

Minutes - APPROVED



Meeting	Corporation
Date	12 November 2019
Time	5:00pm
Venue	E2.06

Corporation members present	In attendance (attendance indicated in brackets)	Apologies received
Louise Biffin Paul Birch Rosie Beswick Dan Blasczyk, Staff governor (except 12 & 15) Gail Bleasby, Vice Chair Corin Crane Wendy Farrington-Chadd Graham Guest, Principal (except 10 & 11.1) Paul Hinkins, Chair (except 10 & 11.1) Geoff Layer (Items 1-13) Gavin Real, Staff governor (except 12 & 15)	Laura Arscott, Finance Manager (Items 5&6) Stephanie Morley, Clerk to the Corporation Celia Robotham, Assistant Principal (Item 8) Janet Stephens, Deputy Principal Jim Welch, previous staff governor (Item 1) Rachel Wilson, Assistant Principal (Item 7)	Chris Pallett Ruth Matthews

No.	Item	Action						
CORPORATION BUSINESS								
1.	Welcome, introductions and apologies							
	<p>The Chair opened the meeting by explaining the previous meeting had been the last for J.Welch as a staff governor due to the expiration of his term. The Corporation thanked J.Welch for his contribution to the discussions and work of the TCAT and then Telford College Corporation, noting the importance of the insights he provided as a member of teaching staff.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the college's new governors – L.Biffin, W.Farrington-Chadd and G.Real. Apologies had been received from C.Pallett and R.Matthews.</p>	<i>Clerk to update register</i>						
2.	Procedural matters							
2.1	<p><u>Declarations of interest</u></p> <p>The Clerk reported no declarations had been received in advance and the following standing declarations were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - P.Hinkins, as Managing Director of Business Watch Guarding and Deputy Chair of the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership - G.Layer, as the Vice Chancellor of the University of Wolverhampton 	<i>Clerk to update register</i>						
2.2	<p><u>Confidential matters</u></p> <p>It was agreed there was a need to hold the following items in Confidential session:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Item/report</th> <th>Reason</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>12 – Annual report of the Remuneration Committee</td> <td>17.2(a) – a named person employed at or proposed to be employed at the institution</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15 – Minutes of the Confidential session and matters arising</td> <td>17.2(d) – any matter, by reason of its nature, should be dealt with on a confidential basis (general)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Item/report	Reason	12 – Annual report of the Remuneration Committee	17.2(a) – a named person employed at or proposed to be employed at the institution	15 – Minutes of the Confidential session and matters arising	17.2(d) – any matter, by reason of its nature, should be dealt with on a confidential basis (general)	<i>Clerk to update register</i>
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3.	Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising	
3.1	<p><u>Minutes of the last meeting</u> The minutes of the meeting held 07 October 2019 were APPROVED as a true record.</p> <p>3.2 <u>Matters arising report</u> The Clerk presented the Matters Arising report to the Corporation and the following updates were provided further to the report:</p> <p>Oct19-02: Apprenticeships data – G.Guest asked governors what further information they required to receive assurance. The Corporation acknowledged the additional detail now provided within the management accounts provided this assurance and no additional information was needed at present.</p> <p>Oct19-03: Consultancy fees – J.Stephens reported the additional consultancy costs had been incurred as they were in excess of what could be funded by the TU through the Restructuring Facility grant.</p> <p>Oct19-05: Safeguarding data – to be covered under Item 8.</p>	<i>Clerk to update register</i>
4.	KPI dashboard	
	<p>J.Stephens presented the monthly report and highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All learner numbers had been rated as amber as the figures would not be finalised until January 2020, when the full impact on next year’s finances would be known - HE figures could not be recovered in-year due to the single enrolment period - Student attendance was improving; figures were higher than this time last year but the aspirational target of 90% was not being met - Both estates utilisation and class sizes had improved - Efficiencies would continue to be identified throughout the year - The ESFA was changing the financial model, which should be better for the college but would need time to embed <p>CORPORATION QUESTIONS/COMMENTS</p> <p>The Corporation noted the ESFA-funded learner numbers had been rated as amber and asked if the target this related to was the TU target. J.Stephens confirmed it was, with a current funding allocation target of 2024. The college’s own aspirational target had not been met. The Corporation asked if the numbers could increase as well as decrease before January 2020. J.Stephens confirmed this was possible but unlikely as the majority of enrolments took place in September. G.Guest reminded the Corporation the college had historically allocated lower funding bands to their programmes and the bandings would be reviewed again this year. This would help, in part, to mitigate against next year’s funding shortfall caused by the lower 16-18 student numbers.</p> <p>The Corporation noted the ambitious targets for high grade achievement in GCSE English and maths and asked if this was realistic. J.Stephens agreed the targets were challenging; however there had been significant staff focus on achieving this and improving student attendance was key to achieving these targets.</p> <p>The Corporation asked is there were any financial penalties for not achieving targets. J.Stephens explained there was not but quality would be the main concern if targets were not met, which would ultimately impact on the college’s reputation.</p>	

