

GOVERNING BODY

**Minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body
held at 17:00 on 14 December 2016 at Barnstaple Campus**

- Present:** Andrew Chapple (Chair), Jeff Andrew, Martin Chance, Ro Day, Diane Dimond, Laura Elliot, Kevin Finan, David Gibson, Martyn Gimber, Andrew Pierce, Lindy Stacey, Lee Thommen and Ruth Williams.
- Via Video Link:** Amy Bayet
- In attendance:** Jane Barton, Bill Blythe, Jane Hanson, Debbie Miller and Sheena Murphy-Collett
- Observer:** Rob Malcolm (except for item 1a)
- Clerk:** Bettina Walker

MINUTES

1. MEMBERSHIP AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- a) The Chair reported that a call for nominations for Support Staff Governor had taken place, and that one nomination had been received for Robert Malcolm, Health & Safety Manager. Rob's details had been forwarded to the Principal, the Chair and members of the Search & Governance Committee, who had indicated their support for the appointment. The Board ***appointed Robert Malcolm as the Support Staff Governor for three years from January 2017 to December 2019.***
- b) The Board thanked Laura Elliott for her contribution as Support Staff Governor over the last six years.
- c) Apologies for absence were received from Laura Cunningham and Shaun Cooper.
Amy Bayet joined the meeting by video link from the Tiverton campus.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None of the Members present had any conflicts of interest to declare relating to agenda items.

Diane Dimond and Bettina Walker declared interests under item 15 and would withdraw during the relevant parts of the discussion.

3. MINUTES

16FGB22

- 3.1 The *minutes and confidential minutes of the meeting of the Governing Body held on 14th November 2016 were confirmed as a true record of the meeting and were signed by the Chair.*

3.2 Matters Arising

- a) **Reference Minute 3.3 c)** – The College had gone out for quotes for a specialist Property Advisor, and was hoping to make an appointment in January 2017. Kevin Finan and Andrew Chapple would be on the panel evaluating presentations.
- b) **Reference Minute 3.3 d)** – The Board had previously noted that the College was potentially slightly under-insured in terms of the re-instatement costs for buildings, should the College encounter a disaster event. The Board ***approved an interim increase in the insurance cover, especially of new buildings, costing £700 to £800 for the remainder of the year.*** The Board noted that a revaluation of the estate for re-instatement would take place shortly, and would be used as a basis for next academic year's insurance renewal.
- c) **Reference Minute 8 f)** – It was reported that plans by Devon County Council to cut supported transport in Devon were due to go ahead from September 2017, impacting on students' travel to college. The Principal had written to the councils and to local MPs and was looking into alternative transport and distance learning possibilities.

4. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

It was agreed that the following reports would remain confidential to the Governing Body because of their business sensitive nature:

Item 6 – Area Review Update

Item 7 – Principal's Report

Confidential items without staff and students present: Items 14 and 15

5. BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIR **Tabled Paper**

- a) The Chair reported that the signatories for the College's Bank Accounts needed to be updated following the appointment of new senior staff. However, the signatory arrangements as they presently stood, needed to be revisited to prevent possible inappropriate use. The Board ***agreed to give the Chair and the Principal delegated authority to put in place the new Bank Mandate with Lloyds once appropriate signing arrangements had been made.***
- b) The Chair reported that a call for nominations for Vice Chair of the Board would take place after the January Board meeting, with a view to making an appointment at the March meeting of the Board.
- c) The Board's current Safeguarding link governor would be stepping down as a Governor in March, and the Chair asked if anyone would be willing to take on the role. The Interim Governance Advisor would circulate a role description to governors for information, and governors should contact the Chair if interested.

- d) An advertising campaign for new governors had taken place, and the Chair and Principal would shortly be meeting with a number of potential new governors. A special Search & Governance Committee would be convened in January with a view to making recommendations for governor appointments at the January meeting of the Board.

6. AREA REVIEW UPDATE (Confidential) Oral Report

7. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (Confidential) 16FGB23

8. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI) 16FGB24

- a) The Board noted the termly KPI report, which provided a review of 2015/2016 performance and proposed targets for 2016/17 alongside the autumn term performance data.

- b) The Board discussed the indicators provided and commented that there were too many for this to be a review of "Key" Performance Indicators. ***The Executive Management Team would review the Performance Indicators as part of the wider review of the Strategic Plan and come back to the Board with the indicators regarded as Key.***

9. COLLEGE SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT 2015/2016 AND QIP

9.1 Final Progress Report on Quality Improvement Plan 15/16 16FGB15

- a) The Board ***noted the good progress made during 2015/2016 towards the targets in the Quality Improvement Plan.***

- b) A post-occupancy review would be undertaken for the new Lifestyles Centre after the end of this first academic year. There was already substantial interest from members of the public in using the facilities, and this should improve once planned further publicity had taken place. The Board was pleased to note a positive start and that further developments were planned.

