

**Minutes of the meeting of the TCAT Corporation
Held on Monday 09 October 2017 from 5:00pm in B.009, Haybridge Rd**

Present

Liz Bekker, Corporation member/Staff governor
Rosie Beswick, Corporation member
Roger Betteridge, Vice-Chair of the Corporation
Kerry Boffey, Corporation member
Graham Guest, Corporation member and Principal & Chief Executive
Paul Hinkins, Chair of the Corporation
Steve Hogan, Corporation member
Neil Phillips, Corporation member
Duncan Varnes, Corporation member
Jim Welch, Corporation member/Staff governor

In attendance

Gail Bleasby, Chair of New College Telford
Martyn Hasell, Director of Finance
David Malone, Vice Principal – Curriculum & Quality
Stephanie Morley, Clerk to the Corporation
Michael Nicol, ESFA representative
Janet Stephens, Deputy Principal – Finance & Resources

70/17 1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and round-table introductions took place. Apologies had been received from D.Gough, L.Lamb, D.Lowe and C.Miller.

*Clerk to
record
attendance*

71/17 2. Declaration of members' interests

None received.

72/17 3. Confidential items

There were no items requiring confidential session.

73/17 4. Minutes of Corporation meetings held (Ai – Aiii)

4.1 26 June 2017 (Ai)

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting. All actions had been completed and there were no matters arising.

4.2 24 July 2017 (Special meeting) (Aii)

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting. All actions had been completed and there were no matters arising.

4.3 18 September 2017 (Special meeting) (Aiii)

The minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting once C.Miller had been added to the list of apologies given. All actions had been completed and there were no matters arising not covered by the agenda.

*Clerk to
amend*

74/17 5. Committee updates (Bi & Bii)

5.1 Audit Committee

R.Beswick reported on the informal meeting of the Audit Committee held on 13 September 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed audit plan for 2017/18. The following audits were supported by Committee members:

Risk-based assurance

- HR (October 2017)
- IT/cyber security (January 2018)
- Financial controls (March 2018)
- Learner number systems (March 2018)

Core assurance

- Data Protection (January 2018)
- Governance and risk management (May 2018)
- Follow-up activity (May 2018)

The next meeting of the Audit Committee was scheduled for 22 November 2017.

There were no questions from Corporation members.

5.2 Finance & Resources Committee (Bi)

N.Phillips presented his update on the meetings held 18 July and 26 September 2017 on behalf of the Committee Chair.

The Committee had been briefed on the re-submission to the Transaction Unit (TU) and were pleased with the progress that had been made and how the bank continued to be supportive of the proposals. The Committee learnt the appointment process for the permanent Senior Leadership Team had been completed and was encouraged by the activity taking place to address organisational cultural differences and bring the two staff teams together prior to the merger.

Student enrolment numbers had been discussed in detail, including difference across the two sites, the all-year enrolment for certain student groups and the importance of retention. Significant improvement had been seen, particularly with 16-18yr enrolment at the Haybridge campus, but there still remained work to be done to promote the college.

The Committee now received a revised format of the management accounts, giving more meaningful and comprehensive information to members. The Committee was pleased with how the accounts and forecasts were now being presented, enabling challenges and problems to be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

The Committee acknowledged and thanked G.Guest and J.Stephens for their hard work, particularly in relation to the re-submission to the Transaction Unit, and also S.Morley for managing the Vice Principal recruitment process.

There were no questions from Corporation members.

Draft minutes from the meeting were circulated to members as they had been finalised earlier that day.

5.3 Quality & Standards Committee

R.Betteridge presented his update on the meeting held 04 October 2017. The meeting focused on achievement in 2016/17, enrolment for 2017/18 and the peer assessment process replacing the current structured lesson observation policy.

In particular, governors were referred to the new peer assessment process, which R.Betteridge described as having major importance for how the college would review and improve the quality of its teaching and learning. The new process represented a significant cultural shift towards collaborative approach based on support and trust. The Committee was pleased to hear this was a tested process, with opportunities to learn from other colleges.

GOVERNOR COMMENT/QUESTIONS

Governors asked D.Malone to share his experience of implementing a similar process at another college. He explained he had been involved in implementing a holistic approach incorporating ungraded observations that, in his opinion, had the biggest impact on teaching and learning within that college. He confirmed the main challenge around implementation was culture change, as it was a move towards an environment of peer assessment and asking for support. However, if implemented well, this would be very positive for the college and its teaching staff.

Governors asked how soon the benefits would be seen. D.Malone reported there would be some benefits seen approximately within the first 4 months, as staff members began to realise the tailored support available to them. G.Guest confirmed this was being introduced at both the Haybridge and King Street campuses and the unions were being consulted due to its links with staff performance management.

Governors were encouraged by this new approach and looked forward to hearing progress reports on its implementation and impact. D.Malone confirmed there would be case studies produced and these would be shared with governors.

5.4 Remuneration Committee

P.Hinkins reported the Committee had met on 04 September 2017 to discuss the performance and pay of the Principal and the Clerk. The Committee received reports on their recent appraisals and was pleased with how both post holders had settled into their roles in a short space of time. On behalf of the Corporation, the Committee approved the remuneration of the Principal and Clerk to the Corporation, as well the salaries of the Deputy Principal and Vice Principal, as per the remit of the Remuneration Committee. Copies of the minutes were available to Corporation members on request from the Clerk.

There were no questions from Corporation members.