	<p>The Corporation acknowledged the college’s HE cohort was small in comparison to the wider student body and asked if the reasons for lower than target enrolment were known. J.Stephens explained the exact reasons were not known but acknowledged the following were contributory factors – recovering from a poor reputation, the lack of a dedicated HE centre, a limited range of courses and students choosing to study elsewhere. G.Guest noted HE was only part of the college’s overall higher level provision. He acknowledged the approach to marketing these different programmes should be reviewed to create a brand for higher level provision.</p> <p>The Corporation asked what assurances were in place regarding the accuracy of attendance data. G.Guest explained the primary data source was class registers completed by teaching staff. Weekly reports on register completion were presented to SLT and action taken where data was missing. Physical counts were also undertaken during the curriculum review process. Corporation members thanked G.Guest for this explanation and requested they be provided with details of departments where attendance was below target and the action being taken to rectify this.</p> <p>The Corporation asked what was the risk of those students currently not attending college withdrawing before the finalisation of student numbers. G.Guest responded this was always a risk and the financial impact of the reduced numbers on 2020/21 funding would be calculated in December 2019. The Corporation asked if there were currently less 16-18 year olds in the borough. G.Guest confirmed there were less young people in the area, in addition to increased local competition.</p>	<i>ELT to action</i>
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FINANCIAL HEALTH		
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5.	Management accounts to 30 September 2019	
	<p>L.Arcott presented the management accounts for the period ending 30 September 2019.</p> <p><u>Key risks:</u></p> <p>Forecast outturn (Green): the forecast outturn was a surplus of £514k.</p> <p>Apprenticeship income (Amber): the team was tasked was delivering £3.68m in line with the curriculum plan but a more conservative target of £3.0m was within the budget. The latest forecast showed an apprenticeship income of £3.61m by year end.</p> <p>AEB income (Green): income was favourable to budget, largely due to front-loaded delivery of sector-based work academies and distance learning. An additional £65k had been allocated in relation to 2018/19 continuing learners.</p> <p>HE income (Red): income was £38k adverse to budget and was expected to have a shortfall of £367k by year-end due to low student enrolment. Mitigating action, such as mid-year recruitment drives, and savings were being explored.</p> <p>Pay costs (Green): costs were currently £100k favourable to budget. This was partly due to vacancies being filled late and by budgeting against a cost of living increase not yet agreed/awarded. Agency costs were on budget.</p> <p>Cash (Amber): the cash balance as at 31/12/19 was £1.965m compared to £1.35m in the financial plan. This was caused mainly by the timing of IT capex, which was expected to catch up with the forecast by November 2019. As per the budget/forecast, a low cash point was anticipated in March 2020.</p>	

Whitehouse Hotel (**Amber**): the sale was progressing and expected to exchange this month.

TU KPIs (mainly **Green**): the only amber-rated KPI related to CFADS, due to calculations not being possible until year end.

Bank covenants (**Amber**): rated as amber as final calculations would be prepared once the accounts have been finalised.

CORPORATION QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

The Corporation acknowledged the significant turnaround achieved with the AEB. The increased income had been a phenomenal success and the Corporation thanked all the staff members involved. The Corporation also acknowledged the progress made with negotiating a fairer funding model for higher needs.

The Corporation asked for confirmation that the apprenticeship numbers had not achieved target but the income was favourable to budget. L.Arscott confirmed this was correct. Different apprenticeships had different financial values and the higher cost apprenticeships were seeing more enrolments. J.Stephens noted the college had two different income targets – the aspirational target of £3.68m and the financial plan target of £3.0m. The college was currently forecasting income at year-end between these two targets. The Corporation asked if there was a limited market for the higher cost apprenticeships. J.Stephens explained the curriculum plan was not solely based on higher level apprenticeships, where enrolment was concentrated during September. Enrolment for lower level apprenticeships was year-round. She noted this was only two months into the year and performance would need to be carefully monitored each month to ensure targets were met. G.Guest stated work needed to be done to understand why enrolments had shifted from lower to higher level apprenticeships and whether this had impacted on the 16-18 ESFA-funded enrolments. It was acknowledged there was a limited customer base in Telford, which was why the college had taken the strategic decision to go outside Telford for growth.

