

MINUTES OF CITY COLLEGE PLYMOUTH CORPORATION MEETING
HELD ON 13th DECEMBER 2018 AT 4PM IN KS301

Present

Pauline Odulinski (Chair)

Penny Wycherley (Principal and Chief Executive, attending via Skype from Australia)

Andrew Ashley

Kristi Dingwall

Nick Holman

Martyn Starnes

Debbie Taylor

Emma Tringham

Cheryl Powell

Mike Jones

In Attendance

Ben Manning

Sandra Wilson

Fran Stratford (Acting Clerk)

Roger Henderson (Assistant clerk)

Kathy Barnes (ATL- item G18/121 only)

G18/116- Item 1.1- Apologies for Absence and declarations

Apologies were received from Hilary Duckett, Thomas Robins, Alain Kakuru and William Woyka.

The Chair welcomed Kristi and Debbie to their first governors meeting and also welcomed Roger Henderson as Assistant Clerk.

G18/117- Item 1.2- Minutes of last meetings

Minutes of the meetings held on 8th October 2018 and 20th November were approved by the Board.

Resolved: To APPROVE and sign the minutes of the Board meetings held on 8th October and 20th November

G18/118-Item 1.3- Matters arising

The Chair confirmed there were no other matters arising from previous minutes which were not addressed elsewhere on the agenda.

On the agenda at 1.3 was a proposal to extend the current Chair's term of office as a governor for another 4 years.

Resolved: the extension was agreed.

G18/ 119- Item 1.4- Confidential items.

The Chair explained the 2 parts to the meeting-general and a closed part 2 session where any staff and students present would be required to leave. The minutes from the Part 2 closed session would be withheld from the published records for the prescribed period.

G18/120- Item 2.1 Principal's Update

The Principal, connecting via Skype, highlighted sections of her circulated Principal's update.

In particular, the Principal expressed huge thanks to the staff for their efforts over this challenging time, particularly Ben Manning and also Sandra Wilson. She reported that there had been good recent meetings held with the EFSA and the bank so things were a little more stable now. The Principal stated her paper was in essence about risk, what needs to be done and the outstanding risks to be faced. The Principal emphasised the importance of students continuing to have an outstanding experience at college and we must continue to satisfy the FE Commissioner's team with regard to the recommendations following their review. There is still a risk around the arrangements with Barclays bank and the breach of covenant but fortunately the bank is not pressing for repayment.

With regard to financial matters, Sandra Wilson has discussed the current challenges with the auditors at the recent audit meeting. The College needed an overdraft facility of £1.5 million by March 2019 and £1.8 million for April 19. Due to the profile of EFSA funding, the months of March and April 19 are financially critical.

The Principal confirmed the College was achieving the agreed financial forecast but explained that we need to continue the drive for income generation in the current year.

The Chair opened up the meeting to questions and as there were none, the Chair formally thanked the Principal for the amazing job she was doing in a very short

space on time in her role and also asked her to pass on sincere thanks to the senior team and other managers for all their efforts.

Resolved- to NOTE the update

G18/121-Item 2.2- ATL Update –Kathy Barnes.

The Chair thanked Kathy for attending her first Corporation meeting and asked her to address any key points in her report, whilst assuming everyone has read it.

Kathy went through her interim report (circulated with the papers) and highlighted many successful achievements and statistics, including:

- Recruitment has overall exceeded targets
- English and Maths have increased 30%, due mainly to employing on line tools
- Apprenticeships are still challenging, but there has been increased engagement with the NHS, the Met Office, Plymouth Community Housing and Plessey, amongst others.
- ATL are still seeking additional growth and apprenticeships. Whilst CCP is the main partnership, new training and support is being developed with ATN.
- Achievement rates to the end of November stand at 84%, an OFSTED survey asking about recommending the course to a friend scored 94%, with 99% in a Talk back survey.
- So overall, 2018 has been very successful with increased growth and stronger relationships planned for for 2019.

Governors asked for more information as to the data with relation to the timeliness of achievement (a very important indicator) and Kathy responded that ATL for work based learning are achieving 72% ,which is considerably above the national average of approx. 58%.

The Chair expressed sincere thanks to Kathy and the ATL team for all their work.

The Principal confirmed that following the FEC visit, we are already working more closely with ATL and the accounts are being consolidated.

Resolved- To NOTE the update from ATL

G18/122- Item 2.3- Annual HE Assurance Report- Ben Manning

The Chair asked the VP to present his report highlights and assume people have read the report.

Reference was made to the fact this particular report has already been circulated and scrutinised by P&S Committee. The College currently has the award of TEF Gold but in order to maintain this, the high percentages in student satisfaction must be maintained and improved.

A Governor challenged the perceived low response rate. BM responded that whilst 70% may not sound high, this rate is still one of the highest in the South West, but significantly lower compared to FE. There would be regular reporting into the dashboard.

