

GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 7th May 2015 at Barnstaple Campus

Present: Paul Petrides (Chair), Jeff Andrews, Martin Chance (Items 9-18), Shaun Cooper, Ro Day, Diane Dimond, Laura Elliott, David Gibson, Andrew Mosedale, Lee Norburn, Andrew Pierce, Joanna Prylinska, Paula Stein and Eirene Williams.

In attendance: Neil Hookway, Susan Lewry and Pené Prior.

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Martyn Gimber, Andrew Lovett and Ollie Tuck.

2. Confidential Items

2.1 It was agreed that Item 8 (Mid Devon Campus), Item 12 (Curriculum/HR Review update), Item 17 (Strategic Review) update and the discussion for Item 18 (staffing update) would remain confidential to the Governing Body for the time being.

3. Declaration of Interests

3.1 Declarations of Interest were received from Diane Dimond, Jeff Andrew, Ro Day, David Gibson, Paul Petrides and Andrew Pierce in relation to Item 7 (Membership).

4. Minutes

4.1 The minutes of the meetings of the Governing Body held on 25th March 2015 and 13th April 2015 (special) were confirmed and signed.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

5.1 **Minutes: 25th March - Item 5.3 – CCIF** – the Chair confirmed that the necessary written approval was received from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and the documents were signed and sealed using the Corporation Seal on Friday 27th March 2015. Governors confirm the application of the seal to the documents, which were signed by Paul Petrides and Andrew Pierce.

- 5.2 **Minutes: 25th March – Item 10 – Strategic Plan** – the Chair reported that, in view of the discussions commencing with Exeter College, it had been agreed that the acting Principal launches the plan through her meetings with staff.
- 5.3 **Minutes: 25th March – Item 11 – Principal’s Report** - the Chair advised that Somerset College had provided a prospectus inviting an expression of interest from colleges who would be interested in forming either a partnership or a merger. Governors were advised that the document was available on the college’s website. However, it was noted that as Petroc had agreed to commence a review with Exeter College, they would not be considering the proposals from Somerset College at this time.
- 5.4 **Minutes: 25th March – Item 16.2 – Adult Loans** – It was clarified that the College was not currently accessing its full allocation of student loans and was looking to increase this income opportunity. In response to a question raised, it was reported that the take up across the college sector was varied and that the Association of Colleges (AoC) was researching why learners were not taking up the opportunity of a loan.
- 5.5 **Minutes: 25th March – Item 21 – Strategic Investment Working Group (SIWG)** - Governors noted that the next meeting of the SIWG would now take place in July as it has been decided to undertake an evaluation survey on the land at Barnstaple, similar to the one undertaken at Tiverton, which would be available at that time.

6. Business brought forward by direction of the Chair

- 6.1 There was no business brought forward by direction of the Chair.

7. Membership

- 7.1 Governors ratified the appointment of Diane Dimond as a Governor of Petroc and confirmed her membership of the Search and Governance Committee.
- 7.2 Governors confirmed membership of the Joint Working Group with Exeter College was follows: Paul Petrides, Diane Dimond and three Governors from Jeff Andrew, Ro Day, David Gibson and Andrew Pierce. It was confirmed that Jeff Andrew, Ro Day and Andrew Pierce would attend the first meeting.

8. Mid-Devon Campus - confidential

- 8.1 Received, considered and approved the targets for 2015-16 and 2016-17 with regard to AS and A2 provision at Mid Devon Campus.

9. Course Fees

- 9.1 Received and considered the revised Course Fees Policy which had been reviewed to prevent the need for regular updates when the funding agencies rules and regulations changed. Governors made some suggestions to aid clarity for consideration.

9.2 Governors approved the Course Fees Policy for 2015/16.

10. Redundancy / Settlements Policy

10.1 Received and considered a revised combined Redundancy / Settlements policy from the Director for Resources. Governors were advised that the policy had been scrutinised by Clarke Willmott and considered by SMT and JCC.

10.2 Governors made the following observations on the policy or sought clarification on:

- With the proposed change in title of Heads of School to Assistant Principals, the need to clarify (7.7) the interpretation of the Principalship.
- It was suggested that at 5.1 the 'over-riding' needs of the college should be inserted.
- The scope for those taking voluntary redundancy (VR) having an opportunity to return to work at the college. The Director for Resources advised that a member of staff taking VR could return to another role in the college the next day.
- It was suggested with the removal of the default retirement age that the link to voluntary redundancy and early retirement is differentiated in the policy.

10.3 It was agreed that the Director for Resources would seek the views of Clarke Willmott and report back to the committee. The policy was approved subject to some amendments and the clarification from Clarke Willmott. *Post meeting it was agreed that the policy would be brought back to the next meeting on 15th June 2015 for final ratification.*

11. Scheme of Delegation

11.1 Received, considered and approved some temporary amendments to the Scheme of Delegation to broaden the range of management available to undertake redundancy dismissal and appeal hearings.

12. Curriculum/HR Review - Confidential

12.1 Received an update from the Deputy Principal/Director for Quality and Performance and the Director for Resources on the progress of the Curriculum/HR Review.

13. Quality Report

13.1 Received and considered a report from the Deputy Principal/Director for Quality and Performance on excluded learners in 2014/15.

13.2 Governors noted the low number of exclusions as a percentage of the number of learners.

14. Finance Report

- 14.1 Received the Management Accounts for Month 8 which showed an improvement on the Month 7 projected operating surplus due to reconciliation of NCS and ESF NEETS funding, which will help absorb the restructuring costs.
- 14.2 It was clarified that where work was undertaken across college this would be recorded as a central overhead and not attributed to one particular campus, but location data could be captured if necessary.

15. Estates Strategy

- 15.1 Received and considered an update on Estates from the Director for Resources.
- 15.2 The Director for Resources reported that the advice from Clarke Willmott was to come to an agreed settlement with Wring regarding their costs.
- 15.3 In response to a question raised regarding reducing the project over-spend, the Director for Resources reported that value engineering was currently identifying savings in the region of £100,000. It was confirmed that this was not by delaying costs to a later date, but by making changes in the specifications, so there would be no additional costs at a future date.
- 15.4 Governors were advised that sponsorship was ongoing and the Director for Resources had set a target for £30-50,000 of sponsorship income.
- 15.5 Governors requested a map of the land being referred to in the report, with regards to the Larkbear proposal.
- 15.6 Governors noted the update.

16. Health and Safety Report

- 16.1 Received and considered an annual Health and Safety Report from the Director for Resources.
- 16.2 Governors approved the small changes to the Health and Safety Policy, in respect of role titles.
- 16.3 Governors were pleased to note that there were no significant issues or trends reported in the Health and Safety Report.

17. Strategic Review

- 17.1 Received an update from the acting Principal regarding the arrangements for the appointment of the consultants and the undertaking of the strategic review, in conjunction with Exeter College.
- 17.2 Governors were advised that a Joint Working Group meeting would be taking place on 11th June, with representatives from both colleges. The

next step is for each Governing Body to receive and consider the strategic review reports in detail, either at the end of the summer term or early in the autumn term, in order to consider the next stage in the process.

18. Staffing update

- 18.1 Received an update from the acting Principal on the back-fill arrangements for the role of Director for Finance and Funding.

For information only

Governors noted the summary report made against the FE Commissioner's recent observations.

The meeting ended at 6.47pm

The above minutes are subject to confirmation at the next meeting of the Governing Body. In the meantime, action can, and should, be taken on the decisions made.