9.2 College Self-Assessment Report 2015/2016 16FGB25

- a) In November 2015 the College had undergone an Ofsted Short Inspection, which confirmed that the quality status of the College as 'Good', and that the College's financial health was "Good" and was projected to remain so in 2016/17.

- b) Safeguarding was considered to be effective, and it was recognised that the Safeguarding Team at the College had fully and effectively integrated the Prevent agenda.

- c) The College self-assessment report traditionally followed the scope of the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework (CiF), and was uploaded onto the Skills Funding Agency portal. Since the amalgamation of the SFA/EFA this was no longer a requirement, and the College had begun to introduce a more holistic approach to self-assessment which incorporated all aspects of the College's business, including Service Areas, and a summary of Higher Education provision.

- a) The Board noted that all provision was benchmarked against national rates for retention, attainment and assessment to enable an objective assessment of the standards of outcomes. Where value-added benchmarks were available, these had been included, and the results demonstrated that overall the College demonstrated excellent value added.
- b) The 2015/2016 Self-Assessment Report had been internally validated by the Senior Management Team, and **Board noted and approved the College's self-assessed ratings for 2015/2016 as:**
 - The Overall Effectiveness of the College is Good
 - Leadership and Management is Good
 - Outcomes for Learners are Good
 - Personal Development Behaviour and Welfare is Good
 - Quality of Teaching and Learning is Good
 - Types of Provision
 - Study Programmes are Good
 - Adult Provision is Good
 - Higher Education (ungraded but assessed by QAA 2014 as meeting expectations)
 - Apprenticeship Provision is Good
 - High Needs is Good
 - Provision of Services (not part of CiF but graded internally as Good)

9.3 College Quality Improvement Plan 2016/2017 16FGB26

- a) The 2016/2017 Quality Improvement Plan had been developed from an inclusive approach enabling learners, staff teams, customer feedback and surveys in identifying and prioritising actions, identified in the 2015/2016 College Self -Assessment report.
- b) The Board noted the revised approach to the Quality Improvement Plan and asked if an impact assessment of progress against the actions could be included in future.
- c) The Board **approved the Quality Improvement Plan for 2016/2017, and noted that progress reports would be made to the March and May 2017 meetings of the Board.**

10. ANNUAL AUDIT REPORTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2015/2016

10.1 Audit Committee Minutes and Committee Annual Report 16FGB27

The Board noted the draft minutes of the Audit Committee that had taken place on 29 November 2016, and **noted the Annual Report from the Audit Committee to the Board and the Principal 2015/16.**

10.2 RSM Internal Audit Annual Report 2015/2016 16AC28

- a) The Board was pleased to note the clean audit with the overall assessment that the College had "an adequate and effective framework for risk management, governance and internal control": this was the best grading possible and meant that the auditors had no concerns.

- b) The Board ***approved the 2015/2016 Internal Audit Annual Report 2015/2016.***
- c) The ***Board noted the responses to the College Regularity Self-Assessment questionnaire for the year to July 2016.***

10.3 Audit Completion Report on 2015/2016 **16FGB29**

- a) Mazars had reported that the accounts had been timely and prepared to a high standard by the College Finance Team, with little needed in the way of adjustments. The Board congratulated the Finance Team on their work in getting the Financial Statements prepared on time within the context of a new financial reporting framework.
- b) The Board ***was pleased to note that the Financial Statements Audit Opinion was "unqualified". The Board approved the Letter of Representation for signature by the Chair and the Principal.***

10.4 College Financial Statements 2015/16 **16FGB30**

- a) The Board ***noted the draft outturn for the 2015/2016 year on core operations was an operating surplus of £765,000*** . Under the new Accounting Standard, FRS102, factors such as the pensions deficit and depreciation were included on the balance sheet. The College showed an overall instant cost basis deficit.
- b) The Board ***approved the Financial Statements for the year ending on 31 July 2016 for signature by the Chair of the Board and the Principal.***

11. BOARD ASSURANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT **16FGB31**

- a) The Assistant Principal Corporate Services presented the Dashboard of the College's key risks, which was in a RAG rated format. In future a rating for residual risk would be added. The Board ***considered this to be a useful overview report from which more detailed questions could be asked.***
- b) The Board noted that the Audit Committee would discuss how new risks were added to the Risk Register, and those items no longer seen as risks taken off.

12. FINANCE REPORT (for information only) **16FGB32**

- a) The Governing Body ***noted that the Month 3 Management Accounts for 2016/2017 financial year was an early indication that the forecast for year end was on track.***
- b) Income was currently behind profile, but with new provision scheduled to start in January, this was expected to catch up. Pay costs were being well managed and were on target. Non pay costs were forecast to be on target by the end of the year. A manageable low point for cash was expected in March 2017.

- 13. SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT 16FGB33**
The Board was pleased to note ***that the Skills Funding Agency had assessed the College's underlying financial health position for 2016/2017 as "good".***

Confidential Minutes for item 14 and 15, without staff and students present, were kept under separate cover.