Performance and Standards Committee to monitor the progress of improving the return rate of numbers completing the student satisfaction levels.

Resolved- to Note the HE report.

G18/123-Item 2.4 FE Commissioners Visit Update

The Chair reported that December's planned visit by the FEC had been put back until 23rd January 19. The College had now received a more detailed analysis document/action plan which the College is already working on. This was circulated to Governors with the pre reading for their consideration and comments at the meeting. With the increased scrutiny put in place by governors on financial matters, it will be important Martyn Starnes is fully involved before and on 23rd January visit. He confirmed he is able to keep the date clear and is looking forward to meeting the team. It was agreed by all members that it is important that the visit on 23rd Jan is used to demonstrate to the team that any concerns they may have are unfounded and that the college is taking all the necessary action needed to turnaround the position. It is a good opportunity to show the FEC that significant progress has been made and continues to be made to address the issues.

The Principal confirmed that the College is now considered technically to be in EFSA early intervention stage (even if it is a light touch).

The Chair then provided an update on various appointments which are part of the FEC action plan:

- 1) Clerk to Corporation- whilst a Clerk was in the process of being appointed recently, it has been agreed this was not the right appointment at this stage and therefore the applicant has stepped away and the role is vacant. Roger Henderson is to act as Assistant Clerk and has considerable legal skills to bring to the role. An advert will be placed shortly for a new Clerk.
- 2) A new Chief Financial Officer has been recruited and this will be dealt with more fully in part two of the meeting
- 3) Penny Wycherley has started as interim Principal and CEO.

Resolved: to NOTE the update.

G18/124- Item 3.1- College Self assessment report (SAR) and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) – Ben Manning

The VP C & Q presented the reports and the annual process of self assessment (included in the papers). This report has received rigorous scrutiny from the

Performance and Standards committee who have endorsed it and recommended it to the governing body for approval this evening.

He outlined points of note including:

There were many impressive outcomes from the previous academic year:

- Very good achievement rates on the majority of provision at or above national average-overall achievement is 90%
- The rate for 16-19 year olds is 90.9%, significantly above the latest national average and a 5 % improvement on last year
- Adult learners overall achievement is 88.7%, an improvement of 1.7% on last year
- Apprenticeship achievement is 88.9%, an improvement of 5.6% on last year
- Stakeholder feedback has again been overwhelmingly positive with the FE Choices learner satisfaction being 97%.

Despite these impressive figures, the rate of actual attendance compared to authorised, requires improvement and has subsequently been identified as a College key area of improvement along with other aspects as identified in the SAR.

Once the SAR and QIP have been approved by Corporation, they would be sent to OFSTED in January.

Governors recognised how much time and effort Ben Manning has spent meticulously going through every area of curriculum, looking at performance and identifying areas for improvement. The Chair acknowledged and thanked Ben for his huge and rigorous efforts in this regard.

The Principal confirmed that quality must be looked at in the light of risk. The Chair raised the point that going forward, Ben will ensure the SAR has a brief summary will also be included under Leadership and Management reflecting the grading and impact of support area functions.

Resolved: To APPROVE the College SAR and QIP.

G18/125- Items 3.2a, 3.2b) Financial statements for Y/E 31.7.18 and external audit college group completion report

Just before the Head of Finance presented, the Chair distributed a proposed example of good practice in the form of a dashboard of KPI's (the balance scorecard) from the Principal. It was agreed that going forward, it is important to get the KPI's distilled to a RAG rated document that would enable better scrutiny by governors, it will also be important for governors to drill down if necessary into the more detailed data and reports where they have concerns.

Sandra Wilson, Head of Finance, then took members through the financial papers to illustrate where there is overlap with MIS/ Data/ Finance areas.

The Year End accounts were now finalised, subject to a change in wording required by the auditor. This was circulated to the Board for approval. The accounts would need to be signed after the meeting before submission to the ESFA. Sandra drew attention to part one of the covering report which dealt with 2017/18 and identified the key areas for the Board.

The Head of Finance then went on to give an update to 2018/19 and to explain the various scenarios whereby the College may submit growth bids to the EFSA for additional funding this year which was extremely encouraging and achieve “Satisfactory” Financial Health this year, with “Good” financial health forecast for 2019/20.

£125,000 of additional funding has been included in the forecast. Full funding for the additional students would be £1.3 million but the forecast is cautious about the proportion which might be received.

The College still needs to achieve the £1.5 m saving but the EFSA money would be additional money. There may be additional funding if the College can attract further new starts during the year if this total is in excess of 200 over the allocation. New starts would come from NEETS.

Members asked a series of questions to challenge the assumptions in the financial reports and concluded they are satisfied that they are a good record of the position.

The Chair requested the Head of Finance circulate the Management Accounts at the end of every month to governors and if members have any points they can raise them before the next Board meeting. This was agreed as standard practice for each month.