5.5 Safeguarding and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee (Bii)

The Committee had not yet met this academic year. As lead governor for safeguarding, R.Beswick reported she was being kept updated and had been involved in the revision of the safeguarding policy. She was assured the college was maintaining its involvement in the borough's key networks/meetings and consistency had been maintained throughout the restructuring. The college's new Designated safeguarding Lead (DSL) was C.Wain – Director for Services to Students, Marketing & Admissions.

R.Beswick referred governors to the minutes of its last meeting (13 July) and reported, in light of recent events, the Committee had focused on the need to review the college's lock-down arrangements and the danger of cyber-attack.

There were no questions from Corporation members.

75/17 6. **Principal's report (C)**

6.1 Achievement 2016/17

Significant improvements had been seen across the college, particularly 16-18yr English and maths, and in many cases achievement was now above national averages. Overall, achievement had been 81.8% - 8 out of 10 students had left college with their qualification. Although achievement for 19+yr had improved, figures were still below national average; therefore this would be carefully monitored in 2017/18. Achievement at King Street had also seen improvement, across both BTEC and A Level provision.

The timely achievement of apprenticeships at year end had still been below national average; however there had been steady improvement over the last 3 years. Below average achievement was mainly due to legacy issues, which were required to be included within the figures.

G.Guest thanked staff members for all they had done to help drive this improvement across the two campuses.

6.2 Enrolment 2017/18

An updated enrolment report was circulated due to more accurate figures being available. It was noted the 19+yr and apprenticeships figures did not present an accurate picture as enrolments would take place all-year round. 16-18yr enrolment figures at the Haybridge campus were positive and in particular growth had been seen in sport, construction and HE. The numbers for King Street were lower than expected and activity was already underway to improve enrolments for 2018/19. Overall, at present, enrolment was below target by 4 students (based on 100% retention).

Governors asked if the reasons behind the 37 withdrawals were known. G.Guest explained he had asked for this analysis to be produced. He reported the two campuses had been working together by supporting

their move from academic to vocational courses and vice versa.

Governors requested the Principal establish which courses students had withdrawn from and where they were now studying (or working) to identify any common themes. G.Guest reported last year 174 students were 'lost' between August and October 2016, which had equated to approximately £750,000 – illustrating the financial importance of retaining students.

Principal to action

6.3 The Principal referred governors to his report and highlighted the following:

- The HE Awards evening on 22 September 2017
- Continued monthly case conferences with the ESFA
- FE Commissioner stock-take visit, now 22/23 November 2017
- Ofsted challenge visit on 12 October 2017
- Progression of the CFADs/RF request through the Transaction Unit approval process
- Completion of the senior leadership team appointment process – governors were thanked for their involvement
- Meeting with head teachers to discuss working collaboratively

M.Nicol confirmed the college's support request had been presented to the TU's Credit Committee on 03 October 2017 and had been referred to the External Advisory Panel for consideration on 11 October 2017. He emphasised these were only recommendations at this stage and any approval would have conditions attached to ensure value for money and best use of public funds.

The Chair reported on the recent Telford Business Board round-table skills event. Along with the Marches LEP and the University of Wolverhampton, the college was involved in listening to local businesses about their current and future skills requirements. Hospitality students had been involved in the 'meet and greet' aspect of the event registration and had also delivered a presentation about their experience as an apprentice. This had been the first of what will be a regular event for Telford.

M.Nicol asked if the reasons behind the higher than expected HE enrolments were known. G.Guest explained initial feedback indicated this had been down to marketing activity and had reflected the national trends of reductions in university enrolments and increases in HNC/degree enrolments at FE colleges.

76/17 7.

Finance policies (Di-Dii)

J.Stephens presented the financial policies, which had both been considered by the Finance & Resources Committee at its last meeting and were recommended for approval by the Corporation. She explained due to the academic year already having started, the policies were being approved in retrospect. For next year, the policies would be reviewed and presented for approval before the end of the current academic year. J.Stephens referred Corporation members to the cover report for the Revised Financial Regulations, where the changes to the document were listed.

The Chair explained, following a successful outcome of the submission to the Transaction Unit, the approval limits for payments mean there will be an increase in approvals being referred to governors.

The Corporation APPROVED the Revised Financial Regulations.

The Corporation APPROVED the Tuition Fees 2017/18 Policy.

77/17 8. Any other business

8.1 Student governor acknowledgement

The Chair took the opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of Joseph Comery, who had served as a student governor in 2016/17 and had now moved on from the college. Joseph had undertaken the role of student representative on the governing body in a professional manner and had fed a student perspective into Corporation and Quality & Standards Committee meetings. The Corporation agreed Joseph had made a significant contribution and requested Joseph be formally thanked.

*Clerk to
action*

8.2 Quorum of the Corporation

The Clerk circulated and presented her tabled report, which had been written that day due to concern over the quoracy of Corporation meetings. It was explained the current quoracy requirement of 9 members (40%) was based on a full Corporation membership of 22. In preparation for merger, both colleges had agreed to carry vacancies and the current full membership of the TCAT Corporation was 15 members. The ability of the Corporation to make decisions in an effective and timely manner was therefore a concern; particularly when there would be critical merger approvals to be made by the Corporation in the coming months and delays would cause significant problems. The Corporation was therefore asked to consider reducing the number required for quorum - a decision permitted through the Instruments & Articles.

The Corporation APPROVED the requirement for 40% member attendance for a meeting to be quorate would apply to the current Corporation membership of 15 members with effect from 10 October 2017.

*Clerk to
implement /
update I&As*

78/17 9. Date of next Corporation meeting

Monday 20 November 2017, 5:00pm.

The meeting concluded at 6:13pm.