G.Guest reminded the Corporation of the need to influence the regional discussions taking place regarding devolved AEB allocation via the West Midlands Combined Authority, as Telford and Wrekin was not a constituent member of the WMCA.

The Corporation asked how often the bank covenants were tested. J.Stephens reported the covenants were tested annually and reminded governors of the technical breach caused by the covenants being waived in 2018/19. The bank had agreed to provide a letter of comfort but were awaiting the sale of The Whitehouse Hotel and a valuation of the college campus. The Corporation asked if this breach impacted on the conditions of the loan. J.Stephens confirmed it did not – the bank was comfortable with the breach and were not concerned, particularly as the 2018/19 outturn was better than had been initially forecast.

The Corporation asked how the college was moving towards its target for the income-to-pay costs ratio. L.Arscott reported at 31/10/19 it had been 58%, which was very favourable to target but caused by a slow start to recruitment. The Corporation asked how the target had been set. J.Stephens explained it had been set as a result of financial planning and knowledge of sector norms. The college's ratio had been as high as 72% several years ago, but the target was now 66% and on track to be achieved.

6.	<p>Anti-Fraud Policy</p> <p>L.Arscott presented the draft policy to the Corporation for its approval and explained there had been a number of amendments to reflect the new requirements within the Post-16 Audit Code of Practice.</p> <p>There were no questions or comments and the Corporation APPROVED the Anti-Fraud Policy.</p>	
TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT		
7.	<p>Learning, teaching and assessment update</p> <p>R.Wilson presented her report and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good progress had been made over the last month, with the year’s second curriculum review taking place before half term, with good teaching and learning observed - There was still improvement to be made in some areas and this was being addressed through focused improvement activity. Clear improvement plans were in place for ALL areas of the college - Good feedback on the walkthroughs, learning walks and curriculum reviews had been received from both staff and students - Work scrutiny had been undertaken to assess how students’ work had been marked and the quality of feedback given - Areas identified for development included peer reviews (within departments and cross-college), capturing and sharing good practice, celebrating and CPD for helping students to be more independent in preparation for employment/HE <p>CORPORATION QUESTIONS/COMMENTS</p> <p>The Corporation asked if there was a target for the number of curriculum reviews to be completed this year. R.Wilson reported 14 vocational and 3 A Level programmes had been reviewed to date and the target was for all remaining areas to be reviewed across the academic year, including action planning. Progress in implementing the actions from last year’s reviews was monitored.</p> <p>The Corporation noted it would be helpful to receive student perspective as part of this report. The Clerk reported the student governors would be in place for the next meeting as the Student Council elections had not yet taken place. R.Wilson added student feedback was obtained during curriculum reviews to inform the process and D.Blasczyk reported he had been part of the process where learner managers had meet with class representatives to feed the learner voice into the curriculum review.</p> <p>The Corporation asked how often curriculum reviews were undertaken. R.Wilson explained information from a number of difference sources (quality improvement plans, 1-1s and ongoing assessment) would be used to determine this. G.Real informed the Corporation his area was the first to undergo a curriculum review – the review continued to be discussed at team meetings and also during staff appraisals.</p>	
8.	<p>Safeguarding update</p> <p>C.Robotham presented the safeguarding report and highlighted the following:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The data showed the number of reported incidents was comparable to the same time last year - Further to the Smoothwall updates, improvements were required as a small number of breaches had been identified - The BeSafe team had delivered 34 counselling and 50 mentoring sessions as at 24/10/19 - A further update to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019 had been released by the DfE. These changes related to safer recruitment and the legal duty refer to the DBS anyone who had harmed or posed a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable person <p>CORPORATION QUESTIONS/COMMENTS</p> <p>The Corporation asked for an update on whether the data referred to only new cases. C.Robotham confirmed the data captured all open incidents – ie both ongoing and new cases. The Corporation asked for future reports to reflect this split in future reports.</p>	<i>Asst Principal (CC&SV) to action</i>
CORPORATION DISCUSSION		
9.	Annual self-assessment discussion	
	<p>G.Guest and J.Stephens asked the Corporation to consider the following statements, supporting evidence and how well the college ‘scored’ for each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Senior leaders and governors developed and selected an ambitious and inclusive curriculum plan which reflects local and regional skills need - Senior leaders and governors have strong relationships with stakeholders and work with employers to introduce new curriculum to address local and national skills gaps - Senior leaders and governors have successfully stabilised the finances and future-proofed the college - Governance is strong, governors provide robust support and challenge to senior leaders. The relationship between the Chair and Principal is highly effective - Senior leaders and governors have highly effective engagement with employers, students and parents which has a direct and positive impact on the local community and economy <p>The Corporation’s self-evaluation for each of the above statements was collected and would be used to inform the drafting of the self-assessment report being presented to the Corporation at its next meeting.</p> <p>*G.Guest, P.Hinkins and G.Layer left the meeting at this point*</p>	
PEOPLE & PLACES		
10.	Staff attendance	
	<p>J.Stephens presented the staff attendance report for the Summer 2019 term and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Absence rates continued to be above target and the national average by 2% - Nine members of staff were on long-term absence (four of these were carried forward from the last report) and comprised four teaching, one management, two assessors and two business support staff members - Sickness continued to be a focus, in particular short-term absence which had caused concern in the current term 	