Resolved: 1) to APPROVE the financial statements for 2017/18

2) to APPROVE the external audit college group completion report

3) to AGREE that the accounts and KPI's would be provided at each month end to the Board, once Martyn Starnes as Chair of F&GP, has seen the accounts and dashboard data analysis..

G18/126-Items 3.4 Risk management annual report,3.5 Internal Audit Annual report and 3.6 Audit committee annual audit report

The Head of Finance ran through the Audit papers and noted that changes had been made to the risk register as suggested by the FE commissioner, following a full review by the committee at the last meeting including reputational risk (-see item 3.7 later.)

The Audit Committee can give the board reassurance that risk is being managed. It was further pointed out that due process had been followed in correctly appointing the auditors. There were no major concerns regarding the internal audit report. The audit committees annual audit report needed to be signed off.

Resolved- 1) To APPROVE the risk management annual report.

2) to APPROVE the internal audit annual report.

3) to APPROVE the audit committee annual audit report.

G18/127-Items 3.7-Risk management Framework Register update

The Head of Finance took the Board through the Risk register and confirmed that three changes had been made at 1e),-cashflow and insolvency, 1f)-reputational damage under finance and 2c)-reputational damage on its own.

The College needs to show that its mitigating actions are having a positive impact.

The Chair suggested that the top 10 risks were identified by SLT and presented reviewed and monitored at each Board meeting.

Resolved: to APPROVE the risk management framework register update and agreed actions

G18/128- Item 3.8-Audit Committee's terms of reference

The Head of Finance confirmed there had been one change made since the audit committee review-removal of audit committee delegated authority. The committee is a review committee and makes recommendations for approval.

Resolved: to APPROVE the audit committee's terms of reference.

After presentation of items 3.2-3.8, both the Principal and the Chair warmly thanked Sandra Wilson and also Ben Manning and Paul Fanshawe for their outstanding efforts recently in representing the College so calmly and confidently in difficult circumstances. Their efforts are deeply appreciated.

G18/129-Item 3.9 Search and development committee update re new governors.

The Chair updated the meeting on the following:

- 1) The Board was seeking new governors to join, specifically with skills in financial management and accounting. There needs to be support for Martyn as the only qualified Accountant on the board. An advert drafted has been prepared and will be published shortly.
- 2) Board members will be sent a skills audit survey to complete to inform the selection of governors and it is felt important that this is completed before the FE commissioners visit to demonstrate progress.
- 3) The chair will circulate an AoC governance self assessment tool but a comprehensive way of governors assessing their own performance effectively. It is quick to use and will be treated anonymously this is important as it should encourage honest and frank self assessment. It is designed to

see where collectively the Board has gaps or weaknesses. These will then be addressed through development.

- 4) Fran Stratford reported on interest from potential new governors. Ed Coley, due to a potential conflict of interest, is keen to delay his appointment until a vacancy in the summer term this would avoid any compromise of his or the college position as an officer of the council working on a potential bid with the college at this current time. Emily Beaumont from Marjon University and a Director of the Chamber of Commerce would be appointed to the vacant role in the New Year if a Finance Specialist could not be found who would take priority, Emily will be offered the next available vacancy.

- Resolved:**
- 1) to ACTION skills update to be sent to all board members (now sent out on 14.12.18) To be completed by 10th January 2019
 - 2) to ACTION AoC governance SAR to be sent and returned by 10th January 2019
 - 3) to APPROVE Emily Beaumont as a new governor once Finance role is finalised and a vacancy becomes available.

G18/130- Item 4.1- EFSA letter re Financial Health

The Head of Finance confirmed that whilst the funding score for 2017/18 on the finance record had dropped to inadequate, the College was still rated as satisfactory based on the finance plan until formally notified otherwise.

Resolved: to NOTE the EFSA letter

G18/131 Item 4.2- Internal Autumn Learner Survey.

Ben Manning reported that this had received the highest level of responses-2,981. Figures are in the 90's for satisfaction. Therefore very positive figures for responses and satisfaction. The EFSA were aware of these figures.

Resolved: to NOTE the autumn learner survey.

G18/132 Any other business

- 1) There was a request for College reps on the ATL board. Ben Manning agreed to be a representative. In addition, it was agreed the new CFO could be an additional representative, once appointed

Resolved: to AGREE that Ben Manning be appointed as College representative to the ATL board and once appointed also the new CFO.

- 2) Nick Holman- The meeting noted it was Nick Holman’s final meeting as a governor. The Chair expressed warm thanks to him for his lengthy service, contribution as former Chair and frequently going “above and beyond”.

Resolved: to note Nick Holman’s last meeting as governor with sincere thanks expressed.

The meeting then moved to Part II confidential closed session and all staff and SLT members left the meeting.

G18/ 133- Item 6 –Date of next Meeting

The next full meeting of the Corporation will take place on **Monday 4th February 2019** at 4.30pm in KS301.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 6.10pm.

SIGNED----- **DATE** -----