors were asked to note:

- The Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) strategy is based on using the existing and longstanding Petroc Moodle platform and the large existing repository of learning materials stored there which have been created by college lecturers;
- The College has purchased additional XTLearn software;
- The College is now part of a consortium of 35 colleges developing common Scheduled On-Line Learning Assessment (SOLA) units (led by the Heart of Worcester College (HOW)).

12.3 It was reported that the College is working towards having one strategy plan for IT/TEL in the future.

12.4 Governors discussed blended learning and the opportunities for potential cost savings for young learners learning at home, but the Deputy Principal/Director for Quality and Performance advised that the funding requirements state that for Study Programme learners aged 16-18 the Guided Learning Hours (GLH) need to be supervised in order to qualify for funding, so young learners would still need to be in College for the required number of hours, if not to impact on the College's income. The college has a large number of adults studying on line learning courses bought in from external on-line learning companies, but there may be opportunities for the college to develop its own adult on-line learning packages and these ideas are being explored.

12.5 Governors noted the update on the IT Strategy and that a strategy for IT and TEL would be brought to the Board at a later date.

13. Finance Report

13.1 (a) Management Accounts

Received and considered the Month 4 Management Accounts. The Principal highlighted the pressure on the budget at the current time, which she had alerted Governors to in previous discussions.

The Principal clarified the figures for pay as a percentage of income, which are shown in the report both including and excluding projects, for clarity.

Governors were asked to note that ESF money would now be distributed through the LEP, but that an allocation to the SW had not yet been made.

Governors discussed the pressure on the finances in detail, and the likelihood of further cuts, but noted the steps being taken by the College to mitigate by focusing on areas for growth.

13.2 (b) Project Performance Report

Received and considered a project performance update from the acting Director for Finance and Funding. In particular, Governors were asked to note that the College had recently undergone an 'Article 13' audit and a clean 'bill of health' was received.

Governors discussed the reduction in project funding and suggested ways in which opportunities for growth could be explored. Governors were keen to be available to offer advice, in their areas of expertise, to members of College management, and expressed their willingness to be contacted.

13.3 (c) Treasury Management Policy

Received, considered and approved the small revisions to the Treasury Management Policy.

14. Estates Report - Confidential

15. HR Summary Report - Confidential

16. Stakeholder Event

16.1 Governors were reminded of the details of the two events being held on 5th February (Barnstaple) and 12th February (Tiverton). It was noted that a summary of key points for the meeting would be circulated shortly.

17. Multi-Academy Trust - Confidential

18. Awayday - Confidential

19. Remuneration Committee - Confidential

The meeting ended at 7.35pm