	<p>CORPORATION QUESTIONS/COMMENTS</p> <p>The Corporation asked how the wellbeing policies were progressing and how staff absence was impacting on students. J.Stephens reported a wellbeing day held on 04/11/19 had received positive feedback but had been followed by increased absence the following week. A wellbeing committee had been formed, staff walks were being held and other strategies were in place. Short-term illness, however, was more challenging than long-term absence. Regarding impact on students J.Stephens explained, due to lower enrolment, additional staffing was currently in place and able to address this. A staff member had also been identified to manage teaching cover.</p> <p>The Corporation asked which department was most under pressure. G.Guest reported this was Construction and Automotive – the construction numbers had grown and the learner manager post was currently vacant. However, he noted he had observed really engaging teaching on a recent walkabout. The rest of the areas under pressure were pockets across the college due to short-term, unexpected absence.</p> <p>The Corporation asked if the college had offered flu jabs to its staff. J.Stephens confirmed it had not and agreed this should be explored.</p>	<p><i>Deputy Principal to action</i></p>
LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE		
11. Reports to the Corporation		
<p>11.1</p> <p>11.2</p>	<p><u>Staff governors</u> D.Blasczyk highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teaching staff were instrumental in obtaining good quality feedback from students which was leading to improvements/changes being made - Class representatives had provided ideas for how VR could be utilised in teaching across the college - Staff illness had been a challenge to manage - The partnership with the Shropshire FA was having a positive impact on student enrichment <p>*G.Guest and P.Hinkins returned to the meeting at this point*</p> <p><u>Chair of the Corporation</u> The Chair informed the Corporation he had been informed by the Office for Students (OfS) the college had been late in paying its registration fee. The OfS had asked him to ensure this was reported to the wider Corporation. He explained the late payment had been due to human error. The college had paid the fee on receiving the reminder and action had been taken to ensure this would not happen again.</p>	
FINAL BUSINESS		
13. Self-assessment and reflection		
<p>13.1</p> <p>13.2</p>	<p><u>General improvements/better ways of working</u> The Corporation asked ELT to look at ways the governing body could interact with the Student Council.</p> <p>The Corporation was keen to confirm the date of the planned strategic session and the Clerk stated she would be contacting governors to confirm their availability.</p> <p><u>Risk identification</u> There were no new risks identified.</p>	<p><i>ELT to action</i></p> <p><i>Clerk to action</i></p>

14.	Any other business	
14.1	<p><u>The Audit Committee</u> The Clerk informed members of the Audit Committee an email had been sent out earlier that day to confirm the rearranged date of the Autumn term meeting – Tuesday 10 December 2019 at a later time of 5:30pm.</p> <p>*D. Blasczyk and G.Real left the meeting at this point*</p>	
CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS A separate, more detailed minute of the Confidential session was taken		
15.	Minutes of the last meeting (Confidential session) and matters arising	
15.1	<p><u>Minutes of the last meeting</u> The minutes of the Confidential session during the meeting held 07 October 2019 were APPROVED as a true record.</p>	
15.2	<p><u>Matters arising</u> An update was provided on the sale of The Whitehouse Hotel.</p>	
12.	The annual report of the Remuneration Committee	
	<p>G.Bleasby, as the Chair of the Remuneration Committee, presented the annual report.</p> <p>The Corporation approved the report and asked for the Clerk to confirm the publication requirements.</p>	<i>Clerk to action</i>

The meeting closed at 7:30pm