

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporation Held on Monday 22 July 2019 at 16:00

at Bath City Campus, Room H102a

Present

Carole Stott (CS)	Chair
Dan Ball (DB)	Student Governor
Paul Blenkinsopp (PB)	Staff Governor
Victor da Cunha (VC)	
Erica Draisey (ED)	
Andy Furse (AF)	
Laurel Penrose (LP)	Principal
Gary Waylen (GW)	
Jenny Williams (JW)	
Neil Wilson (NW)	
Julian Young (JY)	from item

In attendance

Jonathan Creed (JC)	ICCA-ETS (for item 5.3)
Jayne Davis (JD)	Deputy Principal, Curriculum & Quality
Barbara Owen (BO)	Director, Human Resources & OD (for item 5.4)
Anne Roberts (AR)	Head of Governance

Attendance: 85%

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Welcome was given to Dan Ball, the new Student Governor and introductions were given. Apologies were received from Mike Oram and Andy Parker.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Confidentiality of items

The following items were agreed as confidential: 5.1 (papers and minute), 5.3 (papers only), 5.5 (papers and minute) and the confidential minutes/notes under item 8.

Item 5.1 and the confidential minutes/notes under item 8 were discussed by external governors at the Confidential Board with LP invited to attend for the senior post-holder recruitment and LP and JD for the staffing item. DB, PB, JC and JD withdrew for that part of the meeting.

4. Minutes of the last meeting and any matters arising

The minutes of the Board held on 24 June 2019 were approved as an accurate record and the minutes were signed by the Chair.

4.1 Actions from the last meeting

The Board noted the following actions to be progressed on the Action Register:

- Min 5.5 Pensions paper (LP)
- Min 6.1.1 Key targets/minimum standards to be drawn up in respect of students' waiting time between sessions (JD)

All other actions had been completed or were on the agenda.

5 STRATEGY

5.1 Senior Postholder appointment and Staffing

Confidential Board minute

5.2 Principal's update

LP provided the following update:

- The College graduation had taken place at the Assembly Rooms on 18 July 2019
- College staff had met Jacob Rees-Mogg MP in respect of BTEC/T-level qualifications.
- LP had been on the panel for 2040 in relation to the development of creativity and communication skills
- The College was working with primary and secondary schools in the area, with a focus on primary for the first time
- Ethan Conlon, the Bath College stonemasonry student was representing the UK at the World Skills event. The Board wished him well.

5.3 Three Year Financial Plan

JC presented the outturn forecast 18/19 and the financial plan 2019/20 & 20/21 which formed the basis for the submission to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The Chair of the Finance & Estates Working Group commented that the Group had gone through the assumptions and figures in detail at its meeting on 17 July 2019 and was satisfied from their questioning that the plan was both prudent and robust, based on known information. The Group was pleased to note the slightly improved year end position (£70k deficit) compared to forecast budget (£94k). The Group had asked for modelling to be done on the cash position given the capital projects and the bank loan.

JC commented that the College was expected to have a 'good' rating and a reconciliation would be done in December to show how the final figure in the financial statements related back to the £70k.

The Chair of Audit Committee asked for assurance on student record recording and the continuation of monitoring of bad debts, noting that the latter was much improved on previous years. LP reported that a robust system of checks was being undertaken.

JC reported on the work being done in respect of staff costs and efficiencies giving a staffing ratio of 63% which was in line with the sector average. A number of questions were asked on the assumptions for particular staff and non-

staff costs. JC also reported on the bank loan due for repayment in October 2020; discussions were ongoing in respect of the terms and covenant conditions. LP reported that the bank had confirmed it was willing, in principle, to extend for 3 years from the date of signature. The Board noted that the forecast needed to link to the College's Strategy for growth and maximise potential growth areas, such as the apprenticeship levy and high needs provision. The Board questioned the low staff development budget, a key area of the HR strategy and asked that this be reviewed or other income streams sought.

After due consideration, the Board **APPROVED** the budget for 2018/19 and the associated two-year financial plan for submission to the ESFA. **ACTION: LP/JC**

5.4 Draft HR Strategic Plan

The Director of HR & OD presented the draft HR Strategic Plan which would form part of the College's Strategic Plan in the Autumn. Key areas focused on health & wellbeing, Ofsted requirements and T levels, appraisals and reward systems. Members welcomed the plan which was important for the future development of the College, its leadership and its staff. Members commented that the Plan should indicate that the College was a learning environment for both staff and students and asked that the following points be added or be given greater emphasis:

- induction both for new staff, but also for those changing roles and for succession planning
- the growth of talent from the student body, to develop their skills for the future and opportunities for inclusion in the workforce
- proactive recruitment strategies but, more importantly, development of staff and providing opportunities for progression. Retention was very important to address; prioritisation, timelines and assessment of its cost was needed to ensure plans were realistic; the recent NAO report suggested that it cost three times as much to recruit than to retrain someone.

Members asked that data be provided on retention and recruitment

ACTION: LP/BO

- a partnership approach on appraisal, with both employer and employee being proactive in staff development and retraining; this needed to link with the Strategic Plan priorities
- development of skills utilisation, rather than just skills development. The introduction of T-levels would require the application of skills.

The Board thanked the Director of HR & OD and asked that these points were included in the final Strategy. **ACTION: BO**

5.5 Institute of Technology – Legal Structure

Confidential Minute

5.6 Sub-Contracting Strategy

The Board considered the Sub-Contracting Strategy and Policy 2019/20 and associated reports. The Policy had been approved previously by the Board and had had minor amendments. The financial analysis for each proposed subcontractor was reviewed. Members noted that the key messages were the move from 4 or 5 subcontractors to 2 and that this reduction was to reduce overheads and allow the College to have more control over its

offerings. The Board **APPROVED** the Strategy & Policy 2019/20 and asked that these points be included.

ACTION: LP

5.7 Learner Involvement Strategy

The Board considered the Strategy which was tied into the Learner Voice Framework, the Ofsted Framework and the College Strategy. The Deputy Principal reported that the College wanted to get learners more involved in the decision making of the College for example attendance at SMT meetings for particular items, self-assessment reviews (the Student Governor would be attending 3 of these). The Board **APPROVED** the Learner Involvement Strategy 2019/20.

6. SCRUTINY

6.1 CURRICULUM AND QUALITY

6.1.1 Quality Improvement Plan

The Chair of the Quality Working Group reported that the Group had scrutinised the Plan and had focused on Apprenticeships and Teaching & Learning. The Head of Apprenticeships, Community & Learning had provided an update on actions being taken and would attend the Group in December to report on progress.

6.1.2 Learner Outcomes 2018/19

JD provided a verbal update to the Board. Data was still being processed with half of the Learner outcomes logged. The best-case scenario (excluding Apprenticeships) was 90.5% (national rate 85.9%). Progress of the Apprentices was being monitored closely. The timely rate for these was down at 56.4%, partly due to legacy issues which would be separated out for the Quality Working Group to review. JD would provide an updated Learner Outcomes report at the Board's next meeting.

ACTION: JD

6.1.3 Student Applications 2019/20

The Board noted that applications were predicted to be up slightly on last year although the number of acceptances were down. Action was being taken to address this. It was noted that one of the benefits of being in the IoT was providing digital courses which would be attractive to students.

6.1.4 OfS Access & Participation Plan

The Board considered the completed Access & Participation Plan which was a requirement of the Office for Students (OfS) for offering Higher Education. The fees would be used to improve participation, particularly from specific groups such as care leavers and mature students. The Quality Group had considered the Plan and had recommended it for approval as good practice although it did not formally need Board approval. Members asked about progression routes from level 3 courses to HE. The plan did address this but only for the under-represented groups.

The Board **APPROVED** the Plan for submission to the OfS.

ACTION: JD

6.2 FINANCE & ESTATES

6.2.1 Management Accounts

The Management Accounts were incorporated in the three year financial plan under item 5.3.

6.2.2 Tuition Fee Policy

The Board considered the Tuition Fee Policy and noted the proposed increase of between 1-2% for the University of Bath courses (set by the University) and the addition in the Policy of graduated refunds for withdrawals. The Board **Approved** the Tuition Fee Policy 2019/20.

6.2.3 Estates Strategy Update

The Board considered the latest developments on the Estates Strategy. The Chair of the Finance & Estates Working Group reported that the Group had considered the progress on the capital projects and asked for some work to be done on modelling cash flow.

6.3 HR

6.3.1 Policies for Approval

The Board considered the Policies set out below. The Chair of the SSEC reported that these had been recommended to the Board for approval. Members questioned whether all the Policies required Board approval. The Chair confirmed that these HR Policies did. The Head of Governance reported that a Scheme of Delegation would be drawn up (to accompany the Standing Orders) making it clear what responsibilities the Board had.

6.3.1.1 Grievance Policy & Procedures for Senior Post Holders

The Board considered the amendments to the existing Policy and **APPROVED** the Policy & Procedures.

6.3.1.2 Procedure for Complaints against Senior Post Holders

The Board **APPROVED** the Policy & Procedures.

6.3.1.3 Redundancy Policy

The Board **APPROVED** the revisions to the Policy and asked that it go out to the Unions for consultation. Should the Union raise any issues, the Board asked that these be considered by the SSEC.

6.4 HEALTH & SAFETY

6.4.1 Health & Safety report and Dashboard

The Board noted the report. Reminders were being sent to staff to complete the e-learning H&S modules and completion rates were being monitored by SMT.

7. GOVERNANCE

7.1 Governance Documents

The Board considered the revised Standing Orders and Terms of Reference of the Committees and Working Groups, reviewed by each of the Corporation's Committees/ Groups. The Board thanked the Head of Governance for her work in revising these and **APPROVED** the documents.

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

8.1 Quality Dashboard

The Board noted the Quality Dashboard. The Framework would be revised for 2019/20 to reflect the new Ofsted Framework and the Self-Assessment Reviews.

8.2 Committees/Working Groups

The following minutes/ notes or verbal updates were received by members for information and no questions were raised.

8.2.1 Audit Committee draft open minutes, 8 July 2019 (confidential until approved by the Committee)

8.2.2 Finance & Estates Working Group, 17 July 2019 (verbal update)

8.2.3 Quality Working Group draft open notes, 9 July 2019

8.2.4 Search and Governance Committee draft minutes, 17 July 2019

8.2.5 Senior Staff Employment Committee draft open minutes, 17 July 2019

9. Any Other Business

9.1 Register of Interests

The Head of Governance reminded members to return their register of interests as soon as possible if they had not already done so.

9.2 Governors Liability Insurance

The annual insurance renewal declaration asking governors about any circumstances for claim had previously been circulated. It was confirmed that there were no known claims and this could be signed off.

10 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 7 October 2019 at **17:00** at Bath City Campus

Members were reminded that Corporation meetings would commence at 17:00 for 2019/20.

The Chair wished everyone a good Summer break after a busy year.

The meeting closed at 18:15